



1 Jacques Rousseau



1



3



4

Maintenant que l'édifice est parmi nous, qu'en penser?

La rue Sanguinet, du haut de la terrasse de la rue Sherbrooke jusqu'au Marché Bonsecours, est en questionnement comme elle est en voie de résolution. Une brève randonnée nous informe.

Du Marché Bonsecours, renouveau culturel, entre le port, le bassin des patineurs, son pavillon et la ville, par l'ancien hôtel Rasco, le tunnel Gosford, la petite rue Saint-Claude et le Château de Ramezay; l'Hôtel de Ville, le Champs de Mars (fig. 1), Chaussegros de Léry (fig. 2) et la cour municipale; de l'autoroute Ville-Marie (fig. 3), le Métro Champs-de-Mars, les édifices de la Banque Nationale à l'hôpital Saint-Luc; des résidences étudiantes et le centre sportif de l'UQAM en construction, du CLSC, du pavillon de l'Administration de l'UQAM en développement au pavillon de Design; du jardin Sanguinet qui entoure l'École des Sciences de la Gestion et les pavillons Athanas David et de Musique, la Cinématèque Québécoise en construction et aux Habitations Jeanne-Mance (fig. 4); du Cinéplex St-Denis en développement au CEGEP du Vieux Montréal; de l'ancien Mont St-Louis au terrain vacant le plus controversé de la rue Sherbrooke et au-delà le Carré St-Louis.

Dans cette promenade urbaine, le Pavillon de Design, non pas comme oeuvre d'architecte mais comme oeuvre, travail de l'architecture, revisite la tradition de Nolli. La rue, le parvis, la colonnade, le fronton et la nef. La tradition revisitée par les prérogatives du site, du programme et de l'architecte et son équipe. La colonnade précède le parvis, le fronton se penche vers la rue; de plein pied, la salle des fêtes du centre de Design rivalise avec le grand escalier qui s'amorce en vitrine. Avec lui un axe, une faille oblique, quelque fois encombrée, s'ouvre en une nef qui traverse l'école et aboutit au sixième étage sur une cour sur le toit. Issu d'une topographie artificielle, un belvédère, tel un campanile nous attend, plein d'humour et d'ironie. L'escalier d'issue, dans sa cage de verre, se pose dans l'axe du stationnement souterrain du complexe voisin!

Tous ces dispositifs que je décris rapidement nous parlent de culture architecturale dans la ville, pour la ville et donc pour nous.

Si le Pavillon de Design, même indiscipliné, nous parle aussi directement de notre culture, la rue Sanguinet, dans son élan de mutation, n'est-elle pas un site où les projets en cours peuvent encore nous révéler un visage de cette ville en quête de racines?

En effet, la rue Sanguinet est une affaire à suivre. La mémoire collective des architectes est-elle assez incarnée pour s'y manifester? A sa façon, Hanganu fait sa part et nous rend la promenade urbaine moins morose.

Maintenant que l'édifice est parmi nous, qu'en penser?

Qui d'entre tous les designers, architectes et ingénieurs, ayant réalisé des constructions, pourrait prétendre qu'un projet se réalise sans se voir altérer? Personne! Le Pavillon de Design n'échappe pas à cette réalité. Est-ce le fait de l'architecture ou le sort fait à l'architecture aujourd'hui? Quoiqu'on en dise, l'altération est d'ores et déjà une contrainte, une motivation, devenue incontournable.

Hanganu, bon homme, sait celà. Lors de l'inauguration du pavillon, il suggère que l'édifice est une toile de fond. Suivant le thème de la toile comme stratégie du projet, l'équipe de conception s'est efforcée de créer une architecture ouverte aux actes à venir, aux mouvances et errances des uns, aux contingences et intransigences des autres, à leurs valeurs explicites et implicites, leurs espérances, et leurs méfiances.

La toile de fond est l'espace tectonique choisi, témoin du flux et reflux des forces vives, qui s'inspirent et s'expirent les unes les autres, s'inhument et s'exhument les unes les autres pour former une architecture moderne, originale et typique de son temps.

Maintenant que l'édifice est parmi nous, qu'en penser?

Je ne saurais terminer ces commentaires sans parler de l'oeuvre de l'architecte.

Les sensibilités sont toutes différentes. Hanganu était artisan: menuisier, maçon, ferronnier dans un pays de traditions. Hanganu était poète dans un pays obscur. Hanganu était immigrant dans un pays renommé pour son accueil. Pourrions-nous comprendre son travail à partir de ces clefs: les traditions constructives, l'histoire de la Roumanie et les concepts de liberté d'expression et de tolérance, implicites aux terres d'accueil?

Ma lecture globale et subjective de l'édifice réside dans cette émotion que l'on ressent à y vivre et y travailler.

Que le projet de l'architecture est ardu à mener à termes et qu'il naît, asymétrique comme chacun de nous: petit pied, gros pied; oeil perçant, oeil qui louche; oreille alerte, oreille sourde. C'est dans ce projet, comme dans un combat pour la vie, qu'il cherche à harmoniser notre profond désir d'humanisme et notre soif de matérialisme. Si le construit n'est pas un auto-portrait



2

de l'architecte, il est en tous cas l'expression d'une culture. C'est notre portrait, transmis par les pouvoirs évocateurs de la matière. Si l'architecture est à notre image, voilà donc le pavillon de design et toute la liberté et la tolérance qu'Hanganu et son équipe se sont accordées pour inscrire en béton brut peint blanc, blocs à la main, l'acier entre les dents, l'histoire douloureuse mais combien vivante de notre marche vers la lumière. Le Pavillon de Design nous dit honnêtement qui nous sommes. Un édifice qui nous dit combien il est difficile de faire résonner les traditions.

Dans cela, Hanganu n'est pas meilleur homme qu'un autre, il est franc et inquiet comme nous sommes libres et tolérants. Le Pavillon de Design est une leçon du coeur, de culture et de mains à la tâche. A ce jour, l'édifice public le plus humble et humain d'Hanganu et ses collègues.

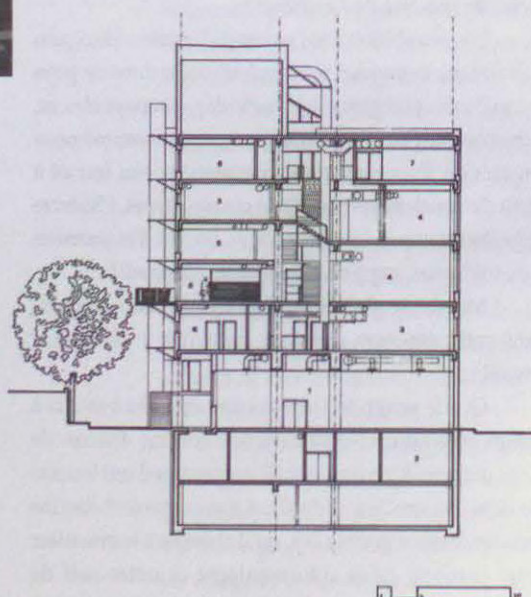
Jacques Rousseau est architecte et professeur à l'UQAM.



east elevation



view of Sanguinet Street



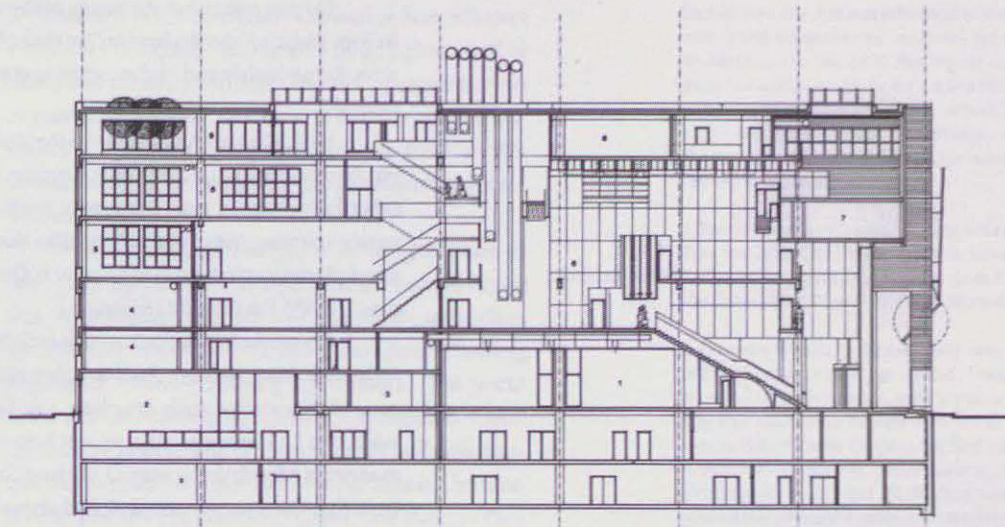
Cross Section

1. Exhibition space
2. Workshops and storage
3. Classroom
4. Studio
5. Café
6. Teacher's Office
7. Computer classroom
8. Mechanical room

Coupe transversale

1. Salle d'exposition
2. Ateliers et dépôt
3. Salles de cours
4. Ateliers de production
5. Café
6. Bureau du professeur
7. Classe d'informatique
8. Salle mécanique

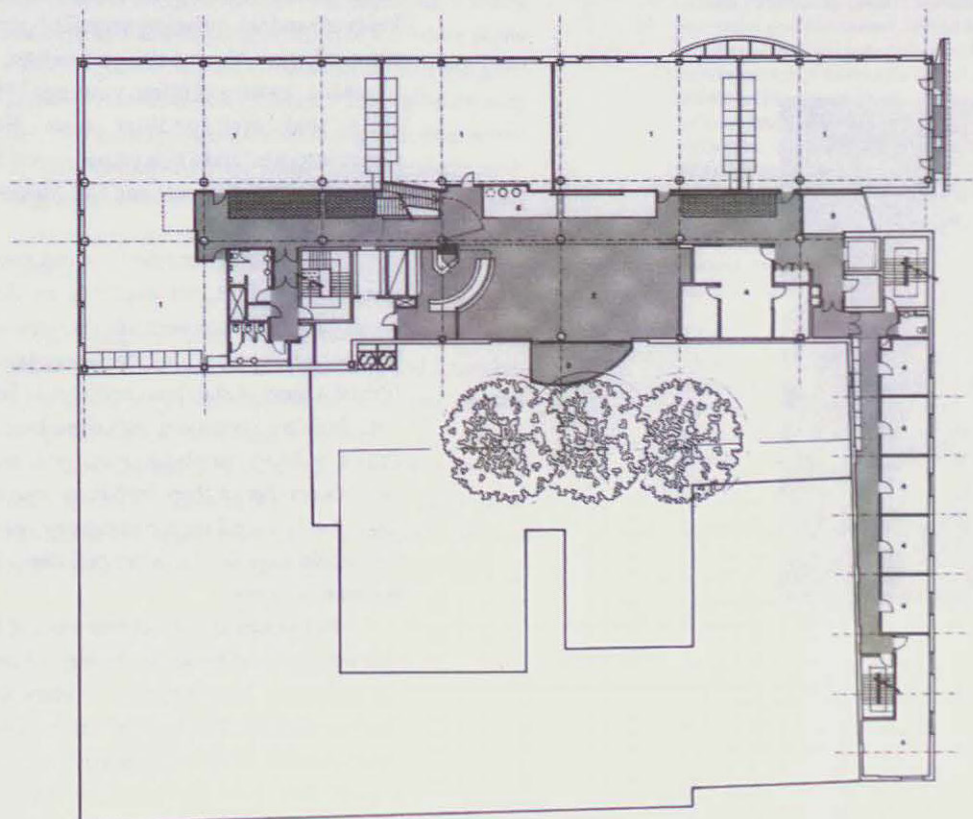
Faculté de design - UQAM
Dra. B. Hargrave architecte



Longitudinal section
 1. Exhibition space
 2. Workshops
 3. Storage
 4. Classroom
 5. Studio
 6. Main atrium
 7. Research office
 8. Computer classroom
 9. Library

Coupe longitudinale
 1. Salle d'exposition
 2. Ateliers
 3. Dépôts
 4. Salle de cours
 5. Atelier de production
 6. Atrium central
 7. Bureau de recherche
 8. Classes d'informatique
 9. Centre de documentation

Projet de design - 1990
 Des J. Hagen, architecte



Third Floor Plan
 1. Studio
 2. Café
 3. Balcon
 4. Recherche office
 5. Void

plan étage
 1. Atelier de production
 2. Café
 3. Balcon
 4. Bureau de professeur
 5. Vide

Projet de design - 1990
 Des J. Hagen, architecte

2 Peter Lanken



north façade

Do you remember the image of the spinning bird in Tom Wolfe's *From Bauhaus to Our House*? The logician who, flying higher and higher, spins in ever-decreasing circles?¹

Well, Modern Architecture—that is, the old Modern Architecture of Le Corbusier, Gropius, and all those other Europeans of sixty or seventy years ago—is now surely spinning out of control, just like that bird. And a good place to watch its dying dance is Dan Hanganu's new UQAM Pavillon de Design.

Everywhere you look in this building, there's a little trick from another time, another place. The concrete block exterior walls are plane, just like the stucco walls of a Le Corbusier villa, except here scribed in the manner of Mondrian by way of Michael Graves.² Those lines that Corb sometimes sketched above his roof gardens here appear as galvanised frames.³ Sant'Elia chimneys⁴—galvanised again—stand beside a roof garden straight out of Corb's big blue book of paradox.⁵ Somehow there's a Mies frame around some windows on the north façade.⁶ Inside, there are at least four different kinds of handrail, including several of galvanised sheet spun off from Alvar Aalto and twisted in a Daniel Libeskind drawing of fifteen years ago.⁷ There's even a little roof stair/podium from the Russian Constructivists,⁸ and a cute piano-shaped balcony from France by way of Atlanta and Des Moines.⁹ The mind spins.

The visiting architect's mind spins, thinking about all the effort that went into the detailing. And about the money that went into construction, for this is no low-budget project, despite its poor-boy affectations. (Priced a sheet of stainless checkerplate lately?) This is not a building consonant with these times of fiscal restraint, reduced maintenance budgets, and layoffs. In fact, it's another of those buildings where one thinks, "boy, if only they'd cut the budget by twenty per cent, this would have been a better building." The architect is certainly capable.

But sadder is the fact that most of those expensive architectural tricks are foreign—European—and old-fashioned. They represent a future that has been dead for decades. Whether any future now exists is another question; what is sure is that if there is a future, it is much different from that of the International Style. The backward gaze to an obsolete future, so common in recent Montreal architecture,¹⁰ betrays a strangely romantic, or provincial, or even colonial, attitude.¹¹

For this is Montreal, not Paris or Berlin. Montreal was the home of the two greatest architects in this coun-

try's history. Victor Bourgeois¹² showed us how to insert windows in a façade,¹³ and how to build a plane wall of small-unit masonry.¹⁴ Ernest Cormier¹⁵ showed us how to modulate a wall,¹⁶ and how to make a circular entrance.¹⁷ But that bird, born to the beat of the *Internationale*, is spinning too fast to understand local lessons.

The Pavillon de Design, in evoking a future of days past, reminds us how authoritarian that old future was. A lot of effort, after all, was spent in those old days on defining minimum building standards: ceiling heights for workers' housing, for instance. (The world has a way of transmuting minima into maxima, which can then be imposed on others.) That old authoritarianism shows itself: here is a display case; here is a bulletin board; here is a big glass sign board. Use them as they were intended. Use only as directed. Misuse is abuse.

If the UQAM students have any spirit at all, of course, they will subvert these strictures. Very quickly.

That old authoritarianism runs deep in the double helices of Modern Architecture. Taylorism,¹⁸ which was so important in the generation of the future of the 1920s, originated, in part, in the social theories that gave rise to nineteenth-century prisons.¹⁹ That vision appears here, atavistically, in the galleries facing each other across a multi-storey space, in the white-painted grilled guardrails, in the wire-protected fluorescent light fixtures, and in the regimented office doors in their projecting steel frames.²⁰

Here is the most dangerous aspect of looking back to that European future for inspiration. Because much of that style was intended to be shocking and iconoclastic, it is now easy to misapprehend, as it spins around us all, its original values and intentions.

The big truths of architecture are still true.²¹ We must not forget them as we wait for that old bird of Modernism to spin so fast that it disappears, as Tom Wolfe described, right up its fundamental aperture.

Shortly after this text was submitted to the Editors of *The Fifth Column*, it was returned to me, annotated in a manner reminiscent of Peter Abelard, or of my grade five English teacher. Evidently the references I thought were clear were not. In adding these notes, I have tried to keep as close to original sources as possible, and always to keep in mind Oscar Wilde's dictum, "Even things that are true can be proved." I hope that readers whose knowledge exceeds my own will point out errors and omissions.

1. Tom Wolfe was, of course, referring to Le Corbusier; see Tom Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to Our House* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1981): 27. Earlier, he had applied the same image to Art Theory; see Tom Wolfe, *The Painted Word* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1975): 112.

2. Reference is made to the essentially non-architectural grid in many of Piet Mondrian's paintings entitled "Composition" from about 1917 into the 1930's. These grids, and the planes they divided, found their way into architecture through the work of Theo van Doesburg, and, thence, that of Walter Gropius. See Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963): figures 81, 261 and 262. Michael Graves regularized and compressed this grid, and applied it to otherwise non-architectural planes. See the Crooks House, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1976, and the Fargo-Moorhead Cultural Center Bridge, Fargo, North Dakota/Moorhead, Minnesota, 1977, in Karen Vogel Wheeler, Peter Arnell, and Ted Bickford, eds., *Michael Graves, Buildings and Projects, 1966-1981* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982): 83-90, 111-8. I consider these grids to be non-architectural because they abstract and diminish the tartan grid originally and triumphantly published by Cesare Cesariano in 1521. It was this tartan, architectural grid that marked the real beginning of complex, modern architecture by allowing the formal and rational ordering of all the parts of construction. It marked the end of an age in which, for instance, Alberti could scribe regular joints on irregular stonework; it led directly to Victor Bourgeois and Ernest Cormier and most of the great buildings of Québec. See Cesare di Lorenzo Desariano, *Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de Architectura Libri Decem, liber tertius* (Como: Gotardus de Ponte, 1521): f. LIII, r. and v. See also elevations of Alberti's Palazzo Rucellai of 1446-51 in Franco Borsi, *Leon Battista Alberti* (Oxford: Paidon, 1977): 64-5. For a general discussion of order, see Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, *Classical Architecture, The Poetics of Order* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1986).

3. For instance, la Maison Citrohan, 1920; here Le Corbusier even drew a little awning. See Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, *Oeuvre Complète de 1910-1929*, 4th edition (Zurich: W. Boesiger et Oscar Stonorov, Les Editions d'Architecture Erlenbach, 1946): 31. Walter Gropius did it too, as at his Master's House at Dessau; he had curtains on his frame. See Hans M. Wingler, *The Bauhaus: Weimar Dessau Berlin Chicago* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969): 409.

4. See Antonio Sant'Elia, Project for a Subway, in Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, figure 192. Some Sant'Elia drawings were exhibited at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in 1995; see Jean-Louis Cohen, *Scenes of the World to Come* (Paris: Flammarion/CCA, 1995): 34-5.

5. Serious students will understand that there is no such volume, and that it comprises the entire corpus of Le Corbusier writings. The most graceful, if not the earliest, exposition of the essential paradox of the great architect's work is by John Summerson. He writes: "In the course of [a conversation with Le Corbusier] we observe, naively enough, that 'the house stands in the garden,' to which Le Corbusier replies, 'no, the garden stands in the house,' proving his assertion by an executed design in which this is, in fact, the case. We suggest that 'a building is, in principle, four walls with windows for light and air,' and he replies that 'on the contrary, a building may just as well be four windows, with walls for privacy and shade....' *Heavenly Mansions and Other Essays on Architecture* (London: The Cresset Press, 1949): 190-1. For Le Corbusier's

Five Points of Paradox, see Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, *Oeuvre Complète de 1910-1929*, 128-9.

6. This clearly is not a Mies detail, but I didn't know how else to characterize the anomalous insertion of a galvanized structural steel section into the façade, surrounding the big aluminum window. Mies worked in the rational tradition of architecture, as did Victor Bourgeois. For interest, compare the wall sections of, say, Crown Hall, Chicago, in Werner Blaser, *Mies van der Rohe, The Art of Structure* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965): 88 and 92, with those of Bourgeois's Entrepôts de l'Hôtel-Dieu, rue Le Royer, Montreal, of 1861.

7. Aalto's curves were generally simple, not compound. See the lecture hall ceiling of the Viipuri Municipal Library of 1935, and the Finnish Pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Paul David Pearson traces these curves to Le Corbusier's Maison Cook of 1926, and the Villa Stein of 1927. See Paul David Pearson, *Alvar Aalto and the International Style* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1978): 123, 181, and 229, note 6.12. Then see Daniel Libeskind, *Between Zero and Infinity* (New York: Rizzoli, 1981): 82-103.

8. See El Lissitzky's Lenin Tribune of 1920-4, in Selim O. Khan-Magomedov, *Pioneers of Soviet Architecture: The Search for New Solutions in the 1920s and 1930s* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987): 52.

9. See note 7 above. The curved wall was, of course, central to Le Corbusier's thought in the 1920's. My favourite example of the piano-shaped wall is at the Villa Meyer of 1925. See Le Corbusier and Jeanneret, *Oeuvre Complète de 1910-29*, 87-91. Then see Richard Meier's High Museum of Art in Atlanta, 1980-3, and the Des Moines Art Centre Addition of 1982-5, in *Richard Meier Architect 1964-1984* (New York: Rizzoli, 1984): 296-327 and 357-63.

10. For Sant'Elia's battered towers and metal projections, see the IBM Building. For Villa Savoye ramps, see the Jean-Noël Desmarais Pavilion of Le Musée des beaux-arts de Montreal. For a Vesnin Brothers Pravda Building canted wall, designed for the same purpose, see Le Centre Molson. For a Villa Stein entrance canopy, here with an added aileron, see the IBM Building. For Bauhaus balconies, different from Montreal balconies, see the Faubourg Québec residential development. For a 1932 Le Corbusier Zurich concrete roof canopy, see Le Centre Molson. For square windows in a Pavillon Suisse façade, see Le Musée d'art contemporain de Montreal. For Centre Le Corbusier bolted angle columns, see the addition to Westmount Public Library. For a Vyborg Mass Kitchen roof wing, see the IBM Building. For a whole bunch of European Modernist tricks, see the various projects submitted for the recent competition for La Bibliothèque d'Outremont.

11. Romanticism: the attraction to ideas or images remote in time and place. Provincialism: the desire to introduce locally the fashions of a remote capital of culture. Colonialism: the imposition of foreign styles or standards without regard to local conditions or traditions.

12. Victor Bourgeois, architect, Lavaltrie 1809 - Montreal 1888.

13. Several approaches: see, for instance, Les Entrepôts de l'Hôtel-Dieu, rue Le Royer, Montreal, 1861; l'Église Ste-Rose, 1851; l'Église St-Joseph-de-Chambly, 1881.

14. See, for example, l'Église St-Félix-de-Valois, 1854.

15. Ernest Cormier, architect, Montreal 1885 - Montreal, 1980.

16. See the Palais de Justice, rue Notre-Dame, Montreal, 1920.

17. See the Dow Tower, Peel Street, Montreal, 1935.

18. Frederick Winslow Taylor was the founder of the Harvard Business School, and the author of *Principles of Scientific Organization of Factories*

(London and New York: Harper, 1911). His method was to isolate individual skilled workers and to examine them at work, in order to codify the most efficient ways of accomplishing clearly defined industrial tasks. His effect was to increase general production and prosperity, and to reduce the worker to the status of a machine. His *Principles* was published in French in 1912, and was known to Le Corbusier. See Jean-Louis Cohen, *Scenes of the World to Come*, 69-75; see also Brian Brace Taylor, *Le Corbusier at Pessac* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, 1972): 4-5.

19. It started with Jeremy Bentham at the end of the eighteenth century. His method was to isolate individual prisoners, and to keep them under individual surveillance, in order to ensure control and to prevent social contamination. His effect was, eventually, to restrict prisoners to individual cells, as in his Panopticon prison, instead of in general wards. See Jeremy Bentham, *Panopticon, or, the Inspection-House Containing the Idea of a New Principle of Construction applicable to any Sort of Establishment, in which Persons of any Description are to be kept under Inspection* (Dublin: Thomas Byrne, 1791). See Jeremy Bentham himself, stuffed, mounted, and in a glass display case, at University College, London. His theory was developed to the point of constructing individual boxes to isolate prisoners in chapel and in class. See Henry Mayhew and John Binny, *The Criminal Prisons of London and Scenes of Prison Life* (London: Griffin Bohm and Company, 1862). These works were recently displayed at the CCA, in an exhibition entitled, "The Idea of the Penitentiary," curated by David Vanderburgh and Cammie McAtee.

20. The archetypal image was also on view at the CCA: Joshua Jebb, *Report of the Surveyor-General of Prisons on the Construction, Ventilation and Details of Pentonville Prison* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1844), plate 21, "Interior Perspective of Pentonville Prison, London."

21. "Be more specific: what are they?" said the note. Every serious student of architecture should have his [sic] own list. Mine are, at the time of writing, and not very originally: first, the Vitruvian triad of Utilitas, Firmitas, and Venustas, from the *Ten Books of Architecture*, III, 2, first rendered in English by Sir Henry Wotton in 1624, thus: "In Architecture as in all other Operative Arts, the end must direct the Operation. The end is to build well. Well building hath three conditions. Commoditie, Firmitas, and Delight," *The Elements of Architecture, Collected by Henry Wotton, Knight, from the best Authors and Examples* (London: John Bill, 1624): 1. Vitruvius also writes of Propriety, *Ten Books on Architecture*, II, 5-7, which, on the authority of Andrea Palladio, I have always considered to be part of Utilitas. He writes, "an edifice may be esteemed commodious, when every part or member stands in its due place and fit situation, neither above or below its dignity and use..." *The Four Books of Andrea Palladio's Architecture* (London: Isaac Ware, 1738), rpt. (New York: Dover, 1965): 1.

That makes three. The fourth is economy, discussed by Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, II, 8-9, but taking its modern, rational meaning from the Abbé Laugier: "Do the minimum necessary." See Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l'Architecture* (Paris: Duchesne, 1753), translated by Wolfgang and Anni Herrmann as *An Essay on Architecture* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1977).

The fifth and last is history. Just as automobile racing is as old as the second car, modern architecture is as old as the second building. The notion occurs often in the history of architecture, as each modern architecture is supplanted by one more modern. But it changed essentially with the publication of the first modern history of architecture, which Peter Collins considered to be Jacques-François Blondel's *L'Architecture Française de 1752-6*. From that time, it has been incumbent on architects to consider the place in history of each new building, as well as of each old one. See Peter Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture 1750-1950* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965): 15-6, 29.