

NATIONAL STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

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from *Idea as Model* by Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelsonas

Architectural design, at this time, is searching for new meaning. We see around us some new buildings that question the ideas of the Modern Movement in a quest for new meaning. In relation to this, there is more and more discussion on the memory of architecture. But what is the memory of architecture as it relates to designers?

This competition would like each contestant to address the question of architectural memory through the design of a house for four occupants. The aim is not to design a house that is an embodiment of the memory of any particular occupant but deals with architectural memory. Function, scale, site, structure, location and materials are all left to the discretion of each contestant.

The competition is open to any student registered in a school or department of architecture in Canada and to RAIC syllabus students. Students who are not members of the Canadian Students of Architecture, the organizers and co-sponsors of the competition, must include a registration fee of fifteen dollars. Members may register without the fee. All contestants must submit registration forms by January 1, 1983 to the organizers. All entries must be sent by February 28, 1983 and no entries will be accepted postmarked after this date. Contestants who did not register and are not members of the CSA/RAIC must include a twenty five dollar fee. Entries must never have been submitted for course credit at any educational institution or entered in any previous competitions.

Additional information shall be available by the time of publication through the CSA/RAIC Chapter Chairmen in each of the ten schools or will be forwarded directly to RAIC syllabus students. This will include submission requirements, judging procedure, further regulations and the prizes that will be awarded. Winning entries will be exhibited at the 1983 RAIC Assembly in Montréal and possibly published in THE FIFTH COLUMN.

MISSISSAUGA CITY HALL COMPETITION

The winner of the Mississauga City Hall Competition was announced on September 29. There were 627 entries registered of which 246 were submitted.

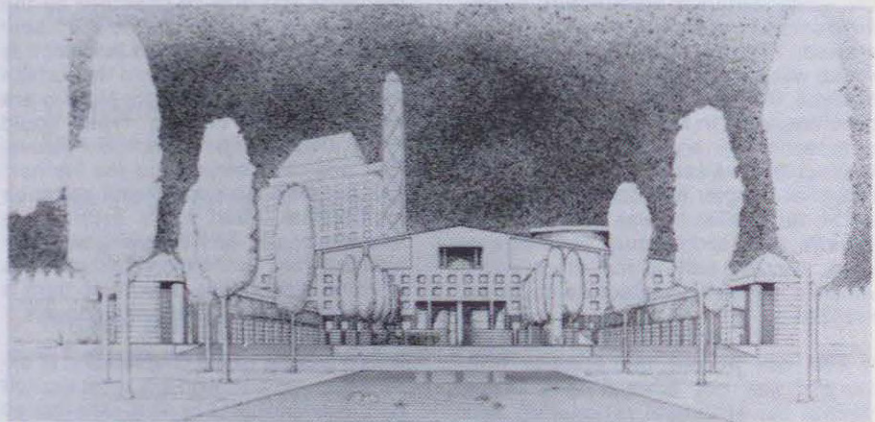
The first prize — \$150,000 in addition to the contract — went to J. Michael Kirkland and Edward Jones based in Toronto. The second prize (\$75,000) went to Barton Myers Associates (in conjunction with Bruce Kuwabara), the third prize (\$37,000) to the Ron Thom Partnership and Harvey Cowan Architects, and the fourth prize (\$18,750) to Michael Brisson. All are from Toronto.

Honourable mentions were given to R.E. Barnett, A.J. Diamond Associates, and the Davies/Leggett Partnership.

The five-person jury consisted of architects James Stirling, Phyllis Lambert of Montreal and Jerome Markson of Toronto as well as Mississauga's planning commissioner Russell Edmunds and a local resident, Douglas Kilner. The non-voting chairman was Toronto architect George Baird.

The judges' decision was unanimous. According to a press agent, James Stirling was to have commented, "The design was of high quality by world standards and would, in my opinion, receive international praise upon publication."

It is hoped that construction will commence in September 1983 with occupancy in October 1985.



Winning entry: "A building for two seasons."

CANADIAN STUDENTS OF ARCHITECTURE ORGANIZE

Les étudiants en architecture du Canada possèdent maintenant une organisation nationale apte à reconnaître leurs intérêts et à encourager la communication entre les différentes écoles du pays.

Affiliée à L'Institut Royal d'Architecture du Canada, cette organisation porte le nom de "Regroupement des Étudiants en Architecture du Canada". Afin de promouvoir ses objectifs, le REAC/IRAC publie le seul magazine national d'architecture, THE FIFTH COLUMN, parraine une compétition nationale de design ainsi que diverses expositions itinérantes et va prendre part à la conférence Montréalaise de 1983, qui aura lieu à la fin mai, et est déjà en branle. Tout étudiant inscrit à l'une des dix Ecoles d'Architecture du Canada ou stagier du IRAC peut, s'il le désire, devenir membre du REAC/IRAC. La cotisation de \$15.00 comprend, entre autres, un abonnement à THE FIFTH COLUMN. Pour s'inscrire, ou pour obtenir plus de renseignements, s'adresser à REAC/IRAC, 328 ouest Somerset, Ottawa, K2P 0J9.

Students of architecture in Canada now have a national organization to address their concerns and to foster communication between the Schools. Affiliated with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the organization is aptly named: "Canadian Students of Architecture of the RAIC". In promoting its goals, the CSA/RAIC publishes the only national journal of architecture, THE FIFTH COLUMN, sponsors a national design competition and travelling exhibitions, and meets annually at the RAIC Assembly. Plans are already underway for the 1983 Assembly in Montreal in late May.

Membership in the CSA/RAIC is on an individual and voluntary basis and is open to students attending one of the Schools of Architecture as well as to RAIC Syllabus students. Membership costs \$15.00, includes a subscription to THE FIFTH COLUMN, and is available from the CSA/RAIC at 328 Somerset West, Ottawa, K2P 0J9.

MARCEL BREUER: FURNITURE AND INTERIORS

A retrospective in recognition of the range, scope and impact of that architect's interior designs and furniture, was presented at the Château Dufresne, Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Montréal from September 17 until October 21, 1982.

CONSTRUIRE EN QUARTIER ANCIEN

Paul Falconer

The French exhibit, *CONSTRUIRE EN QUARTIER ANCIEN*, which travelled to Quebec City and Montréal this summer, was sponsored by the Ordre des architectes du Québec, who supplemented the exhibit with one of their own, *DE LA RUPTURE À LA CON-*

Analogy: The architecture which searches for precedence within the surrounding neighbourhood and uses such as an analogy for new compositions. This necessarily involves the search for the essence of the place, combined with a direct reference to the context. This approach remains both admirable and challenging, and the examples provided demonstrate that direct reference to the style and spirit of a place lend new compositions a measure of credibility and respect.

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. Le niveau de qualité et d'intérêt de ses éditions dépend principalement des articles qui nous sont soumis; ces articles pouvant être thématiques ou d'ordre général.

L'édition printannière de 'THE FIFTH COLUMN' aura pour thème: 'Nouveaux horizons pour l'architecture canadienne.' Les divers régionalismes ainsi que l'influence des conditions climatiques semblent être les caractéristiques permettant de distinguer une architecture canadienne. Mais y a-t-il ou y a-t-il déjà eu une architecture canadienne? Les nouvelles directions que prend notre architecture mènent-elles vers un plus grand respect de ces conditions typiquement canadiennes? L'actuel débat international sur les valeurs architecturales nous rapproche-t-il d'une architecture canadienne ou nous en éloigne-t-il?

La date limite pour la remise d'articles thématiques à paraître dans notre édition Printemps 1983, ainsi que pour tout autre matériel se rapportant à nos chroniques régulières (Making Plans, News and Views, Drawing, Student Work, Critiques) est fixée au 15 février. Pour plus d'information, contactez votre éditeur régional ou 'THE FIFTH COLUMN'.

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 hoped for 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 now our policy to publish potential future themes well in advance in order to better solicit submissions.

The theme for the Spring issue of THE FIFTH COLUMN will be New Directions in Canadian Architecture. Diverse regionalism and climatic response seem to be the two most evident characteristics defining a specifically Canadian Architecture. Is there or has there ever been a truly Canadian architecture? Are new trends in Canadian architecture responding to these conditions or specifically Canadian factors? Is the current international debate on architectural values contributing to or detracting from Canadian architecture?

The deadline for submissions of theme articles for this issue along with any material for our regular features, such as Making Plans, News and Views, Drawing, Student Work, or Critiques, is February 15. For further information, contact your Regional Editor or THE FIFTH COLUMN.

Complex Examples: An architecture which addresses more complex demands involving not one but a number of different attitudes in approaching the design of new compositions for older neighbourhoods.

Blocks of Renovation: The last section of the exhibition referred to the attitudes which affect the renovation or reconstruction of a city block, or a larger part of the older neighbourhood. Here, the problem of integrating a building or group of buildings within the existing historical context is certainly most challenging, and therefore demands a special solution. The architect must address the more complex issue of integrating building and city; creating a piece of the city which belongs to the surrounding built environment.

How can one stop the ravages of this rupture and how can one safeguard and continue the traditional values and forms of the lifestyle? Successful integration requires an appropriate fusion of attitudes and a thorough exploration of the relationships between the city and its various parts. Unfortunately, there remain too many examples of Zero Degree Integration.

Works of architecture erected today depend enormously on our choices and references, and exhibitions such as these might be able to assist us in making effective decisions regarding the proposals forwarded by architects and planners in our older neighbourhoods. The OAQ encourages us to ponder the meaning of "integration" and "contrast" and whether it can lead to an architecture which might respect and develop the "know-how" of our forefathers' heritage.

(Paul Falconer is a student at the School of Architecture at the Technical University of Nova Scotia, presently on a work term in Montreal, and a Regional Editor of THE FIFTH COLUMN.)

POLITICS IN ARCHITECTURE

NEW DIRECTIONS IN CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE

Architecture which is designed and built with total indifference or in total defiance of the existing neighbourhood. A rare example of how such an attitude or approach might be successful is the Eiffel Tower, a steel structure which has come to dominate and symbolize the city of Paris.

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TFC FIRST READERS' POLL

As a magazine of national character, it is important that THE FIFTH COLUMN be a vehicle for the exchange of ideas about architecture, and particularly architecture in Canada. It is also important to realize that this forum is not only open to the writers who contribute but also to the readers. And so, THE FIFTH COLUMN announces its first Reader's Poll.

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.

The purpose of the poll is to see what the readers across the country think about Canadian architecture and what has made an impact upon them. Perhaps it will shed some light on the diversity of architectural expression within the nation and point out the roots of such diversity. And it will allow you to compare your own thoughts with those of the architectural community.

As well as the list of buildings, we are also interested in why those buildings were chosen. Any additional comments giving more detailed reaction or explanation will be very welcome and excerpts from these replies will be published with the poll results.

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.

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

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While Breuer's architecture has already received much of the attention it so richly deserves, his furniture and interior designs have yet to be given a comprehensive exhibition of their own. By the age of 28, Marcel Breuer had created a body of work that would remain one of the most significant in twentieth century design. His furniture, especially his work in tubular steel, was innovative and influential. Through his natural sense of design and his thorough knowledge of materials, Breuer was able to create furniture and interiors that rose above the level of decoration or function. Half a century after their conception, his works remain as modern and contemporary, as vital and relevant, as any designed in the present day.

MARCEL BREUER: FURNITURE AND INTERIORS presented some 37 pieces of furniture, including examples of Breuer's innovative chair designs, such as his wood armchair (1922), the first tubular steel chair (1925), his tubular steel cantilever chair (1928), his aluminum armchair (1932-33), and the Isokon molded plywood lounge chair (1935-36).

This exhibition was organized by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, with the aid of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and was generously supported by SCM Corporation.

UPCOMING ISSUES:

POLITICS IN
ARCHITECTURE

NEW DIRECTIONS IN
CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE

CONSTRUIRE EN QUARTIER ANCIEN

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The exhibits focused on the qualities of different neighbourhoods and contexts in which new architecture is inserted. The exhibition raised some important questions regarding contemporary architecture, as the architects who conceived this exhibition believed that many buildings are in direct contradiction with the value that we accord our lifestyle and culture. They suggested that the various forms of contemporary architecture might be inserted more successfully into our older venerable neighbourhoods.

The exhibition illustrated the work of various architects who have built in these older neighbourhoods and outlined their approaches.

Zero Degree of Insertion: A rupturous architecture which is poorly integrated and characteristically indifferent to the surrounding built environment.

Integration: An architecture which is highly homogeneous with the older neighbourhood, respecting the styles, scale and materials.

Contrast: An architecture which exhibits some degree of integration, but not so much as to interfere with its existence as a separate entity within the environment. The example provided illustrated the integration and yet unquestionable contrast between Florence Cathedral and the surrounding rooftops.

The Amusing and Precarious: An architecture which is designed and built with total indifference or in total defiance of the existing neighbourhood. A rare example of how such an attitude or approach might be successful is the Eiffel Tower, a steel structure which has come to dominate and symbolize the city of Paris.

The Invisible: An architecture which maintains a low profile by using any one of several tactics such as transparency, reflectance or camouflage.

Analogy: The architecture which searches for precedence within the surrounding neighbourhood and uses such as an analogy for new compositions. This necessarily involves the search for the essence of the place, combined with a direct reference to the context. This approach remains both admirable and challenging, and the examples provided demonstrate that direct reference to the style and spirit of a place lend new compositions a measure of credibility and respect.

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FILM/STRUCTURE/ ARCHITECTURE REVIEWED

by Janna Levitt

The drywall and wood installation shown at Toronto's Artculture Resource Centre (July 1982) is an attempt to examine the structural interconnections between film and architecture. A narrative is established by sequentially ordering primary architectural elements — facade, corridor, room — whose reduced forms and spatial development are to be seen as the physical correlation between the two media.

The corridor that connects the facade and the room is the most successful element in this respect. The ramp narrows gradually as it leads towards the room, similar to the two-dimensional representation of a vanishing point. Foreshortening the perspective in this way results in a disjuncture which polarizes the physical reality of one's environment (the architecture) and how it is perceived spatially (the film aspect). Consequently, what is seen as a long distance



is inversely proportional to the actual time it takes to traverse the area. This causes the space to appear 'flattened' much in the way an image, recorded with a telephoto lense, looks on screen. The result, in both cases, is a rational displacement, because the 'thing' or image appears both far away and yet close to, one self.

Forced perspective is a device which has been used in film to varying degrees. From the more extreme examples of *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari* and *Citizen Kane* to the more subtle application in *Marni*, there is an evident tradition employing this non-verbal narrative device to facilitate feelings of estrangement, apprehension, etc., as it relates to the story.

From the corridor one enters a brightly lit room where a video screen is installed in one of the walls. One is unaware of the video until the point of entry since

the corridor and adjoining room have been skewed. All the transition points, where one space meets another, are marked in this way. It's as if all the elements have been pulled apart, examined and then reassembled, each in a different way, testing the conditions of entry, passage and exit. One becomes cognizant of the architectural language by which space and mass interconnect and give way to one another. This self-conscious demonstration of the mechanisms that create a particular space or series of spaces are revealed in other areas of the construction. There are places where the drywall has been cut away to reveal the wood framing; some of the walls form putative corners; the entire framing is revealed, like a skeleton, on the outside of the piece.

The self-reflexivity that this calls into play has its parallel in film, specifically among the avant-garde where the process is as important as the final product. There is a particularly strong connection with the notion of editing, as this is the process where individual shots are joined together. In commercial cinema this is done in such a way as to make the joints or cuts invisible to the viewer. The avant-garde favour highlighting the productive values and the edits are often opaque, according a parity and integrity to the components that create the illusions.

The video monitor in the room displays images of what is going on outside: that is, outside the actual construction but still within the gallery walls. A tenuous connection has been made by the artists to relate this to the notions of 'flashback' and 'future scenes' that in a film takes one out of linear 'movie' time. What is more intriguing and disturbing, in terms of the artists claiming that this signifies "film contained by architecture," is how upon examination they have settled for the most conventional representation or understanding of this relationship.

Due to the treatment of the video the room, the 'architecture', becomes subordinate to what is seen on the screen. The person, hitherto an active participant, is rendered a spectator, a voyeur, able to observe with impunity the activities of others. The classic relationship between spectator-spectacle is re-enacted.

From this room one steps outside the construction, where a film is projected onto a screen set high above the corridor. This screen resembles a Russian Constructivist composition mounted on wire mesh. Where the film is able to penetrate this billboard-like facade, the images spill onto parts of the gallery beyond the structure. The film itself is mainly a collage of architectural



elements, punctuated by shots of fireworks.

The fact that the movie is architectural in nature is not in itself enough to form a significant relationship with the construction. That the images are projected onto surfaces other than simply the screen *per se*, is indicative of the artists' attempt to establish a dialogue between the two media. However, technical difficulties with the film and lighting made it hard to get a clear reading.

The first part of the installation — the construction — has, as was stated previously, a narrative inherent in its organization. By doing so, a set of expectations on the part of the viewer are initiated. The concluding element of the piece — the film — is non-narrative and in a sense this leads to some confusion as one is trying to understand this part with regards to what he/she has just experienced. Ultimately the connection one makes can only be somewhat general, i.e.: "this installation has something to do with architecture that the construction on its own was unable to convey," as opposed to a more specific conceptual relationship between the two. This is not to suggest that the film is gratuitous. In its present state it is just very difficult to comprehend it as an integral part of, as opposed to apart from, the installation as a whole.

The clarity with which the various elements are presented and built, are in themselves the strongest argument for the ideas of the artists. They also allude to the potential that future investigations in this area will proffer. Where the installation falls short is indicative of the artists' inability to decide what in this complex relationship bears articulation. An ambiguity prevails and it is difficult to ascribe an intent whose nature is experiential, structural or both.

(Janna Levitt is a student at the School of Architecture at the University of Toronto.)

