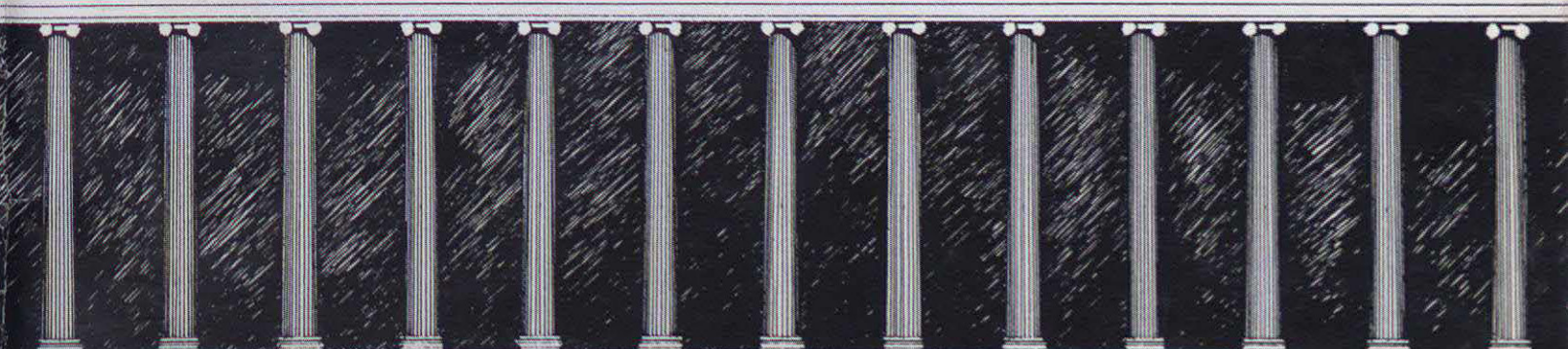
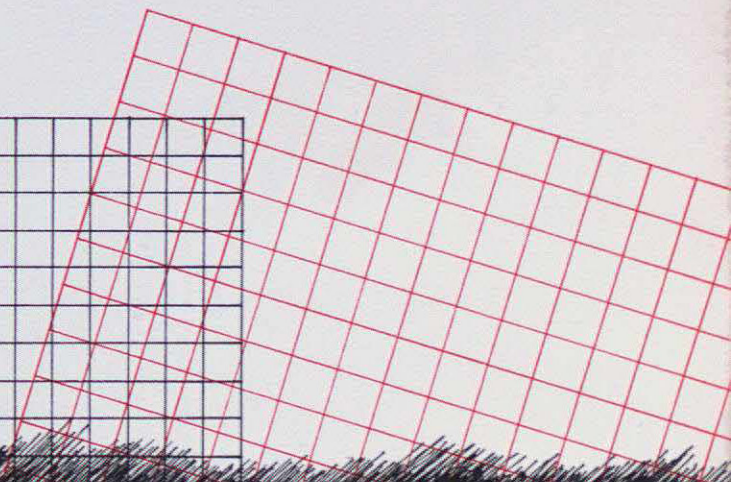
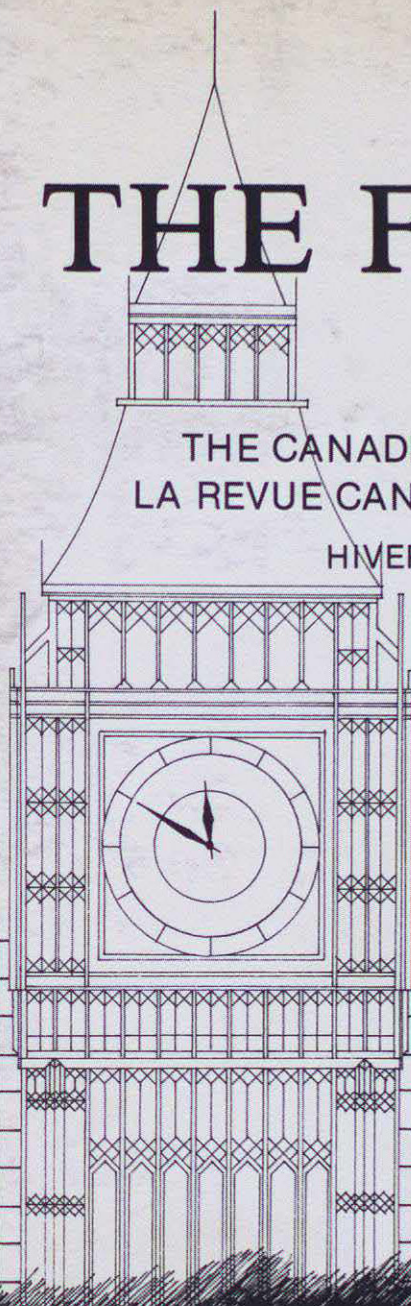


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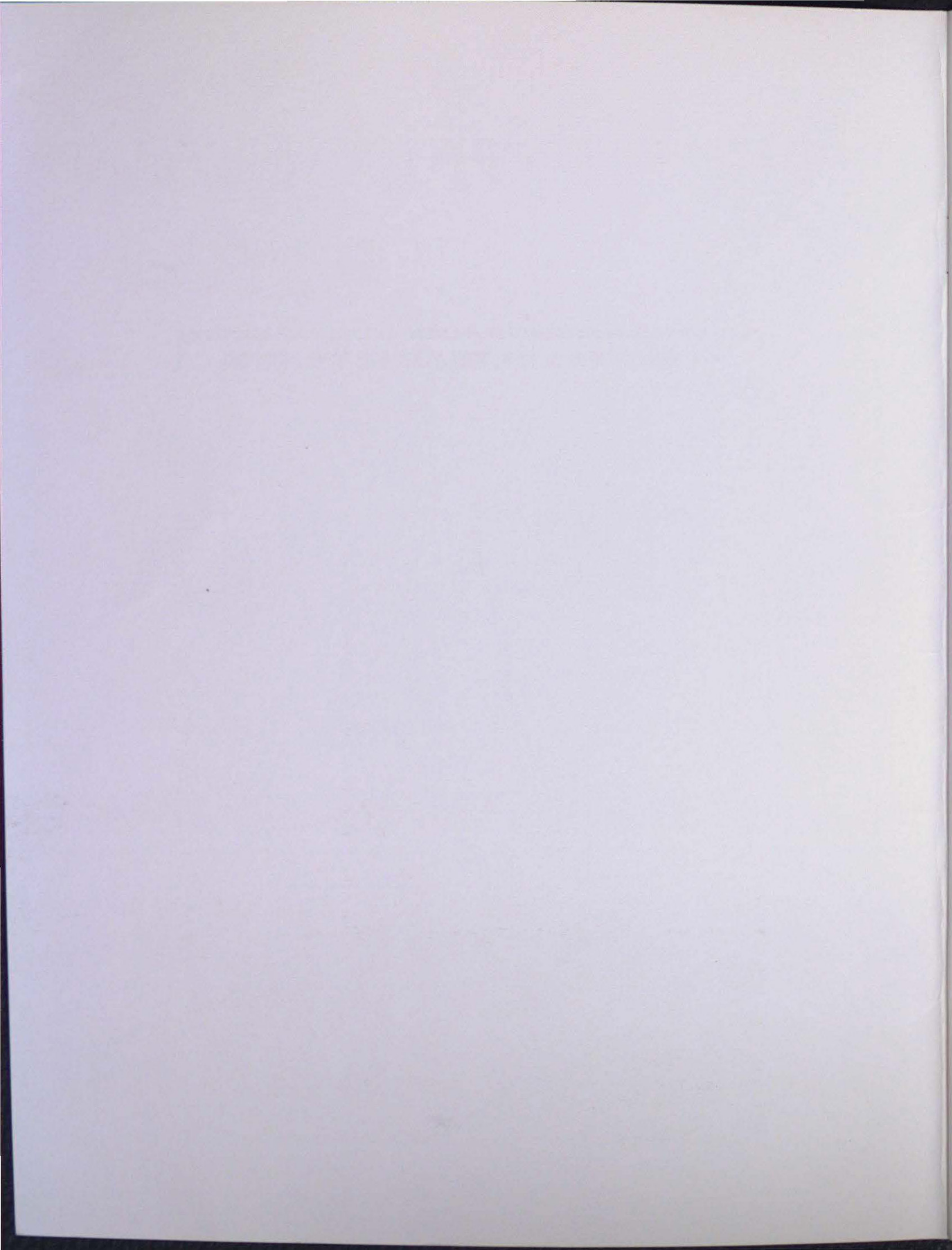
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LA REVUE CANADIENNE DES ETUDIANTS EN ARCHITECTURE

HIVER 1983 WINTER VOL. 3, NO. 2 \$4.00



**POLITICS AND ARCHITECTURE**







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HIVER 1983 WINTER VOL. 3, NO. 2

"The sUn had shifTEd round, and the myRIad WINDOWS OF the MiniSTry OF Truth, The light no LONGer shiNiNG on tHEm, LOOKED grim As the loopHoles OF His heart quAiLEd beFOre the ENORMOUS PYRaMidaL SHaPe. IT was TOO sTrOnG, it couLD NOT be STORMED. A THOUSAND WOULD NOT BATTER iT doWN. ORWELL, 1984. bombs

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FORTRESS.

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G.D. Livesey



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## Editorial

3

## News / Nouvelles

4

## Beyond Modernism -

## Notes On A Dutch Housing Experiment

10

by Peter Scriver with Adrian Sheppard

*Social housing in Rotterdam with a twist.*

*Un projet de logement publique à Rotterdam.*

## Otto Wagner Applied

14

by Graham D. Livesey

*Modernism meets symbolism in Vienna.*

*La modernisme s'unit au symbolisme à Vienne.*

## The Limits of Reason

17

by Joe Burton

*Silence, Form, and Order - the imagery of Louis Kahn.*

*Silence, forme, ordre - les images de Louis Kahn.*

## On Postcards and Places

20

by Jonas Lehrman

*Student proposals for an 'urban room' in Winnipeg.*

*Des étudiants proposent une chambre urbaine pour le centre ville de Winnipeg.*

## Politics and Architecture

## Politique et l'architecture

## Rationalism, Classicism, and Nationalism:

## Myths and Monuments of the Third Rome

23

by Martin T. Troy

*Can party ideology be a generator of form?*

*L'idéologie politique, peut-il générer la forme?*

## Fragments of Some Politically Significant Places

26

by Ricardo L. Castro

*A photo essay.*

*Un essai photographique.*

## Nineteen Eighty-Three

28

*Words and thoughts of Leon Krier.*

*Paroles et pensées de Leon Krier.*

## The Bauhaus Story

35

by Vikram Bhatt

*Fifty years later, the Bauhaus lives on.*

*Cinquante ans plus tard, le Bauhaus respire toujours.*

## Architectures/Cultures

38

de Georges Adamczyk

*L'influence de la culture en politique et en architecture.*

*Cultural considerations on politics and architecture.*

## A Balanced Budget and A Balanced World

41

by Peter Hemingway

*The argument against government intervention.*

*Discussion à l'encontre de l'intervention gouvernementale.*

## Pinsky Speaks... Again

44

by Barry Pinsky

*Reflections of a Sixties' activist.*

*Quelques pensées... une décennie plus tard.*

## Zeppelinhafen

47

## Esquisse

50

## Perspective

51

## Archives

52

Cover by Mark Poddubiuk



## Would you accept a job from this man?

*"How apolitical can you get? If the Devil himself offered Mies a job he would take it."*

Philip Johnson

The relationship between politics and architecture is complex and eternal. Of late, it has been the barely visible forces of government controls that have reshaped the form of our architecture. Indeed, as life in general becomes more and more (in)efficiently controlled by legislation, the architecture of the age tends to be given its form increasingly by zoning bylaws and decreasingly by the traditional giver of form, the architect.

As our cities lie suffering from the wounds inflicted by now infamous (but nonetheless ongoing) socio-political urban policies, it becomes apparent that the tangled bureaucracy we now accept as inevitable is a very recent thing. Prior to the social upheaval precipitated by industry, the idyllic age of absolute monarchies and tyrannical feudal lords allowed for a much more direct manipulation of architectural form, dictated entirely by the architect and his patron. As opposed to the forces of legislation, patronage can be a timeless method of building, and the monuments commissioned by the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt and by Pericles in Greece continue to have significance today.

The possibility for architectural permanence is at least partly due to the dynamics of the patron-architect relationship. Both have the power to impart what the other needs, and in the process each will have to give something up. The patron sees the architect as a giver of form able to create, because of architecture's social nature, a public manifestation of his (the patron's) existence. In addition to any aesthetic intentions expressed by the architect, the work necessarily immortalizes the patron and expresses some of his beliefs. An example of this is Baroque church architecture, where, as well as expressing exciting new formal concepts, the churches are imbued with the religious fervor of the Counter Reformation. Indeed, the clergy were less concerned with undulating facades than with drawing people back into the Catholic fold. In return for this powerful tool of propaganda (used equally well by religion and state) the patron pays a relatively small price: financing of the project and some form of remuneration to the architect.



GM

The architect, while working superficially for survival, builds for a reason akin to that of his patron, immortality. However, unlike painters and sculptors who pursue very similar aesthetic intentions in their work, the architect has the opportunity to exert his presence on a grand, public scale. While the architect's intentions might initially be misread - they will constantly change as the building weathers time - the creator of the work will never change so long as the building remains (we still know that the architects of the Parthenon are Ictinus and Callicrates).

In exchange for this quest for immortality, the architect pays a huge price, that of (political) integrity. Since the architect's task requires more than pencil and paper, the need to build often forges odd partnerships. Mies made a concerted effort to build in Nazi Germany but his forms were labelled Communist, and only the stripped Classicism of Hitler and Speer was believed to sufficiently express the spirit of National Socialism. Yet, both Mies and Speer professed to be completely apolitical men, and neither had any taste for Nazi doctrine, or any other political doctrine for that matter. Does simply proclaiming oneself to be apolitical remove all political and moral obligations from the architect? Is the need to build more important than responsibility to society?

Government intervention in effect isolates the architect from these socio-political issues. In the majority of cases this is a good thing, since there is no telling how far the average architect would go to appease his ruthless developer. At the very least the law guarantees a certain level of existence, even if this is at the cost of interesting architecture. The socio-architectural fiascos of the Fifties and Sixties, the result of design by committee according to government programs, have become increasingly rare. Rather, the government (in Canada, West Germany, etc...) has begun to pursue an alternate method, whereby a master plan for a project is formulated, and portions of the work are doled out to numerous firms. This serves to humanize the scale of the project (a divergence from the mega-project mentality of old) and also gives the architect increased autonomy and the opportunity to produce more notable buildings.

Great buildings, however, continue to be the result of an enlightened patron commissioning an exceptional architect. The architect of the Villa Savoie or the Robie House is so completely a master for his forms, that issues of functional adequacy are no longer relevant. Great architects transcend the issues addressed by legislative controls and they alone are equipped to converse at that higher stratum of universal meaning.

Adam B. Caruso



## ARCHITECTURE, POLITICS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

by Jill Bambury

I once met a political scientist whose concern for the past few years has been the relationship of politics and architecture. The theme of this issue of THE FIFTH COLUMN provided the occasion to examine the perspective of a political scientist on this subject. "Architecture and the Public Realm" by Dr. David Milne was published in *The Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, Winter/Spring 1981.

The appeal is made by David Milne in "Architecture and the Public Realm" for greater understanding of the relationship between architecture and politics culminating in "the birth of a genuine political theory of architecture". For this purpose, architecture should not be considered only in terms of commodity, firmness and delight, but also in terms of political symbolism: that is, the expression of the political ideals of the institution for which it is built.

However, contrary to the popular *zeitgeist* view that architecture can be considered as a direct metaphorical statement about the civilization for which it was erected rather, the relationship is more dialectic. With the aid of Milne's historic examples, it becomes clear that political institutions tend to erect monuments as a means of reinforcing a weak or threatened power structure.

Milne claims that since the eighteenth century, political theorists have been concerned for "the relentless erosion and absorption of the public realm." A similar estrangement has occurred in architecture, an estrangement which until very recently, this century has shown little interest in resolving. Milne's appeal to both architects and political theorists "entails remembering associations which have ceased to hold in our own time and using such memory and practice of each art" for the cause of the ultimate restoration of the public realm.

This cry sounds familiar to us because, for at least the past ten years, one sector of architects has had as its primary concern what Leon Krier calls "the reconstruction of the public realm". The images of this crusade are those components which traditionally belong to the public: the street, the piazza, the parks, the public buildings themselves — the places of gathering. They appear on our drawing boards and in our jour-

nals, but how many of these dreams are being realized?

If the relationship between architecture and politics is, as Milne suggests, that "architecture is a signpost for political downfall", must we, then, bear witness to a political reformation **before** the public realm is revived? Or can such a revival, (as Krier suggests) "be part of an integral vision of society... part of a political struggle?"

*Jill Bambury is a recent graduate of TUNS and is presently working in Montreal.*

## UBC ENTRYWAY COMPETITION

by Margot Paris

In the spirit of the 1980 Venice Biennale exhibition, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PAST, a group of students from the UBC Studies Abroad in Venice program challenged their fellow students to create their own 'Strada Novissima'. The intention of the ENTRYWAY COMPETITION was to enhance and define interior and exterior entrances of the Lasserre building which houses the school of architecture.

Typical of competition deadlines, the students performed the design and im-

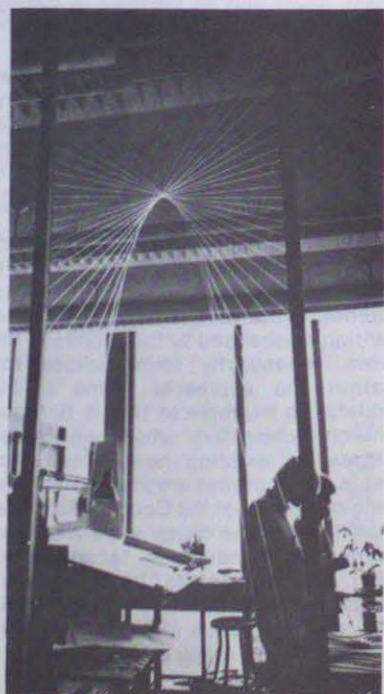
plementation of the gateways in a frenzied forty-eight hour period. Some entrances were completed moments before the judging team arrived. Judges for the event were Mel Charney, Paul Merrick, Ned Pratt, and Geoff Smedley. Of the twenty-one group and individual entries, the judges chose four as winners.

The first was a bit of theatrical architecture entitled *The Creation of Architecture* — clearly a spoof of Michaelangelo's *Creation of Man* image. Extending from either side of the entryway were two full-scale plaster arms that pointed to a large neon 'A'. A backdrop of white drapery diffused pools of red and blue light, in contrast to the cold punctuation of the neon above. The mystery and satirical majesty of this piece was complemented with wisps of dry ice vapour, triumphal classical music and an enigmatic pair of gold sneakers placed on a small approach stairway.

Another winning entry by a tutorial group was a Manhattan Art Deco skyscraper. Defying the nine-foot ceiling of the corridor, these students rendered the upper storeys using forced perspective. Like a stroll down 42nd Street, the image forces your head back, and as Mel Charney noted, "slaps you in the face." The students acknowledged the overwhelming if not oppressive effect of the structure by providing a wall of graffiti — the



Margot Paris



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slogans reflecting a common resentment towards these imposing urban monoliths. With a recording of the Manhattan Transfer providing appropriate musical accompaniment, the completed image of a night-time New York skyline emerged with the effective use of back-lighting.

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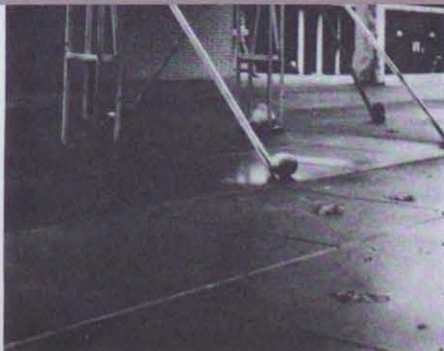
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One must admire the variable nature of the reverberation time. The volume of the hall is 28,700 m<sup>3</sup> (1,015,000 ft<sup>3</sup>) and the audience capacity is 2812. These figures and the fact that there is practically no acoustic (sound absorptive)

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Readers' Poll / Opinion du lecteur

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(Please give name of project, location, and architect.)

LES DIX EDIFICES CANADIENS LES PLUS SIGNIFICATIFS SONT:

(Veuillez préciser les noms du projet, des architectes, et sa localisation.)

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slogans reflecting a common resentment towards these imposing urban monoliths. With a recording of the Manhattan Transfer providing appropriate musical accompaniment, the completed image of a night-time New York skyline emerged with the effective use of back-lighting.

A third winner, an individual entry by a first-year student, transformed a nondescript door in the student lounge into a Palladian *trompe l'oeil* arcade. The arcade culminates in a parapet vista of blue sky and hazy clouds. This gateway provides an extraordinary visual escape from the rather ordinary room. A styrofoam archway frames the door. Its flattened classical pediment and Ionic columns complete the simplified, Post-Modern form. The *trompe d'oeil* air-brushed panel for the door does indeed 'fool the eye' until a doorknob in the centre of a column alerts the viewer to the deception.

The final winner, in contrast to the rather elaborate designs, was commended for its pure geometry. In this understated entryway, an eleven-foot high parabolic arch was formed by obliquely intersecting fishwire lines, pinned to a frame.

Two exterior gateways also drew praise for their attempts to counter the obstinately rectilinear form of the Lasserre building. At the south entrance, an ice-blue, elegantly simple por-

tal (in the form of a pointed arch with a vertical extension) provided a strong and colourful counterpoint to the mass of the building. At the eastern entrance a wooden, tori-like structure extended the longitudinal axis, and echoed the structural grid of the facade. Fluorescent surveyors' tape, attached to points of the building, drawn through the gateway and tied to a cedar tree, effectively 'squeezed' the building through the gateway, establishing a dynamic tension between the built and natural form.

The winning gateways were only a few of the inventive responses to the design challenge of the Entryway Competition. One gateway, described by Net Pratt as "sexy", employed coloured pantyhose as a structural element; while another included eight-foot high cardboard renditions of the Queen's Palace Guard.

The competition, deemed an entirely successful event, showcased student talent and substantially improved the studio environment. Student and faculty attending the awards culminating the competition were rewarded with a scintillating and sometimes controversial exchange of the judges' views on the competition entries and the nature of architecture itself.

*Margot Paris is a student at the School of Architecture of the University of British Columbia.*

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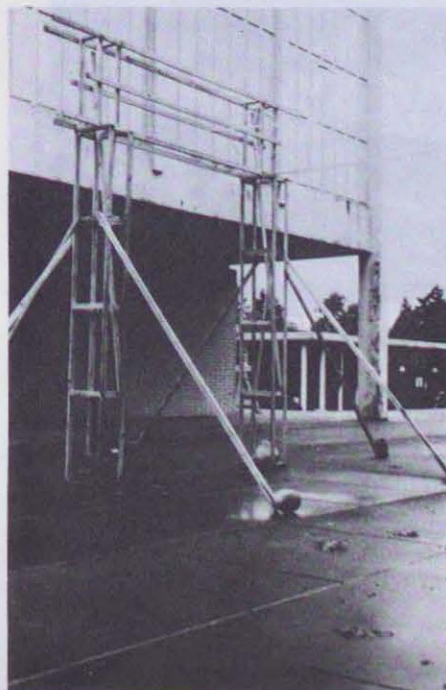
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surface in the entire auditorium (except that of floor carpeting and upholstered seating) contribute to a fine, long reverberation time of 2.1 sec at the mid-frequency range. This will be cherished by symphony orchestras and their conductors. By the lowering of a large number of suspended, cylindrical, sound absorptive banners (designed in cooperation with Mme Marie Rousseau-Vermette of Quebec), the reverberation time can be gradually reduced to 1.5 sec, rendering the hall suitable for chamber music groups and performers.

The large convex, exposed concrete side-wall elements, the staggered and individually projecting balcony sections and the serrated walls around the orchestra platform, constitute a system of sound diffusers, creating the superb feeling that music approaches the listeners from all around the hall, seldom achieved to this extent in any other music hall of the world, except perhaps Avery Fisher Hall of the Lincoln Center in New York.

Above the orchestra platform, thirty circular, transparent, adjustable sound reflectors ("spaceships") are suspended, providing the necessary reflected sounds for members of the performing groups and to every part of the audience area.

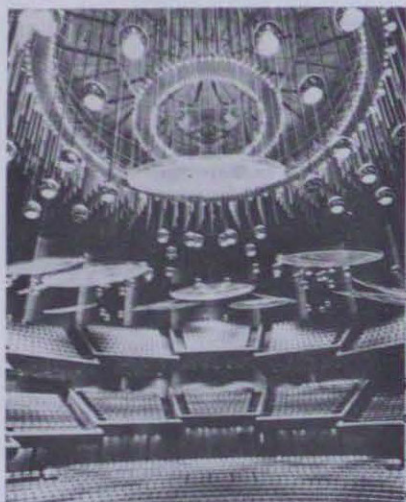
The concert begins: the hall has a formidable dynamic range; it can transmit a *pianissimo* flute and accommodate a thunderous *fortissimo*. Singing achieves a fine quality, not only in the beauty of tone but also in the intelligibility of words. There is a high degree of blend and balance on the orchestra platform, due to the generous use of the overhead sound reflectors. The choir sounds forcefully, with ideal balance between all sections.

A loudspeaker cluster is suspended high above the orchestra platform which can be lowered to any required level to aid announcers or particular performers with weak sound output. Behind the orchestra platform there is a pipe organ featuring 5207 pipes and 71 stops, divided over six tonal divisions. The organ can be played from a built-in console or operated from an electric on-stage portable console.

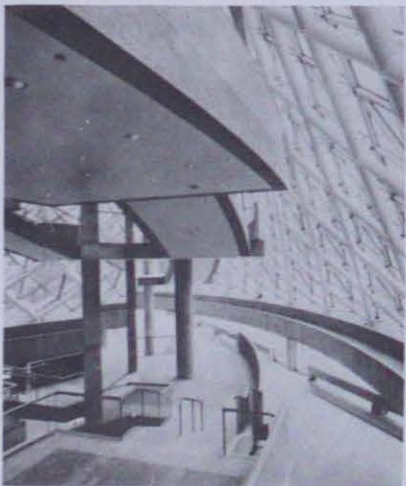
Suppression of exterior (traffic and aircraft) noise has been achieved by the separation of the interior auditorium structure from the exterior shell of the building. The spatial separation is utilized as sound locks through which the audience area can be reached. The background noise level within the auditorium, originating from various

technical and mechanical services, has been reduced to a low Noise Criterion: 13 level.

Obviously the important question is: how good is the Roy Thompson Hall acoustically?



Courtesy Roy Thompson Hall



Courtesy Roy Thompson Hall

We feel, it is a highly sophisticated music hall that can be superbly finetuned (just like a musical instrument) to the particular room-acoustical needs of any musical program, performed by any group, large or small. But the hall must have, and it certainly has now, the competent and qualified persons who must be familiar with all the controls of tuning and adjustment. It is only natural that these people will require a period of a few months to learn their complex duties, technically, musically and acoustically.

We seem to have a good reason to conclude that the new Roy Thomson Hall lives up to every expectation: both visually and acoustically. Attending any program in this hall, will be an event to remember!

*Leslie L. Doelle is a practicing acoustical consultant and Professor of Acoustics at the University of Toronto and McGill University.*

## CONCOURS IRAC 1982

Au printemps dernier, l'IRAC organisait un concours pour les étudiants en architecture du Canada. Nous y avons participé avec enthousiasme. Cependant, nos documents nous revinrent en septembre sans commentaire ni critique. Vous comprendrez à la lecture de notre proposition que notre but n'était pas de remporter une des bourses, mais de provoquer une réaction, un commentaire. Et c'est encore avec ces deux intentions que nous la publions, ainsi qu'un résumé du problème posé par l'IRAC: premièrement pour éveiller la curiosité des étudiants qui ne connaîtraient pas cette façon d'envisager l'architecture, deuxièmement pour que des étudiants ou des professeurs prennent la place du jury et nous fassent les critiques et commentaires que nous espérons lors de notre participation.

Benoit Pomerleau  
Jocelyn Robert  
pour les sept et douze  
architectes anonymes

### Résumé du problème

#### 1. Contexte

Une école d'architecture a reçu d'un philanthrope deux wagons de train de type Pullman. L'école utilisera ces wagons à la fois comme habitation et studio pour 18 étudiants et 2 professeurs. Les wagons doivent donc être modifiés. Le projet est de redessiner ces wagons afin qu'ils satisfassent leur nouvelle fonction d'unités mobiles d'éducation.

#### 8. Philosophie

Une grande partie de notre héritage historique est présente le long de notre réseau ferroviaire. Les étudiants de l'IRAC offrent ainsi l'occasion d'un échange d'idées au niveau national. Le concept d'un wagon-studio est une tentative visant à briser les barrières géographiques de l'éducation canadienne."



## Réponses

1. *L'architecture ne touche jamais aux grands thèmes, aux thèmes fondamentaux de notre vie. L'architecture reste à la limite, et n'intervient qu'à un certain point dans le processus, généralement quand le comportement a déjà été entièrement codifié, fournissant des réponses à des problèmes strictement pré-établis.*

*Même si ces réponses sont aberrantes ou régressives, la logique de leur production et de leur consommation empêche toute évolution.*

*Superstudio, 1972*

Le design est un outil pour l'architecte. Mais la première étape de son travail est la reformulation des questions.

2. Votre question est mal formulée parce que:

a) vous proposez d'utiliser les wagons comme unités mobiles d'éducation, vous basant seulement sur deux des caractéristiques de cet objet: la mobilité et l'habitabilité. Pourtant, il est malaisé de dessiner efficacement dans un train en marche. De plus, le contact avec l'extérieur est très difficile, que le véhicule soit en mouvement ou en stationnement.

b) l'héritage historique le long de la voie ferrée est très limité. Il ne tient compte que des événements particuliers aux chemins de fer, alors que l'architecture explore des domaines beaucoup plus vastes.

c) vous désirez un système d'échange d'idées au niveau national. Cependant, vous proposez une solution dans laquelle seulement dix-huit étudiants et deux professeurs, et quelques autres individus bénéficient des résultats.

3. Possibilités

a) vendre les deux wagons

b) démonter les wagons et réutiliser les matériaux

c) se servir des wagons comme monument

d) se servir des wagons comme local de l'université (laboratoire, cafétéria, salle de bains, etc.)

e) enfouir un des wagons sous une rue pour s'en servir comme tunnel

f) transformer un des wagons en cinéma ou en restaurant, etc.

g) abandonner l'idée d'utiliser les wagons

h) etc.

4. Proposition

Nous proposons l'usage d'un ordinateur comme moyen de briser les barrières géographiques nationales et internationales. Il permettra non seulement aux étudiants en architecture mais à toute la population mondiale de profiter des informations. L'élaboration du système se fera comme suit:

a) installation de l'ordinateur dans les deux wagons, ceux-ci étant stationnés sur le terrain d'une université pour profiter des installations électriques et électroniques

b) collection par chaque université des informations architecturales et connexes de leur environnement

c) transmissions des informations à l'ordinateur

d) connection de l'échangeur d'informations de l'ordinateur au système téléphonique mondial

e) toute personne aura accès à l'information, le seul critère d'admissibilité étant la curiosité

f) extension du champ d'investigation à tous les domaines de la connaissance

5. Conclusion

L'élaboration de cette solution n'a demandé ni formation particulière, ni recherche particulière; n'importe qui aurait pu en faire autant. Mais il ne faut pas s'arrêter à travailler la solution, il faut travailler le problème. Dans le cadre du concours, le problème n'était pas d'aménager les deux wagons, mais de leur trouver un usage, et de briser les barrières géographiques qui limitent l'information.

6. Remerciements

- Superstudio, pour l'évolution
- Pierre Larochelle pour la découverte
- Ann Fortin pour la traduction
- Marcel Duchamp pour n'avoir rien fait

• à vous pour avoir lu

*Benoit Pomerleau et Jocelyn Robert sont tous deux étudiants de troisième année à l'École d'Architecture de l'Université Laval.*

## VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

*The recent controversy over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has enraged the international architectural community. In light of the debate, we are reprinting the following letter to the editor originally sent to the Washington Post.*

Dear Sir:

It is time for professionals in general to speak out in a concerted effort to save the Vietnam Veterans Memorial from becoming an internationally recognized farce. America's current leadership in the arts, especially Architecture, may suffer a severe loss of credibility if this delicate issue is not brought to a solution worthy of our heritage, our creativity and our national optimism.

As one of the 1420 competition entrants I was excited not only by the vision of the organizers and the care with which their adviser, Mr. Paul Spreirigen, FAIA, prepared the rules, but by the outstanding quality of the eminent jury members. Here, I felt, was a competition which could produce a work worthy to stand with the memorials to Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson.

I worked hard and produced an excellent solution. Yet when I reviewed all entries in the great hangar at Andrews Air Force Base, I had not the slightest doubt that the winning design was so clearly superior to all others that I easily overcame my personal disappointment. I sought out the young winner, Maya Lin, to congratulate her on a most wonderful and poetic solution. I am not easily given to public outbursts but I felt like cheering at such an excellent result.

On meeting Ms. Lin, I found her brilliance matched only by a genuine modesty at her remarkable achievement. Rather than dwell on her own work, she was anxious to discuss the entries of the other architects.

One slightly distressing incident occurred when a small group of more established architects could be heard grumbling openly at the jury's decision. I put that down to professional immaturity on their part, a clear contrast to the quiet maturity of the youthful Ms. Lin, and indeed of her work.

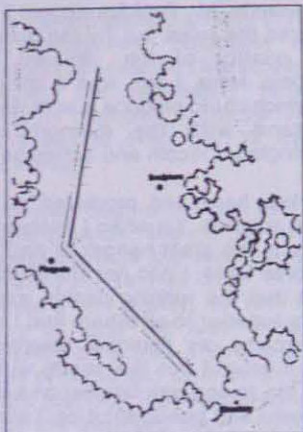
My comments on the quality of the work should be weighed in the light of my own experience of some thirty years in the United States and Europe. I have



been successful in international and national architectural competitions in three countries, and have followed every major competition since 1952 with avid interest. You can understand therefore that I do not lightly consider the Vietnam Veterans Memorial jury's decision to be one of the most clearly successful that I have seen. Hence my tendency to cheer. I felt a great pride that this one should be American.

I have also judged national and international competitions in Architecture. As a former dean, and a professor for some twenty years, I have had the opportunity to observe the designs of several thousand budding professionals. I have seldom come across one with such clear beauty as that of Ms. Lin's proposal.

The competition jury's selection showed that talent and quality can transcend age, sex, professionalism and materialism, giving increased dignity to all four.



AIA Journal, October 1982

My uneasiness at the successive press stories over the past year came to a head with Mr. Horowitz' article in your July 7th issue. Despite that, however, I felt confident that principles and integrity still survive in the only place they can — the spirit of the individual, for Ms. Lin's quoted comments show a wisdom and maturity that should make Mr. Scruggs, Mr. Watt, Mr. Perot and Mr. Cooper feel deeply incensed about the image that they wish this wonderful nation to present to the world of the Arts. They need to remember, I feel, that an image of compromise, meddling and mediocrity is hardly worthy of the heritage handed on by our national leaders of the past.

The great architect, Thomas Jefferson, when he failed to win the competition for the White House, did not try to med-

dle with its jury's decision. Can you imagine how we would have felt if our president had to live in a home whose elegant lines had been cluttered up by cheap additions which conflict with the inspiration of the original designer?

Ms. Lin's comment on the placing of its national flag in the manner of a golf-green pin suggests that even this beautiful symbol may be cheapened by such outrageous interference.

The sculptor, Mr. Hart, apparently does not share Mr. Jefferson's concern for the integrity of the designer who defeated him fairly in open competition; for, it appears that without having the courtesy even to consult with Ms. Lin, he agreed to participate in the potential destruction of her elegant concept.

And what must young American citizens, aspiring to the personal and artistic dignity offered by America's visionary Constitution, think of these under-the-table 'shenanigans'?

How can we on the one hand applaud the Baryshnikovs, the Sandburgs, the Frank Lloyd Wrights and the Winslow Homers, yet treat our young geniuses as if they were mere pawns in the politicization of our great aesthetic heritage?

How can we invite the brilliant poet Seamus Heaney to speak at Harvard, the musician James Galway to play at Carnegie Hall, the architect James Stirling to design work in New York, Texas and Massachusetts, and yet ridicule, by our actions, our own new talents! We pride ourselves on opening our doors to the world's greatest artists: Pavarotti, Gropius, Casals, Bream, Solzhenitsyn, Saarinen, Dylan Thomas, and a host of others, so that our people may have access to the wonderful fruits of their inspired labors. Why must we deny that we can offer equal support to the creative genius of our own young people?

There is more at stake here than a mere monument. We are concerned with more than the political interests of a few whose petty power plays will be lost in the great levelling process of history. There is at the heart of this a matter of freedom itself. And freedom is at its purest in the conscience and aspiration of the creative individual.

A nation's aspirations are always preserved, for better or for worse, not in its words or its politics, but in the cities, the buildings and the works of art that remain as lasting evidence for future generations. That is why we go to Char-

tres, Rome, Athens, London or Peking. That is why visitors from all nations came to Williamsburg, The Mall, Monticello, Beacon Hill, The Golden Gate, or Independence Hall.

The last truly inspiring monument in the U.S. was the St. Louis Gateway Arch designed by Eero Saarinen. Have you ever stood beneath it and listened to delighted reactions in dozens of languages? Can you imagine the comments of our visitors if someone had decided that a tableau of pioneers, complete with covered wagon had to be placed beneath it, or if some well-meaning public figure had insisted on a motto being inscribed on its soaring stainless curves, or placed a tiny flag to flutter meekly in front of its powerful sweep? Can you imagine what its architect would have done if someone had the gall to change it without so much as consulting him? The whole idea is obviously laughable. The people of St. Louis would have been justifiably incensed at this cheapening of their treasure.

The people of America should be similarly incensed at the impending cheapening of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The politicians of America should be ashamed that their standards of national pride in quality are being bandied about like cheap playthings, or worse, in the currency of backroom bartering.

Perhaps it is time too, for President Reagan, who so passionately espouses individual freedom, to recognize that an idea symbolic of the very essence of American creativity is being steadily eroded to the extent that it can become a laughing-stock among those who envy us for holding such freedoms sacred.

I am proud, as a naturalized citizen, to have the freedom to voice my individual opinion so strongly and to know that I can offer it to others through a free press. I call on my fellow architects to do likewise. Let both our people and our political leaders understand that the brilliant idea of this gifted architect, which shone alone in competition open to all U.S. citizens, should not be destroyed by political maneuvers.

Let it be built. But let it be built with integrity, in all its clear, uncluttered beauty.

Sincerely yours,  
Patrick J. Quinn FAIA, FAAR, FRSA  
Institute Professor  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Troy, New York



## THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE

The Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada was founded in 1974 to encourage the study and understanding of Canadian architecture. Included in this study is an examination of both historical and cultural influences which have shaped our built environment and contemporary issues affecting the future of buildings, streetscapes, towns and countryside. Membership is open to anyone who shares an interest in Cana-

dian architecture. The Society publishes a bimonthly newsletter as well as holding an annual meeting to discuss a wide range of topics of interest to the architectural milieu. In July, 1983, the Society will meet in St. John's Newfoundland. For information, contact SSAC, Box 2935, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5W9. (Student membership: \$5.00)

### MICHAEL COOTE, 1932-1983

The School of Architecture at Carleton University marked the recent death of their Director, Michael Coote, with a Memorial Service held in the School on January 21, 1983.

Michael Coote received degrees in architecture from the University of Capetown and the University of California at Berkeley. His career in teaching architecture spanned some twenty years; first at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia then at the University of California at Berkeley and finally with the School of Architecture at Carleton University. He joined Carleton in 1970 and became Director of the School in 1978.

As a teacher, he is remembered for his conviction and commitment. He was a very approachable person and his concerns for students and teaching is attested to by the contact that he maintained with students after graduation. Michael was involved in teaching at all five levels of the studio program and in the teaching of technical and theory courses. He often acted as tutor to fifth year students pursuing thesis work and also served extensively as chairman and member of most key administrative and academic committees.

In 1978, he became the second Director of the School. He was instrumental in putting into effect major curriculum changes, particularly in the area of the studio program and the teaching of history and theory. During his tenure as Director, he remained constantly involved in teaching both in the studio and the classroom.

Michael Coote's commitment and dedication to the School is recognized by all those who knew him over the past thirteen years. His presence will be missed at the Carleton School of Architecture and throughout the Canadian architectural community.

## LETTERS

To the Editors:

As a student of the social sciences with an amateur interest in architecture, I read your issue on Rationalism with enjoyment. While ill-equipped to comment in a manner informed by aesthetic theory, I am impelled to question your metaphysical pretensions nonetheless. That is to say, I think your pursuit of a Rationalist theory of architecture should be conducted with considerably more caution. The vagueness of your editorial statement, the elementary and mistaken epistemology of the article by Ricardo Castro, and the outright spiritualism of "King Solomon's Rule", all betray the uncertain ground upon which this project is being constructed. I fear we are witnessing another one of those abuses of philosophy which have made the term 'metaphysical' a synonym for nonsense.

Indeed, architecture involves many philosophical questions, but these are not ones that can be resolved in the realm of the philosophy of knowledge - which is where you are avowedly intent on locating them. Even less likely is that they will be resolved within the archaic epistemological dichotomy between Empiricism and Rationalism which is now recognized by philosophers of science to be false.

The notion that 'rationalist' ideas of order and clarity can be applied universally to architecture is an eminently reasonable one. However, the attempt to elevate these to a 'meta-architecture' premised on the Cartesian *a priori* will go nowhere because it ignores the fundamental relationship of architecture to society.

The absurdity of this attempt to describe architectural ideas in explicitly epistemological terms is clearly illustrated by Castro's article on Christopher Alexander. Facile use of the categories 'Rationalist' and 'Em-

piricist' has emptied them of all content. He would have us believe that architects in the moment of conceptualizing are to be labelled Rationalist, who, putting theory into practice, become immediately Empiricists. 'Epistemologies' are not brick and mortar, the combination of which make a building; one cannot have an "epistemology of design".

The proposal to formulate a Rationalist architecture is fatally flawed because it is built on a misguided conception of reason. Because architecture is a societal phenomenon, what must be sought is rationality in its relationship to society. Rationalism then becomes 'rationality': a set of "guiding principles" rather than an epistemology. For a theoretical comprehension of architecture we must look to history, to the nature of modernity, to human needs, and to physical possibilities, limits, and constraints. The concrete art must be treated in the concrete.

Alan Fenna,  
Graduate student  
Dept. of Political Studies  
Queen's University.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

It has been brought to our attention that there was an error in the editorial of the Summer issue. One of the four firms named as being appropriate for the commission of the Washington Chancery by the Selection Panel was not, in fact, Smith Carter Partners but rather Smith Carter Partners / Fiset Miller Vinois. We sincerely apologize for this oversight.

In Janna Levitt's review of *FILKI / STRUCTURE / ARCHITECTURE* in the Autumn issue, the names of the artists were inadvertently not included in the text. The artists were John Cirka and Igal Goldstein.

## UPCOMING ISSUES

NEW DIRECTIONS IN  
CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE

NOUVEAUX HORIZONS POUR  
L'ARCHITECTURE CANADIENNE

MANNERED ARCHITECTURE  
L'ARCHITECTURE MANIERISTE

PROCHAINES EDITIONS



'D E P E P E R K L I P', re-ads the huge label in polychromatic tile strung out over a quarter kilometer of facade. There is a wilful absurdity to these giant semi-legible letters, an idea incomprehensible; a game (Venturi?). We pass through a wall, the block--pastel gingham, glazed tiles in modular panels (Bofil?). Inside (outside?) spaces squeezing, streaming, bending. Sheds like armoured elephants in ominous rank and file, glower demanding an answer to the riddle: De Peperklip... The Paperclip ...huh?... Does this 'mean' HOUSING ?...



## Beyond Modernism:

### *Notes On A Dutch Housing Experiment*

by  
*Peter Scriver with Adrian Sheppard*

A pronounced difference between the built environment of Holland and the rest of Western Europe is its marked dearth of monumentality. Whereas the palace, the cathedral, or the grand boulevard are signal impressions one might keep of the French or German city, it is a texture, the residential intimacy of the Dutch street and canal, which speaks for Holland. The housing project that we wish to discuss in this article is the severe quintessence of a monumental statement. It is at once an object of fascinating incongruity to the impressionable visitor; an alien manifesto to the Dutch architectural establishment.



The Dutch, we believe, have always had a highly conscious understanding of what 'housing' entails. This tradition of enlightened residential building practices was, of course, the womb of some of the most significant early movements of Modernism in architecture — lively polemics enacted in many remarkable housing projects. It is fascinating, then, to compare *De Peperklip* with its recent historical context. What it draws from these models but also what it ignores or, indeed, wilfully confounds in them is very telling. What we have is a case study of the first significant infusion of 'Post Modern' (read: after Modern) architectural principles into the original, perhaps most incestuous if progressive, Modern design culture.

What, in simple terms, is *De Peperklip*? The name, as already implied, refers to the distinctive form in plan of this low-income mass-housing project just being completed in the dockyard outskirts of the Rotterdam city centre. The shape, roughly that of a slightly splayed paperclip, is not entirely arbitrary. Architect Carel Weeber has obviously delineated the large elongated wedge of land between the water and a main service road astride his site with the linear mass of his low-rise housing block. There is no relevant urban context to respond to. The curious simile with stationery hardware is perhaps only a whimsical accident of Weeber's desire for closure of the form without unresolved continuity.

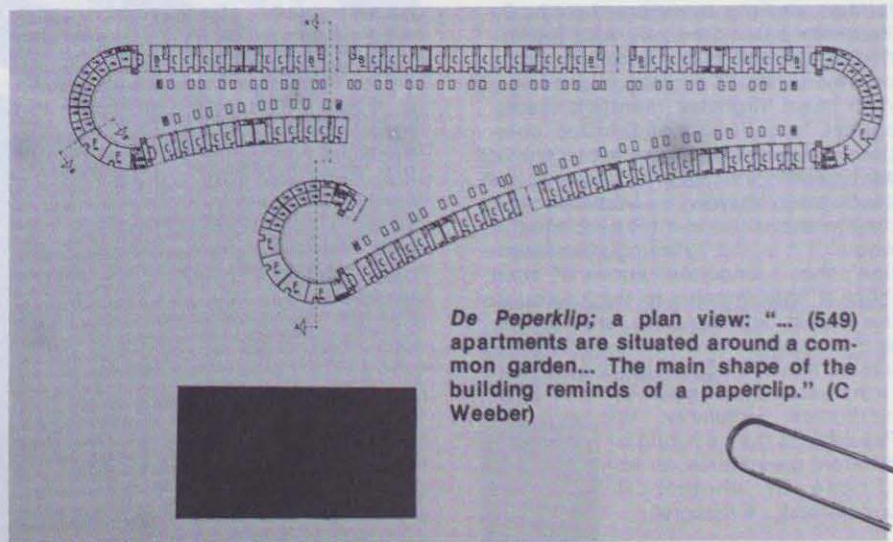
The single linear block serves as a wall in the communal sense, enclosing a large semi-public zone within. Much of the central space is occupied by large storage sheds and a single public footpath is the only additional amenity provided in the narrower passages. Automobiles are excluded from the project and must park in lots or on the streetside periphery. The basic section of the housing block is a conventional four storey walk-up with eight units to a stairwell. The pattern repeats *ad-infinitum* with only the slightest curvature detectable in the linear mass. The three corner tower elements are the only articulation that the architect has provided, this by stacking four tiers of maisonettes upon a single ground storey (nine levels altogether) in a tight half-cylinder framed by stair and elevator cores. *De Peperklip* is built, like most big scale construction in Holland today, with a largely prefabricated system. The concrete frame is poured in place but the same three by three metre modular panel, busily variegated by alternate blue, red and yellow, tile appliqué, covers the entire wall surface of the building. The square module leads to some rather clumsy proportioning about details such as the public portals through the block, and creates an odd visual tension overall.

It is significant that *De Peperklip* is a product of industrial building technology. Holland, like all European nations, underwent a major high-rise housing boom in the post-war years as a result of growth and zoning pressures but in response to new refabrication potential as well. A profusion of vertical extrusions was clearly the most logical revolution to ensue. Only much later, when widespread disenchantment with the tower block has set in, have the logistics been set aside in quest of alternative architectural solutions to mass housing. Though certainly unproven as yet, Weeber's project is already being lauded by some as the new prototype specifically because, one would suppose, it is the high-rise in all its big-scale, prefabricated economy laid on its side and thus 'humanized'. But, this would seem the least of its achievements. If anything it is the very unusual character — the provocative, arresting image of the standard pre-fab building system as there applied — which is the achievement. Through his juxtaposition of tower scale modules with street scale forms and his deliberate spatial contortions of the site — the contradiction between form in space and space in form — Weeber has certainly done much to make a more affecting experience of mass housing.

Bizarre and alien as *De Peperklip* appears, it does find certain precedents in Holland. If Weeber is rejecting the later functionalist notion of high-rise living, he is quite clearly recalling some of the more obvious characteristics of the high density inner city housing which took shape in the politically and ideologically enlightened years immediately following the first war: the low-rise, site-wrapping configuration of the block, its self-expressing unity, the *hofje* (court) created within. But, he falls far short of a comparable quality of residential environment. . . Why? The

explanation we propose relies on a fundamental distinction that we feel we must make. In keeping with the theoretical climate presiding evermore influentially in both Europe and North America today, Weeber seems to be exploring the notion of 'architectural memory' in his forms and gestures. It is the idea of the form, the power of the stipped monumental gesture for which he cares; function, tacit solutions, seems to be an entirely independent concern. The heroic ideals which he eulogizes are not a nostalgic fabrication. They were very real in the original municipal and workers' housing schemes, but as a product, not an objective, of genuine efforts to design the intimately functional ideal of communal housing upward from the smallest elements.

About ten minutes drive across town from *De Peperklip* in the Rotterdam quarter of Spangen, an entire neighbourhood of exemplary working class housing blocks were erected in the early Twenties under the planning (and design in part) of the great early Modernist J.J.P. Oud, Rotterdam's chief municipal architect in that era. The large block designed by Michiel Brinkman (1919-1921) is the most innovative of that particular group, a sophisticated synthesis of the stronger principles in housing prevailing at that time and thereafter. As a model of the type, it shows us above all the fundamental notion of a street-defining, space-enclosing block. The building presents a unified collective expression to the exterior; a stern but protective wall containing a single community. However, within the semi-private zone, and this is important, there is a busy, markedly more lived-in expression. Through a subtle progression of degrees — a breakdown of the major zone into layers of lesser courts, the subdivision of green space into public garden and private plots, the standar-

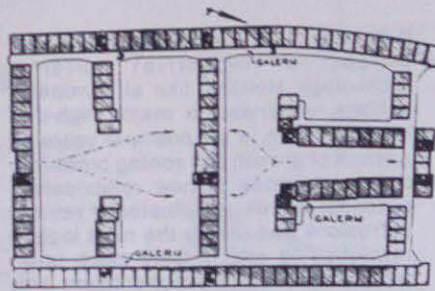


*De Peperklip*; a plan view: "... (549) apartments are situated around a common garden... The main shape of the building reminds of a paperclip." (C Weeber)

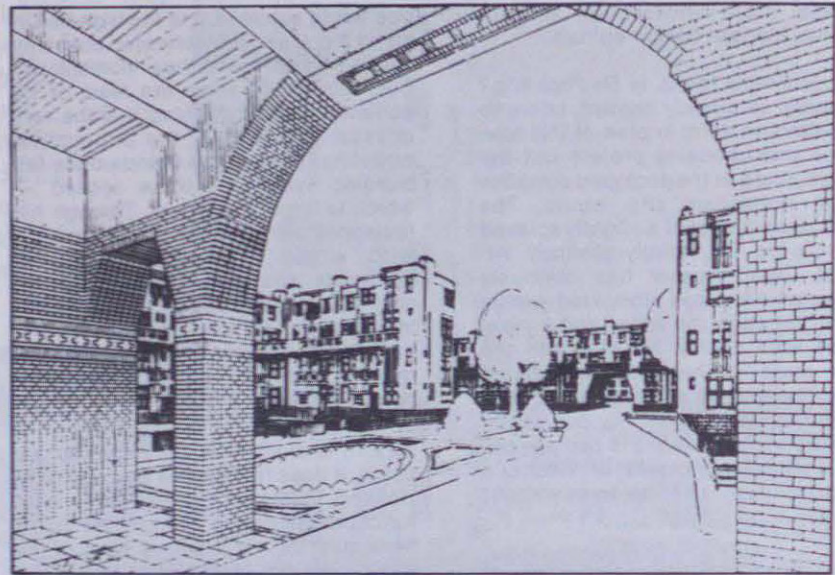


dized articulation of the individual unit and then of specific domestic and functional features — a complex texture of public to private space is built up in the architecture. Received by the collective whole, individuals can always feel their intimate niche within.

A major innovation of Brinkman's Spangenberg block was the creation of an elevated street, for both pedestrians and bicycles, to access a second tier of maisonette units. This provided every resident on or above ground level the important domestic right to his own 'defensible' private address in the public domain. The raised street was an isolated piece of ingenuity but a conviction in the importance of entrance and private address was prominent in all the contemporary housing in Holland. The much more expressionistic Amsterdam School achieved some remarkable whimsy in the statement of doorways through the delightful collaboration of such masters as Michel de Klerk with the gifted brick-layers and masons of the day. The other housing principles which unified the functionalist underpinnings of Holland's stylistically divergent schools of architectural theory in the Twenties were guided, like those already mentioned, by the central concerns for good hygiene, economy, and aesthetics. These included the importance of cross-ventilation, the avoidance of internal corridors and large communal stairs (paired accesses were common however), the extensive use of mitoyen walls within the block for fire control, and the celebration of the collective spirit of the block in a single aesthetic expression to the street and the city outside.



*Municipal Housing, Spangenberg, Rotterdam 1919-1921, M. Brinkman: A plan view, and the architect's original presentation perspective view of the hofje (garden court).*



*Housing in the Netherlands 1900-1940, Donald I. Grinberg*

The folly of Mr. Weeber, to return to the present, has been his failure to appreciate that it is not the forms but the depth of residential texture in the early housing prototypes which is their success. In a quirky, cartoonish way the forms are there in *De Peperklip* but more likely with the opposite spiritual effect from what they convey in their original incarnation. With latent 'high-rise' mentality the architect 'specifies' standardized solutions to functional requirements, and in an independent gesture relies on the associative 'memory' of shapes and their relationships to infuse life into the whole. If it is the 'meaning', the 'intention', that is important above all, then there is little impetus to think through the details and innovate anything so subtle as an inviting public portal or a useful flower bed, as the early functionalists managed to do with methodical regularity. Weeber's *De Peperklip* is then a hybrid of two utterly different mentalities; an ironic homage of one to another it will not understand... a mongrel.

A case in point to characterize this antagonism of crossed intentions, is the obstructive placement of the large metal storage sheds in two stern ranks down the center of the enclosed 'green' zone. Discrete garden sheds are a common, indeed, often standardized cultural feature of horticulturally minded Holland's backyards. With land and privacy at such a premium in this the most densely populated country in the world, the sheds provide storage, organization and a partial screen to optimize the usefulness of private garden plots. As 'symbols', the sheds in Weeber's scheme evoke the only obvious thread of Dutchness in the place, but at the same time they are robbing virtually all potential private or public space in the zone to the visual and spatial detriment of all. When J.J.P. Oud was faced with the question of the sheds in his own Spangenberg project of 1918, he pragmatically chose to integrate storage within the block and liberate the precious interior court entirely. The sheds have never figured significantly in urban mass housing



*De Paperklip: View from within the 'garden' space.*





blocks since.

There is something to the Dutch state of mind which has naturally characterized Dutch architectural theory. Like the children's story of the good boy who saves the land and people before himself by plugging a leaking dyke with his cold and aching finger, the Dutch ethic has always had to be to serve the safety, comfort and effective function of the collective before allowing individual urges to rise. One can see it recorded from early mercantile days in the near homogenous blend of warehouse and mansion along Amsterdam's canals, to reiterate our introduction. In this century, with a remarkable housing act adopted in 1902, the Dutch government elected to serve social housing needs through an enlightened program of monetary and legal incentives to collective housing societies and their architects to create quality housing free of the speculative

builder's prerogative.<sup>1</sup>

This was the ground work for the developments in housing discussed above and an impetus for the spirited functionalism which took shape in the early decades. If the cadre of Dutch theory and practice in architecture remains 'Modernist' today, it is that functionalism/modernism is innately Dutch.

This is not to say that Weeber's challenge is the only radical divergence that has come to light. But it is his manner of alien mutation which, unless we are very wrong, will provoke and fester until it is rejected. If anyone will lead Holland, and perhaps those others who have followed her initiatives in the past, beyond modernist housing, it will be the patient, dogged critics within the well understood bounds of her design culture. Aldo van Eyck and Hermann Hertzberger are the most obvious examples. Each is a distinctly radical

force of strongly independent expression, but there is no question; they are intimately Dutch. For years each has worked both critically and creatively on the text of Dutch modernism to advance the process of spontaneous evolution. When, years hence, they are accessed posthumously, historians will reward their work with new labels, classifications that these practitioners would likely think irrelevant.

In concluding, it is important to set things in perspective. In this article we have reacted to Carel Weeber's *De Peperklip* scheme for one as a fascinating housing project in its own right; two, as a foil for discussion of some lessons in recent architectural history which may not be too familiar to this readership; three, as a new building which we found quite emotionally provocative... a rare thing. We have spoken with disdain of the inadequacy, indeed the relative brutality, of the notion of 'architectural memory' as it seems to have influenced this scheme. But, this observation should in no way be interpreted as a condemnation of the current theories of 'Post Modernism' or 'Rationalism' to which the notion has been attached. As a case study, this losing showdown with Dutch Modernism might simply suggest that our understanding of what a pleasing and effective Architecture should be is probably best founded in the consciousness of building within one's own cultural context. Without dismissing faith in the universal truths of our art, theoretical criticism is probably best applied where it is spawned; that is, Hertzberger in Holland, Rossi in Italy, Venturi in Las Vegas!

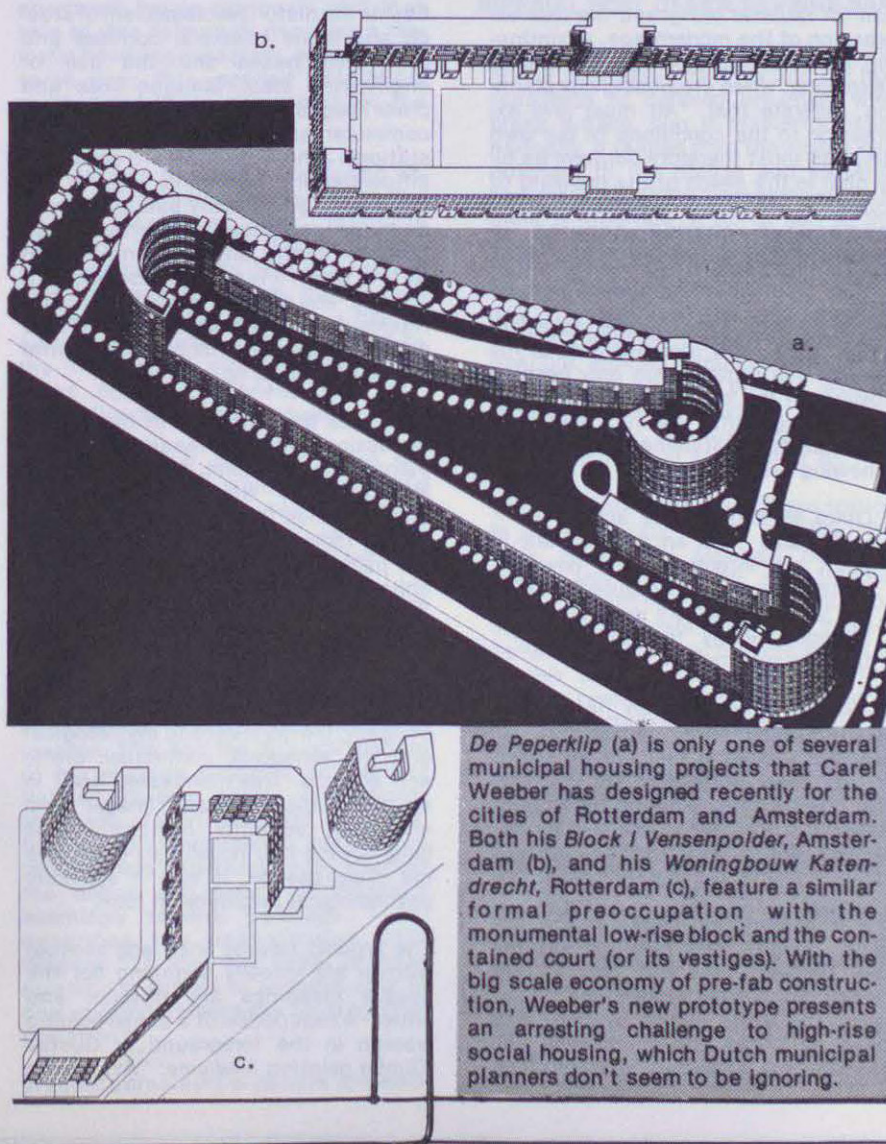
#### Note

1. For a discussion particularly relevant to the theme of this issue, see the chapter "With Red Flags Flying: Housing in Amsterdam 1915-1923", by Helen Searing in *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics* (MIT Press), which gives a full account of this fascinating collaboration of political policy with architectural aspirations.

*Drawings and photos are reproduced courtesy of the architects, Hoogstad Weeber Schulze Van Tilburg architecten bna Rotterdam, unless otherwise credited.*

*Peter Scriver and Professor Adrian Sheppard participated in a McGill-Shaver study tour of Holland and Belgium in August 1982.*

## IMAGES OF A NEW PROTOTYPE (?)



*De Peperklip* (a) is only one of several municipal housing projects that Carel Weeber has designed recently for the cities of Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Both his *Block I Vensenvoer*, Amsterdam (b), and his *Woningbouw Katendrecht*, Rotterdam (c), feature a similar formal preoccupation with the monumental low-rise block and the contained court (or its vestiges). With the big scale economy of pre-fab construction, Weeber's new prototype presents an arresting challenge to high-rise social housing, which Dutch municipal planners don't seem to be ignoring.



# OTTO WAGNER APPLIED

by Graham D. Livesey



STADTBAHN BRIDGE



'MAJOLICA HOUSE'



KARLSPLATZ STADTBAHN STATION

...but it is this juxtaposition of contrasting symbols - the appliqué of one order of symbols on another - that constitutes for us the decorated shed.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Venturi

Born of the Symbolist Movement, Modernism has nevertheless been hostile to the symbol as a means of visual communication. The rise of abstract art, in particular, has tended to focus our attention upon the work as a thing in itself, wholly identified with the art-process. Any art which can be described as symbolist must necessarily reject such an attitude.<sup>2</sup>

Edward Lucie-Smith

The skin 'hung' upon the structure of a building is a notion. Robert Venturi, in *Learning from Las Vegas*, pleads for the return of symbolism. Literal symbolism applied. What should symbolic appliqué mean and whom is it for?

Some of the purest expressions of the skin and applied symbolic ornament can be found in the Secessionist/Art Nouveau work of the great Viennese architect, Otto Wagner (1841-1918). He was an important figure as architecture evolved from eclecticism and revivalism into that which more truly embodied new materials, ideas and attitudes.

Born well-to-do, Otto Wagner was trained as an architect in Germany, under a former assistant of Karl Friedrich Schinkel, and subsequently in his native Vienna. During Vienna's glorious Ringstrasse era Wagner established a thriving practice. He became one of the leading architects in the Italianate classical style. "Utility behind a screen of historical style:"<sup>3</sup> aptly describes his rationalist revivalist apartment houses and commercial buildings. These were very good, but tended to over-decoration.

Vienna, the grand stucco city. Wagner often used stucco in his early Italianate buildings. A continuous, non-structural, applied material. It is an ambiguous material capable of pretending heavy mass when in fact it is a thin applied

layer. Stucco should not purport to be a classical load-bearing stone facade, as Wagner often caused it to appear. But stucco cannot indicate a light, thin skin either. Ornamental symbolism on stucco is either an uncertain continuation of the stucco or something quite separate.

Wagner was first appointed professor in architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in 1894 and two years later he published, *Moderne Architektur*. The pragmatic nature of this, his first book of theory, is deceptive. It is a strident call for rational utility and the true expression of the modern age, a continuing theme in his polemics. He would, years later, when discussing city planning, reiterate that, "Art must give expression to the conditions of our own time. Art must therefore conform its city plan to the needs of the mankind of today."<sup>4</sup> Seemingly a rationalist, a tremendous change occurred in Wagner's work during the 1890's which refutes this notion.

In his writings, Otto Wagner never admitted the deeply romantic side of his nature. This romanticism only became obvious in the ornament and skins of his buildings after the mid 1890's. So much so, that a statement such as the following seems absurd:

Quite as unjustifiable and as objectionable from an artistic viewpoint are intentional but unwarranted curves and irregularities in the lay-out of streets and squares, intended solely to produce artificially picturesque vistas.<sup>5</sup>

Although written much later, this passage adamantly denies the Art Nouveau character that his work took on. He never elaborated on the laws that governed his romantic tendencies, possibly to preserve an image in society or because of the inherent discrepancy between words and romantic thoughts.

The transformation began in the stations, bridges and cuttings Wagner built between 1894 and 1901 for the Vienna city railway system, the *Stadtbahn*. The white stucco stations had taken on a new voluptuousness and freedom of classical interpretation.

Thus began his use of the unadulterated engineering aesthetic. Steel I-beams and rivets clashed with stucco and stone classicism unabashedly.

During the seven years of construction of the *Stadtbahn*, Wagner became more and more influenced by Art Nouveau aesthetics and symbolism. The middle aged master, open to new influences, produced organic and geometric ornament of great timeless beauty. This ornamental use of new materials stood beside the historical classicism of stucco and stone pilasters, cornices and rusticated bases and the use of engineering steel. Sinuous lines and plant images both led and delighted the commuter as he passed through the stations. John Ruskin, stated earlier his influential and immutable love for the organic; "...all perfectly beautiful forms must be composed of curves; since there is hardly any common natural form in which it is possible to discover a straight line."<sup>6</sup> This leads to another Ruskinian ideal, a building with either a decorative skin or symbolic ornamental elements applied to it.

1897 sees the formation of the Vienna Secession under the leadership of the painter, Gustav Klimt. A group heavily influenced by the Glasgow school under Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The young radical Secessionists included the painter Koloman Moser and the architects Joseph Maria Olbrich and Josef Hoffman, both students of Otto Wagner. The principal aim of the group was, "to provide in art a surrogate religion offering a refuge from modern life."<sup>7</sup> The Secessionists explored symbolically, the mystical and mythological and the sensuous, instinctual, erotic and ecstatic. This manifested itself in an art depicting plant images and elongated beautiful nymphs whose long flowing hair hopelessly entangles the male psyche. It was a symbolic psychological revolution in form.

The organic flowing lines and sensual women are visually engaging but the deeper meanings are obscure and elitist - a description of a snake-holding woman in the foreground of Gustav Klimt's painting *Medicine*: "Along with





**KARLSPLATZ STATION - DETAIL**

her brother Asclepius, Hygeia was born a snake out of the tellurian swamp, the land of death. The snake, amphibious creature, phallic symbol with bi-sexual associations, is the great dissolver of boundaries: between land and sea, man and woman, life and death."<sup>8</sup> Visually relevant but symbolically irrelevant.

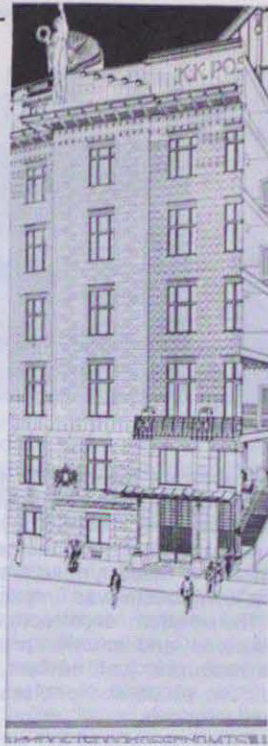
J.M. Olbrich's Secession building, the exhibition place for the movement, was constructed in 1897. Wagner's 'Majolica House', an ordinary Viennese apartment house gloriously clad in a skin of tiles colourfully depicting a majestic flowering rose plant, was built the same year; thin, applied decoration, symbolic of Wagner's respect for the young Secessionists.

The Majolica House is a 'decorated shed'. It is, floral-patterned, very much like Robert Venturi's 'Best' products showroom. For Wagner it is the first expression of the thin two-dimensional skin. However, like stucco, the thin tiles are applied ambiguously to a hidden surface. The curtain-wall, developed by the 'modernists', would ultimately express both its thinness and total separation from the structure.

In 1898 Wagner officially joined the Secession to the horror of Viennese society. The major figures were to remain with the movement until 1905 when most, including Wagner, left.

The romantic freedom and symbolism so masterfully delineated by Wagner on his skins and in his ornament failed, according to most historians, to influence the still very rational and traditional composition of plans, elevations and masses. This and the dull pragmatism of his writings suggests an intellect fighting its own artistic inclinations. Manfredo Tafuri contests, however, that the spiritual/romantic influence of the Secession also profoundly affected the design and nature of Wagner's seemingly rational buildings. Tafuri describes the unarticulated Otto Wagner; "To stop and listen to those mysterious echoes is possible only to one who understands the ritual of interpretation."<sup>9</sup>

Wagner's ornament is visually and emo-



**IMPERIAL POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK**

tionally engaging. The materials, the colour contrasts, the lines and the juxtaposition of detailed ornament with blank surface, play in masterful visual harmony. It ranges from the simple and poignant to the obtuse and esoteric. The meaning of the Secessionist ornament is irrelevant, it works only at the visual level. The mystical paintings of Klimt were not understood by the leading Viennese intellectuals of the day. The mythology, the sensuality, the abstract spiritual codes and ideas are obscure. Applied symbolism can represent many things: power, wealth, religion, philosophical ideas, a building type, structure. However, it must cater to the populace or not exist at all.

The most interesting Stadtbahn station is the Karlsplatz station of 1898-1899. Two classically planned pavilions across the street from one another, large semi-cylindrical canopies, forward set, dominate the simple masses beneath. Thin, white, pristine sheets of marble stand between slender steel support members. Floral and geometric patterns enhance, either carved into the marble panels or hung from the steelwork. Ornament contrasts with blank wall, green and gold contrasts with white, natural curve contrasts with straight line. The ornament seems removed and non-symbolic, merely flowers and leaves. The ornament is timeless and the material expression is lucid. "Wagner treated the walls in his modern manner as skins, suggesting volume rather than the mass beneath."<sup>10</sup> The Karlsplatz station depicts for Wagner, motion versus stasis and romanticism versus rationalism. The buildings huddle,



**SAVINGS BANK - INTERIOR**

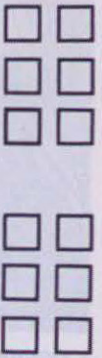
emanating a profound romantic non-intellectual spirit.

The Imperial Post Office Savings Bank from (1904-1906) is one of the most significant early modern buildings. Differing from his early decorated revivalism and his symbolic Secessionism, this is Wagner as the pragmatist. The use of materials is stunning, honest and revolutionary. Large aluminium bolts blatantly hold thin stone and marble sheets to the building. This would seem to be his ultimate and most explicit expression of the skin as an entity unto itself. It would never become the total separation of the skin from the structure..

The use of aluminium is unashamedly bold, particularly within the luminous glass-vaulted banking hall. Riveted supports penetrate the glass ceiling whilst aluminium robot-like ventilation diffusers stand on guard. Ornament enriches the entrance and encrusts the roof-line where two mystical damsels dwell, outstretched arms clutching wreaths to the city. A rationally functional building.

Otto Wagner's Kaiserbad Dam Administration building (1904-1908) is his most 'modern' building. Symmetrical, with a subdued cornice, the classicism has been restrained as the form follows the function. The building controlled one of the dams on the Danube canal. A ship bridge-like control bay lifts above the main mass destroying classical repose. Stairs that link the street level with the lower canal level are part of yet distinct from the building. Blue tile above bolted-on white marble sheets above a bolted-on stone base. Wavy white lines of tile upon the blue background symbolizes the waters. Electrifying blue and white, the building, a ship-like masterpiece, sits beside the canal. Symbolism is restrained. Wagner always designed according to principles most appropriate to the building in question.

Wagner's most Secessionist building is St. Leopold's Am Steinhof (1905-1907), a domed Greek-cross church. The marble sheets are bolted-on in such a way as to create conflicting rhythms of bolt-



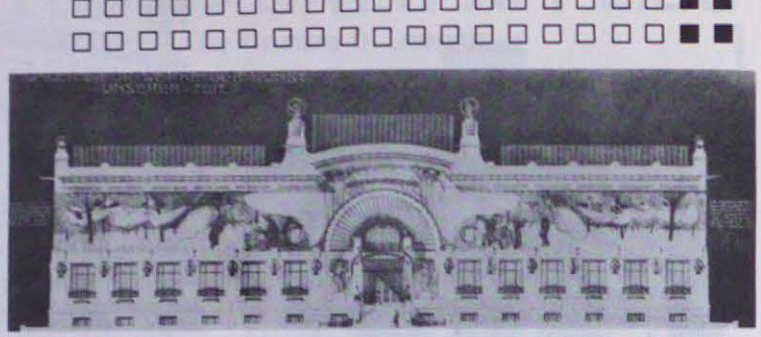




KAISERBAD DAM - DETAIL



AM STEINHOF



MODERNE GALERIE

heads, joints and panels. Christian in its symbolism, the ornament has itself become separate from the structure and skin. Wagner incorporated stained glass, frescoes and statues of angels and saints by other Secessionist artists into the church.

The last built works, including the Neustiftgasse 40 apartment building (1909-1910) and the second Villa Wagner (1912-1913) show a return to stucco in a stripped-classical non-symbolic way. The buildings become simple masses adorned with tiles placed in the stucco to emphasize divisions and focal points.

Some of Wagner's most symbolic work remained unbuilt and only exists as drawings. Wagner's marvellous drawings, similar to those of Schinkel in delineation and the use of surreal foreground figures, somewhat paralleled his architecture becoming more and more Art Nouveau. The drawings show schemes for tremendous churches, museums and monuments. One of the most symbolically esoteric is a proposal for a Moderne Galerie of 1900. A long fresco on the facade shows the arts lifting the veil of ignorance from the people, whilst four bethroned women surround the entrance and floral ornament renders the surfaces fantastic.

As a respected transitional architect, teacher and polemicist Wagner's legacy to 'modernism' would be his distinct and honest use of materials. Although a functionalist, his methods would be rejected for new interpretations based upon the machine and industrialism, space, structure and socialism.

Adolf Loos, an admirer of Wagner, vigorously attacked the use of ornament in architecture. Inevitably architecture became the blank surfaces of the machine-age look. Although the ornament disappeared, symbolism remained. Venturi writes, "Ironically, the Modern architecture of today, while rejecting explicit symbolism and frivolous appliqué ornament has distorted the whole building into one big ornament."<sup>11</sup>

The new abstract symbolism was industrial symbolism, the glorification of the machine and technology. The human intent shifted from bourgeois to socialist, but it failed. Unlike Wagner's work the symbolism was implied, not visual. The modern architecture was cold, oblivious, and inhuman and there was no recourse, just endless white blank stucco strips and endless steel-mullioned windows.

If one accepts ornament in architecture, it isn't a question of man or machine made. It is a question of enhancement, timeless beauty and if symbolic, understandable meaning... eradication of non-articulated surfaces in architecture.

Robert Venturi, the father of anti-modernism, argues for a return to literal symbolic appliqué in architecture in his book *Learning from Las Vegas*. He rejects abstract surfaces for applied Pop-art symbolism. His symbols are derived from pop American culture, the suburban home and the strip billboard. This understanding surfaces in his work like Andy Warhol Brillo boxes. From low art to high art and back again; a distortion. The references are not to be understood; but are instead esoteric tongue-in-cheek games played at the expense of good taste and architecture.

Venturi proposes the 'decorated shed' principle where pop symbolism is applied to an 'ordinary building', and opposes the 'duck' theory where the building itself is a literal symbol. Venturi is serious but are his ideas?

Venturi's symbolism is as elitist as that of the Secessionists. However, the old notion of small-scale, dense (and visually delightful) surface articulation still remains vague in contemporary architecture. Venturi's surfaces are geared towards a media-blitzed populace; "Articulated architecture today is like a minuet in a discotheque, because even off the highway our sensibilities remain attuned to its bold scale and detail."<sup>12</sup> Architecture representing flash and transience. The bold, flat, 'pop'-defined and pastel-coloured surfaces still lack the fine detail necessary for visual play.

Although very influential, Venturi's ideas have tended to spawn other things. The classicism of the suburban home has exploded into the classicism of Ledoux, Schinkel and Lutyens. The omnipresent classical cycle. It has become pseudo-revivalism and abstract expressionistic classicism and eclecticism; esoteric manipulation more removed from reality than ever before.

Symbolism tends to the esoteric and unrealistic; philosophical, industrial and 'pop' art.

Instead of a balanced critique of the modern tradition we are now being subjected to the indiscriminate reaction against the entire evolution of modernist culture.<sup>13</sup>

Graham D. Livesey is a student at the School of Architecture of McGill University and has recently returned from three months of travel in Europe.

#### Notes

1. Robert Venturi, *Learning from Las Vegas*, MIT Press, 1972, p.70.
2. Edward Lucie-Smith, *Symbolist Art*, London, 1972, p.7.
3. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna*, 1961, p.75.
4. Otto Wagner, "The Development of the City", *Architectural Record*, May 1912, p.489.
5. Wagner, p.490.
6. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, London, 1890, p.195.
7. Schorske, p.254.
8. Schorske, pp. 240-42.
9. Manfredo Tafuri, "Am Steinhof", *Lotus 29*, 1980, p.89.
10. Schorske, p.109.
11. Venturi, p.72.
12. Venturi, p.98.
13. Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture - A Critical History*, London, 1980, p.288.

#### References

- H. Geretsegger and M. Peintner, *Otto Wagner 1841-1918*, 1964.  
 -Leonardo Benevolo, *History of Modern Architecture Vol. 1*, MIT Press, 1971.

*Drawings and photographs from Otto Wagner, 1841-1918*, by H. Geretsegger and M. Peintner.



# The Limits of Reason

by Joe Burton

The master work of architect Louis Kahn is often viewed solely as the technological expression of pure construction in the service of physical function. Indeed, Kahn's built projects of the 1950's which brought him international recognition, the Yale Art Gallery Addition, 1951-1953, with its concrete tetrahedral ceiling housing lighting and mechanical equipment, and the Richards Medical Laboratories at the University of Pennsylvania, 1957-1964, with its heroic service shafts and pre-cast, prestressed concrete structure became icons of contemporary architecture created from functional and constructional concerns. Kahn's many theoretical statements about his art, however, affirm his conviction that architecture goes beyond the rational expression of utilitarian excellence. As in the most memorable monuments of the past, he pointedly stressed the necessity of belief—that which transcends sensible knowledge—for the creation of a work of architecture:

I really felt very religiously attached to this idea of belief because I realized that many things are done with only the reality of the means employed, with no belief behind it. The whole reality isn't there without the reality of belief. When men do large redevelopment projects, there's no belief behind them. The means are available, even the design devices that make them look beautiful, but there's nothing that you feel is somehow a light, a light which shines on the emergence of a new institution of man, which makes him feel a refreshed will to live. **This comes from meaning being answerable to a belief.** Such a feeling must be in back of it, not just to make something which is pleasant instead of something which is dull: that is no great achievement.<sup>2</sup>

By pushing architecture beyond the limits of Cartesian measurement, Kahn evidently hoped for a meaningful work satisfying the requirements of the human heart as well as those of the body.

Kahn's own belief was founded upon an intuition of an ideal and omnipresent ground behind all reality that he described as "a world within a world".<sup>3</sup> This transcendent realm which he call-

ed 'Silence' was populated by eternal spiritual essences found within the human soul. He called these psychic essences 'Form'. In one of his notebooks, circa 1959, he professed his idealism and contemplated this unseen existence as a significant determinant in the making of an architectural image:

The beginning is the time of belief in Form. The realization of an existence without material, without shape or dimension. Design serves this belief into being, by placing the maker in harmony with order and being. When the work is completed, the beginning must be felt.

The beginning is the belief in form. It is feeling as religion as dream and thought as philosophy. Its existence is without material, without shape and dimension. Design is the maker of harmony with order and being. A work inspired by form reflects belief. The aura of transcendence, the aura of commonness. One feels renewal in the work of another in transcendence.

The Beginning is the belief in Form, Feeling as Religion. Thought as Philosophy is the milieu of Form. Beyond the personal limits of feeling and thought removed from self.<sup>4</sup>

Kahn saw the world as a meaningful pre-existent 'Order' founded upon his vision of Form. He summarized his world view, reminiscent of the Greek concept of *kosmos*, as "Order is."<sup>5</sup> For him, Order encompassed the essential human experiences of the psyche as well as the physical world:

An architect ("a man who feels Architecture as a spirit") can build a house and build a city in the same breath only if he thinks about both as part of a marvelous, expressive, and inspired realm. From the first feelings of beauty, or the first sense of it, and wonder that follows comes realization. Realization stems from the way we were made because we had to employ all the laws of the universe in order to be. We hold within us the record of the decisions that make us particularly human. There is the **psychic record**, and there is the **physical record**, together with the

choices we made to satisfy this desire to be, which in turn directed itself to what we are now.<sup>6</sup>

In a figure published in 1973<sup>7</sup>, he diagrammed the subtle psychic nature of Order conjoined with its tangible, physical character that he endeavored to incorporate within his architectural imagery.

To express the inner world of the human soul, Kahn suggested the use of symbolic images. Through such imagery a work of art intimates psychic meaning which goes beyond the depiction of physical reality:

An architect...is an artist in addition to being a professional man. But first let me explain what an artist is...Giotto was a great artist because he understood the realm of his art. He wasn't afraid to paint black skies in the daytime, people bigger than a building, birds that couldn't fly and dogs that couldn't run. His people weren't even people...but they are in their proper relation for the allegory.... They are related story-wise.... In the same way, a successful architect must understand his art, must command his medium.<sup>8</sup>

He also explained that symbolic architectural images were intrinsically more subtle and disciplined than images in the other arts because of the complex, pragmatic nature of architecture:

Another aspect (of architecture) is training a man (the architect) to **express himself**. This is his own prerogative. He must be given the meaning of belief, the meaning of faith. He must know the other arts. I use examples which I maybe have used too many times, but the architect must realize his prerogative. He must know that a painter can turn people upside down, if he wants to, because a painter does not have to answer to the laws of gravity. The painter can make doorways smaller than people. He can make skies black in the daytime. He can make birds that can't fly. He can make dogs that can't run, because he is a painter. He can paint red where he sees blue. The sculptor can place square wheels on a cannon to ex-



press the futility of war. An architect must use round wheels ("if he wants to bring his stone from place to place"), and he must make his doorways bigger than people. But architects must learn that they have other rights...their own rights. To learn this, to understand this, is giving man the tools for making the incredible, that which nature cannot make. The tools make a **psychological validity**, not just a physical validity, because man, unlike nature, has choice.<sup>9</sup>

The architect, according to Kahn, must integrate the symbolic, 'psychological' ideas of a work within its structural and functional constraints. August Komendant, the brilliant structural engineer who served as a consultant on many of Kahn's projects, apparently describes his collaborator's attempts to match physical order with spiritual order in his designs. He says that Kahn would request many structural schemes for a particular project. He then selected the one whose image he preferred, often against Komendant's recommendation.<sup>10</sup> In *Eighteen Years with Architect Louis I. Kahn*, Komendant writes:

In Kahn's mind 'image' (what) was the only creative act; to create image does not require intellectual analysis, only intuition, which artists and also poets consider the true source of knowing and truth. On the contrary, the design (how) requires intellectual analysis, which merely explains, even hinders knowing. Thus it is not a creative process, it only involves quantifying of materials and method of construction, and when engineering is ended the spirit of image and its values take over.

...for Kahn, Architecture was Art. He strongly objected to the generally accepted notion that architecture is part art and part engineering. Engineering in Kahn's mind, was servant to the architecture.<sup>11</sup>



It is most likely the hidden program of psychic allegory behind Kahn's choice of a structural image which leads to Komendant's professional dissatisfaction with some of his work, for example, the capitol complex at Dacca.<sup>12</sup>

Kahn's desire to create an architecture expressive of the human heart led him to study the psychic allegory found in primitive pictorial language, the hieroglyphics and iconography of Egypt. The justification for a study of the inventions of such an early culture, he explained in the following manner:

...(the) primitive case is more of an

indication of value than the more sophisticated case. To accept something at the very, very beginning, without precedent, is an infinitely stronger statement than how it is extended in later years.<sup>13</sup>

...if man's nature would not approve, a beginning would be impossible. So beginning is a revelation which reveals what is natural to man—it never would have happened. What the human approves—human as a larger term for man, instead of man simply as the species—is natural to all humans. I would say the beginning, then is natural to all humans. The beginning reveals the nature of the human....<sup>14</sup>

One of Kahn's books of Egyptology, I.E.S. Edwards's *The Pyramids of Egypt*, presents two primitive prototypes of the kind of psychic allegory found in his architecture.<sup>15</sup> In his book, Edwards said that the Egyptian name for the pyramidal tomb, denoted by , meant literally 'castle of eternity', while , the hieroglyphic for the older stepped pyramid, probably meant 'the place of ascension'.

The castle of eternity was designed to protect and preserve the body of the pharaoh through the ages, thus insuring the survival of his soul. Edwards commented that such primitive logic produced many greatly admired masterpieces which never would have been realized without a belief in their practical spiritual value.<sup>16</sup> The iconographic content of the pure pyramid, he said, was associated with the sun-god Rê in Egypt from the earliest times and he suggested an explanation for its relevance:

But what did the *benben* (the primitive stone fetish of pyramidal shape) and its architectural derivative, the true pyramid, represent? Only one answer suggests itself: the rays of the sun shining down on earth. A remarkable spectacle may sometimes be seen in the late afternoon of a cloudy winter day at Giza. When standing on the road to Saqqara and gazing westward at the Pyramid plateau, it is possible to see the sun's rays striking downward through a gap in the clouds at about the same angle as the slope of the Great Pyramid. The impression made on the mind by the scene is that the immaterial prototype and the material replica are here ranged side by side.<sup>17</sup>

According to Edwards, the choosing of this architectural allegory for a tomb rests upon its metaphysical content associated with the sun and the soul's resurrection. He described this

theological notion which was similar to that of the Osirian cult:


The sun-cult and the cult of Osiris were certainly not connected either in origin or in their main theological conception. Rê was primarily a god of the living, with whom certain privileged persons might be associated with after death, while Osiris was essentially the god of the blessed dead and of the region of the dead. Both gods, however, shared one most important feature in common: they provided a divine example of survival after death. Osiris, though murdered by Seth, had been restored to life by the magic of Isis, and Rê, whose daily disappearance beneath the western horizon was considered as his death, was reborn each morning at sunrise. In the experience of these gods, the ancient Egyptian found reason to hope for his own survival.<sup>18</sup>

Edwards further explained that the form of the castle of eternity had a practical magic purpose. It served as a solar ladder to the bright god above. Quoting ancient magic spells, he writes:

The Pyramid texts often describe the king as mounting to heaven on the rays of the sun. Spell 508 of these texts, for instance, reads: 'I have trodden those thy rays as a ramp under my feet whereon I mount up to that my mother, the living Uraeus on the brow of Rê.' The temptation to regard the true Pyramid as a material representation of the Sun's rays and consequently as a means whereby the dead king could ascend to heaven seems irresistible.<sup>19</sup>

His reading of the solar stair is most likely influenced by his interpretation of the earlier stepped pyramid as 'the place of ascension'. The stepped form associated with astral cults, he suggested was similar to the ziggurats of ancient Mesopotamia and the historical Tower of Babel which were viewed as links between heaven and earth.

#### Psychic Allegory In The Work of Louis Kahn


The ancient symbol of light, the pure pyramid and its two dimensional hieroglyphic, , expressed perfectly Kahn's sense of 'Order'—that the supersensible, psychic realm of Form, Silence, manifests into the sensible, physical realm as light and matter. He used the pyramidal shape and the triangle in his 'Silence to Light' diagrams, circa 1969, to inscribe in hieroglyphics this metaphysical allegory. Of this timeless image, he said:



The pyramids seem to want to tell us of its motivations and its meetings with nature in order to be.

I sense Silence as the aura of the 'desire to be to express'  
Light as the aura 'to be to be' material as 'spent light'.  
(The mountains the streams the atmosphere and we are of spent light.)<sup>20</sup>

One can find the allegorical image of the pyramid throughout Kahn's mature work. For example, it is presented early, clearly and insistently in the ceiling of the Yale Art Gallery Addition. Although the design of the Gallery ceiling was inspired by a space frame, structurally it acts as a series of concrete beams ornamented by an infill of concrete tetrahedrons.<sup>21</sup> Similar to Komendant's complaint of Kahn's work at Dacca, imagery overrules structural reason in the Yale Art Gallery Addition. Kahn recognized this inconsistency and tried to rethink the structural logic of the completed building in a later study. After Yale, the primitive solar symbolism of the pyramid was brilliantly integrated within the triangulated structure of his City Tower Project of 1957.

Kahn's interest in architectural allegory is also seen in his use of the stepped pyramid pictograph, , 'the place of ascension', which Edwards had described. In his unbuilt projects for the Washington University Library of 1956, and the Theological Library at Berkeley, 1973-1974, this hieroglyphic quote is expressed three dimensionally in cruciform plan and in a 'wedding cake' composition, respectively. These two educational buildings were truly to be 'places of ascension' of the human mind and its aspiring spirit, an idea especially apt in the context of a theologians' library. The imagery of this pictograph, however, was more subtly realized in the stepped soffits of the cantilevered concrete beams of the Richard's Medical Laboratories at the University of Pennsylvania, 1957-1964. This stepped form which originally was also found in the vent shafts is more evident in Kahn's earlier studies for the design. The elegant shape of the beams simultaneously reflect the physical determinants of their design to handle moment loading. With this integration of symbol and structure, the Richards Medical Laboratories provide a clear cut example of Kahn's desire to speak allegorically within the physical limits of the art of architecture. He may have been thinking of this work and its psychological meaning when he wrote in his 1959 notebook:

Form is the religion of Beginning,  
Design is the inspired writing of its  
Scriptures in the layers of order. It  
is the containing text that binds

thought and feeling prophecy and religion and aspiration. Reading it one experiences renewal of form as immanent, ever beginning. And when we celebrate a work which achieves this kind of sacred realization, we partake in man's worshipful-likeness to perpetuate the transcendency of form by that of himself.<sup>22</sup>

In his attempt to extend the boundaries of late modern architecture into the realm of the human soul, Kahn joined the front ranks of western philosophers and artists who have challenged a solely materialistic conception of the world, a conception formulated during the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment inherited René Descartes's neat division of psyche and matter which encouraged a methodical exploration of all that is physically quantifiable. Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* of 1781 questioned this limited view and contributed philosophically to a Romantic rebellion against the Enlightenment in the nineteenth century. The work and thought of Louis Kahn ultimately descends from such attempts to re-establish conceptual links between the psyche and matter. His work must be seen as a form of *architecture parlante*, speaking architecture—a notion found within the Beaux-Arts traditions of his architectural education. In the late 1840's, Léon Vaudoyer, a French Romantic architect, coined the term to describe the emblematic architecture of Claude-Nicolas Ledoux.<sup>23</sup> By suavely speaking through 'the layers of order', Kahn never intended to dismiss the rational, physical aspects of a building. He merely hoped to elevate it into the immeasurable realm of architecture.

Joe Burton is a professor at the College of Architecture, King Faisal University, Damman, Saudi Arabia.

#### Notes

1. This writing is partially taken from a lecture, "The Architectural Hieroglyphics of Louis I. Kahn", given at the Department of Architecture, McGill University in April 1982. It is based upon research in the Louis I. Kahn Collection at the University of Pennsylvania and work in Kahn's personal library at the Philadelphia home of his widow, Mrs. Esther I. Kahn. The research was undertaken while a Ph.D. candidate in architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, 1977-82.
2. Ronner, H.; Jhaveri, S.; and Vasella, A.; *Louis I. Kahn Complete Works 1935-74*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1977, p.330, my emphasis.
3. "Louis I. Kahn Talks With Students", *Architecture at Rice*, 26, Rice University, Houston, Texas, 1969, p.24.
4. Kahn, Louis I., personal notebook, K12/22/c. 1959, Louis I. Kahn Collec-

- tion, University of Pennsylvania.
5. *Architectural Forum*, Vol. 137, No. 1, July/August 1972, p.46. "I came to a statement that 'order is' because I could never write what it is...I made a long list of what I thought it was. And when I threw the list away, 'order is' remained. It sort of included everything by not trying to say what it is. The word 'is' has a tremendous sense of presence."
6. Kahn, Louis I., "I Love Beginnings", Complete Particulars/Louis I. Kahn Memorial Issue, *Architecture and Urbanism*, 1974, pp.280-281, my emphasis.
7. "Louis Kahn—Silence to Light", *Architecture and Urbanism*, 73:01, p.47.
8. Kleckner, Carol E. "Louis Kahn Explains Esthetic Theories", *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 30, 1959, p.6D.
9. "Louis Kahn Talks With Students", p.18, my emphasis.
10. Komendant, August E., *Eighteen Years With Architect Louis I. Kahn*, Aloray Publishers, Englewood, New Jersey, 1975, pp.36-37.
11. Komendant, pp.23-24.
12. Komendant, pp.84-89.
13. Wemischer, Robert, "An Architect's Music of the Spheres", *34th Street Magazine*, University of Pennsylvania, April 22, 1971, p.3.
14. McLaughlin, Patricia, "How'm I Doing, Corbusier?", *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, Vol. 71, No.3, December 1972, p.20.
15. Edwards, I.E.S., *The Pyramids of Egypt*, Penguin Books, New York, 1952. Edwards book was a gift to Kahn from his daughter, Sue, his wife remembered, soon after his return from Egypt in the early 1950's. The copyright date of Kahn's edition is 1952.
16. Edwards, p.52.
17. Edwards, pp. 289-290.
18. Edwards, pp. 29-30.
19. Edwards, p.291.
20. Wurman, Richard Saul; and Feldman, Eugenie, editors, *The Notebooks and Drawings of Louis I. Kahn*, Falcon Press, Philadelphia. Besides light, the 'castle of eternity' seems to also imply Kahn's view of Being and the creative urge behind all Existence: "The inspirations come from the walk through life and through the making of a man, the inspiration to live gives a life to all... those manifestations of man that come from the inspiration to live forever." and "...The sense of physical well-being comes from the desire to live forever: to express." See Ronner, Jhaveri and Vasella, pp. 325 and 449.
21. Ronner, Jhaveri and Vasella, p.66.
22. Louis I. Kahn, personal notebook, K12/22/c.1959, my emphasis.
23. Drexler, Arthur, editor, *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1977, p.405.



by Jonas Lehrman

# ON POSTCARD

It is often enlightening to check the picture postcards on sale at local outlets to find out what buildings and views are considered attractive and imageable. It may be even more instructive to consider why these images have their particular appeal to the public mind. Sometimes the building illustrated is not one that an architect with an educated taste may have chosen, but almost invariably the building has some memorable aspect about it, whether or not it is supported by some additional historic or symbolic significance.

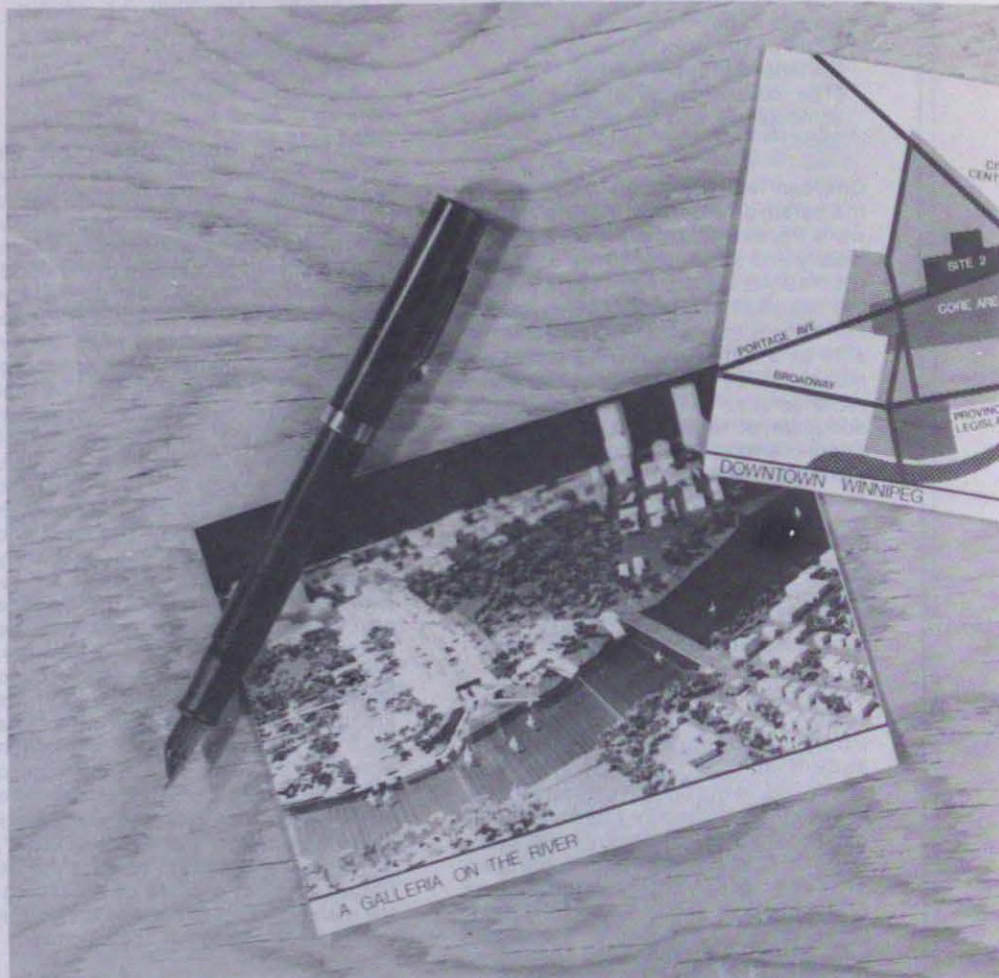
It is also illuminating to see how often a place, rather than a particular building, has caught the public imagination; a place perhaps not of the quality of the Piazza San Marco in Venice, but perhaps like Toronto's Nathan Phillips Square or Victoria's Bastion Square.

Unfortunately, Winnipeg does not possess such a place. The need is currently met by one or other of the large downtown department stores, shopping centres or cafes. But people should not be under pressure to buy something, even coffee, if they merely want to indulge the very human desire to sit and watch other people go by.

Recognising this need, students in the Pre-Masters Regular class in the University of Manitoba's Department of Architecture formed groups to develop a proposal for a central place, or roofed public plaza, in the context of a specific location of the downtown area of Winnipeg. The Urban Room was to be easily accessible yet free of vehicles, while providing a place for people to meet in a climate controlled environment.

Inherently attractive to undertake as was this project, it was no mere flight of fancy unrelated to 'the real world'. The City of Winnipeg needs such a place, the downtown core has many underdeveloped sites containing one and two storey structures and parking lots, and the current \$96 million Core Area Initiative provides *inter alia* the facility for property acquisition.

Each of the six groups in the class had a distinctive idea to offer. What follows are illustrations of two of the projects, with written descriptions by the group involved.



## A GALLERIA FOR WINNIPEG

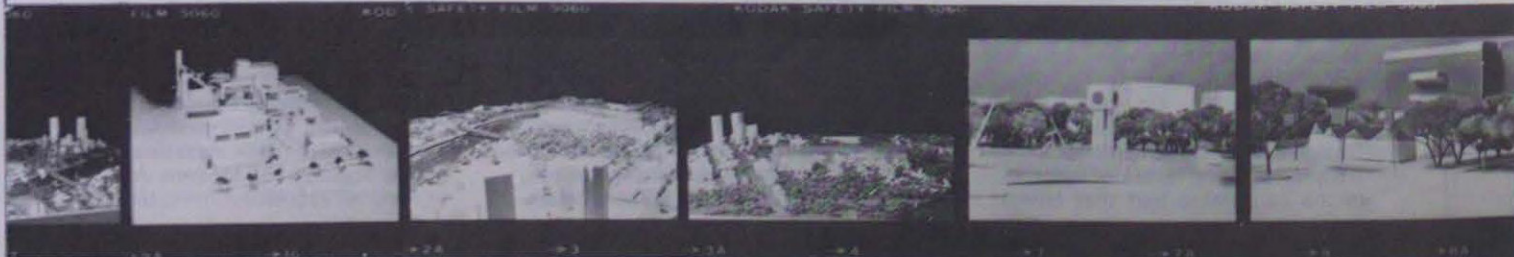
D. Davidson, M. Krapez, P. Petkau, B. Sparrow

In providing a central meeting place for Winnipeg, it was decided that this facility could not only fulfill this function but also utilize many potential, existing, but unrealized amenities. The CN railyards were seen as a symbolic entrance to the site and structure, which extends the axis that terminates in a marina, and visually terminates in the ruins of St. Boniface cathedral, an important landmark in Winnipeg.

The space within the gallery could be utilized on a year round basis, with a mixed use infrastructure to attract users and provide something of a population base. This would consist of shops, residential/hotel, squares, trees, interior gardens, all of which connect to a terraced development on the exterior. Riverboats and a monorail connect at the east end of the facility.

River development is extensive, allowing for maximum access to the river's edge. Winter activities could extend from the structure to the river surrounding park.

Layout: Susan Ross and Jeff Telgarsky





# S AND PLACES

University of Manitoba  
Urban Design 1982

a number of defined districts: The Bay-Eaton's corridor; Old Market Square; the medium-high density housing around the Cumberland area; the Portage and Main financial district; and so on. The site we have chosen possesses the potential of acting as a central communicating link for all of these places. It has a ready clientele of residential, business, shopping, university and visiting people. We have re-inforced each of these activities at the periphery of our site to increase their density and have then provided a variety of passive or active areas with spaces of varied character. Included are fast food outlets and a beer garden, a tram stop and bus shelter, a speaker's corner, a sculpture garden, an amphitheatre, a carillon and a clock-tower. Some activities provided for include jogging, ice and roller skating, outdoor chess, an artists' bazaar, and playing fields.

One major part of our proposal is to relocate the Free Press newspaper offices and printing plant in a new building on the corner of Portage Avenue and Colony Street and to renovate the existing building to provide studio and office space for Winnipeg's cultural groups such as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Contemporary Dancers, various ethnic groups, theatre companies, film companies and so on. The ground floor of the building would have public spaces for reading rooms, lounges, billiards, and a room for chess and other board games.

We feel that the proposal submitted would increase the desirability and amenity of living, working, shopping and visiting in the city center.

*Jonas Lehrman is a professor at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Architecture.*

to search for a downtown site. This also inherently satisfied some major criteria for a 'meeting' place.

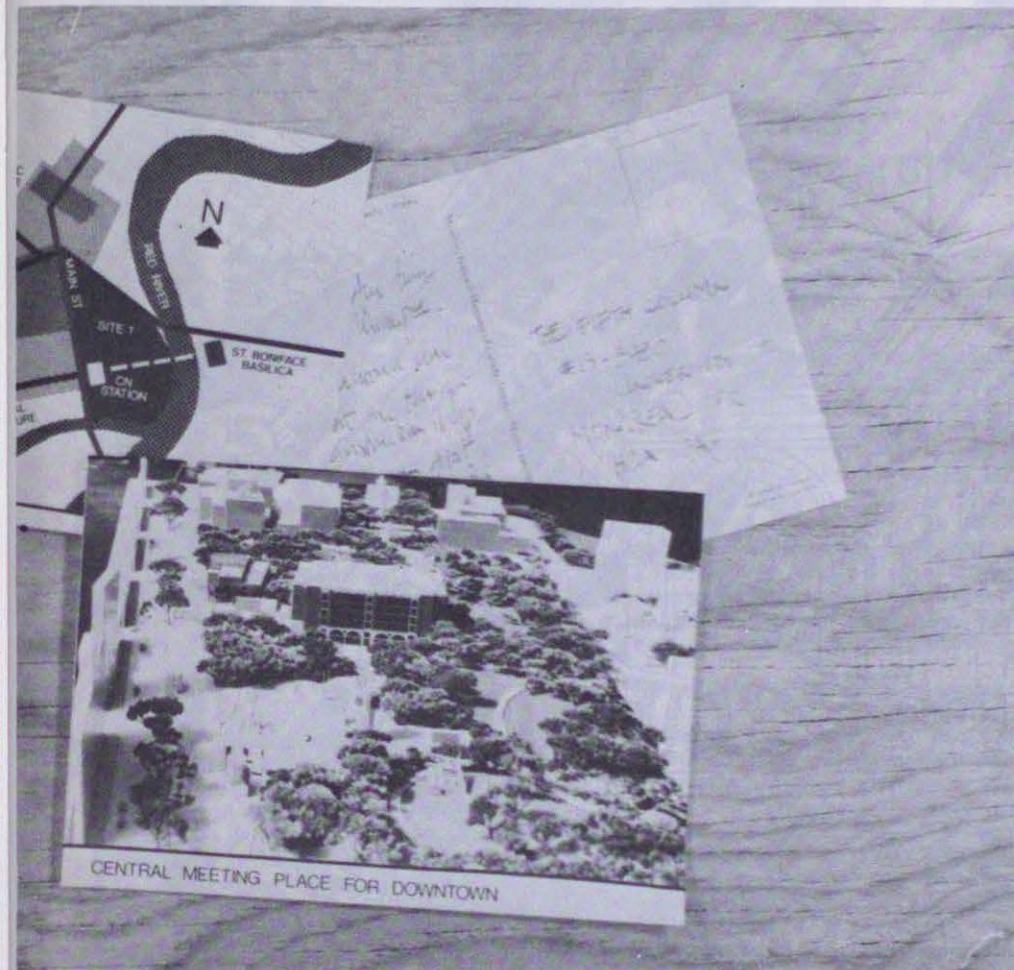
The site we eventually used - the north side of Portage Avenue - was chosen because it is a rapidly dying area near Winnipeg's heart. In 1982 approximately seventy-five percent of the land in the blocks between Portage Avenue and Ellice Avenue is parking lot or alley way; major growth in the Winnipeg core is presently taking place from Portage Avenue to the Convention Center.

Central Winnipeg is de-centralized into

## A CENTRAL MEETING PLACE FOR WINNIPEG

Colin Friesen, Hendrik Herfst, Glenda Jowsey, Garth Norbraten, Bob Taylor

In our design we attempted to solve a real problem. We felt that the challenge of working towards a solution which dealt with the present deterioration of urban form in Winnipeg could excite our imagination although it held more constraints than the other directions we could have taken. A perceived need for a central development to re-establish downtown as a functional core lead us



Photos: by the authors





POLITICS AND ARCHITECTURE  
LA POLITIQUE ET L'ARCHITECTURE



# Rationalism, Classicism, Nationalism:

## Myth and Monument in the Third Rome

by Martin Thomas Troy

*Slow, incessant, inexorable, is the advance of Fascism. Fascism constructs in a Roman way, stone upon stone, its ideal and material buildings, which like the Roman ones, will defy time.<sup>1</sup>*

Benito Mussolini, 1923

Mussolini's 'March on Rome' in 1922 signalled the final overthrow of the old order in Italy and the rise to power of the Fascists. The symbolic manifestations of this 'March on Rome' were much greater than any imagined military ones. Mussolini's visions of a new Imperial Rome, with *Il Duce* as the new Augustus, would need to have just such a heroic beginning to truly mark the advent of the new spirit in Italy. This new spirit, arising from the political, economic and social theories of Fascism, attempted to express its ideals by assuming a 'cultural dress'. Thus art and architecture became prime vehicles for the national expression of Fascism. These ideals were not of a constant nature, but were always evolving, to match the evolution of the Fascist ideology itself. Mussolini's brand of Fascism was as politically opportunistic as he was himself. Italian Fascism transformed itself from a national 'socialist' movement based on revolutionary theories into a completely reactionary and nationalistic ideology in the later stages of its development. These changes in ideology were paralleled by shifts in the State's attitude towards theories of art and architecture. From an initial attitude of art as an individual expression, and not as an expression of the State, Mussolini was soon in a strong enough political position to be able to dictate which aesthetic would constitute an official Fascist art. Thus the concept of Fascist architecture was spawned.

It is here that the eternal dilemma of how to define the nature of the relation-

ship between ideology and architecture is encountered. Can there be a true Fascist architecture, whereby the ideals of Fascism are truly expressed by architectural form? If this is so, then it follows that ideology can be a generator of form. The other extreme position on this question is that architectural form, used in the service of an ideology, is merely a 'facade' behind which ideology can lurk, its true secrets hidden behind a screen of heroic gestures and monumental myths.

### I. Futurism and the Italian Tradition

*We will sing the stirring of great crowds... as revolution sweeps through a modern metropolis. We will sing of the midnight fervour of arsenals and shipyards blazing with electric moons; insatiable stations swallowing the smoking serpents of their trains; factories hung from the clouds by the twisted threads of their smoke...<sup>2</sup>*

from Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto* 1911

*We could define Classical as the spiritual movement in our desires, excluding... every meaning of rhetorical reaction or of the rehabilitation of worn out manners and ideas, which no longer correspond to our sensibilities... Classical, finally, is the sustainer of certain fundamental norms... of a certain political and moral order.<sup>3</sup>*

Ardengo Soffici 1924

The Futurist ideals of the glorification of war, aggressive action, the society of the machine, revolution, and the abolishment of morality and historical culture appealed immensely to Mussolini as he was forming his philosophies of Fascism following the First World War. The Futurists' revolutionary theories of art meshed well with Mussolini's early theories of the 'Fascist Revolution'. So, when the Fascists took power in 1922, they were able to turn to the Futurist movement for a new revolutionary aesthetic as a



Architectural Design.

tool of national policy. However, in spite of Mussolini's personal friendship with the Futurist Marinetti, and his admitted enthusiasm for a modern aesthetic, Futurism presented a basic, unresolved contradiction to the main body of nationalistic Fascist theory. Revolutionary and destructive anti-traditionalism ran counter to Mussolini's obsession with a return to the 'Roman Tradition'. To Mussolini, Rome was "...the eternal city that has given two civilizations to the world and will yet give a third."<sup>4</sup>

At this time, in the early 1920's, there was developing a flourishing Classicist movement in Italian painting and architecture. This movement did not have any particular political alignments or pressures as its impetus for development. Rather, it grew from a desire for cultural renewal; as a reaction against what was considered to be the failure of the pre-war *avante-garde*. Making use of the Italian Classical tradition, they sought a new order, reason and regularity in art and architecture.<sup>5</sup> This new order would aid in defining the nature of the relationship between the present and the past in artistic theory and practice.

Inspired by the powerful metaphysical imagery in the paintings of de Chirico and by the painters of the Novecento movement, the new generation of 'Classicizing' architects from Milan were led by Giovanni Muzio, Gio Ponti, and de Finetti. The stripped Classicism and heavy traditional forms used by this group, known as the 'Milanese 900', owed as much to the internationalism of Austria's Adolph Loos as it did to Italian tradition.<sup>6</sup> Thus, it can be regarded as a precursor to the architecture of the Rationalist movement as well as to the Monumental neo-Classicism of the following decade.

With the decline of Futurism as an aesthetic force in Italy and its quick fall from favour in official circles, the debate over what would constitute the official Fascist Architecture began to



## 'Progressions of Classicism: Terragni's intellectual abstraction of the Classical spirit'

rage. The key to this debate was the Fascists' desire for an architecture that would express the greatness of the Third Rome by evoking Italy's Classical tradition. The interpretation of the form of this Classicism would be the major point of contention between the Rationalists and the neo-Classicalists.

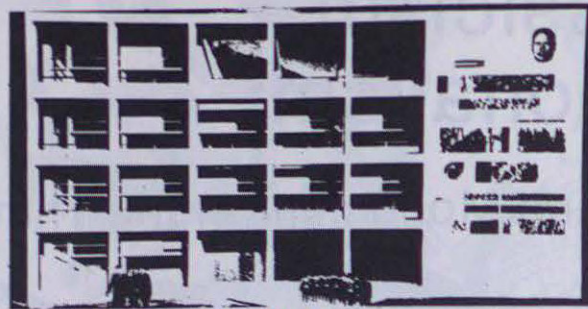
### II. Rationalism as Classicism

*...New architecture, true architecture, must emerge from a strict adherence to logic, to rationality...there exists a Classical foundation and spirit of tradition (not the forms, which is something different) that is so profound in Italy, that evidently and almost automatically, the new architecture will preserve a stamp which is typically Italian... We do not want to break with tradition. It is tradition which transforms itself and assumes new aspects...<sup>7</sup>*  
Gruppo Sette 1926

The formation of the Gruppo Sette in 1926 signalled the birth of the Rationalist movement in Italy. As the group's spiritual leader, Giuseppe Terragni was indisputedly the most important individual within the pre-war Rationalist movement. It is not necessary to describe here the details of the rise and fall of Gruppo Sette and their brand of Rationalism. However, it is important to realize how and why Rationalism initially appealed to the Fascist regime, and why the movement eventually lost the support of the Fascists.

From the time of the movement's inception, the Rationalists realized that the only way they would be able to receive building commissions of any significance within the Fascist system was to gain the official sanction of the regime. To this end, direct appeals were made to Mussolini through various manifestos, publications, and exhibitions, declaring the close ideological alliance between Rationalism and Fascism. By presenting a theoretical synthesis of a modern aesthetic with the Classical tradition of Italy, the Rationalists were able to attain some degree of success and official recognition in the early years.

Declaring themselves to be against both "the vain destructive fury" of the Futurists and the "false historicism"<sup>8</sup> of the Monumentalists, the Rationalists tried to present a moderate position. This position was, however, based on a left-wing interpretation of the 'Fascist Revolution'. A rational, modern ar-



Casa del Fascio, Como 1932-1936

Architectural Design

chitecture, they believed, could embody Mussolini's rhetorical enunciations of the need to rejuvenate, the triumph of youth, and "the revolution in action."<sup>9</sup> At the same time, this architecture could embody the national spirit of Italy by invoking the spirit and essence of Classicism. These polemical announcements were replete with ambiguities in meaning and intent. It was not until the actual realization of several projects that this concept of Rationalism as Classicism was clarified.

Perhaps the most obvious link between these two can be seen in the similarities between Rationalism and the Classicist Novecento group.<sup>10</sup> Both movements called for a return to order and logic. Although approaching it from different directions, both movements tended towards a monumentalism and formalism that can be considered to be an expression of a Classicist ideal. The abstraction of formal tectonic elements also tended to move Italian Rationalism into an almost metaphysical mode of expression.

These abstractions of Classicism can best be seen in the work of Terragni. With commissions such as the Novocomum Apartment House in Como, and the Casa Rustici in Milan, Terragni established a language of Rationalist architecture and gave the movement its early credibility.

Terragni's Casa del Fascio, built in 1932 in Como, is, in Kenneth Frampton's words, "...the canonical work of the Italian Rationalist movement."<sup>11</sup> He goes on to state that the rational geometry, the structurally codified and layered surfaces, the metaphysical spatial effects, Terragni's use of materials, and the siting in the historic urban core all combine to make the building "...tectonic, meticulous, and monumental." Planned around a double-height meeting hall, the spatial organization is an abstraction of the traditional palazzo with a central courtyard. This embodiment of the spirit of Classicism represented Rationalism's claim to be

the true architecture of Fascist Italy. The Casa del Fascio, designed as a symbol of 'Fascism in Action', featured a direct connection between the meeting hall and the exterior piazza, permitting the flow of mass political rallies from inside to outside.

The Rationalist symbolization of a 'Revolutionary Fascism' eventually and inevitably succumbed to the forces of political reaction within the regime. Over a period of time in the 1930's, the movement lost its internal cohesiveness and its political support. The shift towards the right implied a shift towards the neo-Classic as an expression of the Fascist State. Rationalism's bid to represent the aspirations of Fascism through an abstracted national Classicism had failed, amid reactionary cries of 'Internationalism' and 'Bolshevism'.

### III. Classicism as Nationalism

*Mussolini wishes to resuscitate the material vestiges of ancient Rome because they are beautiful and invaluable, but also and mainly because, in doing so, he hopes to revive the old virtues of rugged men who under iron discipline once fashioned Roman Power.<sup>12</sup>*

The New York Times,  
March 19, 1933

Freeing the monuments of Imperial Rome from the 'inferior' medieval fabric that surrounded them was merely the first step in reviving the glories of Rome. In addition, Mussolini wished to build a new set of monuments to 'The Third Rome'. It was left to Marcello Piacentini — Mussolini's 'official builder' — to mediate between the neo-Classical and Rationalist movements, to find a suitable architectural expression for the glory of Fascist Italy. The resulting 'Official Architecture' was a stripped neo-Classicism, combining a Rationalist and a simplified neo-Classical vocabulary of architectonic elements, composed in a Classical manner.

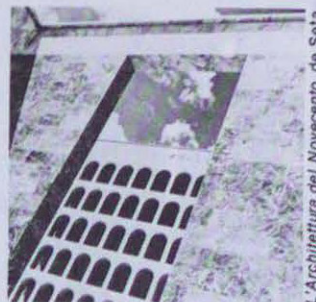


## 'EUR '42: Monumentality, heroics, and grandeur; The myth of the new Roman Empire'



EUR '42, Rome

The Third Rome, Kostof



Palazzo della Civiltà, EUR '42

L'Architettura del Novecento, de Seta

Piacentini was the architect in charge of planning such representative projects as the Via della Conciliazione, the University of Rome and the Esposizione Universale de Roma (EUR).

The EUR was to have taken place in 1942. The entire world would be able to come and admire the achievements and grandeur of Fascism in this 'Olympics of Civilization'. This vision of a new monumental center for Rome turned into a stark, scaleless reality. The complex can be seen as a monument to the myth of Fascist power and culture. Although hauntingly beautiful in the same sense as is a de Chirico canvas, it is totally separate from social reality and humanist values.<sup>13</sup>

With such diverse states as Germany, the Soviet Union, France, and America using the same reductive language of form, neo-Classicism can be considered to be an 'international style'. This implies that neo-Classicism had lost any significance in terms of specific ideological meaning. The monumentality of the EUR was a compromise between the forces of Classicism and Rationalism to express the nationalism of Fascist Italy. Symbolically, such diverse tools of tectonic language as scale and iconographic references contributed to what was hoped to be an effective communication of the ideals of Fascism.

#### IV. Architecture as Ideology

*What is of interest here is the precise identification of those tasks which capitalist development has taken away from architecture. That is to say, what it has taken away from ideological refiguration. With this, one is led almost automatically to the discovery of what may well be the drama of architecture today; that is, to see architecture obliged to return to pure architecture, to form without utopia; in the best cases, to sublime uselessness.<sup>14</sup>*

Manfredo Tafuri 1976

According to Tafuri, there has been a lack of ideological content in architecture in the modern era, dating from the time of Piranesi. This has resulted in a type of 'autonomous architecture', a pure architecture achieved through sterile transformations of historical form.

This concept is perhaps an oversimplification of the role of ideology in architecture today. Architecture can never really be considered out of the context of its ideological base. This ideology inevitably has some bearing on the way architectural form is transformed in an attempt to impart new meaning to it.

This meaning is communicated through syntactical signs, rather than through an actual embodiment of ideology in the form and mass of the architecture. It is both the decision of the architect and the subsequent interpretation of the user which creates these signs. However, the interpretations of these signs can change with time and social context, making it impossible that architecture can serve as the eternal symbol of a specific ideology.

The Rationalism of the Fascist era gleaned its meaning on an intellectual level, whereas Monumental neo-Classicism appealed to human empathy in an attempt to extract a specific emotional response from the user. The image of the Fascist State as bringing about a heroic, ordered, and glorious society was a myth. That the architecture of the Fascist State sought to perpetrate this myth shows that architecture as a symbol of Fascism was based on the suppression of the realities of the Fascist society. The new monumentalism of the Third Rome was nothing short of an attempt at formal propaganda. This architecture attempted to portray the mythical greatness of the Fascist State by the symbolic manipulation of scale. Perhaps inadvertently, it also portrayed the dehumanizing aspects of the ideology. Fascism's adoption of the neo-

Classical as its official stylistic expression proves that ideology is not the sole generator of architectural form or style, since we have seen that neo-Classicism is such an 'international' style. However, the ideological interpretation of architecture through formal signification and symbolization has been seen to provide an otherwise 'autonomous' architecture with a new ideological level of meaning. Reading this architecture in today's context, one can see both the truths and the myths of the Fascist ideology. Thus, the architecture of Fascism is a symbol of both what Fascism was and what it had attempted to become.

#### Notes

1. Ellen Shapiro, "The Emergence of Italian Rationalism", *Architectural Design*, 1/2 1981. This statement by Mussolini was made at the inauguration of the Fascist Headquarters Building in Milano, 1923.
2. Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, 1980, p. 84. Excerpt from Point 11 of The Futurist Manifesto, 1911.
3. Leonardo Benevolo, *History of Modern Architecture, Vol. II*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1971, Chapter 16.
4. Spiro Kostof, *The Third Rome*, University Art Museum, Berkeley, 1973, p. 30.
5. Vittorio Gregotti, *New Directions in Italian Architecture*, Studio Vista, London, 1968, p. 9.
6. Gregotti, p. 10.
7. Bruno Zevi, "The Rise and Fall of Italian Rationalism", *Architectural Design*, 1/2 1981, p. 41. This quote was excerpted from a series of articles appearing between December 1926 and May 1927 in *Rassegna Italiana*.
8. Frampton, p. 203.
9. Zevi, p. 41.
10. Gregotti, p. 17.
11. Frampton, p. 205.
12. Kostof, p. 31.
13. Frampton, p. 215.
14. Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1976, p. ix.

#### Additional References:

*Architectural Design Profile 23*  
"Neo-Classicism" Vol. 49 No. 8/9

Martin T. Troy received a Bachelor of Architecture from McGill University in May 1982 and is presently working in Montreal.





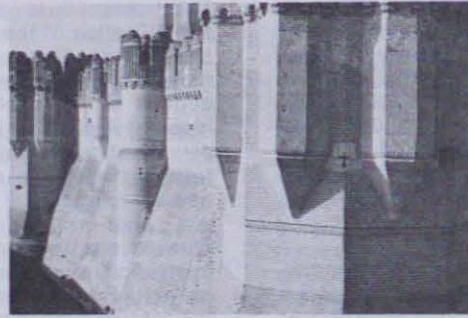
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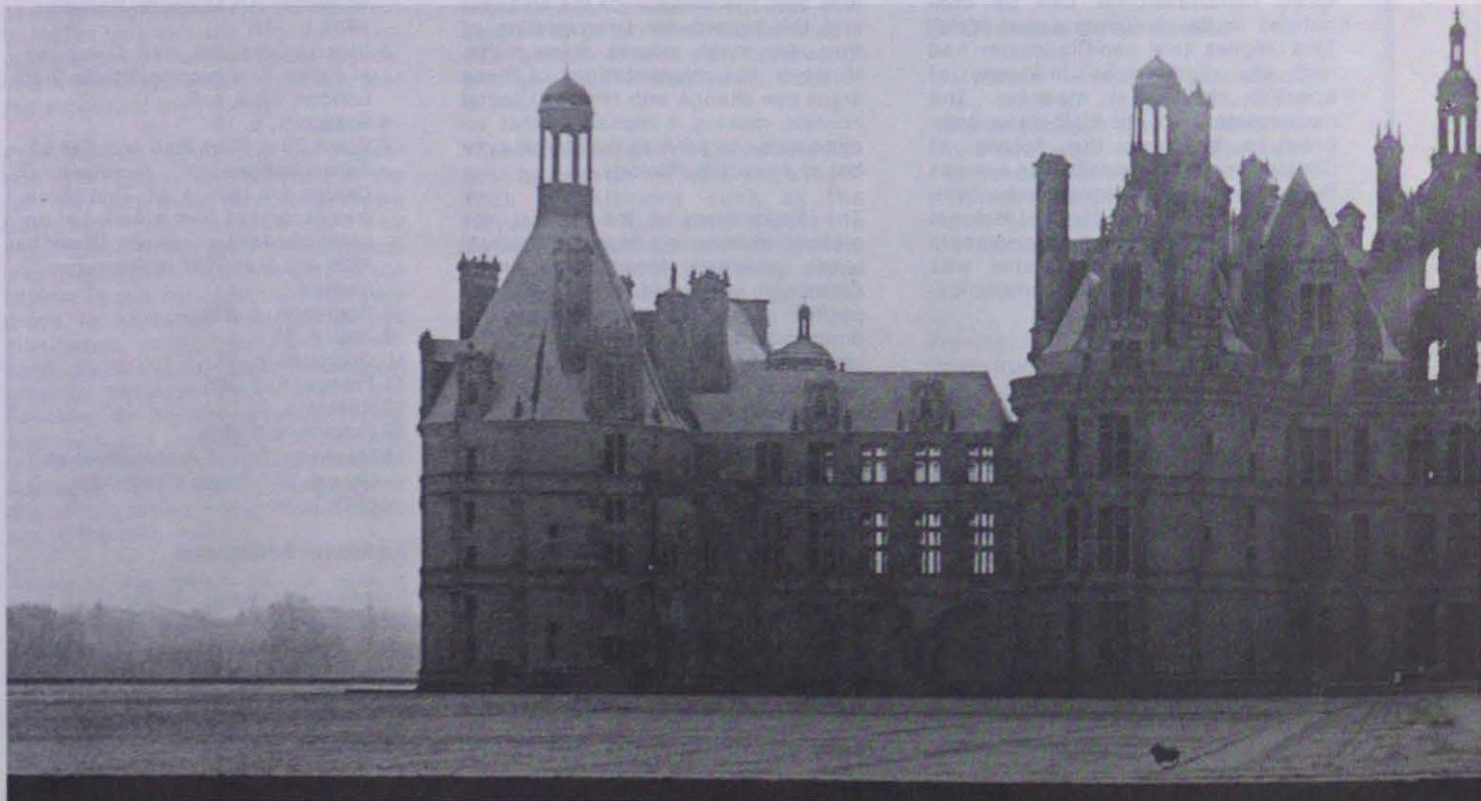
## Fragments of Some Politically Significant Buildings

2.

1. Stoa of Attalos II, Athens, Greece.
2. Coca Castle, Castilla, Spain.
3. Roman aqueduct, Segovia, Spain.
4. The Colosseum, Rome, Italy.
5. The Little "Plaza", Zafra, Spain.
6. The Parthenon, Athens, Greece.
7. Chateau Chambord, Loire, France



by Ricardo L. Castro







3.



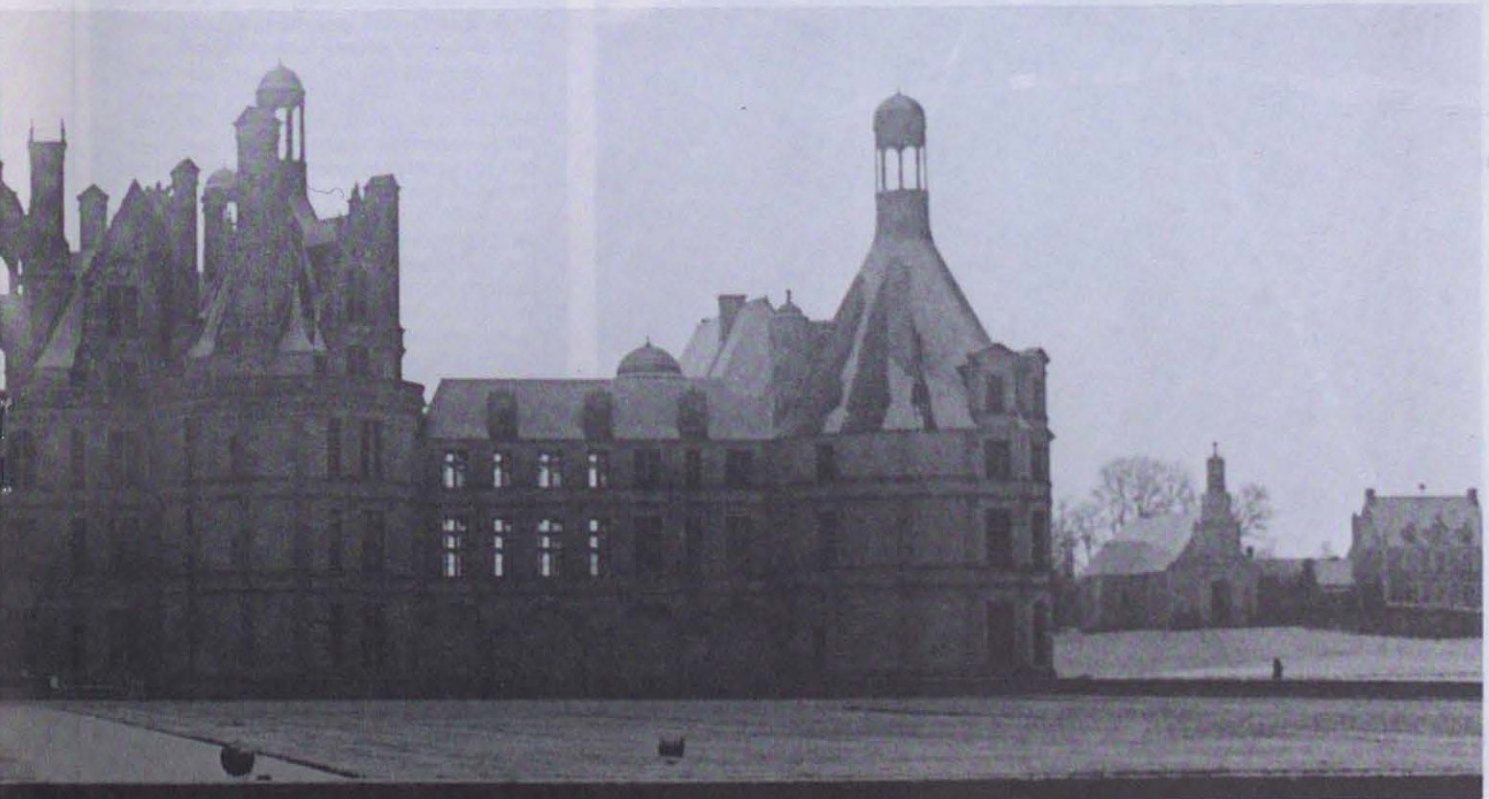
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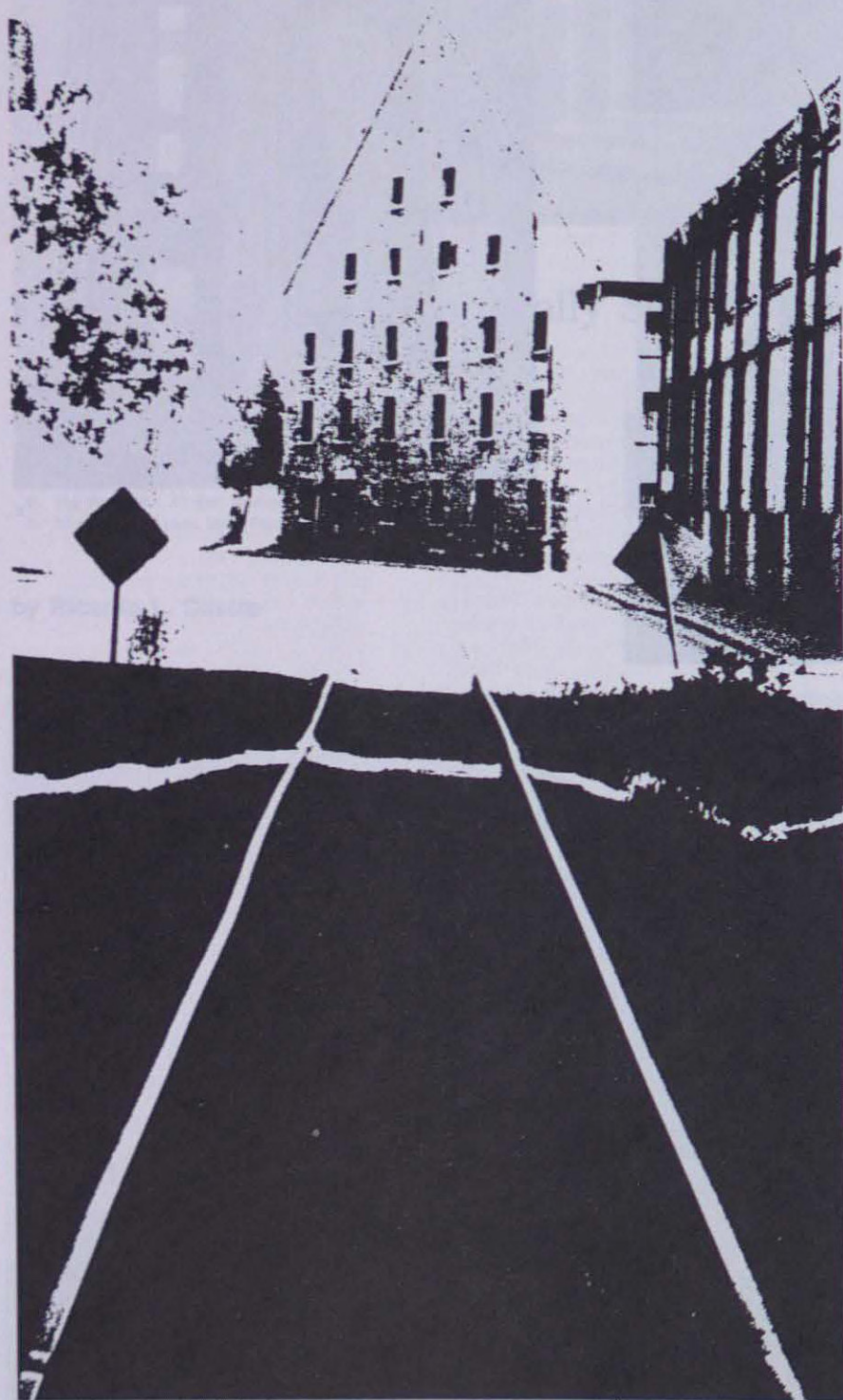
# Nineteen

*Leon Krier was in Montreal in March 1982. While in Montreal, Mr. Krier kindly agreed to take part in a discussion with McGill architecture students. The following is the transcript of part of that discussion.*

**L**eon Krier: We have reached a stage which is very difficult to cope with, where - virtually - education ignores the main issues of the problems we cause through the system we have established with nature. And I think that city planning and, in the end, architecture are maybe the pivotal instruments in the destruction of country and city and of our values - which have been established over a very long period of time and which have been taken for granted by the last five or six generations.

I do not only mean politicians but also intellectuals and history responsible to people - which had to do with an attitude that one always thought, 'whatever we do, if we do it together, and with majority decisions, it will be alright. It will be fine in the end even if there will be suffering in between, if some people will lose meanwhile. But in the end, the overall gain, historically, will be colossal and we can't possibly avoid going in that direction.' And now we see that, basically, majority decisions or committee decisions very often don't replace, or cannot replace, the moral responsibility of the individual. Quite the contrary. Very often majority decisions or committee decisions allow the individuals to completely give up their moral conscience and hide behind this anonymous consensus which finally is - and has shown to be - extremely destructive. And I think as an architect one is immensely involved in that process of destruction. You automatically work in a system which is furthering this total devastation of the planet. And however carefully you do your work - I mean, you may design a very beautiful house - but just the problem of designing a house in a certain system, planning system, is, in my way, extremely destructive if you do not know exactly what you're doing.

Now, I'm not trying to create moral problems with slogans to be anti-capitalist because it's not a problem of being anti-capitalist because it's not a pro-





# Eighty-Three

blem of being anti-capitalist or anti-industrial or anti-anything. The real problem is that when you do something you have to be morally responsible for it. And there is no excuse. I think the problem of capitalism is certainly one but it's not the main problem because whatever system you claim to change capitalism or get rid of capitalism has never achieved that. Quite the contrary. It has very much been instrumental in radicalizing these tendencies towards pontification of purely accounting values rather than moral values. Purely numerical values. And I don't know whether industrialization is a sign, a cause, or an effect of the moral decadence of the European and then the rest of the world. So sad.

So one doesn't really know how it was possible suddenly to give up moral concerns and principles which transcended, really, epochs and cultures; which had nothing to do with being Christian or Jewish or Greek. But there was an essential concern which was always the same, I think, in our philosophy, in our theology. There was the same concern with the moral responsibility of the individual. And suddenly, for that to be given up - I haven't found out yet what caused it and I don't think anybody really has.

This very great problem nobody can solve, even individually, because the education you get is completely against this taking of responsibility. And also the modern conception of history is really that the individual doesn't, is not able to, do anything against history; that history is a big machine and it runs in one direction which we can't change and if you go outside that machine you just make yourself a bit ridiculous.

I think the fundamental problem came with the change in conception of the universe. From the Renaissance onward there was a very strong tendency to consider the universe as a machine; a very complex machine which we didn't understand yet entirely. But potentially there was a possibility for human intelligence to understand the machine in all its complexity, in all of its parts, and at a certain moment to intervene in the working of the parts and also in the overall construction of that machine. That was sustained, I mean, basically, by Descartes and by Newton

but was also, I think, very much at the basis of thinkers like Hegel, maybe, and Marx.

Another philosophy which I find terribly important was that of one of the last great universal thinkers, I think, Leibnitz. Leibnitz was a mathematician. He's most famous for his development of calculus. He was very important in many matters. He was basically also a theologian and a philosopher and he criticized very strongly that mechanical concept of nature. He said however close or however far you look at nature you always see about the same amount of complexity; but the further you penetrate that complexity it will always reveal new complexity of the same



order and of the same vastness. Even if you build the hugest machine, if you look at the infinitely small, you will just see a surface, an outside of something which is infinitely more small. Each part of the machine is yet again an infinitely complex machine. Whereas Descartes, and what became known as rational thinking, said that if you blow up half of this machine very big and you project it on the wall, you will suddenly see a huge member which is part of that machine and you can touch it and you can say that is the member of that machine and there is nothing else to it but its own characteristics. I think that, morally, it creates a very different attitude and a much greater modesty towards nature which is that there is

something we don't know: why we're here. Nobody knows. You can sit together five million intelligent people and they will not find out why we're here. This is something fundamentally mysterious and unexplained.

And so this arrogance of the scientists - I do not mean now the very great scientists but the people who go for science as an industrial means to develop the planet and resources - this incredibly cold-blooded arrogance that whatever you do will be for the best of us all no matter how many people you massacre meanwhile. And I think, also, architects have very much that attitude. They are educated that they are able to function within a certain legislation - not to question it at all. They learn certain things - what you can do and what you can't do - and then they are let loose in the world. The result is what you see was built in the last thirty years in Europe. It's just as well it would not be there. And if it was not there, nobody would miss it. However, if other things disappeared, a lot of people would miss it, and that is why there is this incredible discontent and awareness now growing against destruction.

Fundamentally, whatever is being done outside in the world is not necessarily real because reality is something which is more than just something to touch. It must have quality and in that we can only look at nature and how it reveals itself in its abstract concepts and in its order.

I think, therefore, it's very important to understand the basic problems of philosophy because they haven't changed in the last thousand years. I think you should never read books about philosophy, but always the people themselves because it is much easier to read Aristotle or Plato - the greater thinkers, even Jesus Christ. People who write about them complicate the issues usually and put too many arguments. So I think it's very important to sit back and think for a while. They are the highest examples of human intelligence and awareness we have. I wouldn't go to school for that. You should just read it and if you have difficulties, you have to think about it. It's very easy to do that. If you really work at it, it will be as if you go to the toilet - you activate the chain and it



feels like a shower going through your head and just the main things remain.

I think it's very good for architects to think. It creates a modesty which is very important and which will also reveal that we are at a very low level of culture and also of artistic sensibility, of awareness of what beauty is. Beauty, today, is purely taught as historical category. It's removed from its instrumental value. After all, these people who wrote about beauty knew that people are apt not only to understand what beauty is, but - at an age where the awareness of beauty vanishes - are able to recapture and re-understand what beauty is and how they can also make it. I think the discourse is very universal and you shouldn't expect, if you read these people, that by tomorrow you know.

And I think in our lifetime there won't be any great architects. It's not possible. There will be no great painters. Because great artists can only come after a time when the awareness, the intelligence of basic categories is so natural that by the time you are fifteen years you really know how to make great art. It's so natural that you don't even question it. Then there may be people who come and just with a stroke of a brush make genial things which will be remembered for another thousand years.

But now a single individual will not be able to do that because we have no art ourselves. One can say, of course, there are a lot of artists who produce art and they put sculptures everywhere. They make big buildings therefore one can say there is art and architecture. Because there are artists and architects, they do not necessarily produce art and architecture. Today people automatically conclude, because there are so many artists and architects who have even diplomas and the greatest achievements as far as institutional evaluation goes, that we are in a great artistic epoch. But I think it's quite the contrary. If you really see a great work that just moves you overwhelmingly, you may conclude perhaps that there is a great artist behind it. That does not mean that that great artist may just have had a stroke of luck, you know.

Today, I think, is a desperate period. My work, I find, is extremely primitive as far as artistic values go. I'm not thirty-five. It took me about fifteen years to learn, myself, what is architecture at all - even the names of things. If I had to describe all the profiles in a column, I couldn't describe it like I describe a meal although I have now been occupying myself with these problems for the last fifteen years. You see this incredible problem of intelligence which also prevents, then, artistic maturity to arrive.

The machine which now, of course, is put in place of art has very little value. One can measure that with the example of nineteenth century art which was consumed and forgotten and even hated, but which was fine art and which was extremely highly developed, I think. There was a great number of extremely talented people who worked, who really profited from thousands of years of artistic tradition. They had this advantage to still know what art was and to be trained, even technically, in such a fine way that when they were about twenty-five, they completely dominated all the mechanical and spiritual problems which confront an artist in his life-time. They were resolved by the age of about twenty or twenty-five and then you could mature as an artist.

I think a Mozart, nowadays, or a Chopin is just completely inconceivable. Mozart today would be purely occupied to probably re-invent, I don't know, the basic laws of harmony or something like that. Maybe then, if he had the chance to live for eighty years, he would write one little fantasy which would reach the genius he had achieved by the time he was five.

So the world is not that great nowadays. That does not mean that you cannot enjoy it fantastically. We have to see very carefully what it is possible,



as an individual, to do - not to get involved in projects, in great hopes, which by the time you are forty, you are disgusted by.

**Panel:** You teach or are attached to the A.A. in London.

**Krier:** I was.

**Panel:** How do you find a position as an educator if your conviction is so strongly against mass education?

**Krier:** I really learned a lot myself when I was teaching but I don't think that it

had any result, as far as education goes, for my students. Quite the contrary. My best students reacted very strongly against any kind of rational teaching. The brightest became really crazy artists. It's very strange. If you want to put things right or put things in place, you disappoint such huge expectations - which are both social and professional.

Most people become architects or artists because it has a certain social value. I'm sure that ninety per cent of people become architects because their mother, their father, their grandmother said, 'become an architect because he is both an artist and in a social position where you earn enough money bla, bla, bla and you will be considered like a priest.' Now, in the last thirty years, the profession of architecture has changed in Europe from a very high prestige to just the bottom of any status at all. That if you say for instance, now in England, that you're an architect... I never say I'm an architect if people ask me because people feel very aggressive against architects.

I was at school in Stuttgart for a few months. The only thing I found out was that everything I was taught was exactly the contrary of what architecture is and was, truthfully and fundamentally. Really, what you are taught is that you will not be able to do this and that and therefore you have to be content to do just this manner of unpleasant things. My brother had to go through school. He's much older and he had to do his diplomas to satisfy the family and so on. But by the time I came into the machine, we were all aware enough that that teaching was completely useless and also counterproductive, and therefore I was able to leave school in the first year. I just told my parents I simply can't go because I would not have been able to do the exams. I couldn't function in that system.

I looked for a master. I wanted to learn something because by the time you are twenty you are fed up, you want to know what is right and what is wrong. And I was then very much still enthused by LeCorbusier and Leger and all that kind of stuff because it felt very revolutionary, still. I was looking for somebody who could teach me and then I thought James Stirling was the only one who had done something which I found really important or had some quality. But when I went there I found that he had no security. He was jumping from one flower to the other and that, virtually, with every project he changed his belief. He was designing according to very superficial categories of industrial aspect rather than of industrial production, so, in that sense, he was still an artist - but without any vision of life. Just then he had been commissioned to design, I think it was,



eight hundred or a thousand housing units and he didn't know what to do. There were about five guys in the office who tried for six months to design shapes and nobody knew what it really was; whether they were court houses, yards, gardens, or what even the image was or should be. So it was completely looking in the darkness for fame. He had another good publication and that's, really, when I got extremely critical and also got in a terrible crisis. I told him if somebody so childish, who has no theory, gets such a big job - and he's the best man I could imagine - what are the other big offices doing? How do they confront the real problems?

Then you come to the conclusion that this industrial system only creates phantom values and phantom pressures. You always have to finish a certain thing for a certain time. A student, every three months, has to do one project. Now, with the artistic and technical ability we have, it is extremely difficult because with every project we have to learn virtually everything. Whether it is at the scale of designing a door or a city. I always found to really do something properly, the deadline is always too short. And now I've decided, because I have some comfort, that I can work to the moment I've finished. Even if I've won or lost the competition, I have to rework it no matter how much time. I have now been working on a competition I got a small prize for two years ago and it is not yet finished. Virtually everything you draw you have to learn. It's very nice if you have time but you can't work on pressure. I don't think you produce quality because judgement is so obliterated. That judgement, if you don't learn it by the time you are fifteen years old, you have to learn it just through...

I found out a very good system. If you are doing a project or a drawing or anything, it's very good to hang it on the wall to look at it, just always have it there. And then when there is something which is not right, it will irritate you very shortly. And then you will work on it until it won't irritate you. That's the dumb way towards beauty. The moment nothing will irritate you, you will probably have quite a beautiful product because only a beautiful product will leave you completely peaceful, I think.

Judgement is something, I think, you can only regain by being very relaxed and also very open-minded. Don't think about what Leger or what LeCorbusier is doing, just look at what the thing is worth. Material things, technical things become extremely important for judgement. And I found out that in school this is completely impossible if you get people who come from the most different places; from America, from Iran, from this and that, with very different

moral backgrounds. It is completely unbelievable, unthinkable that you can teach them anything within a year or within two years.

That was also the value of pre-industrial educating - of education, I would say, because I don't think there is industrial education. It just doesn't exist. It's called so, but the results are not every educative. But the relationship of the master and the pupil was a relationship of extreme care and also of love, of tenderness, and of great concern. Not only for the pupil towards the master but also from the master to the pupil. A direct human concern.

I had that chance because my brother was much older. So we had a great emotional relationship for a very long time, and which lasts on and on, because he had to go through hell, virtually, himself - or through the first ring of hell. I always could avoid. I always had a greater comfort after because he had to go through this very terrible experience. And so we had a very nice relationship and I think that is the relationship a pupil has to have with a master. It must be extremely of great concern and, therefore, one of the great principles of the medieval guilds, of those *artisanal* systems of education, was that a master must never have more employees than he can educate. That is about three or four at one time and that is already a maximum. All the rest is dilution.

My brother has now two hundred and fifty students in Italy. Some professors have a thousand students. It is completely meaningless and the outcome is tragic. And, usually, selection is much harsher than even the most elitist aristocratic societies because it is



much more brutal. That equality which we have is not so much equal opportunity for everybody, but equal opportunity for everyone to fail and only the toughest survive. And then one says, 'Oh yes, he had the same chance at the beginning' and therefore, if they fail, we just treat them like human rot.

Whereas, I think, a society which is aware of colossal differences will be much more sensitive to these differences and have more respect to what people can do. Now all of that leads towards conclusions which I haven't resolved and which can't possibly be resolved. But this we have to think very strongly about and not be so sure we have the best system which has ever been invented. That doesn't mean that you can't enjoy life colossally.

**Panel:** There must be parts of the world where industrialization hasn't had any effect at all. For instance, in Nepal. Do you find here a continuity of an older society that is undisturbed and is satisfied?

**Krier:** The things which escaped industrialization, they have escaped only for the moment. That is the tragic dimension to it. Not any of the highest cultures in Europe, or also in China or in other parts of the world, were able to confront this industrialization. But even why Europeans or North Americans, why even the dumbest of them, always feel superior, that they are the top of the world and behave as if they were... Why there is no other culture which infuses us with so much respect that we would want to imitate it, and why we don't want suddenly in Central Europe to have Nepalese temples, and why, in Nepal, petrol stations and factories begin to grow and will finally blast the place very quickly, very soon...

Industrialization is that kind of invasion of life which was not expected and because nobody expected the attack from this side or that side, nobody reacted against it.

In 1954 in France, somebody signed a treaty which led France towards that development of nuclear energy which is now the most colossal and monumental investment in history - when compared, the cathedrals or any of the great pyramids are nothing. Now, a French thinker, Michel Bosquet, who is very concerned, tried to find out who was responsible for this. So he went from one contract to the other, backwards, to find out who made the first signature which made the machine develop. And he found out that the first contract was signed by the then prime minister, Pierre Mendès-France. Mendès-France, in France, was the only politician who had never been involved in Mafia or any kind of terrible political machinations. He resigned over Dien Bien Phu. He said, 'We can't do that,' and he resigned and said, 'I'm unable to take that responsibility.' And so, he was the greatest moral character in French politics; and he signed this treaty which led to total disaster and I'm sure that it's completely out of control.

In 1954, when you were told about



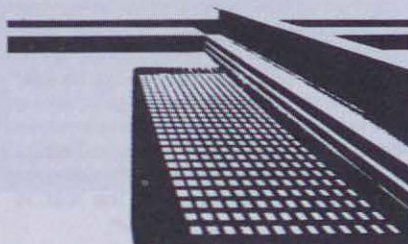
nuclear energy, scientists and technicians said this is a great thing of the future. I saw propaganda films of the English nuclear authorities saying, in a heroic voice, that in 1960 we will have developed so many stations, in 1970 so many, and in 1980 electricity will be free. And on those reports, which were signed by the greatest scientists and technicians of the time, political decisions were taken just because they believed the scientists. Now they know they were wrong and there are some scientists who begin to realize and who begin to criticize what they did themselves. But that is really to say that in 1954 nobody was capable to be critical of the nuclear program because nobody knew what it was.

In 1935, nobody in Germany could be critical of the motorway because nobody knew what it was, what it meant. In 1820, nobody could be against the railways because nobody knew what it would mean, that it would blow all the cities in Europe apart. Industrialization is always that thing which comes towards you and that you don't know what it is. And yet you are incapable to take the moral responsibility because you don't know what it is, what it will be.

I mean, if the British Parliament would have been told in 1830 - or whenever they took their decisions to let this big industry develop as far as public transport goes - what it would mean over a very long period of time, that in a hundred years it will have changed completely the nature of English cities and that it would be a system which initially was profitable but in the end would demand incredible public funding and sacrifice, probably people would have said, 'maybe we have to devise now the system. Maybe we should just reduce trains to luxuries, to develop train lines towards spas so people can have healthier lives and drink good water.' So if you want to be a good industrialist, you have to think of something which has not been there and nobody expects. It's very easy because you just have to think in a certain way and then you will win.

I mean, the man who invented Muzak - this music which goes on and on and on and has no structure, no beginning, no end, no high, no bottom, no middle, no section, nothing; it's just complete confusion of music - he discovered something which is now so present that nobody even notices it. It's in hotels, it's in houses, it's everywhere. And yet it is nothing. It has no structure. And, industrially, it was the best thing to promote. These things which have no limit, which are completely expandible, which can be spread out everywhere without anybody noticing - that is the nature, the fundamental structure of our time.

Then you find that there are very great familiarities between motorways and Muzak. Or Muzak and ketchup. Or television and curtain wall. Because they have no beginning and no end. They have no shape, they have no form. They are just something which comes off the production line and which you just cut sometimes. Nobody can say whether the Seagram Building should be two hundred and fifty metres high or whether it should be three kilometres high. It could just as well be. And who is the master who says where to cut that kind of building to make it digital? In fact, if you look at the buildings of Mies van der Rohe, you could take any house which is one storey high, you could just raise it and build it to three hundred



metres. It wouldn't change anything at all to the structure.

And yet this is fundamentally, completely contradictory to any laws of nature, which has a principle which Leibnitz called 'individuation', which is that each object is an individual. It can only exist once and it can only be there once and when it is there it will never come back. Just like we are unique but there is something universal to us that we are all the same topologically. The principle of industry is that it takes something and reproduces it identically. That's what Huxley called cloning; individuals which are taken from the same genetic material and instead of producing one child you produce five hundred. They are completely identical. And if I would go out of the room, I would come in and I may be somebody different. That's cloning. The difference is indistinguishable. And that is completely against nature. That is the greatest scandal ever done in nature, that you reproduce something identical. That you make a mold and then you cast it. That is really denying all the laws of nature. And yet that is the very principle which is at the foundation of industrial production. It's that you produce objects that you can't distinguish, which are identical to each other, and

because they are identical to each other, they have no identity. They have only been called Mach II or Ford Capri, but you can't distinguish one Ford Capri from another in terms of the production. And that is what I think is fundamentally against nature and also what will take colossal revenge on what we are doing because we created a world which is not real, which is completely abstract.

**Panel:** How do you, as closely as you can, define industrialization? The term means many things to many people. Certainly, a long time ago, before the industrial world, people were reproducing things, they were making a lot of stones to build with.

**Krier:** You can define it as the development of a means of production independent of an immediate need. If that develops towards a complete independence it also develops a completely autonomous system of production and it creates work which is extremely unpleasant. It's a universalization of toiling.

I think Hannah Arendt is very important. She distinguished three categories of work: body work, manual work, and intellectual work. Artistic work is that form of production which allows an ideal combination of manual and intellectual. The physical exercise is extremely pleasant and yet, you produce objects which have a lasting value, objects of use which outlast a generation and which have a kind of permanence.

Now, artisanal work, craftwork, was that manual work which was also highly pleasant - and I know it because my father is a tailor, and the only problems he had were with the government, who were just destroying his firm through overtaxation and so on. But I still experienced a place where there were about ten people working in very great human conditions which were extremely pleasant, which showed, by the way, that these people were very good friends in the way they were talking. It's a very quiet way of production. So, craftsmanship is a form of production where you make necessary objects of use with pleasure.

Hannah Arendt makes the fundamental difference between objects of use and objects of consumption. Objects of consumption are those you consume immediately like an apple or anything the metabolism needs for immediate survival and reconstruction. Objects of use are those with which you build the human world. They are artificial objects but which create a world which is human. She said that human beings are basically alien to nature. They can't live in nature. They have to build their own objects. We are not like cats.



Now, craftwork is that work which is extremely pleasant but which is also very comfortable. You don't have great problems of creativity because it is work, really, for private use. It has no great public status. Whereas art is really public. It creates values which are public values which everybody admires because they reach a higher degree of awareness of our condition, I think, and also of beauty, of solidity.

Whereas toiling, she says, is purely body work, where pleasure, virtually, doesn't come into account, like primitive forms of agriculture. Sheer physical work like digging out graves.

Industrialization is that condition where unpleasant work becomes the universal condition of all human production. But even now, in the condition of industrialization, artists subject themselves, without being asked, to that industrial alienation. Then you have artists who do these most alienating works of art - what are called 'works of art' - in which you see that the man can't have had pleasure, because it's so abstract and something so minimal, as far as intellectual investment goes, that it couldn't have been done with pleasure. And yet, she says - not only her, she does an analysis of other occidental thinkers - that a work of art can only exist if it has been done with pleasure, because pleasure and beauty are extremely linked. There can be no beauty which is not conceived somewhere in pleasure. Sometimes it takes pain, but even pain can be very close to pleasure. But it's completely different from industrial work where you go everyday to a place where you know they are going to tear your guts and your brains out. And if you go through that for thirty years, you are not a human being anymore. You have never developed the capacities which you have been given by nature.

Industrialization is that stage where this unpleasantness becomes the universal condition - although it's unnecessary. All the excuses which one brings up with demographic explosion are not true because European society has not grown demographically in the last thirty years. It has reached an absolute top. So there would be the possibility of now installing structures which would create objects which would have a greater permanence. Yet the contrary is being done. Objects of use are more and more being taken over by industry and becoming objects of consumption. So you do not only consume pears and bread but you consume now entire cities.

If you go to places like St. Louis, you see that that city is being completely consumed. It doesn't exist anymore. It is complete ruin. You can drive for hours and hours diagonally and criss-

cross the city and it is just an eternal wasteland like Detroit, like the Bronx in New York and so on. Yet, twenty miles from there, one is building a completely new city. But in twenty years that place will also be a place of total devastation.

And that is a tragic dimension because now an average single generation has to do work which can only be done by several generations. That is why it becomes extremely superficial or unpleasant and why it also becomes unbearable for the next generation to see; because if something is done with shoddiness, it can't have permanence. You can make the most solid structure,



it will not be permanent if it has not beauty because nobody will be interested to keep it.

Now, one of the tragic situations is that you can have today the most beautiful object and because of the moral incapacity of people to judge, they don't even see anymore what is beautiful. You can tear down the most beautiful buildings and replace them by the greatest nonsense, as far as art and aesthetics go. You have criteria of urgency or necessity... that is where, really, people have lost their senses. Where they have become blinded and unable to smell or really judge what is pleasant.

**Panel:** What did the public think of your Luxembourg counter-proposal? How did it go?

**Krier:** It was great because Culot had organized a fantastic publicity campaign. Luxembourg is a very small place - 300,000 inhabitants - but it is very complex. It has about six daily papers. Can you imagine? Just 300,000 people. It's a country which has cities, which has a beautiful landscape, which has mountains, and which has plains. It has everything. It's like a miniature world. And so, when you do something, you immediately reach everybody. You can organize a press conference and the whole of the press is there. And because they really love writing about things, you give them a text and they just change the commas. So they filled the papers for a few weeks.

It was a fantastic occasion. It was a great reward for my toiling because there was no one who disagreed. 'It's the right thing. What should one do? How can you proceed? What's the next step?' I said, 'I just offer you a solution. What to do about it, I don't know. I'm not a politician. I'm not a developer. I just offer you instruments.'

I occasionally go back every two years to do a few lectures and I think it creates an awareness that not everything is right, now, but that there are disasters which are each and anybody's responsibility and that maybe one can bring a crisis to a boiling point where they ask who can resolve it. And so, I would offer my services to do that.

I think most people agreed because I just confirmed what they were saying. The only thing I tried to do was prove that people were right in their feelings, however stupid their argument. They said, 'Taillibert, it's inhuman.' It's not an argument which has value because then three other specialists say, 'No, it's the only thing which is now human. It's progressive. It's liberty. It's creativity. It's everything.' So I just tried to prove, with what they had, why they were right to say this is wrong, because they didn't know how to articulate it. By comparing to the existing situation which is beautiful and which they are losing. But if that situation is beautiful, it's not because it's natural to have a beautiful environment, but because there have been so many generations who cared for and who were extremely sensitive and intelligent and also made the greatest effort to build up this environment. Now, if we take that for granted, it's to our own disadvantage because if we don't respect it, it will have disappeared in two generations and then there will be nothing left. And then it's even worse than starting from scratch because we are so alienated and so far away from any good sense that, I think, it's something which is completely without issue, without possible positive outcome.

The populist approach is also a very dangerous one because if you take people's judgement as the supreme judgement... If an architect is a good architect, or if a town planner is a good town planner, there is no need for people to protest because he does his job well and people respect him and he will earn a lot of money and he will be remembered. That has been done with all the great architects and artists and they are venerated like gods, almost. But if you are a bad artist and you pretend to be a good one, you can make a lot of money but you will be punished by a bad conscience and by disrespect and by a lack of comfort in the society. We are still, now, at the moment where people realize that something has gone



wrong, but they are not yet capable to judge what should be done.

We sent to all politicians a book explaining all the elements of the analysis and of the project. What could be done. And it's extremely simple to do because it could be done by political decisions which don't involve disappointing anybody. No expropriations. Nothing. It doesn't hurt anybody.

Town planning and architecture is something which creates values. If you use that human labor to build something beautiful and something solid, it will be a value. It will be a real value which has not existed before. It will be a new value and that value will have a certain permanence if it is beautiful, solid and comfortable. All the good classical objectives. If you don't do that, it will have none of these qualities and you will lose values. But that will take time for people to realize. Or even if they don't realize, it will be too bad.

But now the situation has become so ridiculous that people disbelieve architects and in Europe there's a huge demand for participation. People say, 'Because architects are so bad, we want to participate,' and they form committees and they want to have a say. And so, an architect, who wants to do anything nowadays in a European city, has to present his project to big committees and even the butcher has a say. The same say. They can say, 'No I don't like this,' or 'I want my car park here.' That's total Babel. It's complete confusion.

It's impossible to think in a committee. If we were to think here about something, we would have to go back, each of us, and think and then maybe we could come out with something intelligent, and present it. A committee cannot possibly do something which is intelligent and yet these participation rounds claim that they are going to create a better environment.

If engineers were unable to build airplanes that fly, committees would not be able to resolve the problem. Committees will say engineers are wrong because they build airplanes which fall down or which can't fly, and then there would be a demand for participation. But there is no demand because engineers build airplanes which fly. So if architects make houses which are real houses, there wouldn't be any need for participation. And, after all, we look back on a few thousand years of architectural culture, of the highest achievements of art and architecture. So someone should be able to do something but...

**Panel:** One thing you might explain, because there may be a misconception

about it, is how do you spend your time?

**Krier:** I had to leave teaching because of my health. It made me very ill and I got very bad headaches. The doctor said whenever you get that sort of thing there's something wrong with your work. When I told him I was teaching, he told me to just give up teaching. I told him that it was 'the only thing I earned my money from. He said give up teaching or have ulcers, so I gave that up.

I had a lot of projects for authorities in Germany, and in France, too, which earned a bit of money. Because I do things myself, alone, I don't have any problems with people. I don't have discussions. I just do things until they're right and all by myself. It's very easy because an individual can do most of the things which are required nowadays from a planner. Just by doing it peacefully. It's interesting because you can earn a lot of money which otherwise is lost in big office problems and teamwork. It is a colossal *gaspillage*, teamwork, because you waste so much energy in just bringing human differences together or ironing them out, that they're counterproductive. It's enough if I do a project every two years which earns me some money so I can live. Usually I work on it for six months so I can live for two years. It's very pleasant. But before that, I usually put the conditions so that my work will be accepted for what it is.

Usually you find enough people who are in authority - and usually it's administrators and politicians - who have great awareness of the catastrophe we are in. They don't have any illusions because they have nothing to excuse themselves for. They don't have terrible drawings they did twenty years ago that they had to burn. So they know exactly when art is just useless, or when architecture is bad, because they see with very cold eyes. So these people are very often quite rational and they go along, if you really argue something very rationally. There are many projects where I demonstrated to the local senate or the authority of a new town that they were fundamentally wrong and that my project was right. So they had to agree. They had to pay me. And yet they say, 'We are sorry. You are right. We will pay you but we can't build your stuff although you are right. We know you are right.'

I had one very big project in France for a school and I needed a budget which would have been about double to build it decently. If you wanted to build the materials I presented, it would have been two hundred percent more expensive. Which is not very much because, after all, Taillibert, his budgets go over two thousand times. But if you want to

do something reasonable, it's very difficult to ally the great amount of the people because people understand it and therefore they say, 'Oh, but we can't have this.' If you mystify the problem, you say this must be so expensive because of this and that and inflation... If you don't have the truth you will unify people behind you. Just by lying. But I don't want to get involved with these problems because I won't survive just healthwise.

I found out that a very good combination of working is writing and drawing because I usually get very angry when I do a project and then I can write very well after. Culot commissioned me to do a series of books and I concentrated and I haven't done any drawings in two years. I got so frustrated because writing - the sort of writing which I want to do - is already something more abstract than drawing because drawing may be an abstract thing - it's two dimensional - but it's very much related to the real world. Whereas philosophy is the highest degree of abstraction and universality and if you don't have a colossal gifted mind for that it leads you to terrible frustration. And I just had to learn for two years how to write. And I found out that the combination of drawing and writing is a good combination.

**Panel:** What sort of books are they?

**Krier:** They're called *The Six Books of Reconstruction* which also try to link the idea of reconstruction to philosophy and science and to situate architecture in a very broad moral landscape. I found out that the work I did ten years ago was still very abstract because what I drew I was learning. I could only draw things which I had understood; so, I couldn't draw a cornice because I didn't know how it was built and what it was there for. I didn't know what a modillion meant or where an ovolo motif came from and what it really signified. So, now, my projects have become more and more real and to do these books I will rework old projects. They won't be changed but I will just add the things which have been missing and maybe sometimes even explain why this has been done so.

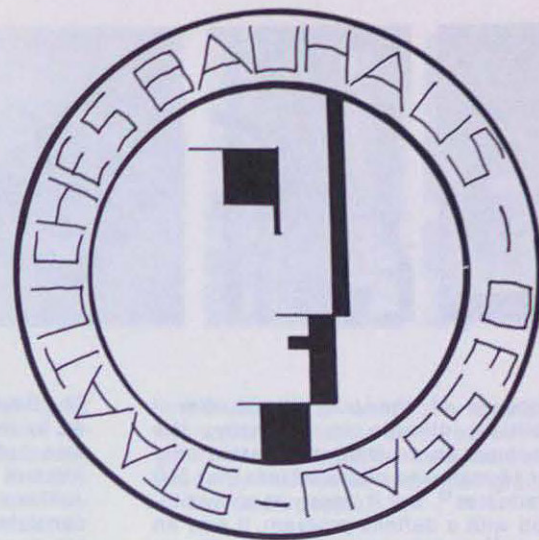
The books are extremely simple. They're like school books and they explain how the system works from the smallest part to the larger. It's rational. Rationalism really came about in the eighteenth, nineteenth century when the world was already falling that much apart that some people thought the only way to keep it together was to gather knowledge in some form, so that it's possible to learn not from direct empirical experience, but just by taking books. With books you are able to recapture all this knowledge. But it is already a great simplification of the moral and sensuous world of feeling...



...a useless aquarium which became a centre for the Nazi war machine...

# the Bauhaus story

by Vikram Bhatt



signet of the staatliche bauhaus - 1922

During the First World War, Henry van de Velde, founder of the School of Arts and Crafts at Weimar, being a foreigner (Belgian), felt himself increasingly persecuted in the xenophobic atmosphere in Germany and decided to leave the country.<sup>1</sup> In 1915 he wrote to Walter Gropius asking him to take over the directorship of the School, but it was not until 1919 that Gropius was formally offered the directorship of the School of Arts and Crafts which was now part of the Grand Ducal Academy of Arts.<sup>2</sup>

In a letter written to a state official at the time of accepting the directorship, Gropius wrote, "...Before I accept this honourable appointment, it will be necessary to call to the attention of the proper authorities that the momentary financial situation does not promise favourable working conditions. In the following, I am presenting a closely calculated account of the necessary expenditures."<sup>3</sup> A look at the budget shows that 'the momentary financial situation' was indeed bad; in his total 1919-1920 budget of DM 163,000.00 the support requested, apart from fee income, was DM 123,400.00, a mere 75.71%!<sup>4</sup>

The School of Arts and Crafts which Gropius had taken over and which was to become *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar* on the forty-second day after his request for financial assistance, was thus, even before it was born, dependent on state funds, and 'the momentary financial situation' persisted until the closing of the school in 1933. Moreover, the considerable financial assistance which the Bauhaus received during its entire existence insured that the fate of the institute remained tied to the whim of the politicians in control of public funds.

Some of these politicians, however, were supportive, among them, Max Greil, a State Minister in Thuringen. During the early years of the *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar*, he remained loyal to the institution, protected it from the attacks of other politicians and above all was a help in keeping the state funds flowing. 1924 brought a rightist government to power in Thuringen. State financial support for the *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar* was slashed to half of what Gropius considered essential for running the institution and in December of that year a declaration of dissolution was made by the Faculty.<sup>5</sup> However, in Dr. Fritz Hesse, the lord Mayor of Dessau, the Bauhaus found another saviour. Within three months of the dissolution, Dr. Hesse had successfully obtained approval from the city council of Dessau (1927 population 70,000)<sup>6</sup> for an annual subsidy of up to DM 100,000.00, as well as additional money for a new building for the institute. The new Bauhaus at Dessau was to incorporate the municipal school of arts and crafts and was also to incorporate an existing technical school in the city. The *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar* thus moved to Dessau in 1925. Within a year a new building complex designed by Gropius and also known as the Bauhaus was completed.



signet 1919-1921

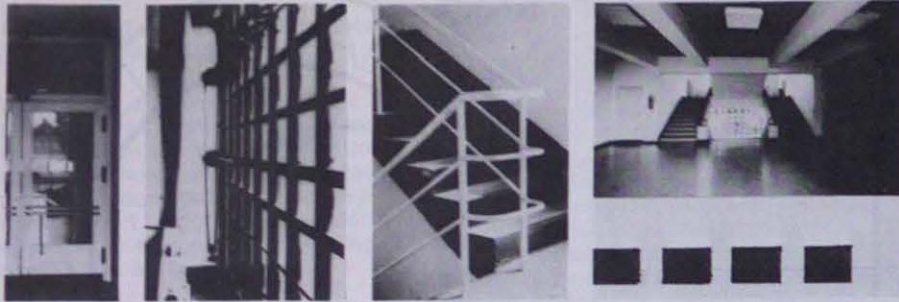
After I had already found my own ground in architecture before the First World War, as evidenced in the Fagus building of 1911 and in Cologne Werkbund Exhibition in 1914 (Germany), the full consciousness of my responsibility as an architect, based on my own reflections, came to me as a result of the First World War, during which my theoretical premises first took shape.<sup>7</sup>

I became obsessed by the conviction that modern constructional techniques could not be denied expression in architecture and that that expression demanded the use of unprecedented forms.<sup>8</sup>

It was in the new buildings for the Bauhaus at Dessau, that Gropius' pre-war architectural experience and post-war theoretical maturing came together.

The fate of the Bauhaus at Dessau was in good hands as long as Mayor Hesse's power base was secure. In 1932, however, the National Socialist German Workers (Nazi) Party became powerful in the city council. The funds for the Bauhaus, which in the eyes of the National Socialists was a "Jewish-Marxist institute of design",<sup>9</sup> were cut off and the institute at Dessau closed. Mies van der Rohe, who was director of the institute, tried to continue the work of the Bauhaus, as a private school, in Berlin. However, by 1933, the lack of financial assistance from the state compounded by harassment from the National Socialists (by now the party in power in Germany) proved insurmountable and this institute, too, had to close down.





the workshop wing - 1926



cost of furnishing was DM 126,000,00.00.<sup>13</sup>

Because of the post World War I political climate in Germany, the Bauhaus as an institution lasted only for 14 years and produced less than 500 graduates<sup>10</sup>, but it "was not an institution with a definite program, it was an idea"<sup>11</sup> and the spirit lives on, almost fifty years after the institution was closed.

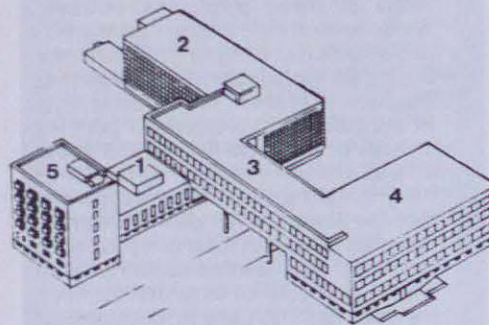
### The Building

The life story of the Bauhaus building at Dessau is remarkable. Unlike the institution which it was designed to house, it has assumed many colours, it lived through severe changes of political climate, and survived. And in all likelihood it will be with us for generations to come.

The building, built in 1926, was, in my opinion, the ultimate architectural manifestation of what that institution stood for. The Weimar announcement expressed it this way:

The complete building is the final aim of the visual arts. Their noblest function was once the decoration of buildings. Today they exist in isolation, from which they can be rescued only through the conscious, co-operative effort of all craftsmen. Architects, painters and sculptors must recognize anew the composite character of a building as an entity. Only then will their work be imbued with the architectonic spirit which it has lost as *salon art*.<sup>12</sup>

The Bauhaus building was commissioned by the City of Dessau in 1925, and was built in a relatively open north-western part of the city near the Junkers Aircraft Factory. The building consisted of five main parts: a single storey auditorium, stage and dining hall wing including the main entrance foyer to the building complex (1); a three and

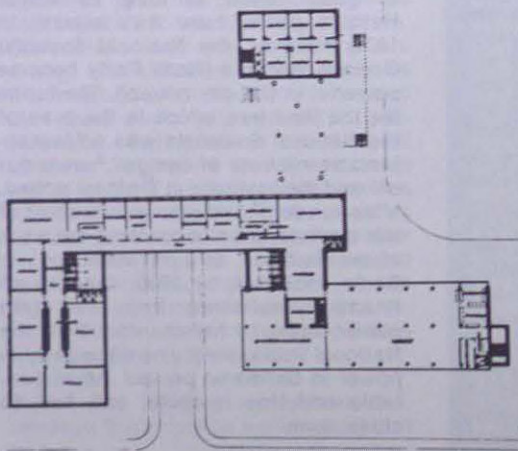


the bauhaus building

a half storey building containing laboratory, workshop and classroom space (2) - studio space in present architectural terms - whose upper two floors are connected via a bridge (3) containing two floors of administrative offices to the technical school (4), which is also three and a half storeys high and has a separate entrance; a five and a half floor studio wing (5) next to the dining area of the auditorium. The building occupies about 28,300 square feet. The total construction cost amounted to DM 902,500,000.00 and the

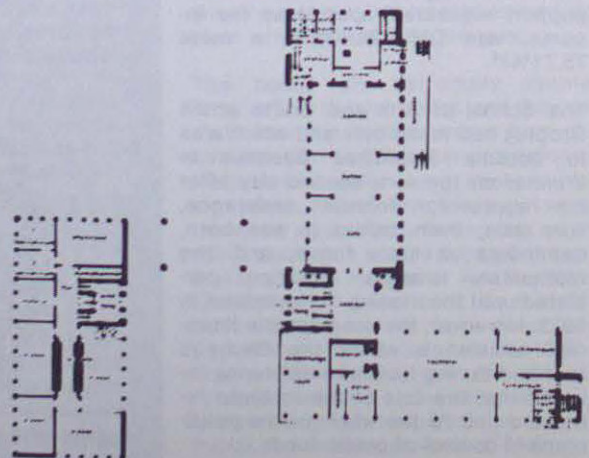
When the National Socialists succeeded in stopping the flow of funds from the city to the Bauhaus, the city council representative Mr. Hofmann proposed that the building itself be demolished. That motion was defeated in the council by a vote of 25 to 15<sup>14</sup>, but the National Socialists were unwilling to accept defeat, as is illustrated in the following which appeared in the pro-Nazi newspaper *Anhalter Tageszeitung*, Dessau, on 10 July 1932:

...since the National Socialists will probably not be able to get a majority for the proposed demolition of the institute buildings, efforts will have to be made, for the time being, to use the building for other purposes. This is likely to be very difficult, since the glass and steel skeleton structure can be used neither for educational nor for health facilities, nor for administrative or industrial purposes. Maintenance...will put such a heavy financial strain on any owner that only **nabobs** (my emphasis) would be able to afford such luxury. Whether one likes it or not, then, some day the building will have to be taken down...may the total demolition follow soon



plan b - second floor

plan a - ground floor



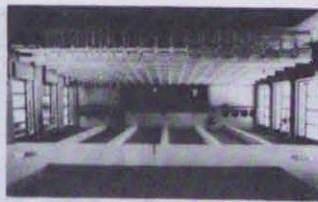




and may on the same spot where today stands the somber glass palace of oriental taste, the 'aquarium', as it has been popularly dubbed in Dessau, soon rise homesteads and parks that will provide German people with home and places for relaxation. 'The robe has fallen, the Duke must follow.'<sup>15</sup>

After closing the Bauhaus in 1932, and until 1938, the building was used as a technical school, a trade school for construction, a home economics school for girls and at one time as an office for the National Socialists.<sup>16</sup> According to Dr. Georg Opitz, the present Director of the Scientific and Cultural Centre of the Bauhaus, when I met him in Dessau this summer, after 1938 the technical school wing was still used as such but virtually all the remaining space was taken over by the Third Reich. The laboratory workshop classroom space being converted into an aircraft design shop for the Junkers factory down the road, and the rest occupied by the S.S. supervisory staff. What an irony of fate: this useless 'aquarium' now became a centre for the Nazi war machine. A new robe was made up for the Duke, the S.S. nabobs were coming!

Dessau, at the end of the Second World War, was more than 84% destroyed,<sup>17</sup> as a result of air raids, but the Bauhaus buildings suffered relatively little damage. Only the laboratory, workshop and classroom wing, enclosed in a steel and glass curtain wall, was badly damaged. The structural frame of the building however was still safe, and the curtain wall portion was eventually bricked in. In the early post-war period (1945-1946) Dr. Hesse was reinstated as Mayor of Dessau and he tried to re-open the Bauhaus with the help of a former Bauhaus member, Professor Hubert Hoffmann. According to Hoffmann's account, Dr. Hesse was able to help in the restoration of the building and he succeeded in having it declared a historical property. During these years (and later as I learned from Dr. Opitz)



the workshop wing - 1958

the Bauhaus building was mainly used as a school premises where five different schools ran in shifts.<sup>18</sup> However, under the subsequent Soviet Russian army occupation, Dr. Hesse and Professor Hoffmann, despite their best efforts, were never able to reopen the Bauhaus.

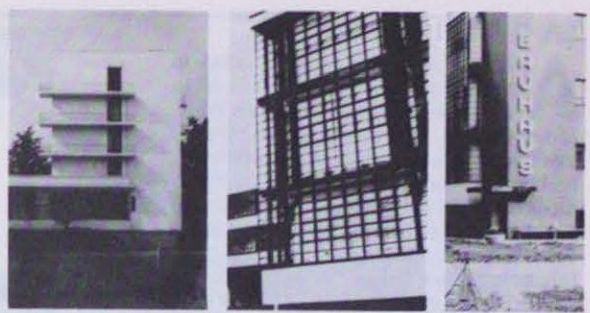
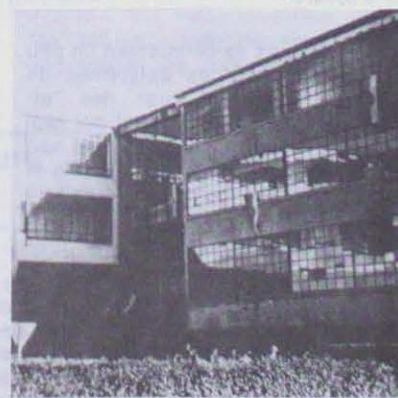
So, until 1976, the Bauhaus building remained in its early post-war condition. The genuine restoration of the building was initiated by Dr. Paul, the state architect in Dessau. For the restoration, help was sought from two former Bauhaus students: Professor Konrad Puschel of Weimar and Professor Selman Selmangic of Berlin. Sixty students from the Weimar School of Architecture and Engineering and engineers from Dessau also participated in the process. The restoration work as of September 1982 (when I was in Dessau) was almost complete. At present, the building is used for the following functions:

- The Bauhaus archives and exhibition (open to the public);
- An experimental centre for building design and architecture (Bauhaus);
- A cultural centre;
- A teachers training school;
- A technical school;
- A home economics school for girls.

After looking at the quality of restoration, and the pride and care shown by the people involved in re-building the Bauhaus building, I had the profound

#### dessau 1965

main entrance of the bauhaus with incorrectly reconstructed glass panel



impression that while the Bauhaus story was certainly coloured by the politics of the times, its real history was made by individuals and small groups of dedicated people.

#### Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Hahn of The Bauhaus Archives museum in Berlin in facilitating my visit to Dessau, Dr. Georg Opitz, Director Scientific and Cultural Centre of the Bauhaus at Dessau for providing much information on the pre and post-war use and restoration work of the building and my friend Professor Chan for taking me around Germany.

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## LA QUESTION SOCIALE

**A**vant de vouloir s'engager dans le débat sur l'Architecture et la Politique, ne devrait-on pas s'interroger sur les fondements culturels de ces deux notions? Ou plus précisément, ne devons-nous pas admettre que nous attachons trop rapidement à ces notions des 'institutions' constituées et émancipées des profondeurs anthropologiques, d'où elles s'élèvent vers les 'lumières' de la Culture savante, pour se présenter à nous totalement naturalisées dans leurs fonctions sociales. Or, ce qui dérange ces rapports de complémentarité entre l'Architecture et la Politique, en particulier dans leur travail de Représentation, c'est ce que l'on désigne par la *Question sociale* depuis le XVIIIe siècle<sup>1</sup>. L'Architecture comme institution ne peut plus se limiter à donner ses formes aux institutions de la Politique pour leur conférer une grandeur sociale. Cette crise de la Représentation ne peut se comprendre en dehors d'une recherche plus générale sur la fonction symbolique dans le champ culturel. De plus, cette crise devient elle-même le sujet des contributions construites et discursives aux théories nouvelles de l'Architecture comme production intellectuelle spécifique. C'est dans ce contexte que je propose d'ouvrir le débat directement sur la question sociale et ses rapports au symbolique dans l'Architecture contemporaine.

## COMMUNICATION ET CULTURE

Dans son ouvrage, *La structure absente*, Umberto Eco nous rappelle en quoi l'architecture se conforme aux conditions de réalisations du message de masse: elle est persuasive, psychagogique, reçue dans l'inattention, supporte des signifiés aberrants, coercitive, donc menant à l'irresponsabilité, rapidement obsolète, totalement insérée dans l'échange marchand. Mais elle comporte quelque chose en plus: elle informe aussi sur la manière dont elle a décidé de susciter et de dénoter les fonctions, c'est-à-dire que les stimuli en architecture sont en même temps producteurs d'une idéologie de l'habitat<sup>2</sup>. Dans ce contexte, on comprend mieux la fascination pour des jeux pratiques de formes traités par analogie comme des jeux de langages, cherchant à inventer de nouvelles réthoriques. Cette analogie est dénoncée par Jacques Guillerme qui voit dans le recours que font les architectes à la linguistique, le signal de la présence d'un champ aveugle que ce groupe professionnel en crise cherche à investir au nom de la science et d'une expertise spécifique au plan de la communication sociale, afin de résister à l'impérialisme des ingénieurs:

*As a result, the invasion of the language or criticism by the syn-*



*tagm, architecture language, can be seen to mark, in the first instance, the disappearance of that about which one could no longer reasonably speak (classical Architecture,) except in terms of Archaeology, and subsequently, to mark the place of something about which one does not know how to speak at all.<sup>3</sup>*

L'architecture comme production culturelle dans une société informationnelle présente la difficulté de se laisser séduire par une définition restrictive de la culture en terme de communication. Cette tendance à la négation d'un fond commun de culture, à la négation de l'histoire sociale, est aussi une difficulté chez les sémioticiens ainsi que le rappelle Argidas Julien Greimas:

Il n'est d'ailleurs pas étonnant de constater que les sémioticiens qui avaient essayé de rapprocher les deux concepts, *Communication* et *Culture*, et de fonder sur la théorie de l'information une sémiotique culturelle, ont vite abandonné cette voie.<sup>4</sup>

Et il ajoute:

Les cultures se définissent un peu à la manière des épistémés de Michel Foucault, par des 'attitudes' qu'elles adoptent par rapport à leurs propres signes et non par rapport aux textes culturels et encore moins, comme on aurait pu s'y attendre, par rapport aux codes de communications utilisés.<sup>5</sup>

Comprendre la fonction symbolique de l'architecture nous apparaît, après ce détour, beaucoup plus complexe que le simple rapport qui unirait une 'volonté artistique' à un destinataire en attente.

## LES FORMES DE LA CULTURE

Les sciences de la Culture cherchent à définir celle-ci par des oppositions, pourtant la *question sociale* articulée à l'*architecture* comme pratique signifiante ne peut se contenter de l'opposition tactique entre 'culture vécue' et 'culture représentée', ce débat ayant occupé déjà le début du siècle en terme de 'peur du nouveau' et de résistance des modes de vie comme le décrit Anatole Knopp dans son ouvrage sur l'architecture de la période stalinienne:

Pendant les années vingt, c'était la vie collective, les nouveaux condensateurs sociaux: le club ouvrier, la Maison-commune, l'usine nouvelle, qui allaient permettre et la construction du socialisme et l'apparition de cet homme nouveau caractéristique du nouveau régime. L'industrialisation, étape considérée comme nécessaire sur la voie du socialisme devrait aussi être le résultat de ces rapports nouveaux entre les hommes favorisés par les condensateurs sociaux créés par les architectes d'avant-garde des années vingt. Au cours des années trente, il en sera tout autrement. Les conditions favorables à l'industrialisation ne seront plus considérées comme devant résulter d'une organisation collective du mode de vie, facilitant la vie quotidienne et élevant la conscience de classe des masses. C'est à la famille traditionnelle qu'il incombera, comme autrefois, de donner à ses membres le goût de l'effort et du travail bien fait.<sup>6</sup>

La réflexion critique ne peut pas non plus se limiter à l'opposition entre 'culture populaire' et 'culture bourgeoise' car celle-ci ne peut se défaire du concept de 'lutte de classe'



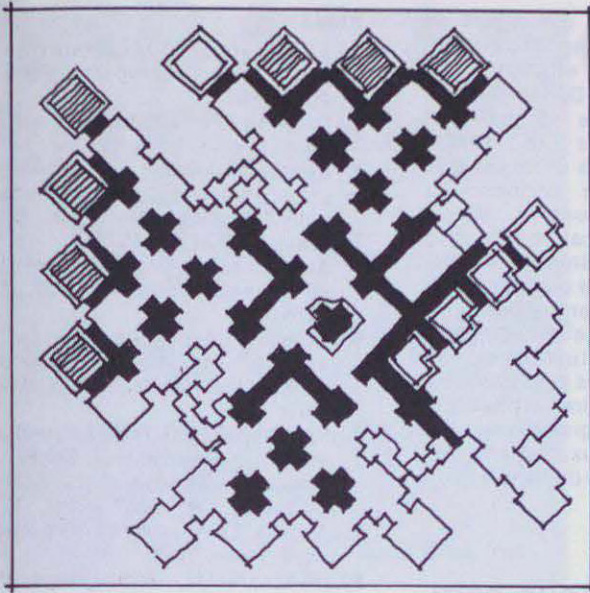


Figure 2

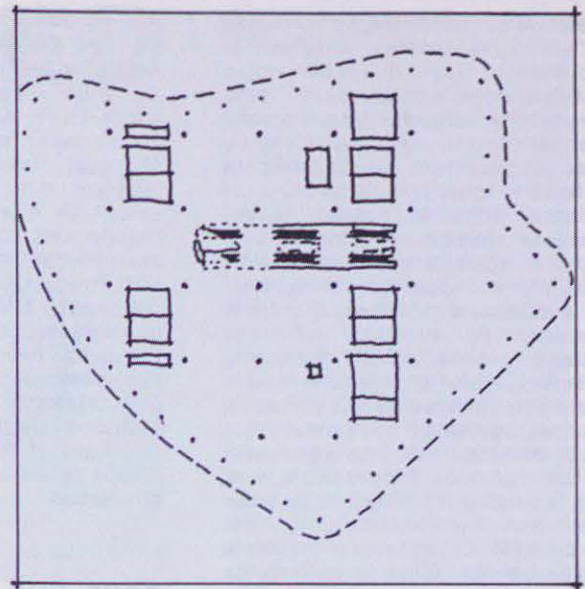


Figure 3

et du déterminisme économique qu'il recouvre dans la pratique politique. Par ailleurs la distinction entre 'culture populaire' et 'culture de masse' est essentielle car elles ne peuvent se confondre. Pour tenter de clarifier cette distinction, je propose, à ce stade, de situer dans l'espace public les configurations culturelles produites par l'histoire sociale. (Figure 1)

Ce tableau synoptique offre l'avantage de nous montrer clairement que la tension politique et économique entre culture populaire et culture bourgeoise passe par la fonction idéologique de la **culture de masse** comme culture 'réellement dominante'. L'Architecture comme pratique signifiante ne peut se penser en dehors de cette problématique et sans occulter son appartenance à la 'culture représentée'.

### LE DEBAT CRITIQUE

Le courant européen de 'l'Architecture urbaine', tel qu'il apparaît en particulier en Italie, se définit comme critique et fonde sa pratique sur 'la longue durée' que représentent les établissements humains et la mémoire collective des habitants. Il se tourne donc vers le caractère opératoire du construit en tant que 'monument' et vers la 'tradition artistique'. Mais ce mouvement man-

que totalement le passage des formes archéologiques dans une civilisation de l'image et du message. Il démontre plutôt une démarche élitiste et cynique face à la culture populaire dont il élimine la singularité au profit d'une culture savante de l'urbain. Au contraire, la démarche des Architectes de la ville de Bologne, démarche restauratrice du construit et instauratrice de nouveaux usages de construit axés sur l'échange symbolique, possède un caractère critique et opératoire manifeste pour la culture urbaine vécue. Ces deux attitudes qui s'appuient sur la même rationalité déglagée des positivités du XIXe et éclairée par l'économie, les sciences humaines et l'histoire, diffèrent: la première cherche à maintenir le statut **d'oeuvre** au construit, la seconde le situe résolument dans le passé, par opposition au statut **de produit** du construit aujourd'hui, découvrant ainsi la question de l'appropriation de l'espace à toute la collectivité habitante<sup>7</sup>. En ce sens et derrière les apparences, cette réponse est totalement tributaire du mouvement moderne. Elle est complémentaire à celle qu'expose Henri Ciriani à propos de son travail en ville nouvelle:

Je refuse catégoriquement de reproduire les morphologies ur-

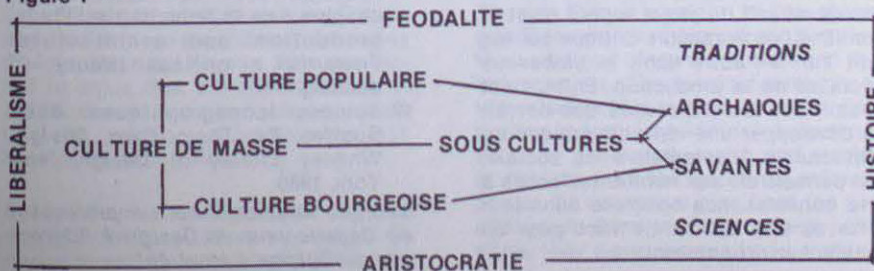
baines du passé comme moyen de retrouver l'urbanité perdue. Je refuse le mimétisme en architecture parce qu'il aboutit à la théâtralisation des espaces qu'il engendre. Apprenons à construire la ville contemporaine sans pour autant oublier les leçons de l'histoire.<sup>8</sup>

Si la prise en charge de l'urbain dans la problématique architecturale constitue une nécessité théorique et pratique, ceci ne doit pas nous dissimuler une autre réduction simpliste qui situerait l'habitation dans la **sphère privée** par opposition à la ville qui serait la **sphère publique** de l'expérience culturelle. Si l'habitation participe de plus en plus aujourd'hui à "la sphère apparemment croissante de la souveraineté individuelle", c'est en "échange de la dépossession et des contraintes croissantes que les individus subissent dans leur travail."<sup>9</sup> En effet, faut-il se réjouir aveuglément "des possibilités d'explorations des aspects sensoriels et spirituels de l'existence qui, faute de temps et de connaissance, n'avaient pu être expérimentées jusqu'à aujourd'hui."<sup>10</sup> Jusqu'où faut-il suivre Susan Sontag dans son apologie du style 'camp':

La première forme de sensibilité, celle de la grande culture se fonde solidement sur la morale. La seconde sensibilité de l'excès qui inspire souvent l'art 'd'avant-garde' contemporain, tire avantage d'une perpétuelle tension entre l'esthétique et la morale. La troisième, le 'Camp', n'a que des préoccupations esthétiques.<sup>11</sup>

Cette victoire possible du style sur le contenu, de l'esthétique sur la moralité, de l'ironie sur la tragique caractérise assez bien le post-modernisme ar-

Figure 1





chitectural qui accompagne la montée des "idéologies tertiaires" fortement individualisantes,<sup>12</sup> ainsi que le développement d'attitudes "narcissiques"<sup>13</sup> dans la production culturelle. Une approche essentiellement iconographique du construit écartant le spatial, la plasticité et toute idée de 'besoins' et de 'désir' reliés à l'habitabilité est trompeuse. Une telle conception, lorsqu'elle se situe dans l'ordre de l'Art public, prenant appui sur une architecture muette, peut seulement prendre le caractère d'un manifeste artistique contre l'autonomie de l'Art privé et contre "le design" de l'architecture. Ainsi le groupe Site, dans son travail, s'attaque-t-il au paysage urbain de la consommation: la distribution de détails (magasin BEST), le compte d'épargne, le *rest-area*, le *parking lot*.<sup>14</sup> Quant au post-modernisme nord-américain, il n'est pas différent du stylisme des objets dans les années 1930. Il se contente de substituer aux signes d'une fausse modernité, ceux d'une fausse historicité 'usoniennne'. Ainsi que l'écrit Kenneth Frampton:

Il est aujourd'hui difficile de prévoir l'évolution de l'architecture dans la prochaine décennie. Si le post-modernisme exerce beaucoup d'influence, ses bases pluralistes, ouvertes et libérales le rendent incapable de toute articulation significative. Mis à part la défense du Kitsch ou du pastiche comme forme d'expression, la thèse populiste s'exprime généralement en termes négatifs sans ouverture pratique sur le futur.<sup>15</sup>

Non seulement l'arrivée de la fonction symbolique comme préoccupation spécifique dans l'architecture contemporaine tend à isoler le formel de l'habitabilité et de la technique, mais plus encore elle tend à vouloir démontrer la désuétude de la question sociale comme question de logement supposément résolue par l'état-providence. Ne demeurerait que la question esthétique. Rien ne nous démontre en fait que la question du logement est résolue, mais pire encore cette vision des choses gomme totalement du champ de la réflexion architecturale les lieux de travail. Or, 'la nouvelle histoire' par les moyens qu'elle se donne ouvre la possibilité d'études comparatives qui peuvent permettre de rendre à la critique architecturale un rôle social important<sup>16</sup>. Cette critique qui se tiendrait à l'écart des interprétations du construit en seconde main<sup>17</sup> faciliterait des études telles que celles qu'évoque Kenneth Frampton dans le dernier chapitre de son ouvrage *Modern Architecture*.<sup>18</sup> En effet, comparons les 'réponses' qu'apportent Herman Hertzberge et Norman Foster quant à la place qu'ils font à l'individu au sein de l'organisation d'un travail à travers le processus de sa

spatialisation: il s'agit d'une part du Centraal Beheer Building d'Apeldoorn en Hollande (Figure 2) et d'autre part du Willis-Faber and Dumas Building d'Ipswich en Angleterre (Figure 3), tous deux construits in 1974.<sup>19</sup> Or, quel 'bruit' dans un cas et quel 'silence' dans l'autre serions-nous tentés de dire en poussant vers la théorie des communications ce que nous révèle le graphisme de ces projets. Pourtant, une étude plus approfondie pourrait à la fois montrer que cette analogie reductrice est effectivement à l'oeuvre au plan conceptuel comme elle l'est dans la théorie des organisations et aussi rendre plus claire l'articulation instrumentale d'un programme spatial, technique et formel aux 'besoins' exclusifs de la commande du monde de la production.

## POUR UNE PRATIQUE CRITIQUE

La question sociale trouve son expression sociale la plus claire au sein du mouvement moderne. La critique de son programme formel dénonce trop vite le 'manque symbolique' de son Architecture. Il faut, selon moi, au contraire y voir l'investissement utopique de ses positions critiques dans le champ culturel. C'est sur cette base qu'il faut aujourd'hui reprendre le travail critique.

Concevoir une pratique critique n'est possible que si l'on situe celle-ci par rapport à l'institution architecturale. Ce sont en partie les universités et les instituts qui rassemblent aujourd'hui le travail intellectuel de la légitimité de la pratique architecturale. C'est dans ce contexte qu'il m'apparaît nécessaire de produire un discours théorique et une pratique articulés l'un à l'autre. Sans doute, cette production doit-elle passer par le discours *lettré* qui en est la forme consacrée, toutefois si le discours fait l'oeuvre, le projet fait le construit. C'est ainsi qu'il me semble possible d'envisager la production d'un discours théorique et pratique à travers l'activité projectuelle ouverte à la réflexion critique. S'agit-il de se réfugier dans le graphisme? Non, si l'on prend en charge son historicité ainsi que sa spécificité qui portent sur les moyens intellectuels de l'architecture. S'agit-il de poser l'idée d'une pratique prescriptive situant la théorie d'abord et la pratique comme telle après? Non, car ce travail réflexif du projet a pour objet le construit, et le rapport critique qui les unit l'un à l'autre dans le processus socialisé de la production. Enfin, c'est aussi dans les universités que devrait se développer une véritable critique architecturale, comparative et sociale, qui permettrait aux habitants l'accès à une connaissance concrète dans leur lutte au sein du monde vécu pour un meilleur environnement.

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# A BALANCED BUDGET AND A BALANCED WORLD

BY PETER HENINGWAY

The brief recently presented to the Federal Government by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada on behalf of Canadian architects, argues strongly in favour of ending deficit financing. But the mathematics and the charts and the conclusions are only part of the story. The essential thrust of the brief is that it challenges the assumption of the Canadian Government that its economists and experts now have the wisdom and the knowledge to solve the periodic economic slumps created by business cycles.

On the contrary, I think it can be shown that not only have governments failed to understand the nature of the business cycle, but what is worse, they have failed to appreciate the relevance of the cycle to how economies and societies function.

It is only necessary to check the graphs and diagrams beloved by business economists - some of which trace economic history back to 800 A.D. - to see that business disruptions are more often caused by government meddling than they are by natural disasters. By government meddling, I am thinking of wars, trade sanctions, and usurious taxation, as well as the ill-advised inflationary schemes that rulers have resorted to from the earliest civilizations until the present. I can see no essential difference in this regard, between the "half crazed" concepts of a John Law in eighteenth century France and the far more sophisticated theories of John Maynard Keynes. Both attempted to argue that the imperfections of the business cycle can be corrected; Law by printing paper money and Keynes by deficit financing.

Before Keynes and Law, we had the outright theft of personal and communal wealth by forced expropriation of

property to replenish empty government coffers, or the more devious inflationary schemes of a Constantine or a Henry VIII. The latter two worthies if you recall, used the goldsmiths of the Imperial Treasuries to simply scrape the gold and silver off the coinage whenever it returned into government hands. Then, later of course, we had the infamous 'Greenbacks' issued by the American Government during the Civil War and the worthless currency issued by the German Weimar Republic to pay off its war debts. Indeed, it is hard to find any period in history when some government or other was not trying to extract more money from its citizens than they were prepared to give more or less voluntarily in good or bad times.

During the feudal epoch and even earlier, governments had complete power over their subjects and thus, were able to enforce their tax laws and their disregard of business cycles by pain of death. If the peasants revolted over the price of bread or the scarcity of commodities, they were put to the sword. However, once wealth became more evenly distributed with the rise of the middle classes, governments resorted to more insidious ways of collecting monies. The emergent middle class was a considerable threat to autocratic government because it had arisen in the first case in opposition to feudal and aristocratic structures. The John Lockes, the Rousseaus and the Thomas Paines were the philosophical guerillas who championed and justified the ambitions of the merchants and the industrialists. The political strength of the middle classes grew in direct proportion to their acquisition of property. Property generated wealth and wealth in turn opened the gates of political power. So no matter how hard the old aristocrats tried to cling to their positions, they were eventually neutralized

by a more numerous and vigorous bourgeoisie.

Between the middle of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the First World War, the merchants were generally able to convince governments and politicians of the merits of free trade policies. The rise of mercantilism, in any event, paralleled the great expansionist phase of the European empires and this was a period of optimism, both scientifically and economically. The wars that broke out, as for example those of the Napoleonic era, were relatively tame contests when compared to the holocausts of the twentieth century. The economists and social theorists of the age were generally sympathetic to liberalism and free trade. The French Physiocrats, Adam Smith, and David Ricardo in Britain in fact believed that economies were guided by natural laws that in turn were ultimately discoverable and measurable - Smith refers to these laws as the 'invisible hand'.

The Physiocrats, Smith and Ricardo, were essentially acting as scientists much in the tradition of a Newton or Galileo. But then, the social turmoil created by the new industrialism fostered the emergence of a whole new group of economic philosophers who saw the world in radically different terms. Marx in Germany and J.S. Mill in England were not content to investigate economic activity objectively and, instead, believed that economic law and human behavior were interdependent. As if this was not enough, these men and their disciples - and this is especially true of Marxism - developed a feeling of religiosity about their theories. Marx it may be remembered, spent most of his life in castigating his opponents, including Mill, and accusing them of all kinds of philosophical treason. Measurement and reason favoured by the classical economists was replaced with rhetoric and emotion. Marx borrowed a curious Aristotelian logic from Hegel and adopted it to fit his own theories based upon his own subjective concepts of class structure. He likewise completely misinterpreted the need for economies to accumulate surplus capital for re-investment purposes and instead claimed that surplus capital came about through the exploitation of labour.

In retrospect, it is surprising that such a distortion of economic common sense could gain widespread acceptance until one remembers that the latter half of the Nineteenth Century and the greater part of the twentieth century was fertile ground for all manner of neo-scientific theories. Think of Mary Baker Eddy, Theosophy and even the racial theories of Nazism.

However, once this evangelical rag-bag

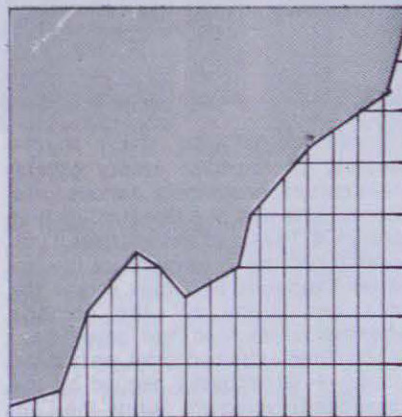




approach to economic theory had found popular acceptance, then it spawned similar movements from Fabianism in Britain to Roosevelt and his 'New Deal' in the United States of America. Finally it reached its philosophical culmination in the writings of John Maynard Keynes who claimed surely for the last time that governments can cure the periodicity so long associated with economic activity. In the midst of the Depression of the 1930's, he argued that future disasters of that kind could be avoided by a skillful government manipulation of the money supply. To justify his ideas, he invented a whole new lexicon of economic jargon that is still in use in most of the educational institutions in the Western World. Gross National Product, Gross National Income and other equally tenuous aggregates of value became part of macro-economic theory in which economies could be visualized as objective national entities. To think that this type of crude visualization was taking place at a time in history when nuclear physicists from Bohr to Heisenberg to Chadwick were exploring the structure of the atom with infinite precision beggars the mind.

But Keynes had a lot going for him because his ideas were ready made for ambitious politicians and a semi-literate public. In addition, central banks designed to manipulate economies had been established in just about all Western nations. Following the realignment of capital that occurred as a result of the Second World War and encouraged by proponents of the Welfare State, governments began to apply Keynesian remedies each time their economies started to falter. There was one further significant attraction in Keynesian business cycle magic and that was that it dovetailed well with the idea of redistributive societies. In other words, it allowed governments to tax their citizens to previously unheard of levels under the barrier of self righteousness. The catch was, and is, that the necessary dynamism of the business cycle was lost as economic units were given no possibility of re-charging their financial batteries. Thus,

the flexibility of the market was abandoned and the signals that the market normally gives to all segments of society were distorted. Accordingly, if government decided to stimulate one segment of the economy, say, for example, housing, then it would redirect financial resources into that industry creating all manner of maladjustments. Students would be encouraged to become engineers, architects and draftsmen. The trade schools and the building unions would graduate and license more bricklayers, carpenters and electricians than might normally be required. Inevitably, there would be less interest in other fields, say computer



science or bio-genetics, with a corresponding loss of social vitality. After a while, when the government decided to switch priorities, the workers who had been mistakenly attracted into the housing field in the first place, would have to find alternative employment, causing perhaps even greater distortions.

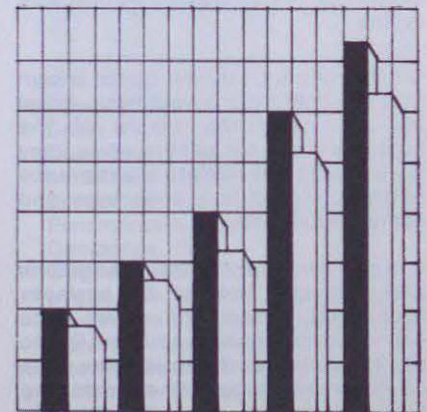
The method by which the majority of national governments decided on priorities or, as they stated, national goals became sanctified as central planning and the underlying weakness of the system was recognized by too few critics. Notwithstanding that rigidly, centrally planned economies, especially in the so called 'peoples democracies' have repeatedly failed to produce social environments which encourage cultural and material wealth, the underlying reasons for this failure have never been properly studied. On the contrary, whenever centrally planned economies break down, which they do continually, the apologists always seemed to deduce that the problem was that the economies were not planned enough. So it goes on, layer of restrictions upon layer of restrictions until finally society ceases to function in any human way and guns, soldiers and secret police forces have to be employed to keep order.

Now what if man has misinterpreted his

role in the natural world much as he misunderstood the significance of relativity in classical physics? Lately there seems to be a great deal of evidence that this may be the case. What if the business cycle is deeply related to man in the cosmos, just as the socio-biologists maintain animals and the insects are related to their environment? That there is, as it were, a super determinism in all of existence that cannot be escaped anymore than the laws of thermo-dynamics can be subverted.

To take just two illustrations in quantum physics, one Einstein's search for a Unified Field Theory and Bell's experiments with the polarization of photons, they seem to suggest that there is a fundamental underlying unity in nature. That for every action there is indeed an equal and opposite reaction. That matter can neither be created or destroyed and that as Einstein demonstrated, mass and energy are equivalent and on the quantum level, are indistinguishable.

The work of Verne Atrill in expanding classical economic theory to include the same physical constants that have been discovered in physics also appears to indicate that economic law exhibits an equivalent determinism that cannot be flouted. Atrill's dictums that debt will always be paid, if only by the



creditor, can be compared to the laws dealing with the conservation of energy. His explanation of accounting and discounting principles is surely just another description of the balance that must exist in the universe and that we are just beginning to perceive.

In astronomy, as well as in the attempts to determine whether the universe is closed or open, we are likewise beginning to sense a similar sort of super balancing mechanism or super determinism. The possibility of this balance is both fascinating and salutary, especially for interventionists who believe that they alone hold the key for re-ordering the world in which we live.

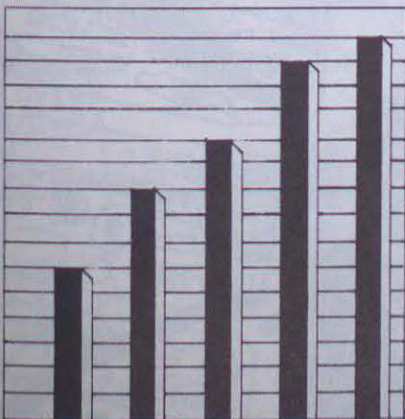


To return to economic theory, lately there have been suggested modifications to business cycle concepts. Friedman and Laffer, both of the United States, have suggested, in my view rightly, that government economic interventionism should be curtailed, but for the wrong reasons and by the wrong methods. Friedman has argued that inflation can be controlled by restricting the money supply while not appearing to understand that non-monetized debt is just as big a problem. Accordingly, governments have been encouraged to go on increasing their deficits while at the same time restricting the growth of the money supply. The result is a complete distortion of the monetary system and a predictable depreciation of the value of the currency. This system can be compared to a tautly-strung bow with the bow trying to reflect the actual growth in the money supply while the central bank symbolized by the bow string refuses to allow this to happen, bending the bow more tightly until its resilience and power is destroyed.

In effect, when accumulated debt is not reflected in the money supply, then according to the proportion of unmonetized debt, one dollar is owed to more than one person. Eventually, if this process continues, then the currency can shrink in value until it becomes entirely worthless. This is for instance, what must occur when central banks continue to buy their own Treasury Bills in ever increasing amounts.

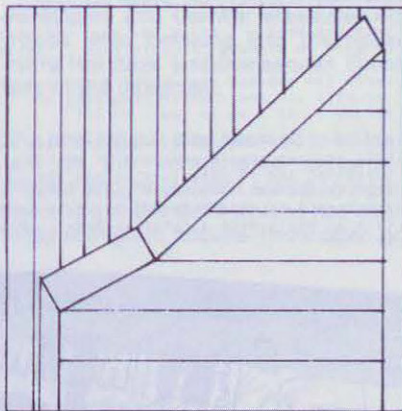
Laffer, for his part, seems to believe that taxes can be cut, even though the U.S. Federal Government is in a hopeless debt position. To persevere in this approach without apparently understanding the laws of solvency for an economist is inexcusable. The laws of bankruptcy clearly indicate that once an economic entity passes a certain debt stage, the entity cannot recover solvency without selling assets or devaluing its net worth - that is, ten cents on the dollar.

The key to what is happening is surely



that governments are continuing to depreciate their currency much in the manner of a Henry VIII. Of course, their methodology is not as obvious. Of course, their reasons appear to be for more humane motives. But in the end, the results are the same. The clearest indicator of this depreciation remains the stock markets, as in the long term, the monetary value of stocks must continue in most cases to be less than their book worth. This situation will persist if governments carry on inflating and depreciating.

But finally, is all this interventionism and government paternalism really for humane motives or is it for that age old elixir, the acquisition and the maintenance of political power. Much of the research being carried out by social scientists strongly suggest that it is the latter. Men and women surely function most responsibly when they are left alone to build their own lives and their community structures without the constant harassment of government officials. This is the manner in which all life forms reached their present level of complexity from the building of the first amino-acid chains to the brain of an Einstein. Now if in addition we can confirm what many now suspect, that evolution proceeds in accordance with a natural rhythm, then the constant attempts by one group of



people to control another much larger group of people begins to look strangely like an ignorant neuroticism. Democracy, after all, as defined by John Locke was and is an attempt to diffuse central government power and to neutralize the arrogance and the dogmatism of the state. Democracy, if it is to survive, must always challenge the motives of the statist and strive for a diminution of state power. In the last century we seem to have forgotten this lesson as governments are once again relentlessly struggling to return citizens to new forms of feudalism. Perhaps they sense though that very shortly they will no longer be able to achieve their unstated goals in the future in the man-

ner they have in the past by boasting that they can protect each and everyone of us from the vicissitudes of the business cycle. For what will happen when we finally realize that the business cycle is not our adversary, but our inseparable companion.

This is not a *laissez faire* position or a traditional anarchist position, but only a plea for a more objective view of man in society. It is a realization that perhaps comes very close to a participatory view of the world rather than the adversary posture that Western man has always tended to adopt. In a sense, it is perhaps a reaffirmation of



traditional eastern philosophy that has always seen man as an integral part of a never ending cycle in which salvation or satori finally comes when we recognize the oneness of existence.

As to what happens to all the political parties and philosophers when the populace finally realizes that political promises are merely posturing is a matter of conjecture. A general awareness of how the business cycle operates will surely bring about major changes in the way that countries are governed and could well usher in a new area of international stability.

There are also many implications for the architectural and design professions, for when we possess the degree of predictability given us by a knowledge of how economics operate then we can properly advise students as to what chances there will be for employment when they graduate. Architectural offices likewise will be better able to stage their staff requirements, avoiding to a large extent the 'hire/fire' syndrome that has been so prevalent over the last decade.

It is an exciting and encouraging prospect.

*Peter Hemingway is an architect practicing in Edmonton.*



# PINSKY SPEAKS

Notes: This article states out talking about last year's 5th and 6th year crits out gets universal critet.

Around the end of April, 1971, much too late, something happened in school called "final crits". For those of you who missed this event - most of 3rd and 4th years, a lot of 5th and 6th years and U1 students - a brief explanation is in order.

**Final Crit:** This is what happens at the end of the School Year after you've worked your ass off competing with your classmates cause you think that's a good thing to do it's better to compete with your classmates and learn from your classmates. Traditionally, the 6th year students worked on "thesis" projects, ie. oversized one-man designs, and presented these at the end of the year. In 1965/70, these became group efforts and in 1970/71 5th and 6th years combined (incidentally - surprise). Also traditionally, this was the school's finest hour as its senior students presented their best work to a distinguished audience of staff, guest critics, and fellow lackeys.

## TRADITION IS DEAD.

Of course! We tried hard enough to kill it. But the new phoenix has not yet risen. Last years' final crits were terrible because:

1. They were held so late that 3rd and 4th years could not attend because they were writing exams and most of the 5th year people missed the last of the crits for the same reason.
2. No one knew when or where crits were being held because an up to date schedule was not posted.

3. Hardly anyone knew why crits were being held and what they were about - let me explain. Many of the presentations concerned work which had developed over the entire year. This work was discussed at least twice during the year, as it was prepared, at formal crits which almost no one attended. The students did not, of course, present this development work over again - so people attending only the final crit had little clue as to what was going on. This was especially true for people in 3rd and 4th year who were safely hidden away during the year. Note that this same reasoning applies for many half year projects.

## WHO'S TO BLAME?

The students of course. Why? Because we all knew how fucked up the system was last year and just rode along with it. The staff is never going to do anything unless they get pushed so you can't blame them - you can only get rid of them or push. So here it is:

## THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION

**Step 1:** The year starts off differently in September. Two or three or more days are set aside for the staff to explain their proposed studio projects. Anyone who accepts a project at face value and who does not ask any questions does not pass go, does not collect \$200 and sits out the year. Attendance is **COMPULSORY**, so you will at least know what the project started out to be in September when you attend the first discussions (the word *crit* is henceforth banned; use a *discussion substitute*) at the end of October. Ideally, all staff from U1 to U4 (6th year) will do this at the same time before the whole school. Moreover, any prof. who is not ready or has nothing to say should also not pass go not collect \$200, and be retired. (I'd rather work here than I'm out of school).

**Step 2:** A party is held after these sessions so that everyone can get friendly again. People with choices pick their studios and everyone gets to work.

**Step 3:** Communicate! People in different years and studios must wander around and talk to each other. An A.U.S. lounge with student exhibitions, night-time seminars given by students, and using the same building would all help. So would Architecture Week - I think the next one should be used to discuss "Architecture". Invite Louis Kahn for a few days - it'll be worth the expense (and maybe I can get to rap with him too - *underlying selfish motive*.) It's up to you - DO IT!

**Step 4:** Intermediate Discussions must be held to keep people informed of what's happening and to make sure we see the staff sometime. Procedure could be as for Step 5 or more informal but in either case an up-to-date accurate schedule should be kept.

**Step 5:** Final Discussions. (This section is mainly procedural).  
A. For one week in the beginning of April, NOTHING is done except the presentation of student work and discussion of that work by students, staff, and guests.  
**IMPORTANT:** The whole school, every year presents at this time. They do it at U. of T. so you should be able to do it here.  
(note: Mrs. Wilde must be forced to juggle the exam schedule. She's tough but it can be done)

B. A problem: how do you get everyone to stop their work at the same time?  
Answer: **Firstly**, everyone is now co-operating and communicating and are interested in seeing everyone else's work. **Secondly**, two lotteries are held on the first day of the final discussions. The first lottery chooses which year starts and the second chooses the order in that year. After the first year or studio is drawn, the second is chosen and so on.  
(note: Do not choose the complete order of presentation at once or some of the sheehds at the end will just fuck off - not everyone is a revolutionary.)

C. Notes: Beer, coffee, wine, cheese, doughnuts, etc... should be available - it makes the whole thing more fun and minimizes traffic flow. Also, you need a bigger room than A9.

By now, some of you, may be asking - why bother? Well if you're in U1 you're excused, otherwise wake up! Here's why:

1. You're going to learn a lot more and probably enjoy it. You'll start to talk to a lot more people and be forced to think about what you're doing.
2. A dead School of Architecture will come alive. Nothing will be done by rote - everything will be questioned and maybe even answered but that's tougher.
3. Professors will no longer be able to hide (like in the 3rd year studio or the top of the old Chem. Building) away from the questioning of other profs. and students. Everything will be up front. (See "The Electric Cool-Aid Acid Test" about being up front).
4. Look around you - at the cities, at the shit that architects build, the grey sky above, and butchery everywhere - well, that's what happens when people don't ask questions and aren't honest and open. We are going to do better than that - we have no choice.

That's why. Peace.





## Note:

The late sixties and early seventies are generally seen as times of great political awareness of students.

Strikes, marches, sit-ins were common and the cry "don't trust anybody over thirty" was a period slogan.

The fact that in 1983 it is difficult to find a student willing to sit on the Senate while whole universities were closed down by strikes to acquire that very right describes the change of mood concisely.

Since I was a student at McGill in those heady days, I suggested that we invite a very active student of that era to write down his current views on "Politics and Architecture". My good friend Barry Pinsky fits the bill. Through the good offices of Maureen Anderson we also print a copy of an article by Barry in the 1971 AUS handbook.

Pieter Sijpkens

Dear Pieter:

I was pleased to hear from you and to have this opportunity to write on a theme so important to me, one which I was beginning to think had very little currency in the architectural thinking of the Eighties. With so little time between your call and my leaving again for Mozambique, I have abandoned all possibilities for a scholarly treatise but hope that this rambling, personal account will still do the topic justice.

In its most essential, politics is a process of questions and choices. It starts with simple questions: Who pays for and who benefits from the work I am doing? How much control do people really have over the decisions that affect them?

I started asking these questions in the Sixties, apparently a more affluent time and certainly a more heady and militant era than today. Looking back at the AUS Handbook and my first attempts at

social commentary, there are the views of a concerned and, I think, not too immature student questioning the design and content of courses and procedures. Can professors really be as knowledgeable as they sometimes pretend, especially in such a fluid and often subjective field such as our own? Why couldn't there be student input into administrative matters - darkroom hours, choosing a new director? Why did the Dean of Engineering keep political files on myself and other students? Lots of hot stuff in those days and we organized McGill's first ever student strike. It lasted four days and at the end of it, a student-faculty advisory committee was struck. I think it resulted in some constructive discussion but never really overcame faculty intrigues and mistrust of student intentions. The School was not ready for too much democracy.

This questioning quickly extended to the University. At that time the Board of Governors had no student, women, or minority members. Who did it really represent? Why was a group of elite Anglo businessmen making decisions about our education, when in fact the people of Quebec paid eighty percent of the bills and students paid most of the rest? Unfortunately, my fellow students gave me a chance to become even more frustrated over these issues by electing me to the Students Council. At the same time, my neighbourhood, Milton-Park, was under attack by the La Cité developers and the War Measures Act troops were breaking into the house every few days just in case Mr. Cross was in the basement.

The next logical step seemed to be less talk in the comfortable university climate and more direct action trying to use some of the skills which I had been lucky enough to acquire. (How often do

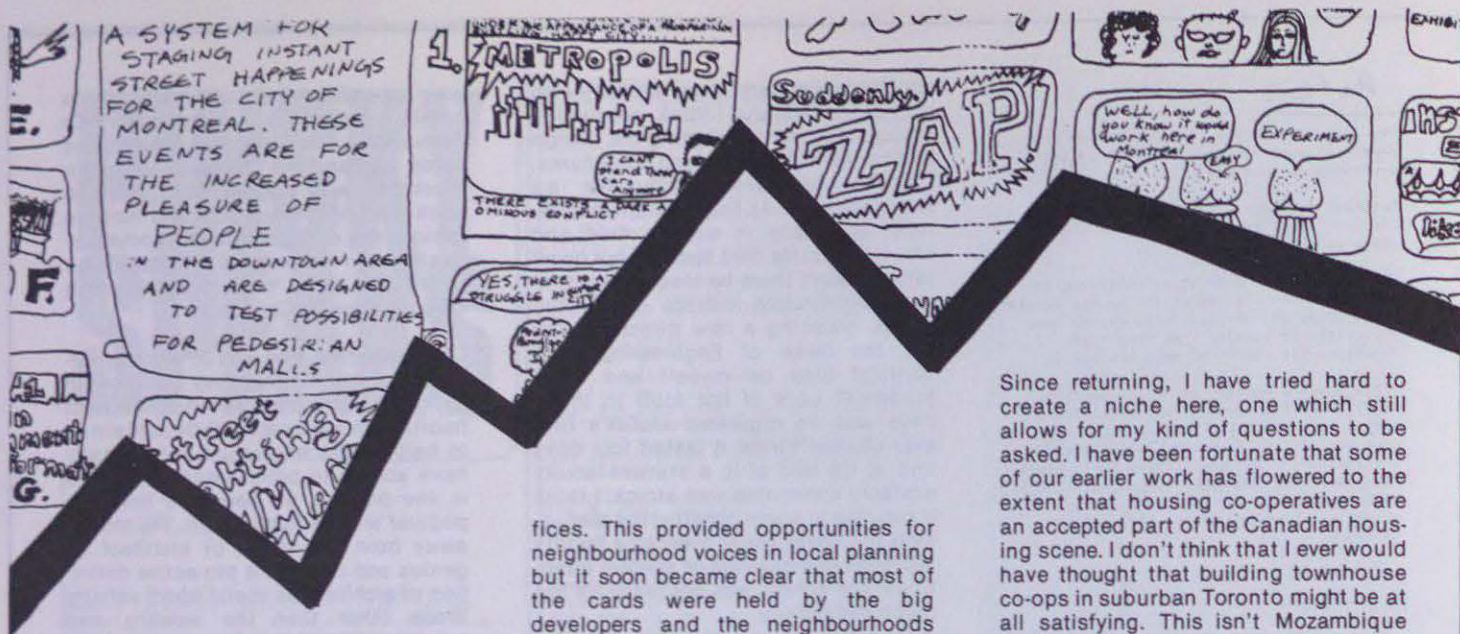
we remember that university is a privilege enjoyed by a small minority?) Fortunately, Joe Baker was thinking the same way and the Community Design Workshop was created. We began to work with neighbourhood and tenants groups, day care centres and community clinics. In the process we started one of the first three 'modern-era' housing co-operatives in Canada.

Our motivating idea was to work directly with people so that they could begin to make decisions about their own habitat. We were particularly concerned to help people who would not normally have access to professional skills and in the process we began to define a popular architectural idiom. We moved away from the notion of architect as genius and towards a pro-active definition of architect as social agent serving those other than the wealthy and powerful. We found American friends doing similar things and for a while storefront architecture was at least a minor rage.

The new role we were playing not only involved the nitty-gritty of renovating hundred year old slums, it also meant kitchen and community meetings, demonstrating for welfare rights, and building our own version of Berkeley's People's Park in Montreal's Pointe St. Charles. Taking the idea of direct action to one of its limits, and much to our retrospective credit, I think, three McGill architects were arrested defending Milton-Park along with fifty-five other residents. Not incidentally, we were also fighting the architects who work for block-busting developers - 'someone has to design it and we are going to do the best job possible'. Cité Concordia was the result! (Much to his credit, Ray Affleck gave up the job.) I still don't talk to some of the others and they will never work on one of our new







co-ops.

At this point, my own career became somewhat checkered, moving along from grant to grant, sometimes sustained thanks only to Unemployment Insurance. I defined myself as an activist who happened to be an architect and continued to work on co-ops, seniors housing, playgrounds and other community projects all leading up to a serious case of 'burn-out'. Ready for a new place and some new thoughts, I enrolled in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto.

Once there, it seemed that I picked up where I had left off at McGill. Could it have been that the transformation was permanent? I was turned down for a job teaching design because I was "too radical". Was that because I didn't think design was entirely a mystical, philosophical and intellectual process? Instead, I was still looking for ways to involve the too often victims of design. Perhaps it was because I was a little too noisy about the absence of a student voice in choosing a new Dean - some things never change!

In any case, I at least added a new set of questions to my repertoire. These concerned appropriate sizes and types of organizations for human development and social change balanced with a new concern of the natural environment. Visions of a decentralized, rural/urban society danced in my head although not without many questions about how to get there.

Turning outward once again, I did some volunteer work with an east end Toronto community group trying to develop a recreation centre and I became excited by the potentials of neighbourhood planning. Almost unbelievable, at least to a Montreal lad, the City actually hired planners to work in neighbourhood of-

fices. This provided opportunities for neighbourhood voices in local planning but it soon became clear that most of the cards were held by the big developers and the neighbourhoods were most often being saved for those who could afford them. The architecturally pleasing effects of 'gentrification' were only a slightly less insidious form of slum removal - removing the people instead of the buildings. The same old questions popped up - who benefits and who pays? Still, compared to Montreal, the temperature level of debate at City Council was hot and a lot of housing, including many non-profit co-ops, have been built downtown.

In 1976, with my Master's degree almost in hand, I went to the biggest human settlements show in the world - the UN Habitat Conference. Lo and behold, there were a whole lot more people asking questions about their work as architects and planners, only the context had been changed. The slums were in Asia or Africa, physical problems were that much more acute and the vast majority of people seemed to have very little to say about their own environments, indeed, their own futures. Of course, the logical happened and soon I was off to the People's Republic of Mozambique. (Doesn't that have an odd ring to the North American ear?) Mozambique is a country which, having suffered mightily at the hands of Portuguese colonialism, gained its independence only in 1975. With few skilled people and a massive unprovoked exodus by the settlers, there were only twelve architects in the National Housing Directorate when I arrived and most of those were expatriates. Having decided on a strategy of pilot projects to develop housing, I soon found myself working with community groups to improve basic living conditions in a huge shantytown around the capital, Maputo. There was no room left for the grandiose architectural fantasies of the colonial architects; people needed roads, water, electricity and better latrines. In a way, I was at home for the first time. I wasn't working on the fringe, our work set the guidelines for national policy.

Since returning, I have tried hard to create a niche here, one which still allows for my kind of questions to be asked. I have been fortunate that some of our earlier work has flowered to the extent that housing co-operatives are an accepted part of the Canadian housing scene. I don't think that I ever would have thought that building townhouse co-ops in suburban Toronto might be at all satisfying. This isn't Mozambique and our movement is a small one, but we do work closely with people and empower them to control at least one part of their lives - their housing. At the same time, I am about to join the board of a community centre in my own neighbourhood and I stay active in activities related to both city politics and more recently to Third World solidarity.

I started out by suggesting that politics is a simple thing - asking questions. It quickly becomes more difficult if you don't like the answers and try to do something about them. It may be especially hard for an architect to combine politics and her or his profession. It means helping to create a new system of self-valuing. Shantytowns and suburban housing co-ops do not look great in the glossy mags and the clients often don't have too much to pay. The real satisfaction is in knowing you are part of creating a new world based on new values of individual worth and community participation.

Another satisfaction is knowing that you are not alone. Lots of us late Sixties types still seem to be at it. Jai Sen works in the shanties of Calcutta and Richard Beardmore has been building co-ops in Lesotho. Cassie Gottlieb has been helping to save neighbourhoods in Baltimore, Herb Stovel is trying to preserve Ontario's architectural heritage, and of course Joe Baker never ceases his activities. I hope that we are not all dinosaurs, relics of a lost era. There is too much to be done, the questions are getting bigger. How big a pile of dust will all our architectural masterpieces make when hit by twenty megaton bombs?

Pieter, I hope this is what you were looking for. Thanks again for the opportunity.

Best Regards,

Barry



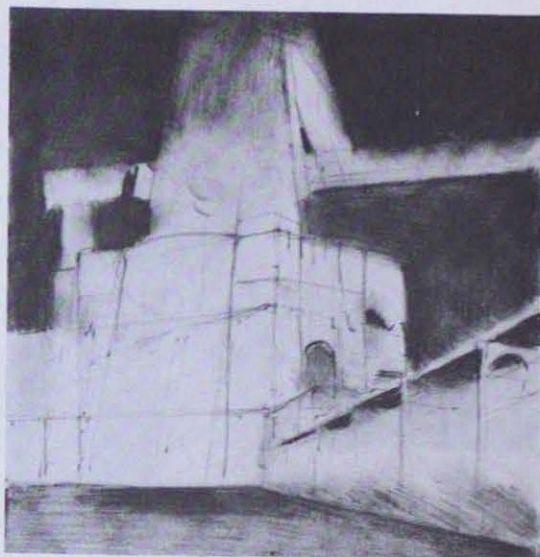
# Zeppelinhafen

by Howard Davies

Howard Davies completed his studies  
at the School of Architecture at McGill  
University in December 1982.



Image of the aerial plaza



View from the zeppelin field

*I looked around upon the carved sides  
Of an old sanctuary with roof august,  
Built so high, it seemed that filmed clouds  
Might spread beneath, as o'er the stars of heaven.  
So old the place was, I remembered none  
The like upon the earth: what I had seen*

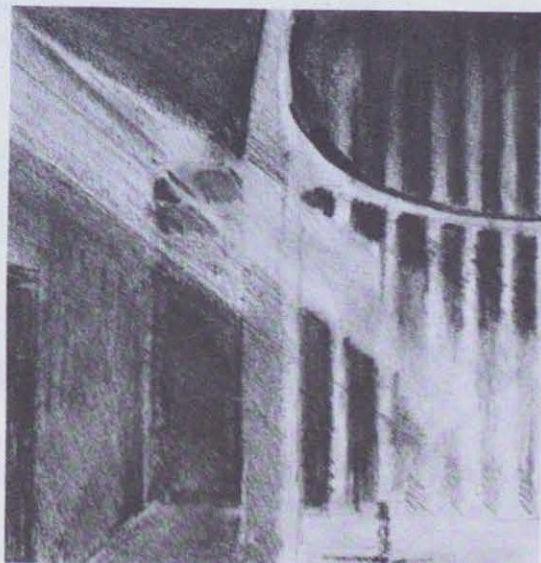
*Of grey cathedrals, buttressed walls, rent towers,  
The super annuations of sunk realms,  
Or Nature's rocks toil'd hard in waded and winds,  
Seemed but the Faulter of decrepit things  
To that eternal domed Monument.*

John Keats

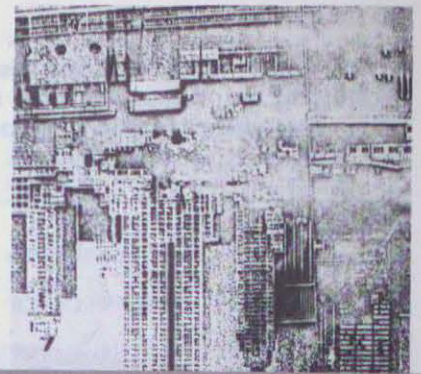
A Concourse study (acrylic)



A Concourse image (makara)







## READERS' POLL / OPINION DU LECTEUR

In keeping with the upcoming theme of New Directions in Canadian Architecture, it seems appropriate that our poll should deal with what has influenced architecture in Canada. We would like to know what you think have been the ten most significant buildings built in Canada. Of course, the criteria for selection are difficult to enumerate and so it is felt that the guidelines for deciding what significant means should be left up to the individual reader. By significant, however, it is implied that these are not necessarily the ten **best** buildings, but rather those which have exerted the most influence on the Canadian architectural horizon.

Selections for the poll should be given to your Regional Editor or mailed to the Montreal offices of THE FIFTH COLUMN, using the reply card provided in this issue. The readers' choice for the ten most significant buildings in Canada will appear in the Spring 1983 edition, New Directions in Canadian Architecture.

En vue du prochain thème à paraître entre les pages de notre revue, 'Nouveaux horizons pour l'architecture canadienne', il nous semblerait de mise d'axer ce sondage sur les influences qu'a subites l'architecture canadienne. En fait, nous aimerions connaître ce que vous croyez être les dix édifices les plus significatifs construits au Canada. Les critères de sélection sont évidemment à cerner; nous laissons donc au lecteur la liberté de déterminer ce à quoi 'significatif' implique surtout les édifices ayant su exercer une grande influence sur le monde architectural canadien et pas nécessairement les dix 'meilleurs' en tant que tels.

Vous pouvez remettre votre liste à un de nos éditeurs régionaux ou faire parvenir la carte-réponse ci-joint au bureau montréalais du THE FIFTH COLUMN. Les noms des dix édifices canadiens les plus significatifs sélectionnés par nos lecteurs seront publiés dans l'édition printannière 1983, 'Nouveaux horizons pour l'architecture canadienne'.

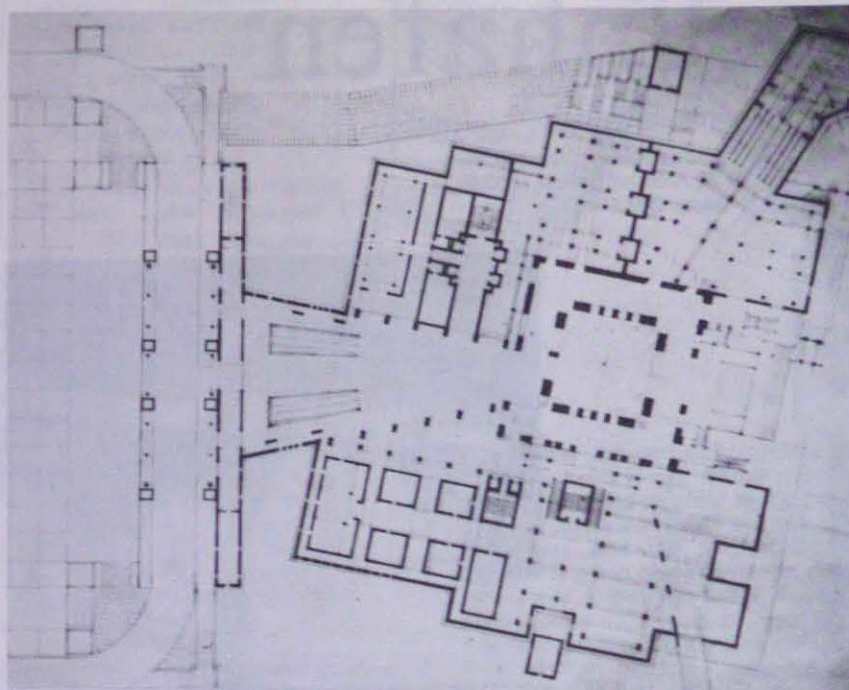
### THE FIFTH COLUMN

Canadian Student Journal of Architecture  
Revue Etudiante Canadienne d'Architecture  
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Montréal, Quebec H3A 2A7

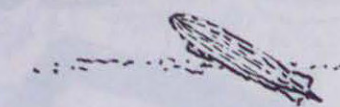
tel: (514) 392-5407





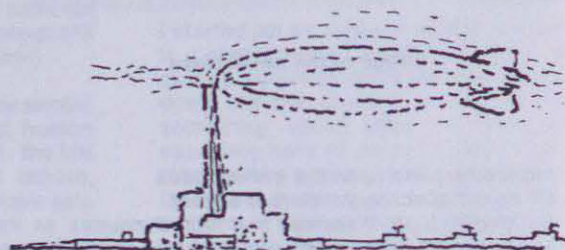


Plan-Station level



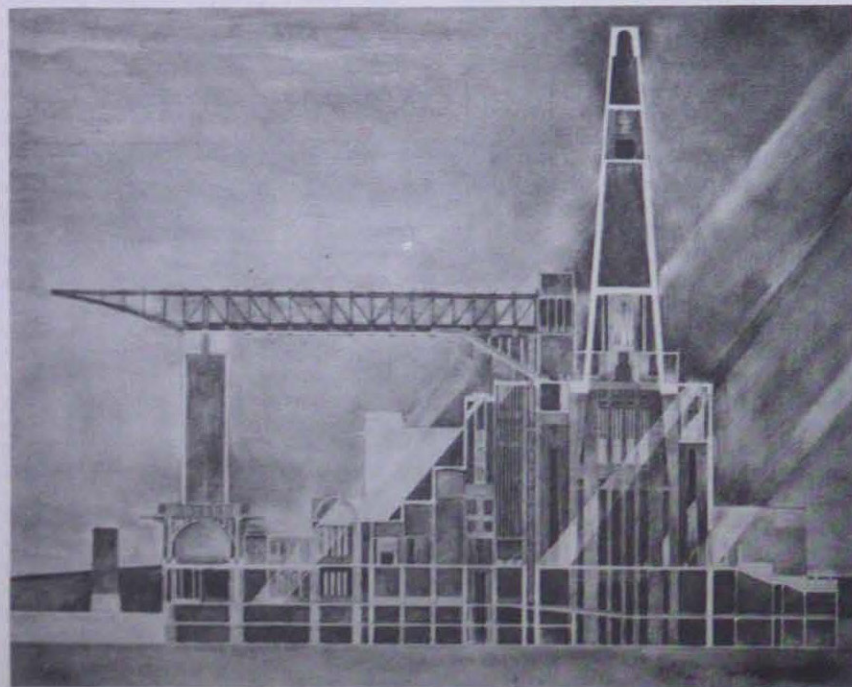
Concourse

Zeppelin Station  
 Keystone of the Air-City;  
 Watching the sky as was once watched the sea;  
 Heimdall arisen, reborn.  
 Alone;  
 A destination, in a destination; of a journey, itself;  
 An object;  
 Helldunkel.  
 Silently listening; in expectation



Section, Grand Hall and Concourse

Substation studies

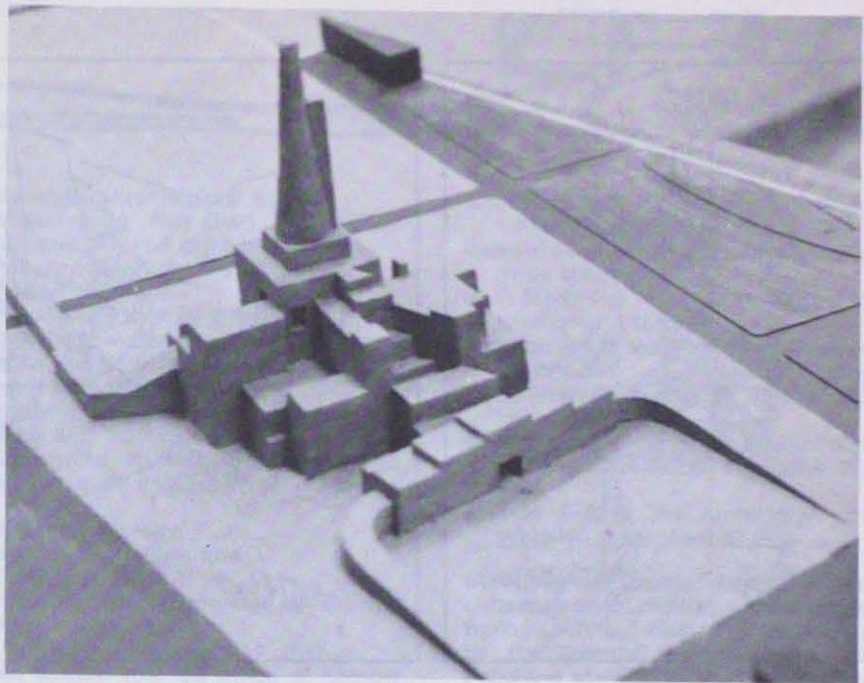


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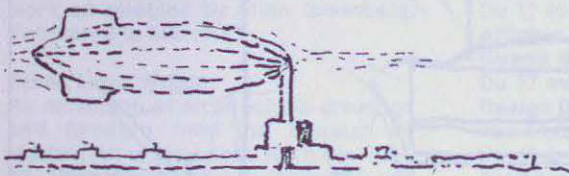




View from the Hindenburg

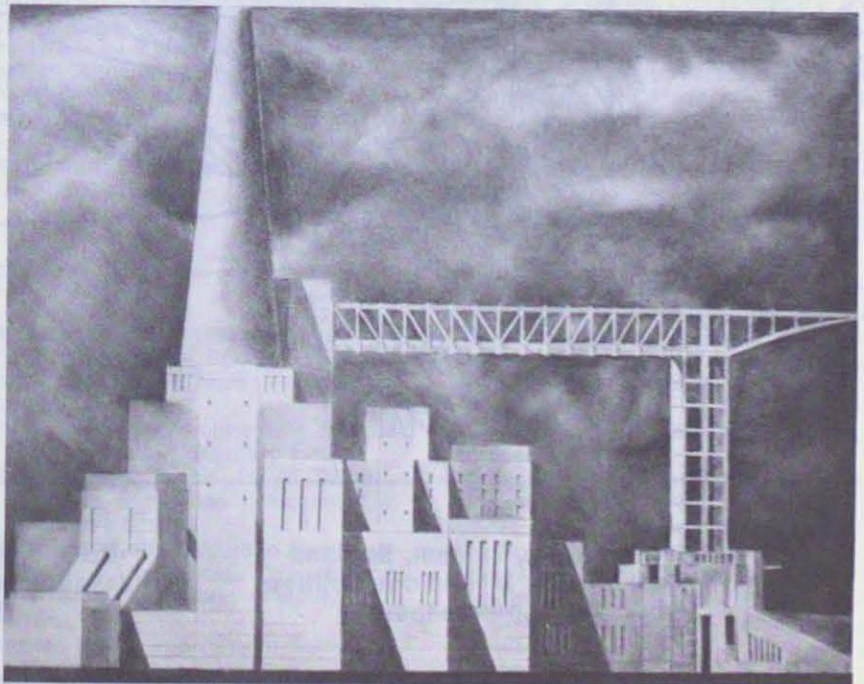
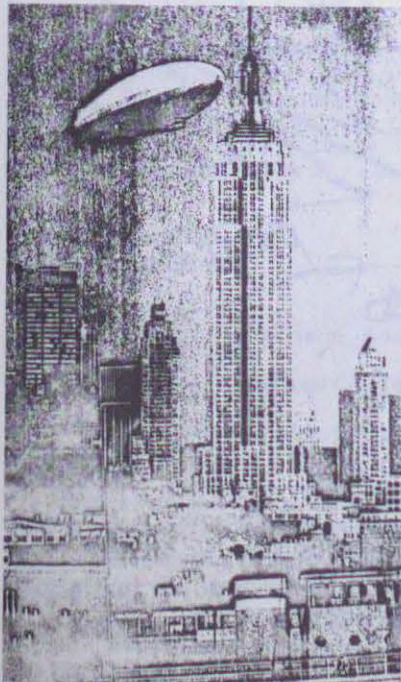


Plaza

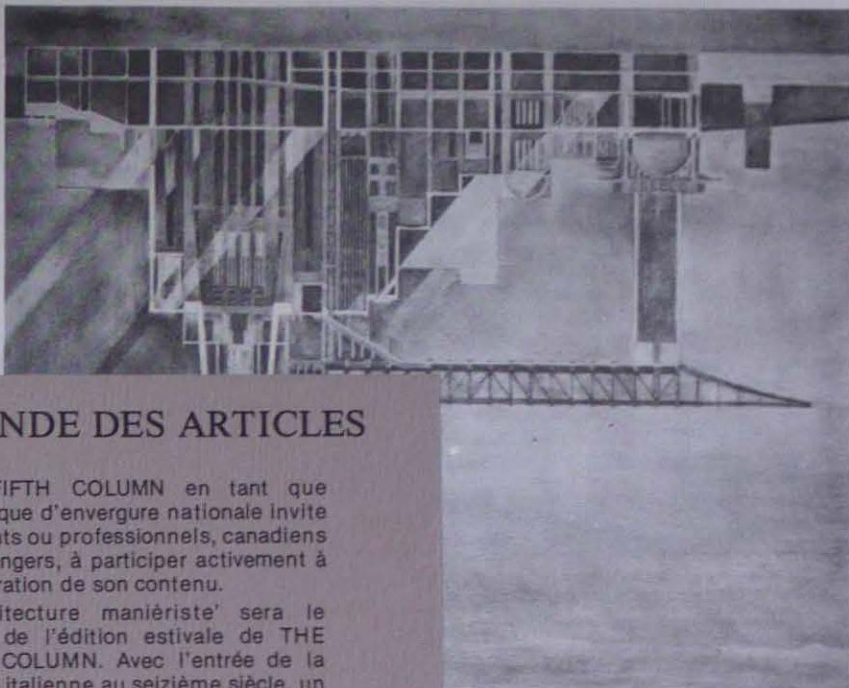
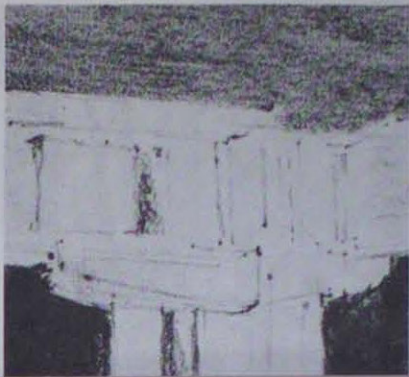


Awaiting the return of giants.  
 A product (Ballung), the result (hopelessly) of today,  
 And tomorrow;  
 The face of Gotterdammerung;  
 After —  
 What exists?  
 Memories which remain like our ideas,  
 .....even in ruins.

Elevation, Notre Dame view







## CALL FOR ARTICLES / DEMANDE DES ARTICLES

THE FIFTH COLUMN as a national journal, is calling for increased participation throughout the country and beyond. Whether from student, professional or otherwise, material is welcome and needed to raise the level of quality and broaden the appeal of the magazine. Articles can be thematic or of general interest. It is our policy to publish themes of future issues well in advance in order to better solicit submissions.

The theme for the Summer issue of THE FIFTH COLUMN will be Mannered Architecture. As the High Renaissance subsided in sixteenth century Italy, the phenomenon of Mannerism crept into all fields of art including architecture. The word implies stylization: architecture contrived, manipulated and tortured, consciously or not, to the point of shock and humor. Mannerism, or Mannered Architecture, still seems relevant today. Technology has placed so much emphasis on invention that the vaguely familiar has become mundane. The media bombards us with easily discarded images and emotion is abstracted and removed. In this issue we hope to look at whim and fancy, the associations of images as well as the consumption of ideas... a guiltless Mannerism.

The deadline for submissions of theme articles for this issue as well as any material for our regular features such as News, Esquisse, Perspective, or Archives is May 15. For further information, contact your Regional Editor or THE FIFTH COLUMN.

THE FIFTH COLUMN en tant que périodique d'envergure nationale invite étudiants ou professionnels, canadiens ou étrangers, à participer activement à l'élaboration de son contenu.

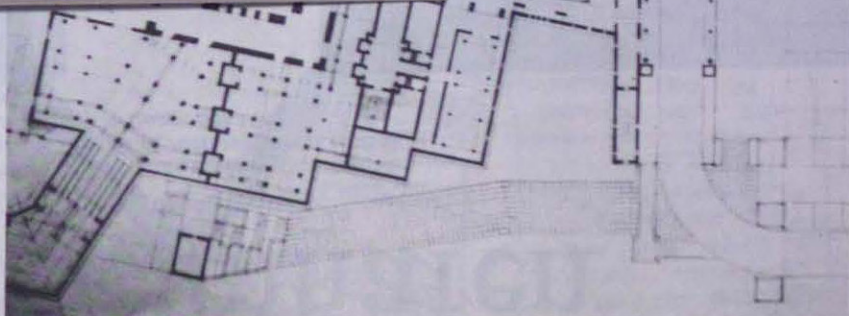
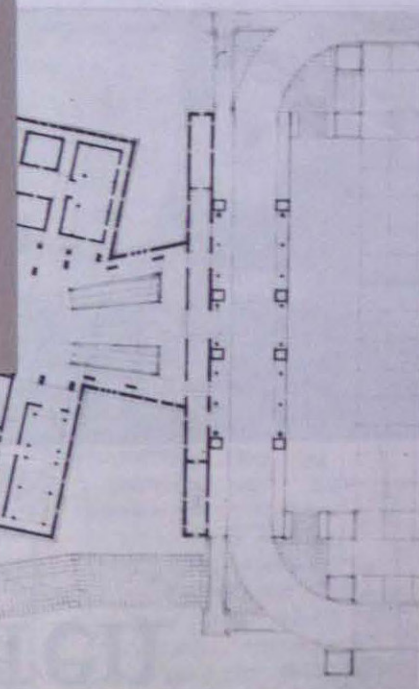
'L'architecture maniériste' sera le thème de l'édition estivale de THE FIFTH COLUMN. Avec l'entrée de la société italienne au seizième siècle, un nouveau phénomène apparut: le maniérisme. Au sommet de la renaissance, ce mouvement allait se répercuter dans toutes les activités artistiques incluant l'architecture. Cette dernière se retrouvait ainsi limitée, manipulée, torturée, consciemment ou non, jusqu'au point limite de l'esthétique. Le maniérisme, ou plutôt l'architecture maniériste, se retrouve aujourd'hui encore d'actualité. Notre monde technologique a tellement idolâtré la notion de l'éternel renouveau que nous considérons maintenant comme futile le familier. Les médias d'informations, si important de nos jours, ne cessent de nous soumettre à un bombardement constant d'images non-émotionnelles, totalement dénudés de sens. Dans cette édition de THE FIFTH COLUMN, nous désirons vous présenter de spontanéité et de la fantaisie dans les images et la pensée, un maniérisme actualisé.

La date limite pour la remise d'articles thématiques à paraître dans notre édition Été 1983, ainsi que pour tout autre matériel est fixée au 15 mai. Pour plus d'information, contactez votre éditeur régional ou THE FIFTH COLUMN.

Section, Grand

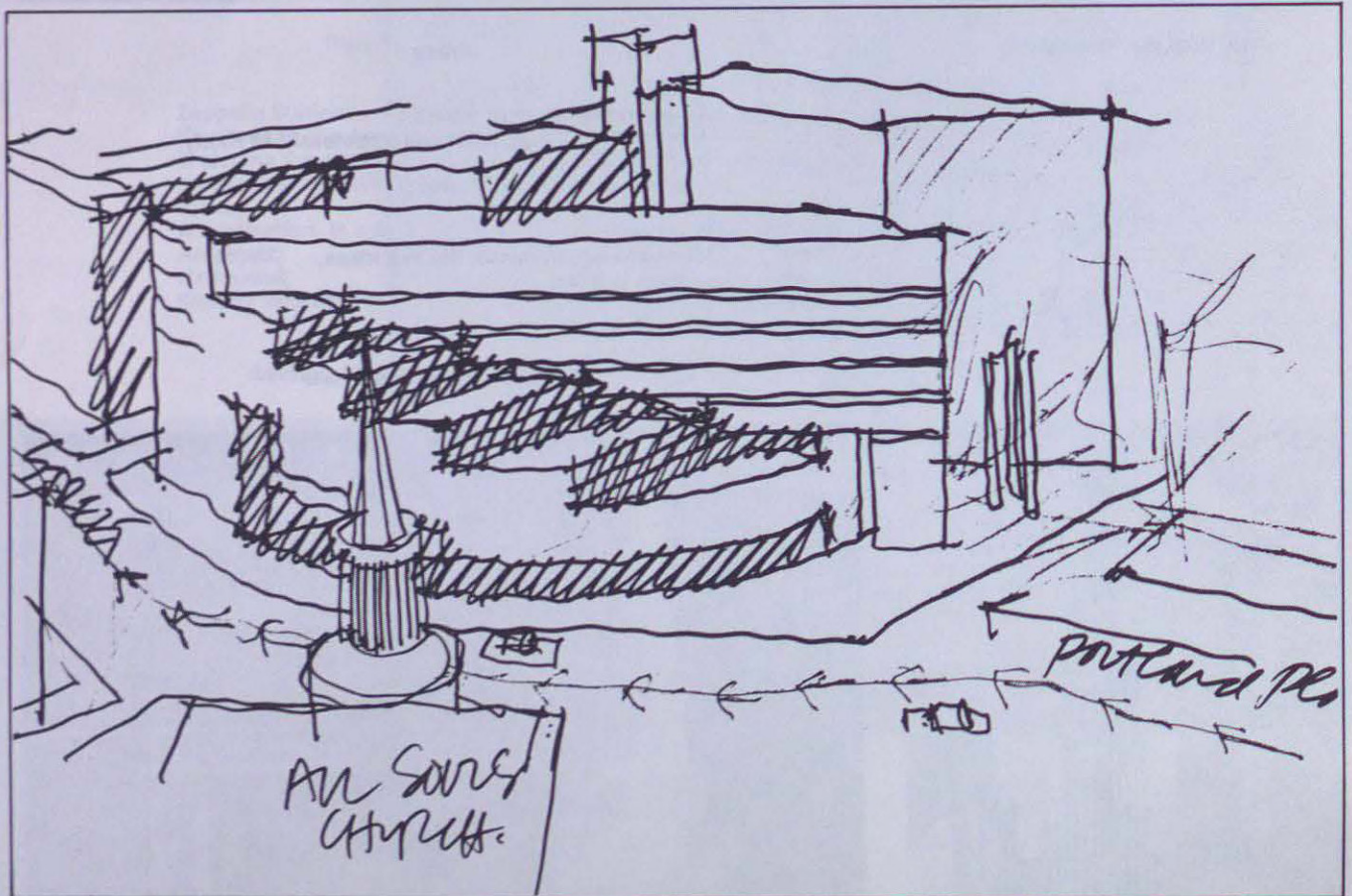
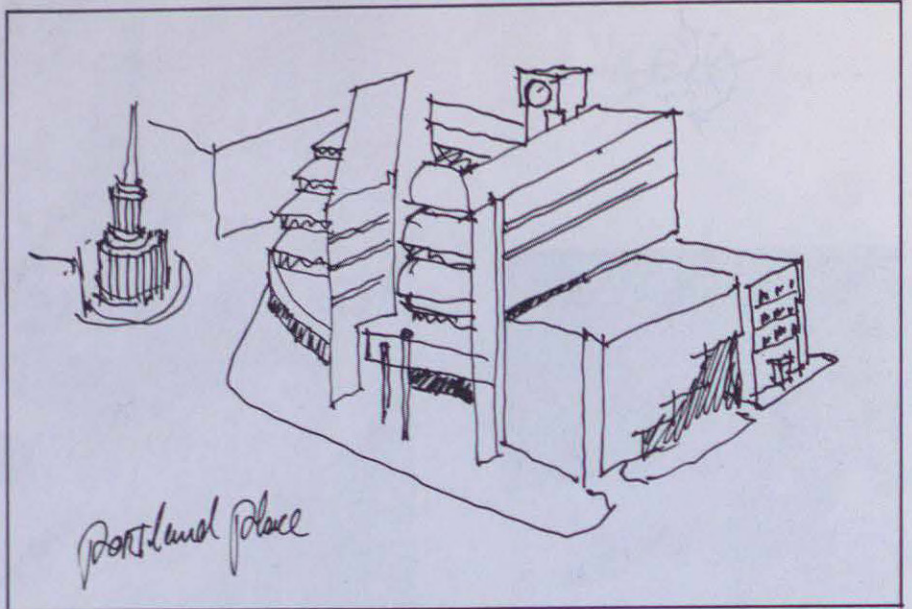
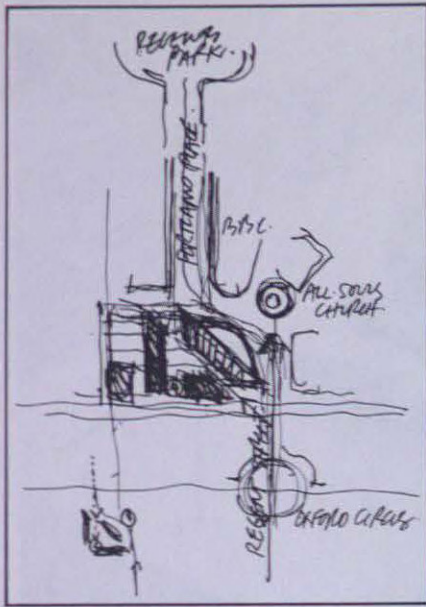
Zeppelin Station  
Keystone of the Air-C  
Watching the sky as  
Heimdall arisen, rebo  
Alone;  
A destination, in a de  
An object;  
Hell Dunkel.  
Silently listening; in e

Plan-S





# ESQUISSE



BBC Headquarters, London, England  
 Concept sketches for invited competition.  
 Ink on sketching paper.

BBC, Siège Sociale, Londres, Angleterre  
 Esquisses soumises pour le concours par invitation.  
 Encre sur papier calque.

Webb, Zerafa, Menkès, Housden



# PERSPECTIVE



## COMPETITIONS

### National Architecture Student Design Competition 1983

The Canadian Students of Architecture are sponsoring this second annual competition. The theme for this year addresses Architectural Memory in the design of a house. The competition is open to all students registered in a school or department of Architecture in Canada and to RAIC syllabus students. The entry deadline is March 14, 1983. For more information, contact the CSA representative at your school or write to RAIC Competition, School of Architecture, University of Waterloo, 200 University Ave., West, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1.

## EXHIBITIONS

### Le Château Dufresne, Musée des Arts Decoratifs de Montreal

#### The Architecture of Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944)

A retrospective of sixteen of Lutyens's work as selected by Allan Greenberg. February 4 to March 13.

### Frank Lloyd Wright

An exhibition of architectural drawings and furniture from the Museum of Modern Art in New York. April 9 to June 12, 1983: La Château Dufresne (Musée des Arts Decoratifs), corner of Pie IX and Sherbrooke, Montreal.

### Le Centre Urbain

#### From the Architect's Sketchbook —

Drawings by Bruce Anderson, Morris Charney, David Covo and Norbert Schoenauer. Ends February 28, 1983. Le Centre Urbain, Heritage Montreal is located at 406 Notre Dame St., East, Montreal.

### Carleton University School of Architecture Exhibition Gallery

#### First Year Studio

Student projects from term one. February 10 to 18, 1983.

#### Berne, Switzerland - A Medieval City Today

The evolution and growth of a city over 800 years. March 1 to 18, 1983

#### DSA — Rome

The results of the latest 'Directed Studies Abroad' program in Rome during the fall term. March 21 to April 1, 1983.

#### Student Work

A cross-section of work from the various studios in the school during the year. Beginning in May.

### Ballenford Architectural Books Mississauga City Hall Studies —

Michael Kirkland and Edward Jones  
January 19 to February 26, 1983.

Recent Drawings — Ron Thom  
February 28 to April 9, 1983.

Back at 98 — Drawings by David Sisam,  
John Van Nostrand and Joost Bakker  
April 12 to May 21, 1983.

Waterloo at Rome (tentative)  
Beginning May 23, 1983.

Ballenford Architectural Books is located at 98 Scollard Street, Toronto.

### McGill University, School of Architecture

Exhibition Room.

Working Drawings Working by Aldo and  
Francesco Piccaluga.

January 31 to February 11, 1983.

An exhibit from the office of Bobrow  
Fieldman and Associates.

February 21 to March 4, 1983.

### Centre de Création et de Diffusion en Design

Expositions 1983.

#### Graphisme Canadien

Du 17 février au 6 mars 1983.

#### Affiches Polonaises, Après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale

Du 17 mars au 10 avril 1983.

#### Design Diffusion Pédagogique - Projets des Finissants.

Du 18 avril au 1er mai 1983.

#### Architectures Colombiennes, Alter- natives aux Modèles Internationaux.

Exposition itinérante, conçue et  
réalisée par l'Ecole Spéciale d'Architect-  
ure de Paris.

Du 19 mai au 5 juin 1983.

#### Design Diffusion - UQAM

Du 9 juin au 30 août 1983.

Pavillon Arts IV - Design de l'UQAM, 175  
ave. Prés. Kennedy (locaux 1915 et  
2890), Montréal. Ouvert au public mer-  
dim, 12h00-18h00.

## LECTURES

### Architecture Alcan 1983, Montreal

The lectures are at 6:00 pm in McGill  
University's H. Noel Fieldhouse  
Auditorium.

Paul Goldberger: Architecture, History  
and Confusion; February 1, 1983.

Neil Levine: Frank Lloyd Wright,  
Picasso and Modern Architecture;  
February 8, 1983.

Michael Kirkland: Suburban Monumen-  
tality — Mississauga City Hall and  
Other Recent Work; February 15,  
1983.

Andrew Batey: The Work of Batey and  
Mack; February 22, 1983.

Charles Moore: The Beverly Hills Civic  
Centre Competition; March 1, 1983.

Demetri Porphyrios: Classicism is not a  
Style; March 8, 1983.

Mark Mack: The Vienna of Hoffman and  
Loos; March 15, 1983.

Richard Etlin: The Forgotten Modern  
Movement — The Milanese  
Novecento 1918-1938; March 22,  
1983.

Bernard Huet: Architecture  
d'Aujourd'hui en France; March 29,  
1983.

Vincent Scully: The Architecture of  
Michael Graves; April 5, 1983.

### University of Toronto, Faculty of Ar- chitecture and Landscape Architecture

Spring Lecture Series 1983. Sponsored  
by the Toronto Masonry Promotion  
Fund and assisted by the OAA. All lec-  
tures at 8:15 pm in the Medical  
Sciences Auditorium. Admission free.

Barton Myers: Recent Works; February  
3, 1983.

Edward Jones; February 10, 1983.

Jan Gehl: Street Life and the Quality of  
the Urban Environment; February 24,  
1983.

Jerome Markson: Influences and Work;  
March 3, 1983.

Wallace E. Sherriff: The Architectural  
Designer's Role in a Multi-Faceted  
Practice; March 10, 1983.

To be announced: March 17, 1983.

Randy Hester: Emerging Aesthetics in  
Landscape Architecture; March 24,  
1983.

Sir Peter Sheppard: Light and Water as  
Elements of Landscape; March 29,  
1983.

Fernando Domeyco-Perez: Analytical  
Methods for the Study of Traditional  
Form; April 7, 1983.

### Perspectives on Architecture — Lec- tures on Architecture by Architects

Calgary Central Library, Second Floor  
Auditorium, 7:30 pm.

Daniel Soloman: February 4, 1983.

Norman Hotson: March 18, 1983.

Tom Dubcicianic: April 22, 1983.

Tickets are \$4.50 at the door. A recep-  
tion will follow each lecture at the  
Palliser Hotel Penthouse, Calgary.

### Alcan Lectures on Architecture 1983, Vancouver

Organized in collaboration with the  
Vancouver League for Studies in Ar-  
chitecture and Environment and held at  
the Robson Square Media Centre.

Ricardo Legoretta: February 9, 1983.

Kenneth Frampton: The Prospects for  
Critical Regionalism; February 23,  
1983.

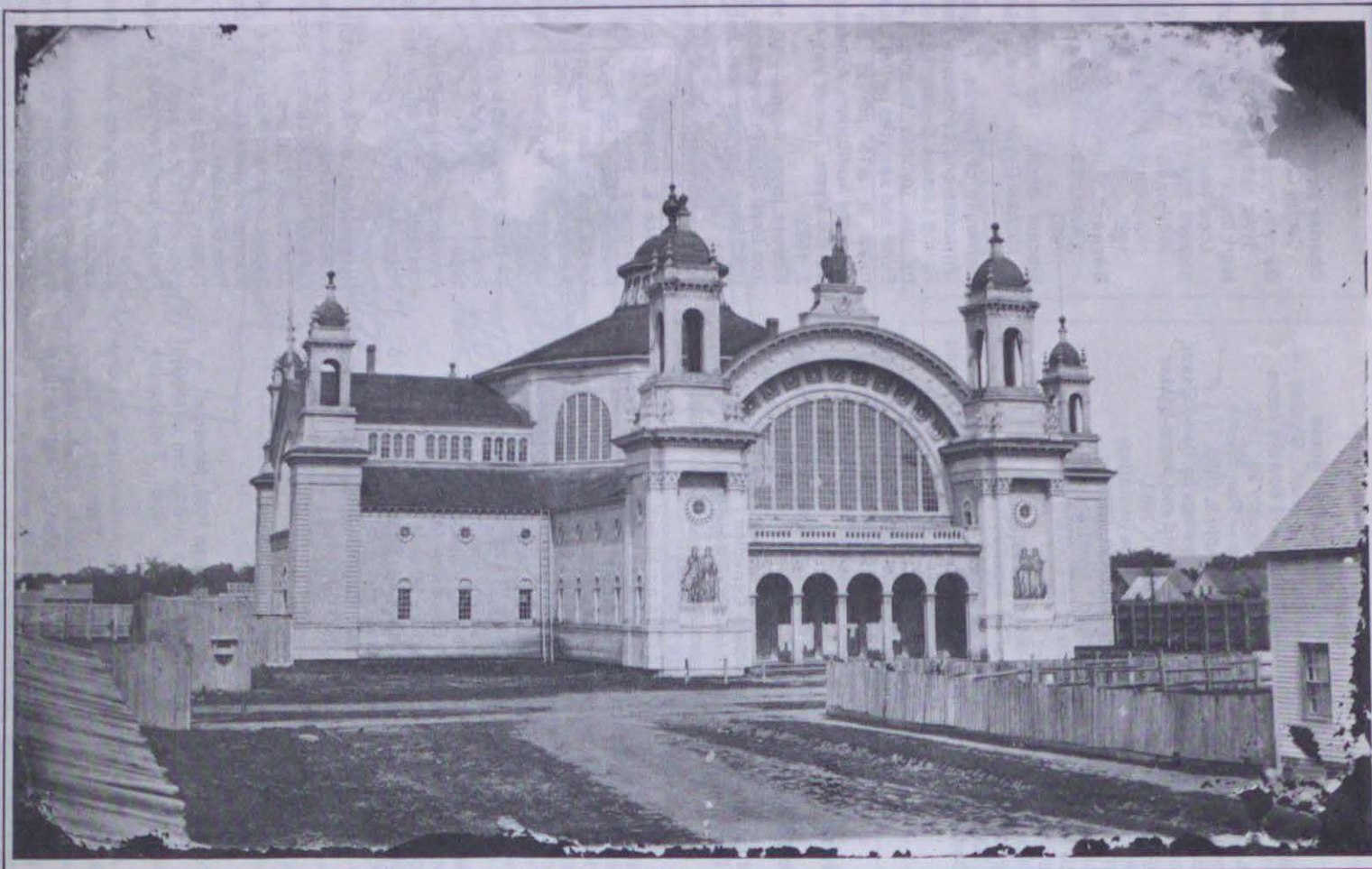
Angela Danadjieba: March 30, 1983.



# ARCHIVES

52

THE FIFTH COLUMN, Hiver 1983



**First Exhibition Palace at Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1863 - 1877  
Matthew Stead, Architect**



# THE FIFTH COLUMN

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School of Architecture, McGill University  
Architectural Undergraduate Society, McGill University  
Ontario Association of Architects  
The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada

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L'Association des Etudiants en Architecture, Université de Laval  
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Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba  
Northern Chapter, Alberta Association of Architects  
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School of Architecture, Carleton University  
School of Architecture, University of Waterloo  
Southern Chapter, Alberta Association of Architects  
University of Waterloo

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Derek Drummond, Montreal  
Domtar  
Heritage Montreal

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