THE FIFTH COLUMN

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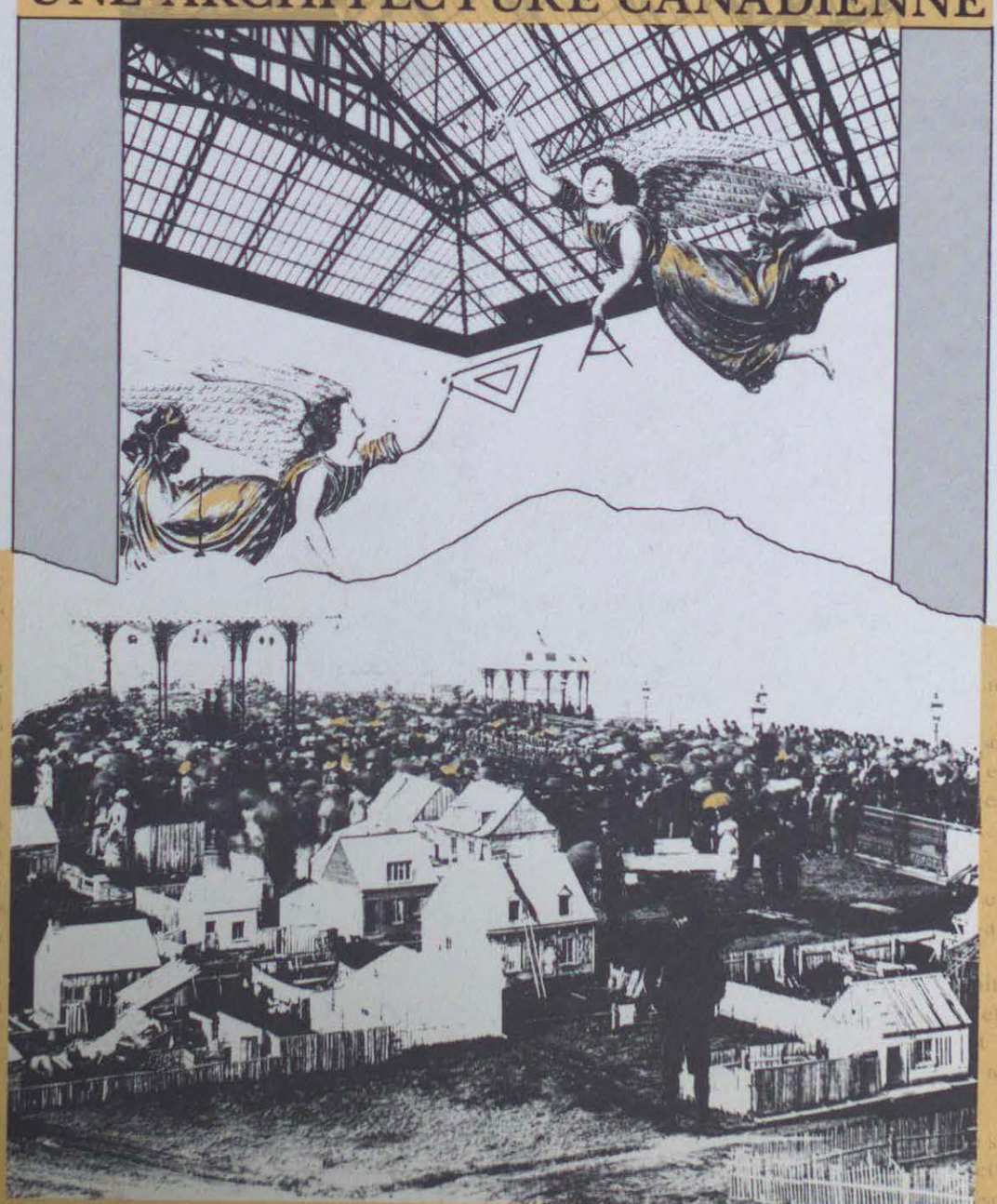
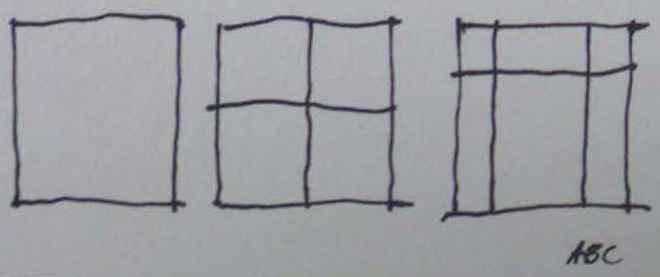
A CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE
UNE ARCHITECTURE CANADIENNE



the grid
evocative of the endless expanses
of the canadian prairies
Big sky
on the wide open page
A new neo-rationalist stance for
the canadian student journal of architecture
Maybe
more likely a realization of the
neo-plastic reality of the modern
world



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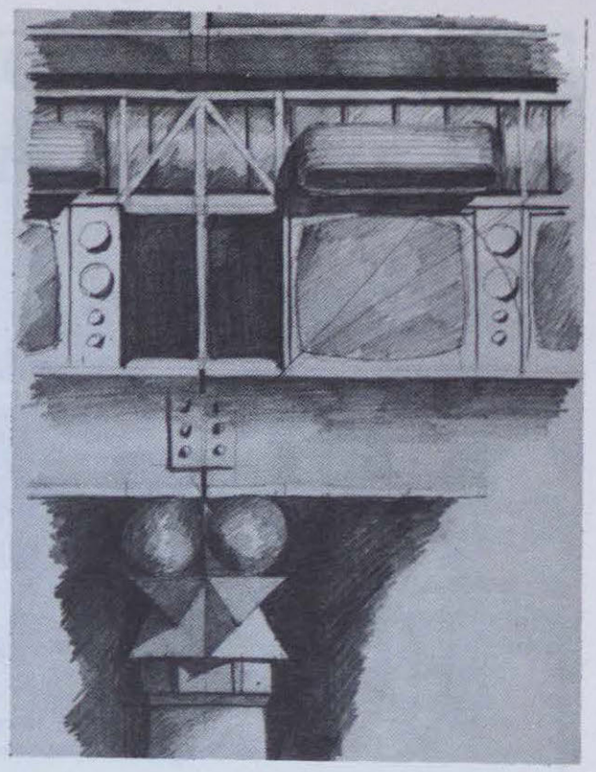


A Canadian Order

Cover by Georges Drolet

The Spectre of A Canadian Architecture

by Mark Poddubiuk

The house pitched
the plot staked
in the middle of nowhere.

At night in the mind
inside, in the middle
of nowhere.

The idea of an animal
patters across the roof.

In the darkness the fields
defend themselves with fences
in vain:
everything
is getting in.

Margaret Atwood,
Progressive Insanities of a Pioneer

We began this issue of THE FIFTH COLUMN with a very different idea in mind. It was originally entitled 'New Directions in Canadian Architecture'. Once we began researching the theme and soliciting articles, it became obvious that there was a much greater project at hand. Like Northrop Frye's overquoted rhetorical question, "Where is here?", where we are going is inconsequential until we know where we are.

Secretly, I hoped somebody would arrive at a model for A Canadian Architecture. I have been disappointed. Apparently, such a venture is not an enviable one in a country split geographically, historically, socially and culturally. Canada is a ridiculous anomaly. Twenty-five million separate realities seemingly held together by the very conflict that threatens to tear them apart. Nationhood, and a tentative nationhood at that, is our only defence against complete anonymity.

I think there must be themes that run consistently through Canadian architecture. Margaret Atwood's thematic analysis of Canadian literature, *Survival*, draws some fascinating conclusions from a seemingly incongruous body of literature. Many of these themes can be extended to embrace other fields of the Canadian psyche. In architecture, they are made conspicuous by their absence. Various foreign periodicals have recently done special issues devoted to architecture in Canada (*Progressive Architecture, JAE, The Architectural Review*). In every case there is the same note of incoherency. Canadian architecture has never made a clear statement.

Fifty years ago, John Lyle expressed his misgivings about the practice of architecture in Canada. He developed a critical stance in respect to the lingering historicism of Victorian architecture which had dominated most Canadian architecture since Confederation and the oncoming wave of modernism already entrenched in Europe.

It was a critical moment in Canadian architectural history, all the more remarkable in its similarity to our present situation. Lyle sought a distinctively Canadian architecture based on modern ideals, mediating classical precedents and regionally sensitive forms and ornament. Apart from the few of his late projects that were realized, and perhaps those of his contemporary, Ernest Cormier, modern architecture in Canada has largely ignored Lyle's ideals. Instead, we have spent the past fifty years developing an anonymous collection of buildings that reflects no grander ideal than the pluralist society in which we are mired.

A few of the finer works of Arthur Erickson, Ray Affleck and others have succeeded in establishing specifically Canadian solutions to architectural problems. It is interesting to note that these figures are almost completely absent from the pages that follow. Though it was never intentional, it does indicate that they are no longer representative of an emerging generation of Canadian architecture. There is a difference between a solution to an architectural problem, such as the Canadian winter, and an architectural expression that is a particular reflection of a culture. An inward-looking building or an underground city provide possible solutions to the problem of the Canadian winter, but, hopefully, those solutions do not express cultural or social aspirations. That is why Erickson's houses are more importantly Canadian than any of his public buildings.

The modern project, as so emphatically stated by Kenneth Frampton, is not over. It has suffered an unfair sentence. The spectre that we call A Canadian Architecture cannot be found in a nostalgic reverence for a past that we, as a nation, never really had. We have not much advanced since John Lyle addressed the RAIC in the late Twenties and early Thirties. Instead, a new generation, fully versed in the tenets of modernism, increasingly respectful of the variety of traditions in Canada and fully aware of important ideas from abroad arrives at another critical moment in Canadian architectural history. Ultimately, A Canadian Architecture will be a synthesis.

The spectre still eludes us. We did not expect to bring it out into the open. When asked to name the ten most significant buildings in Canada, our readers consistently singled out the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. They embody some element of the spectre that extends well beyond the Victorian Gothic cloak. What is A Canadian Architecture? Don't answer — the question only needs to be asked.

Mark Poddubiuk is a student at the McGill University School of Architecture and a member of the Editorial Board of THE FIFTH COLUMN.

Sour Grapes in the Garden

On a recent visit to Montreal I stood in front of the house Cormier built for himself. Above the doorway he had positioned a statue of a woman holding a replica of his University of Montreal. It was clear that Cormier was proud of his architecture, that he created with joy and unabashed enthusiasm.

We walked through a public garden and Cormier's home revealed its bulk grandly, joyfully. Today, with many of our schools in hopeful transition, major competitions becoming built realities, an archives being realized by our finest working with real dedication and spiritedness, new architectural publications full of vitality coming forward, new writers opening their opinions to a broad forum, it is at this time that we should hold on to the joy that one can see in Cormier. I am particularly aware, as I work on this issue, that many teachers are forgetting why they began teaching, many architects forgetting what we choose to devote years over drafting tables to: Canadian architecture is a garden, rich with tradition and exploration and possibilties — it's good to see the joy of those who don't settle for a few grapes.

— Kathy Dolgy

Kathy Dolgy is the Toronto Regional Editor of THE FIFTH COLUMN *and a student at the School of Architecture of the University of Toronto.*

THE MEDIOCRITY CULT

by Graham D. Livesey

...The general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind.
J.S. Mill
On Liberty

Canada exists as a pedantocracy. She is a liberal/capitalist democracy of incredible diversity and potential — a country that could forge ahead of all others in the quest for a truly civilized state. Yet the governing standards are those of true mediocrity, incompetence, complacency and frightened conformity; with very few exceptions.

John Stuart Mill, the great British liberal/Utilitarian thinker from the mid-nineteenth century, predicted this fate for democracy. Yet it seemed to him that within the democratic system there lies the greatest potential for excellence and individual freedom. Mill wrote urgently for the liberty of the ordinary individual, for a system free from what he termed the 'tyranny of the masses' — rules dictated by mass society, rules that stifle individual awareness and creativity, that limit mankind's desire to learn. Mill warned that the Individual was in great danger and that freedom of speech, thought and action, as long as these did not harm others, were of absolute importance to a society wishing to progress. His own solutions to ensure that the British parliamentary system would liberate the individual, leave one very sceptical, however, the diagnosis is correct. "He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty other than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties."[1]

For the most part Canadians are dull conformists hampered by a crushing inferiority complex. The dictator of this regimented like-mindedness is our collective psyche, the mass media and the Almighty Greenback. Throughout our entire society the conformists widely out number the eccentrics who desperately want to both contribute to the collective and pursue their own lives. One must consider good architect/artists to be eccentrics, as the general trend in building, as in society, is to conform to the mediocrity cult. The Cult is comprised of those irresponsible businessmen who pose as architect/artists and whose sole concern is bucks — they take no responsibility for the horrors that they inflict upon the unsuspecting society. This is not architecture/art, this is interfering with the individual liberty of others. The Cult accepts no social responsibility in the way that a doctor might. The Cult often assumes a superior role to the rest of society, prescribing vast building projects that are even unfit for habitation by the dogs of war. The people are not to blame, for they do not care for the subtleties of esoteric architectural and artistic debate. The Cult is to blame; it must start producing buildings good enough to be understood and appreciated. The buildings themselves must educate the people. A tradition of good architecture must be established in architecture — a tradition that can seep into the psyche of Canadians. Quality is of the essence. The Cult must be de-programmed, to make way for the Architect/Artist.

The architect/artist must be seen as an equal contributor to society. The tyranny must end — too much talent is being ignored by Canadian society. One must remember that everyone is talented and that everyone can equally contribute to bettering both the lives of the citizens and the world in general. If buildings have become useless and/or esoteric, then this must end — it must be valid to the people, to the traditions, to the climate and to the infinite Canadian landscape. Architecture/Art is not just for the Architect/Artist. The true architect/artist has no credibility in society today because of the Cult — the businessmen in their three-piece

suits who rip-off society with their slick, economical, dumb non-architecture/art.

This may be a limited disease, but it is carried by the high profile of the so-called profession. The architect/artist must assume responsibilty for his actions, he is the expert who can tell good from bad — society can remain only as an unconscious critic. The Cult will not be broken unless the members can break from the conformity and mediocrity of their attitudes and values: from the profession, the clients, the bureaucrats and the Money. This demands the courage to be individuals. Buildings are complex and omnipresent; they reflect to a certain extent the values and concerns of a society. Today the boxes of the Cult show who controls the entire soap opera. Why should greed, selfishness, and complacency prevail? The architect/artist only wants to gain acceptance, to shatter the power that money wields. Instead of talent and new ideas contributing to a better society, they are viewed with contempt and fear by the frightened conformists throughout the society, who direct our affairs. Moreover, within the animal kingdom we have been blessed with an unusual cranial capacity. "With us, heretical opinions do not perceptibly gain, or even lose, ground each decade or generation; they never blaze out far and wide, but continue to smoulder in the narrow circles of thinking and studious persons among whom they originate, without ever lighting up the general affairs of mankind with either a true or a deceptive light."[2]

There must be more to any society than money and conformity, especially within one questing for universal happiness. The people of Canada must become free as individuals, not directed in their actions by the society — this includes the Architect/Artist. The mind oppression must be fought. It is the perversion of the human species, it is the bomb, it is automation, it is everyone in the world lining up to see *Star Wars*. It is building without thought, without responsibility — searching only for bucks and for nothing else that architecture and people are.

Notes

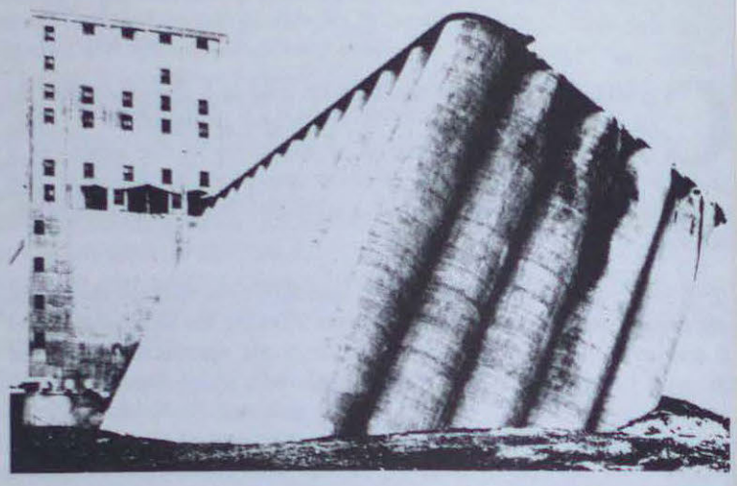
1. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government*, New York, 1972, p.117.
2. Mill, p.93

Graham D. Livesey is a student at the McGill University School of Architecture and a member of the Editorial Board of THE FIFTH COLUMN.

There are two definitions of culture. One has to do with an elite class of artists and connoisseurs with objective standards, universal ideals, absolute truth. The other is concerned with ordinary men and women, living together, evolving their own institutions, producing their own artifacts, creating their own myths.

Since the Renaissance, architects have generally associated themselves with the first definition of culture although the Modern Movement tried to combine the two. The quest for absolute truth has taken various forms: the traditional ideal of beauty, organic functionalism, more recently the return to rationalism and its offshoot, structuralism. If one of these were right, then the discussion as to whether there could ever be a Canadian architecture would be at an end. All we could do would be try to understand what nature or reason — or architecture itself — has set down for us to follow, and then we too might learn how to produce design of transcendental quality just like our colleagues from other parts of the world.

The dream of a single, objective, definitive standard, based on discoverable laws and principles, has fascinated architects over the centuries. It provides the psychological boost needed to have faith in what one does, it gives us the basis on which to condemn those whose work we dislike, and it allows architects, critics and teachers to set themselves up as authorities. The fact that no rules have ever



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been proved to be necessary or sufficient, that most rules are mutually exclusive and therefore suspect in their own validity, or that the history of architecture itself is sufficient evidence that both theory and design are conditioned by time and place, has done nothing to dampen the enthusiasm with which architects hold to their belief in the existence of some ultimate and external authority.

In itself, this act of so-called reification whereby human beings conjure up an abstract existence for their otherwise inexplicable beliefs is normal. Unfortunately, it can have pernicious side effects. Any fundamentalist dogma breeds narrow-mindedness, intolerance, the hatred of opposing view, and the rejection and ridiculing of beliefs other than one's own. Amongst architects it has encouraged and helped minority cliques to impose their tastes worldwide in the name of some objective reality. But most damaging of all, it undermines the role we play in shaping our own destiny.

Given a world traditionally conceived as operating through divine or natural law, the realization that social institutions were man-made only surfaced in the 18th century. In architecture the catalyst was the rediscovery of Gothic. Faced with different but equal sets of forms and compositional rules, the notion of style was developed. The idea answered many problems. It explained why architecture appeared in many forms. It allowed for different modes of architecture within the evolution of western civilization — Classicism, Gothic — and outisde it — Arabic, Indian, Chinese. It demonstrated how each and every style could be considered within itself. It showed why judgements changed as standards varied. And more problematically, it related architecture to other facets of the society that produced it.

From this standpoint, architecture was not the realization of an abstract ideal, but an expression of social values. Together with other social institutions — government, religion, language, law, art — it was part of the culture of any group that had its own unique identity. In this sense, culture was not something imposed from above, but the natural outcome of social life, to be found equally in a 'primitive' Indian tribe as in 'civilized' western nations. Productive as it has been — and it is at the heart of anthropology, archaeology and art history — the twin concepts of style and culture as a unified theory lent itself to a number of potential fallacies. It assumed that one aspect of society predominated over all others or, in another version, that its metaphysical totality infused and conditioned all its constituent parts. It assumed that all manifestations of social activity were somehow interconnected. It assumed that western civilization constituted a single culture. And it came to assume that there was a cause and effect relationship between the quality of a society and that of the art it produced.

Implicit in the belief that architecture 'reflects' its time and place is the hidden inference that some pre-architectural content exists for it to reflect. In its most popular form, this 'essence' has been conceived as the 'spirit of the age'. Given an objective material basis by Marx who argued that the character of art was determined by the economic system from which it results, the vision of a 'Machine Age' was fostered by architects such as Le Corbusier. At the same time, both men, who shared a liking for Greek art, attempted to reconcile their contention that architecture was indicative of its time, with the conflicting notion that it also followed its own immutable laws. It is from this symbolic union of the Parthenon with a Bugatti engine that Modern architecture derived.

This move to combine social culture and aesthetic culture did nothing to help the cause of nationalism. The only effect was to limit and qualify the 'absolute' rules of an aesthetic creed by the 'universal' conditions in which they were applied. Once again the reality of living in Canada or Timbuktu had nothing to do with architectural design. The only change was that instead of designing Neoclassical buildings in Nazi Germany, Communist Russia or New Deal U.S.A., architects now designed Modern buildings for

countries as diverse as Japan, Saudi Arabia and Brazil. Being commonly regarded as the expression of western civilization, it was taken for granted by its citizenry that western architecture was both the norm and the best. The consequence was that while, in theory, it could be accepted that differences might be allowed, in practice, other areas were considered ripe for western 'improvements' (so that even the U.S.S.R. exported its own brand of Neoclassicism to China) or in line for being 'updated' due to the historical necessity of events.

This Eurocentric point of view permeated and confused the theory and history of architecture. By chronicling a single line of development regardless of geographic borders, it explained all internal differences as regional variations and reduced all external imitations to a colonial or provincial status. In this situation, content could be achieved by substituting wheatsheaves for acanthus leaves. But even mother countries were not immune to such cultural imperialism. In the cultural life of the western world, no one nation has an architectural history it can entirely call its own, and some have always had their styles imported or imposed.

The flaw in the reasoning was to oversimplify the complex nature of culture as it applied to a set of separately identifiable groups or nations, and to equate it with a small class of architects and their patrons whose interests and aims were supranational. Thus catchphrase notions like the 'Age of Reason' — during which the fall of Quebec established Canada with two founding nations whose

had dissolved into a pathwork of separate societies, each with its own special character. The stage was set for architecture to take its place alongside other social manifestations — language, government, laws, traditions — as a symbolic component of each culture of which it formed part.

This did not happen. Certainly the English Gothic Revival sequence which led to the Queen Anne schools of the London School Board, and the no-nonsense houses much admired by Hermann Muthesius, found its motivation — if not all its sources — in the English physical and social climate. But any such incipient nationalistic tendencies were easily brushed aside by the subsequent success of the Modern Movement. Global in scope and meaning, the International Style once again took the world as its domain and completely ignored ethnic boundaries. The question must then be asked that, if architecture is an expression of each specific culture, how did this so readily come to pass? Or conversely, given the intrinsic nature of architecture and the manner in which it occurs, does it have the capacity to be representative of any specific culture?

As we have seen, it has been generally assumed either that architecture is an autonomous art form based on universal laws — aesthetic, behavioural, and natural — or that it reflects universal conditions — actual or idealized. While these have also been wrapped up in metaphysical terms, they have obviously contributed to the international direction that architecture has persistently taken.

RCHITECTURE:

cultural differences we all know only too well — failed to recognize the importance of other more general cultural traits. The transmittance of styles was brought about as a result of a minority aesthetic taste rather than through any popular expression, as with the introduction of the Italian Renaissance into France by Philibert Delorme and into England by Inigo Jones. It could easily be argued that, far from representing the triumph of a superior or later phase of European aesthetic culture over one that was inferior or less advanced, this sort of intrusion was a defeat for the indigenous social culture that was being exploited and undermined.

The consciousness that Classicism represented not only an aesthetic ideal but also an ethnic bias came with Goethe's eulogy on Strasbourg cathedral. In it he decried the recently published theories of the Abbé Laugier that sought universal rules for architecture in the primordial buildings of antiquity. Although both English and German writers were to claim Gothic as their national style, the rift that emerged was essentially between two European factions, between the Greco-Roman and Nordic traditions, between the light and reason of the south and the dark brooding mysticism of the north. Thus Gothic and Renaissance were portrayed as not just two consecutive styles but as the natural expression of two distinctive groups who at consecutive times had been the dominant force on the European continent. In this reinterpretation, the Renaissance of Brunelleschi heralded a return to the Italian mainstream after a period of national decline, while the rediscovery of Gothic was vindicated by a reassertion of northern values.

At the same time, the rise of nationalism in the wake of the American and French revolutions and Napoleon's armies, established the political structure in which nationalistic movements could flourish. Instead of the broad north-south division of European culture, there were now independent states of every shape and size. The universal realm of the Roman Empire and the Christian church, well serviced by the Classic and Gothic,

DELUSION OR

Industrialization, urbanization; the need for housing, offices, schools, hospitals; the means and methods of design; professional and business practices and requirements; consumer habits. All are relatively standard in a large part of the world. What then could be left to justify the pursuit of an indigenous architecture that would be any more than a regional variation — responsive perhaps to the local climate — of an international theme?

Two arguments must be made. The first is that it has proved difficult to generate an international style, especially one based on form, that can accommodate local modifications without impairing its symbolic integrity — witness the brick Gothic of northern Germany or the pitch-roofed Modern of California — a predicament which helps to explain why subsequent regional, colonial or provincial versions of a given style are generally, at best, second-rate. Secondly, what constitutes a culture in the anthropological sense is not how human beings behave in any general way, but what they make of their lives together in a particular way.

Notwithstanding the structuralist contention that cultural differences only represent transformations of a natural order, the fact remains that architecture is self-evidently a concrete manifestation of a particular time and place and not purely the physical embodiment of some eternal, absolute, universal system. In other words, regardless of whether any metaphysical essence underlies architectural design, history and commonsense tell us that the forms it takes are conceived through the experience of human existence. Rather than being the expression of technology — obviously a tool — or any other factor, architectural design clearly evinces the manner in which such agents are viewed. Thus architecture tells us as much about the people who design as it does concerning the issues to be faced and resolved.

It is this special quality of a people that lends itself to characterization as 'American' or 'Canadian' or even 'Quebecois'; and, in architectural terms, results in residential environments as unique as those of the Dogon, or Hyderabad, or Amsterdam, or Halifax. If these anonymous buildings can serve so well the culture of a group, and, assuming that architects represent the society in which they live, why it is that the work which they so painstakingly and self-consciously produce fails to similarly portray or satisfy the same conditions?

The answer lies in the architect's role as spokesperson for society. When patrons and architects favoured the same taste and the majority of society — being illiterate and oppressed — could be ignored, architects were readily able to convince themselves that what they did reflected both an aesthetic ideal and the social reality. The Industrial Revolution shattered this simple relationship with the emergence of two other potent groups. A middle class which proceeded to take over the function of client that the upper class had once enjoyed and a working class which, by its numbers and increasing militancy, came to represent the main part of society. Against these opposing forces, architects developed two strategies. Bourgeois taste was ridiculed and condemned. With the working class majority, they were more circumspect and equivocal. On the one hand they denounced the factory system and division of labour which had cut off the workers from their crafts and, as a result, corrupted their natural sense of design and turned them into passive consumers of shoddy merchandise. At the same time, they accepted the fact that people had become passive consumers and set themselves up as arbiters of good design who, by intervening between vulgar manufacturers and their innocent customers, would raise the general level of taste by giving people what they ought to like.

Following from these changed circumstances, architects could no longer seek the justification of their work in its acceptance by the power elite, but had to impose it on an unresponsive public to prove their contention that it was socially apposite. In this advocacy of a particular style, they were encouraged by their training to find motivation in the professional interests of an international faction rather than in their own situation. If the aesthetic model had been developed from some indigenous base, architecture would have realized its potential as the sublimation of ordinary building into art, as — ironically — it did in Victorian England and in Italy where a common bond existed between the local building tradition and its Classical, Modern, Fascist and Rationalist idealizations. As it was, the undiscriminating rejection of popular taste cut off architects from their social group, while their presumption that their

own taste was the standard of perfection, set them above and outside the public domain.

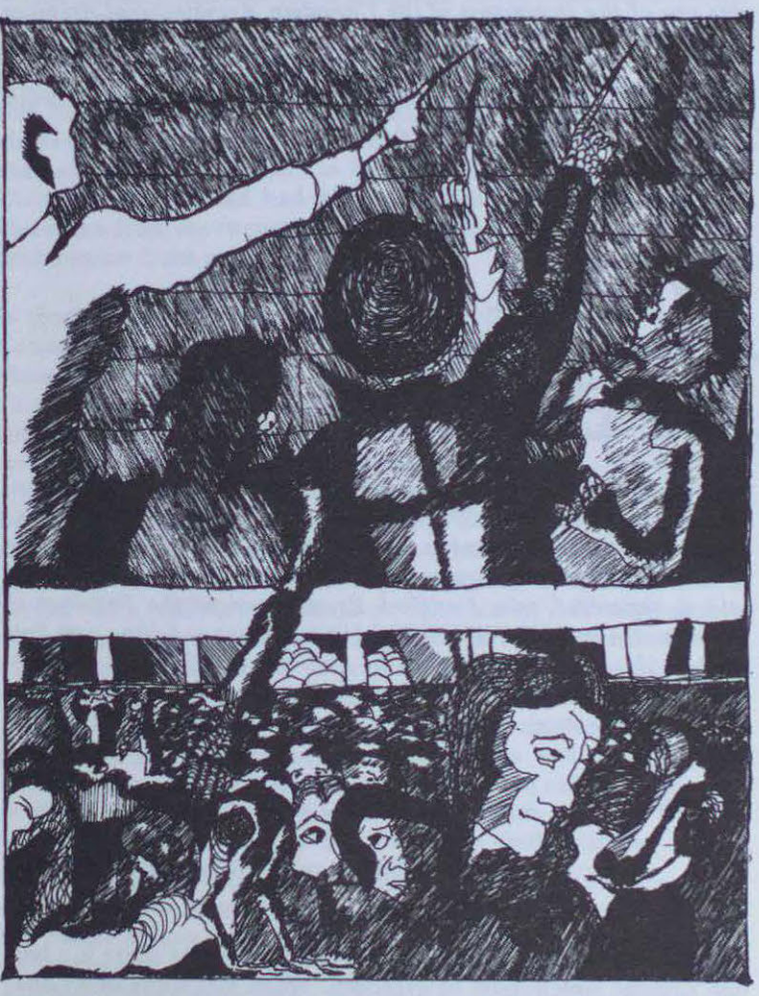
Ordinary people: ignorant, inferior, un-'cultured'; in Canada, middle-class, middle-brow, mediocre. Confronting them with disdain and proselytizing fervour, architects, heroically attempted to raise the quality of design. Given this simplistic caricature of a situation, inherited from the nineteenth century, critics have either despaired of ever producing a Canadian architecture of world-wide repute, or pinned their hopes on gradually raising the general level of public taste so as to provide the milieu in which great architecture might flourish. Yet in spite of the widespread assumption that all social institutions interact upon each other, the practice of architecture has largely maintained its own autonomy. The major influence on its evolution has been its own internal history. That this has transpired is because architecture, from its very inception, was attributed the capacity to symbolize some aspect of objective truth. By reversing both positions, a different and more

REALITY?

by Anthony Jackson

desirable cultural relationship can be reached.

While it does not in any axiomatic way follow that architecture should reflect beliefs or values derived from other social institutions — from economic or political or scientific convictions — it is obviously better for a social art like architecture, if the architectural values that it projects are shared by the majority of those it serves in a democratic nation. And, if this proposition is accepted, its attainment is more likely to grow out of our common way of life



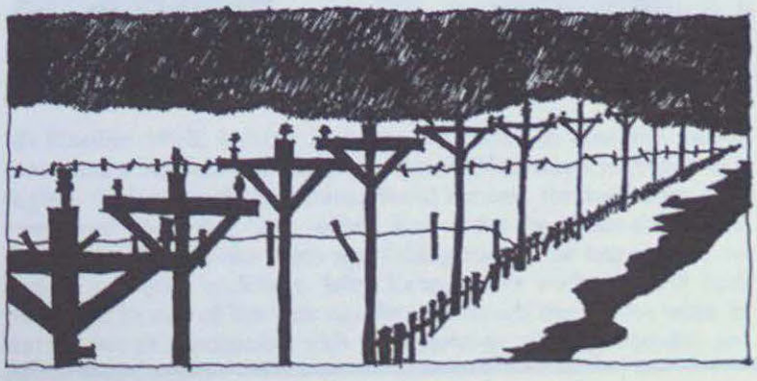
than from the esoteric pursuit of some abstract metaphysical illusion. Far from symbolizing any aspect of ultimate truth, architecture has always been addressed to the psychic — intellectual, emotional, perceptual, mnemonic, visual — needs of those who positively responded to the signs that it used. To give meaning and sustenance, a sense of order, tradition, relevance, beauty to the built environment for everyone — not just a favoured few — who must make their life in it, regardless of their occupational class, is surely no mean task. For such a resolution to be effective, it must be readily shared.

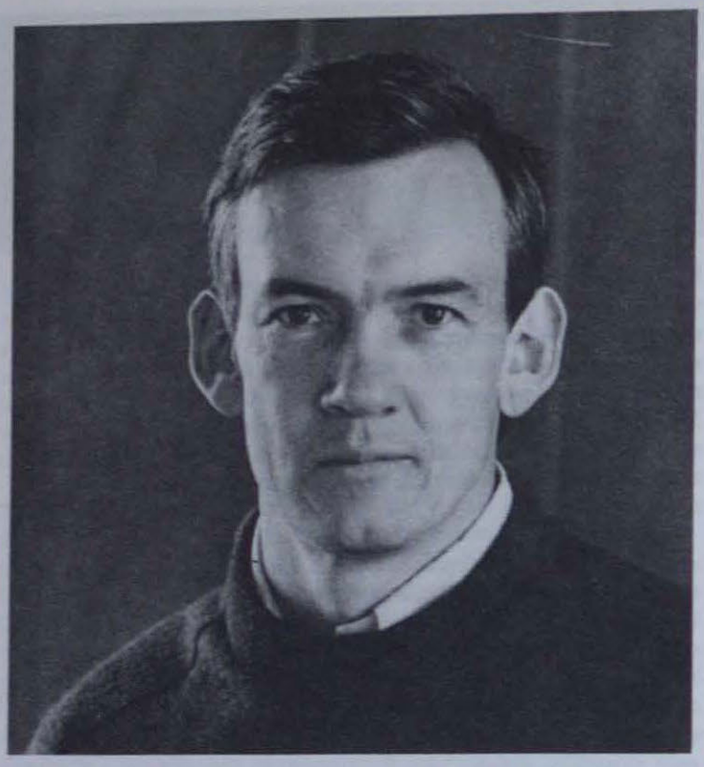
Architectural concepts, forms, strategies, motifs, principles do not constitute the *a priori* means and methods of a professional group but are the artificial conventions through which it realizes its architectural intentions. By focussing exclusively on their own private language as if this had an objective existence of its own rather than being a particular aesthetic code — different but not necessarily superior to those familiar to other people — architects have divorced themselves from public understanding in the same way that they themselves have been put off by the ruling conventions of certain other art forms. The solution to the current disillusionment with the stylistic conventions of Modern architecture is not to impose new sets imported from Amsterdam, Los Angeles or Milan, but to evolve a style or — more usefully — an outlook than can accommodate the sentiments, the attitudes and beliefs, the realities, myths and dreams, that collectively make up the Canadian ethos.

Are there any indications that this is happening? Certainly not in the work of those who continue to ape their mentors from abroad. But elsewhere, the advance towards an architecture responsive to our culture is being made from various approaches. Less affected by undermining trends that are promoted through the international circuit, those architects with an original talent, being Canadian, are predisposed to create images that are eloquent of their own situation. Others look for content in the existing Canadian fabric, finding their stimulus in the historic working out of built forms, or in the everyday arena of contemporary life, or more directly in climate, geography and social patterns of behaviour. Such individual endeavours provide an accumulative source of architectural material on which to base an indigenous architecture. But underlying and reinforcing these isolated results, within the same process that has already evolved its own vernacular traditions, exists that more general interaction of contextual forces and creative responses whose impact is demonstrated by the new spatial order that marks the present-day Canadian architectural scene.

For all people have a culture. Architects can add to it, enrich it, open up new directions for it; or they can distort and inhibit it. In the past, their pretensions to a foreign ideal have done much to perpetuate a colonial frame of mind. Today, the wider demand for myths and symbols — literary, cinematographic, architectural — to sustain and further our own identity, pluralistic in the diversity of our people and the variety of our land, requires us to leave behind our customary subservience to external influences and to seek our own posture in life through the buildings we create. We will then be of some value to the society to which we belong.

Anthony Jackson is a professor at the Technical University of Nova Scotia. He is well-known for his writings on Canadian architecture, such as The Future of Canadian Architecture *and* Space in Canadian Architecture.

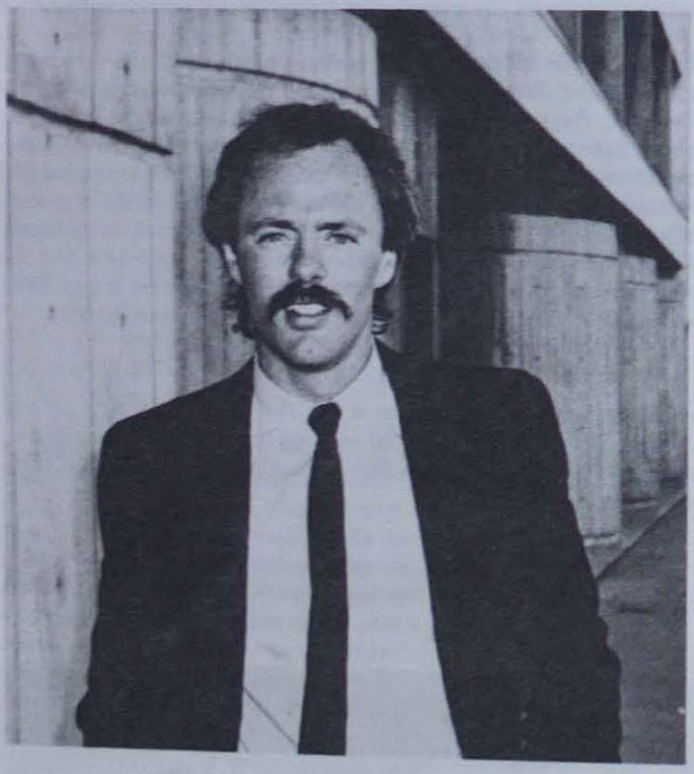




Michael McMordie is currently Professor of Architecture at the Faculty of Environmental Design of the University of Calgary. He is a graduate of the University of Toronto's School of Architecture, and studied the history of modern architectural theory at the University of Edinburgh, where he earned his Ph.D. He has worked in architectural practises in Toronto, Vancouver and Edinburgh, and has taught at the University of Edinburgh as well as Calgary. As well, he has been active in architectural and urban conservation, and acts as a private consultant in these fields. His research and writing are mainly on the history, theory and criticism of architecture, particularly Canadian architecture. He was one of the instigators of the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary.

Michael McMordie was interviewed recently in Calgary by Brian R. Sinclair for THE FIFTH COLUMN.

An Interview with Michael McMordie



Brian R. Sinclair is currently in his third year of the Environmental Design (Architecture) Program at the University of Calgary. Previous to his enrollment in this Program he completed a Master of Science degree in Psychology and Environmental Psychology and is registered as a Certified Psychologist in the Province of Alberta. He is THE FIFTH COLUMN Regional Editor and Past CSA/RAIC Representative for the University of Calgary. Currently he is involved in the production of a book on Calgary Boom Years Architecture as a partner in the Uptown Avenue Design Group Ltd.

TFC: The main issue to be discussed in this interview is whether there is, or ever has been, a truly Canadian architecture. What would be your initial response to this question?

McMordie: The problem with the question is that there is a hidden premise which must be explored. When you speak of a Canadian architecture, it implies that there are a number of different architectures around the world which can be identified with nations — I wonder in what sense how true that is. When we speak of American architecture, what do we mean by that? There is pre-industrial American architecture of the East Coast or of the Southwest which is distinctive, which represents an evolution from a received style. East Coast American architecture, largely British Renaissance, in some cases, pre-Renaissance traditions modified by local craftsmen and designers to suit local conditions. Same thing in the Southwest United States; same thing in Canada in Quebec, where, for instance, the Quebec parish churches represent an evolved form which is different from, but derived from Metropolitan French forms.

But as soon as you get into the industrial era, the picture changes. There are some regional architectures, but mostly one talks, for instance, about American Architecture. One starts to identify major architects. You talk about Richardson or Sullivan. You talk about

some of the great names — Gropius, Mies van de Rohe, who, of course, were not originally American architects but who developed their buildings, their developed styles, their careers in the United States. Their architecture, however, becomes an international architecture.

Now to get back to the question, is there a Canadian architecture? There certainly is a pre-industrial architecture of Canada, parts of Canada — which is distinctive — notably the architecture of New France, of Quebec. That developed a tradition, a body of work, which included craftsmen and designers which extended certainly on into the nineteenth century and produced some very notable figures; for instance, Charles Baillairgé, as a figure of eminence in architecture. There was work through that period which is distinctive but as you move into the twentieth century as international architects in the industrial era takes hold, that uniqueness even in that area tends to dissolve, as I think it does in the parts of the United States that had had distinctive architecture. Canadian architecture from the twentieth century tends to look much more like architecture from everywhere else.

Is there a Canadian architecture? I think there are elements of a Canadian architecture and there are oustanding Canadian architects of the present era — as there are oustanding American architects or outstanding British architects of the present era. I think there are elements in their work that are perhaps Canadian, in terms of response to climate and materials. I think that we have craft traditions and, of course, they had a very tenuous and a very local and specific footing in this country. This country is very much a country of the industrial era — as a nation that extends right across the continent. As we move into that era, we move into a period which really is too close to us, historically, to identify clearly distinctive elements. I have my suspicions of what those distinctive elements are. They may be obvious things like, response to climate — the evolution of an architecture which emphasizes the enclosed spaces — the enclosed communal spaces — enclosed spaces for communication between parts of the city as well as buildings. That's an obvious thing that lots of people talked about. That's one of Ray Afflecks' favourite themes.

One of the things that is distinctive has to do with the process of development of financing and construction. This links back into the nature of this country, a country which is very strongly centralized in a number of ways, as opposed to the United States which is decentralized, particularly in financing — which has become so important. The Canadian banking system has been immensely important for the Canadian development industry, and has made possible a scale and kind of development that is distinctive. It's difficult in some ways to link that to architectural form, but I think that link may be there and that as we gain a longer perspective, we will see elements of a distinctive architecture and urban design in this country that relate to those factors — to geographical factors, to factors of financing, and development and indeed broader political factors that reflect some fo the distinctive things about this country in terms of its history and evolution and present government.

TFC: You mention various factors influencing the architecture. Diverse regionalism and climatic response seem to be the two most evident characteristics defining a specifically Canadian architecture. Do you see any new trends in architecture that respond to these conditions or do you see any other specifically Canadian factors in the architecture?

McMordie: It's interesting; as you know Trevor Boddy has just finished his Masters Degree Project looking at Prairie Architecture. Trevor came to the conclusion that there wasn't a distinctive prairie architecture but there were elements in this historical architecture of the Prairies that might contribute to the development of a regional architecture. That's a rather tentative conclusion but that's the kind of conclusion that seems to be the best we can come to when we look at this sort of question.

TFC: Do you know what elements of the prairie architecture he was looking at — that he has identified?

McMordie: I prefer not to go into that in great detail; I think Trevor has and will be explaining his point of view himself.

I think that more important than the traditional sources of regional architecture — that is local material, local craft traditions — are probably any distinctive elements in the way that people live in different parts of the country. That's difficult to pin down because we have an immensely mobile population. As you know, this is unlike Britain. When you travel around Britain or the United States, you find people who have lived in the same area for generations. This continues to be true in parts of the Eastern part of this country — in rural Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces. I suspect that that affects the architecture there. I am hesitant because I don't know those areas as much as I would like to. I'm heistant to specify.

When you look at it from the West, the only part of the West that seems to have a distinctive quality is the Pacific Coast. Vancouver is both a highly mobile city, in flux — a rapidly developing city — with a very strong national-international aspect. It is also a city which offers a kind of life, a fairly soft climate, immediate access to the sea and mountains, and so on. A former head of the UBC School of Architecture used to describe it as 'Lotus Land'. I am sure that's a pretty fitting description.

You find, of course, in Vancouver, buildings that cater to that and most evident is residential architecture. It has traditionally had a much greater interest in variety. The housing has tended to be open to the climate, the view, the sites and I think that that is continuing with the move from an emphasis on detached houses on their own sites to much denser urban housing. You can see it most obviously of course, in the development around False Creek and now with BC Place coming. But up the slopes to the south of False Creek, a lot of various private developments, not part of that coordinated scheme, again are developing a kind of dense urban housing which takes advantage of the view, gives a lot of individuality to the inhabitants and seems to foster a kind of distinctive style of urban life. I think that sort of thing is distinctive in BC.

TFC: When you talk of Vancouver as perhaps a regional type of architecture — how would you compare it to West Coast architecture in the United States?

McMordie: Well, I think it shares a lot with it. And for awhile there was a tendency to lump the Pacific Northwest together as a region. This crossed the international border, the boundary between two countries, but which had a lot in common. I can remember Ron Thom years ago telling me of the importance to him of a Seattle architect, John Yeon, who's work you will find published in one of the first numbers of *House and Home* when it started out as a magazine with an interest in very high quality architectural design.

You can't isolate architecture, you can't arbitrarily isolate local architecture from national and international tendencies. You want to use the best building science and technology you can grasp. You want to understand the economics of buildings; you need to know how people live, particularly for mobile populations; you need to be aware of things happening outside your region. I think we (educators) are trying to do this and bring the two together, but I'm not here to answer the question. You are in a better place than I am to judge whether we are managing to do some of this.

That of course, introduces another one of the problems — if you start to look for regional characteristics — the regions don't necessarily respect national boundaries. I think there are things common with areas to the south — the Bay Area and the Vancouver area seem to have architectural characteristics in common. But, I would look for an interweaving of those common regional characteristics with the distinctive Canadian political, economic things and see if they together begin to produce some sort of distinctive characteristics.

TFC: I'm wondering how you consider Canadian architecture as it relates to the larger framework of North American or of Western architecture?

McMordie: I think so far it has developed very largely within that framework. Many architects in Canada either were born and trained abroad, or went from Canada to receive their architectural training outside the country, or to pursue a Masters Degree outside the country after initial architectural training here.

Much of the investment in major building in this country has been by companies who are parts of multinational or transnational organizations, and this is all in the recent era — the last century of development. And this has contributed to the very strong international characteristic of Canadian architecture — and where there is a deviation from this, it tends, as I have said, not so much to reflect uniquely Canadian characteristics of style and design but much more questions of scale development — the way the planning framework operates in this country, code regulation of building, and such.

There isn't a clear separation between Canadian architecture and United States architecture — at least the northern United States where the climate and characteristics are similar.

Where there are much more distinctive patterns of training and development, I think you see greater distinctions — between, say, English architecture and Canadian architecture than between Canadian and American architecture. The English tendency has been to place more emphasis upon smaller scale of development and design, and the approaches to detailing are different, though some of these have been brought into Canadian architecture by English or British trained architects. There tends to be between Canadian and American architecture a tendency — looking at architecture very broadly, not looking at the work of individual distinctive architects whose work stands out — for a very high level of general competence in design and construction and a lack of interest in specific close-up details. So there is a sort of blandness or sameness — the buildings tend to be inarticulate; when you approach them closely you get the same sort of entrance details over and over again without much attention to any particular characteristics of the building or any attempt to respond to the individual using that building. Consequently, the entrance lobbies of commerical buildings tend to have a terrifying sameness — the colours may change, the marble may be different, but the thinking is the same in each case. That's both an international characteristic and one of the great deficiencies of Canadian architecture, particularly commercial architecture. But it is also seen in institutional buildings.

Look around this university for instance — that's very true of most of the buildings on the campus. That's a deficiency both in training and in outlook of the architects, and in the quality of the clients — because good architecture ultimately depends upon good clients who are aware of what can be done and very clear of the direction of the architect. It's an uphill job for a good architect to persuade a client with no particular interest in architecture that he ought to be responding to these things. The best architecture comes from the junction of a good architect and a good client. I can sight some exampes of that sort of building that exists. They stand out from the mass of buildings in the country.

TFC: You speak about the architects being trained in other countries and bringing that training to Canada. I question, now that Canada has a number of schools of architecture, whether the students are being taught any sort of Canadian architecture or is it just that same architecture from other countries brought in and retrained?

McMordie: That is a particularly penetrating question — given that you and I have been involved in a course in which some of these questions were being raised. If you look back at what I have said so far, you can see what the difficulties are for somebody who is trying to teach architecture in this situation. It becomes difficult to know just how to teach it. I think the thing we are most successful at is asking the questions. We are not particularly successful at finding the answers.

I think that we are trying to push students — one of the problems of architectural education is that there is relatively little time to master something that people haven't mastered in a lifetime of professional activity.

The most you can do is try to establish some fundamental skills and point some direction, partly by asking questions, which you hope people will pursue as they follow their careers after they leave this place or other schools of architecture.

I think that we are now looking much more closely at the region in which we build than we used to. Although, I remember, as a student of architecture at Toronto in late Fifties, early Sixties, we were very interested in the historical building traditions of Toronto. It was a city that had historically been built out of brick and, to some extent, stone — but brick was the prevailing local material. Respected local firms and architects used brick well.

I hope that approach continues; here (Calgary) we certainly spend some time looking at the historical traditions of the area. They are not very long or deep but they do, to some extent, reflect the characteristics of early development here. You can see this in some of the architecture that local architects are building — residential work which attempts to respond to some of those characteristics — traditional Calgary architecture, the very tight thin skin wood-frame, wood sided house of the pre-World War I period. That, I think, is one of the things we try to do. As you know, in the course we were discussing we used Kenneth Frampton's idea about regionalism — critical regionalism — as a theme or a method of exploring some of these ideas. I think his identification of the interaction between international trends and particularly international technology and local traditions and characteristics is very important here.

TFC: In *Trace* magazine you mentioned the conditions of creation in architecture, noting such conditions as political struggles, economic crises, technological innovation, compromises and constraints with clients, public authorities, budget and site. How

might architecture in Canada harness these forces in the building of cities in perhaps a more consistent manner — and would this consistency be a desirable thing in our architecture?

McMordie: To start with the last question first, I think consistency is always desirable in architecture. I think the fact that I take the position expresses something of my background as a Canadian.

I think one of the identified characteristics of the country as compared with the United States is a small 'c' conservative tendency and this has been a necessary element in the country's existence as a nation, historically and politically.

It has required an acceptance of a level of authority and direction which would be unacceptable to man, most American citizens. Certainly the United States historically developed as a nation because it adopted a position which emphasized a kind of revolutionary attitude. Though, that can be over-emphasized. The first Americans, George Washington and so on, were in many ways deeply conservative British but were deeply affected by eighteenth century French thinking, at least the early development of the nation was, which was a radical overthrow of the existing conditions.

Our political and social traditions reflect a much greater value placed upon continuity — politically and socially. I think this expresses itself to some degree in our cities, in the tendencies towards a much stronger planning framework, a much greater emphasis upon bureaucratic involvement in the regulation of city development with all the costs and problems that that involves. None of these things are entirely good or bad. And as much as I criticize the excesses and mistakes of that approach, I still value it. I don't want to throw it out the window — I want to improve it and modify it to be more responsive and sensitive. I look in the architecture of the city following from that for perhaps a greater consistency or greater continuity — a greater emphasis on a kind of background architecture, which seems to me part of a historic tradition which goes back beyond the origins of this country.

And it is a tradition I greatly value. I did post graduate work and spent a fairly larger period of my life in Britain and Edinburgh. The Scots were terrificly important in the development of this country, and I think that kind of convservatism is there in that Scottish tradition. You can see it in a city like Edinburgh — which at first sight tends to strike you as rather bleak and monotonous — but which on acquaintance, reveals a great deal of subtlety and variation within a fairly consistent framework. And that is the kind of city that I think we should be trying to create.

TFC: Paul Rudolph has said, "Architects by implication suggest the past as well as the future and make connections between the demands of society and Utopia." I'm wondering how you would interpret this statement as it relates to Canadian architects putting up Canadian architecture?

McMordie: I don't think we have many, if any, Utopian architects. I'm not certain about Utopia as the goal, at one pole. At the other end, I think that many architects have been notoriously insensitive to historic traditions in the past. It's difficult to compare with things elsewhere — we perhaps haven't been any worse than architects elsewhere through the Fifties and Sixties, which is a period of great insensitivity to these things — while other goals were pursued.

I think that we tend to be very pragmatic in our architecture rather than idealistic in that sort of Utopian sense — and I respect that. I place a greater value on sensitivity to and respect for the past than I do upon some notion of a Utopian future. And so, I would diverge from Rudolph.

TFC: Frampton sees regionalism as offering resistance to an onslaught of universal civilization. Regionalism changing in ideology from place to place — is an Ism that cuts across Frampton's Productivism, Rationalism, Structuralism and Populism. Do you see any examples of Frampton's regionalism in Canadian architecture, such as Doug Cardinal's Alberta work and Erickson's West Coast work?

McMordie: I think some West Coast work, including some of Erickson's, is; Cardinal puzzles me a little because his building has less to do with any specific geographical characteristics of this region than it does with some kind of metaphysical notion of Indian culture and its relation to current international culture. I think I'd make a distinction there. There are other architects who I think have contributed in some ways to this kind of regionalism. Many other architects on the West Coast — I think an architect like Barry Downs, some of Ron Thom's work as the West Coast got into that. Thom is interesting because I think some of his work in Ontario has tried to respond to a different region. Massey College is a very interesting building which reflects a very strong client and his predelictions in architecture — but it also shows a very great development change from Ron Thom's West Coast work in a way which responds, it seems to me, very directly to Toronto and Southern Ontario.

I think there are architects in other parts of the country — there are architects in Toronto who reflect that. There are architects whose work I don't know that well in Quebec, who I suspect show that as well. To some extent, some of the work of Gaboury and others in the Winnipeg area. Some of Cliff Wien's work perhaps shows that.

One of the problems is that there are not many, if any architects who have assembled a consistent body of work over a long period of time which reflects or seems to embody or express a continuing and consistent response to these things — so that we tend to sort of jump from building to building and architect to architect.

But it is a good question and I think it can be answered positively in a number of cases. It wants more space and time than I think anyone has yet given it. But I think that is one of the next steps in writing about Canadian architecture. I think there is more attention — a much stronger tradition in Quebec than in other parts of the country, and that is, of course, one of the strengths of a culture that is based upon a linguistic community which separates it from the influence of the northern United States.

One of our problems here and elsewhere is that we tend to look south of the border and do our criticism and research as an international exercise and on international subjects. One of the exciting things that is happening now — I think, over the last ten years — is the steady growth in scholarly work, criticism, history, and theoretical work in Canadian architecture. And that is an essential element, an under-rated element in the development of an architecture. Whether it is a Canadian architecture remains to be seen.

TFC: Roger Scruton, in *The Aesthetics of Architecture*, notes "a distinguishing feature of architecture is its highly localized quality. Works of literature, music and pictorial art can be realized in an infinite number of locations. The same cannot be true of architecture. Buildings constitute important features of their environment, as their environment is an important feature of them; they cannot be reproduced at will without absurd and disastrous consequences." What is your reaction to Scruton's statements, given that Canadian architecture may be simply a collection of borrowed and transplanted work — ranging from, for example, early Scottish mason work to California mission vernacular?

McMordie: I think the absurd and disasterous consequences are evident. They have a lot to do with the worst qualities in our cities. This is what we have been talking about — I think that this recognition of the fact that a building occupies a particular place in space and time is something that every architect ought to understand as the fundamental premise of architectural design. But somehow, when the building gets built, that seems to have disappeared from the process. I think the particular place and time obviously accepts, necessarily involves, a lot of elements that came from elsewhere — the craftsmen came from elsewhere, the building, the design ideas, the materials came from elsewhere.

Every urban design ought to be designed as part of the design of a better city. Improvements in a city by necessity have to be built upon the best of what is already there. The continuity of the past and the need to understand the history, the place as a particular place in space and time — has to be defined with as much exactitude as you can manage. That means a fairly profound understanding of the space in a sort of geographical, climatic and economic and social sense and time in a historical sense.

TFC: When Hitchcock and Johnson wrote their book *The International Style* it was relatively easy to define an architectural language compared to the situation today. Now, as students in the midst of confusion and arbitrariness of current architectural practice, we look for answers. Too often the solutions are over-reactions to the uniformity and blandness that surrounds us. Canada has produced its share of architects which would fall under the umbrella of the loosely defined Post-Modernism. What is your response to Canada's work in this area; that is, do you see anything unique in Canadian manifestations of Post-Modernism?

McMordie: I don't much like the term Post-Modernism — I suspect it will fade as an architectural category over time.

TFC: Would you rather another term be used — or is a term required?

McMordie: Well, I would rather simply treat things chronologically until you can produce some kind of useful stylistic category. I would talk about recent architecture, which includes a wide variety of different things, some of which attempt more or less literally to use elements from the history of architecture, some of which eschew any literal elements but which have developed as a much freer use of the continuing traditions which were being established when Hitchcock and Johnson wrote.

A lot of the basic themes of modern architecture defined very broadly, especially the influence of technology on architectural style, continue to be major elements in buildings — it seems a little silly to pretend otherwise. The most interesting people are people like Peter Rose in Montreal who are trying to understand and respond very much to the places in which they work, who are in their training and in the skills they yield fully modern architects — and every architect has to be unless you find a very specialized and rather esoteric niche for yourself in the field — and who are trying to bring the two together in some way. It was interesting to me hearing Peter talk about his National Gallery submission for Ottawa — to relate it to the work of Asplund and the Swedes at that point at which Asplund, who was, of course, a classically trained architect, was moving towards the themes that Hitchcock and Johnson were talking about. That is — architecture was in evolution at that stage towards what we loosely call Modern Architecture, or at least one major theme in Modern Architecture.

And that kind of involvement with a critical juncture in the history of architecture within the century is interesting because it seems to me it is re-exploration of some of the starting points from which the dominant architecture of our day has grown — to see if there are any other tracks or roots that could be explored which are more receptive to local characteristics, to regional things which permit or encourage design, which assimilates tradition and the particular character of place more easily. I think that — I don't think Peter agrees with me — some of the things he shows show an over-literal reliance on the things that define a particular place — in this case, Ottawa — and perhaps, at the moment, a not quite free enough use of the historical tradition that he has been exploring. But I think that it is the inevitable consequence of starting this kind of exploration of the past. The way forward is to become easy and free and fully in control of these materials. I think there are architects — Peter Rose is one — that are doing that sort of exploration and depending on their own talent and intelligence — and particularly their stamina in a business that is notoriously variable — they stand to do some very good things.

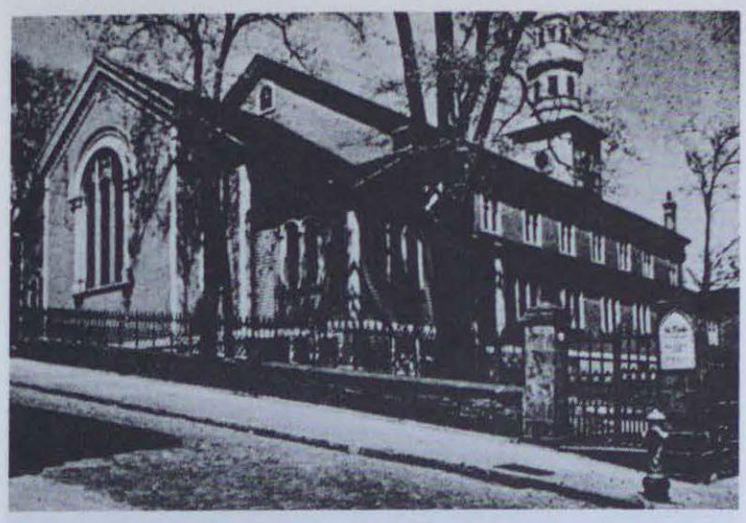
TFC: It seems that the issue of Canadian architecture is a very debatable one. If we take the position that there is not a uniquely Canadian architecture, do you see any possibiltiy for one in the foreseeable future — and if so — where might its priorities lie?

McMordie: I question whether there is now any national architecture which can be so clearly and uniquely identified, that the citizens of that country can say, "That building is a Canadian building, an English building, a United States building." And I'm not sure that architecture should play that role.

I think the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa have that kind of symbolic significance and in that sense, they are part of a Canadian architecture designed by two Englishmen in the Victorian Gothic style. So you know the notion of national architecture is a very odd notion to me. If you assert one you are going to find yourself throwing into the bag a curious collection of disparite bits and pieces — buildings which may have nothing to do with any particular region or local characteristics but which happen to have become prominent buildings in a particular place, designed in the most international of international styles — by an architect who had never set foot in the city. It is a possibility, but once built in that place, they become part of that place.

Toronto City Hall has some of these characteristics — it is a building by a Finnish architect with a group of Finnish colleagues and then modified somewhat and reworked in a local office. Certainly the procedure that selected the design was framed locally and was curiously Canadian in some ways. But the jury that selected the building was dominated by a Finnish American architect, who dominated a number of other competitions in the same way and produced buildings which became landmarks and which are, each in their way, a part of a particular nation's architecture — look at the Sydney Opera House. But that is a very odd way to produce a national architecture — it throws some interesting light on the notion of a national architecture.

I think notions of an architecture that responds to the particular place and time in a more sensitive way are appearing more and more. I think it is a very exciting time in architecture. We have very good people working very hard at producing better considered buildings. As I've said all through this, I think there are factors which contribute to producing buildings — to producing an architecture — which in some ways will be distinctively Canadian. But whether anyone will be able at a glance to see that it is Canadian architecture is another question.



RAIC Journal

Canadian Architecture:

Past Present and Future

by Bill Walker

Building Canada, Gowans

Top: St. Paul's Church, Halifax (1750). Above: Dominion Parliament Buildings, Ottawa (1859-1866, Thomas Fuller). Destroyed by fire in 1916.

Layout: Jeff Telgarsky

Some 300 years of cultural history precede where Canadian architecture might be said to be 'at' today. Canada's buildings are as much products of aesthetic theories as of the realities imposed by a particular time and place. Over the past three centuries of building in Canada, the approach to architecture has progressed from the need to copy and transplant old world styles to the invention of new forms based on an understanding of Canadian topography and climate.

Sykes,
Imitiation to Innovation

The history of Canadian architecture is essentially the history of borrowed styles, and even today much of our architecture can hardly be described as uniquely Canadian. The purpose of this review is to examine the history of architecture in Canada in an effort to understand the existing state of affairs and, further, how its future may be changing relative to our past traditions.

Although many writers on the early development of architecture in this country begin their accounts with the buildings of the first British and French settlements, one must not forget that there was building of a more indigenous nature going on before this. This building was of course the 'architecture' of the native people of this land: teepees, igloos, and totems of the indians and inuit. Unfortunately virtually none of this pre-European-settlement building exists today except through imitations and drawings based on the writings of our native peoples. But it was into this environment that the earliest settlers stepped, and to them it represented a cultural and technological void. The easiest method for building the new world was to utilize the technology and traditions of the homeland. This 'architectural invasion' was the beginning of the end for indigenous forms of building. From this time forward the architecture of Canada was a direct reflection of the history of styles as they evolved in Europe. It is important to realize at this point the development of Canada as a colony; for it is only natural that as a colony, the new settlers would imitate the cultural and sociological traditions of the homeland. Canada's experience is in contrast to the American situation which saw the severing of ties with the motherland (along with the rejection of much of the culture) and eventually the development of its own unique culture, its own heroes, and its own myths.

The earliest buildings put up by settlers in Canada have been divided, by some authors, into different categories which reflect

the degree of settlement (some of these catagories are, broadly: pioneer buildings, town buildings, and military works (Bland, 1976, Gowans, 1966). But again the earliest pioneer buildings (cabins, huts,) were temporary in nature and have not been a major component in the essential chain of styles imported from Europe. Most of them were constructed of wood and reflected very early European building traditions. And military works, although a part of this early sequence of building, did not have a direct influence on later architectural development. The buildings which begin the chain of styles are essentially those found in early towns and villages (houses, shops, churches).

It is at this time that one can distinguish the emergence of the two major traditions of architecture (and building), the British and the French. The French colony was, in the early stages, importing the Baroque style from its homeland and modifying it to suit local conditions. This was reflected not only in buildings but in town planning (for example, Place Royale in lower town Quebec City). There was a well established tradition in rubble building with shingle and later sheet tin roofing. This tradition is perhaps most easily distinguished in the early parish churches of Quebec. A series of these built for Monseigneur de Laval reflects a mix of medieval and Baroque traditions modified according to the availability of materials and craftsmen. The clapboard and wood framing, characteristic of some of their buildings, was in fact an adaptation of New England methods. The English tradition in Canada was of course influenced by this building style of New England, which in turn was inherited from both the France of the Louis and the England of the Georges. A good example of the Georgian style introduced by the British is St. Paul's Church in Halifax, built in the 1750's. The forms and composition make the church look very much like those found in London in the same period. What distinguishes the new world buildings from those of the homelands is the degree of modification of the original style. Primarily because of a lack of similar materials and craftmen and the differing climatic conditions, modifications to the European models were being constantly made.

The British tradition in architecture developed alongside the French in Canada and it was not until the early 1780's, with the beginning of a heavy English-speaking immigration, that it began to dominate. But the French tradition continued to develop in spite of the English majority. Culturally it relied to an increasing degree on the Roman Catholic religion. English Canada of course, leaned more heavily on British institutions to set themselves apart from both the French and now the Americans.

During the mid-eighteenth century excavations at Athens, Herculaneum and Pompeii uncovered many new artifacts from the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. These discoveries sparked renewed interest in those cultures and led to the sequence of revivals of 'classical' styles. The Neo-Classic style hit Canada around the turn of the nineteenth century. It travelled from the United States with immigrants fleeing the civil war, and from Britain. In Britain the style was thought to reflect the slowly growing power of the country as it built towards its status of 'Empire', although it was adopted more as a fashion. In the United States, however, the classical style was embraced as something of a monument to the victory gained over Britain in the war of independence, and as a symbol of democratic society. As the century progressed architecture in Canada reflected the successive Revival styles occurring in England, Italy, and France: Classic Revival, Gothic Revival, and Italianate. Of these, the Gothic Revival seemed to have had the most profound influence. One of the first Gothic Revival buildings in Canada was Notre-Dame Cathedral in Montreal which predates even the British Houses of Parliament, built in 1836. The Gothic Revival style was chosen for Canada's own Parliament Building (begun in 1861) thus reaffirming the cultural-historical links to Britain. The eclectic style of the Victorian period was quite widespread in Canada, and relatively long-lasting. The three phases (Early, High, and Late) extend from the 1820's to the 1930's. Many fine examples of Victorian housing remain today in the older districts of Halifax, Montreal, Toronto

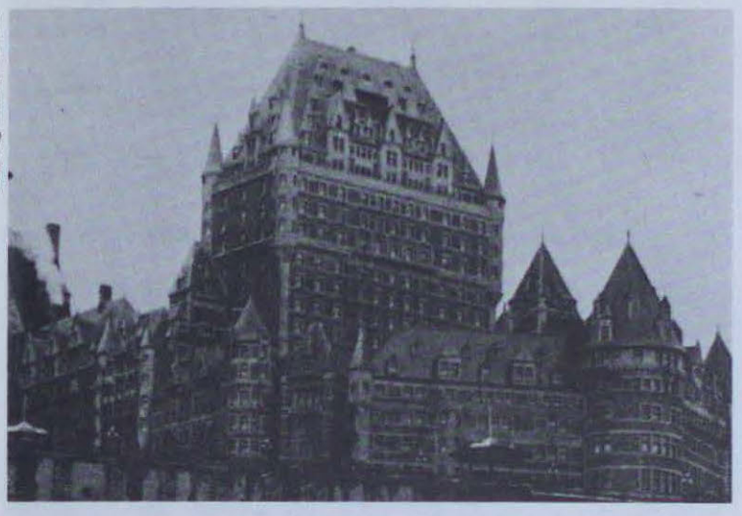
and other major cities. The style was, of course, not limited to residential design but many of the grand Victorian public buildings have since been demolished.

> *Architecture in Canada, unlike painting and in a lesser degree our sculpture has shown a decidedly tenacious adherence to traditional forms. Prevailing fashions, taste of client, or the passing mood of the architect, are among the causes for the appearance in our streets year after year of new buildings of entirely unrelated scale and style. The appearance of our streets truly illustrates the chaos of our time. But very few of our buildings, apart possibly from the present day domestic, no matter what the style or other pretension may be, can be any stretch of the imagination be considered good architecture, or even architecture at all.*
>
> *Colgate,*
> Canadian Art: Its Origins and Development

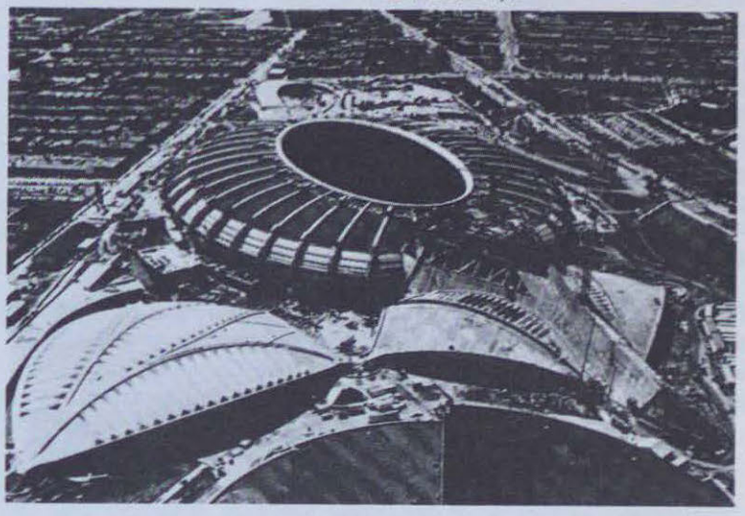
Toward the end of the nineteenth century a significant shift of influence appears. The English tradition begins to give way to the burgeoning dominance of architects south of the border. This new source of architectural style and theory has been the most influential through to the present day: beginning with imports of the early 'Modern' Americans, such as Sullivan and Richardson and following through with full blown International Style and the present day 'Post-Modern'.

The early American influence can be found in both private (that is, residential) and public buildings. It begins with the end of the revivals. Notable examples include: the old Toronto City Hall (Edward Lennox), and Benevenuto, Toronto resident of S.H. Janes, a developer, (Stanford White, 1890). The 'quintessentially Canadian' Chateau style hotel of the railways (Chateau Frontenac, Quebec City by Bruce Price), although developed by an American architecture, was intended to be uniquely Canadian. This early American influence was merely the preamble to the International Style invasion. Early development of the International Style occurred primarily in Europe. Its existence in North America up until the late '20's was modest at best. The reasons for its sudden popularity are certainly as numerous as those who have written about it . It was economical, convenient, 'appropriate' and so on. Many claim, its essence was a reaction against the ornamentation of styles past. But whatever the case, this style was picked up in Canada in the same way as all others before. After the mid-40's modern architecture was here (and everywhere) to stay.

Opposite: City Hall, Toronto (1958-1963, Viljo Revell). Left: Chateau Frontenac, Québec City (1890, Bruce Price; 1923, E. Maxwell and W.S. Maxwell). Right: Olympic Stadium Complex, Montreal (1974-1976, Roger Taillibert).



Building Canada, Gowans



Canadian Architect

It was not long before Canada was turning out its own architects, well versed in the language of Modernism. The Parkin partnership was the first firm to develop a practice based on the new style. John C. Parkin had studied at Harvard and returned to Toronto with teaching of Walter Gropius. For a time, during the Fifties and early Sixties, the work of the Parkin firm led the field in Canada, but the best work in this style was still to be found outside the country. Firms such as Skidmore Owings and Merrill were the masters of corporate architecture. Again, Canada was in second place with the 'provincial' variants. The foreign dominance continued with not only the imported style but also imported architects. Numerous major corporate towers in downtown Toronto, Montreal, Calgary etc. were designed by well known Americans such as Mies van der Rohe, I.M. Pei, and the large firms such as SOM. Toronto's City Hall was designed by the Finnish architect Viljo Revell and Montreal's Olympic Stadium by a French architect. Even some of the notable Canadian architects were 'imports' (for example, Moshe Safdie, John Andrews, Barton Myers). These architects along with others (Affleck, Erickson, Thom, Moriyama) did gain international recognition for Canadian works. But again many of their efforts were a part of the wider movement which sought to transplant local needs and social values with a universal solution. The International Style has been a very big part of Canadian architecture ever since the Second World War. It has dominated our downtown skylines and it continues to develop into the Eighties. But its position of dominance has impeded the evolution of a relevant Canadian architecture. Many people remark disparagingly when they see another 'glass box' rise within the city today. And this questioning of architectural values is just what seems to be running through the minds of many Canadian architects as well. Slowly their efforts are taking new directions.

> *To me, therefore, the most interesting and most 'Canadian' architectural achievements are those that show themselves most aware of their human and community context, those that show what you might call architectural conscience. You will know what I mean.*
>
> *Parkin,*
> Canada: An Inside View

We are now left with the question, "Is there such a thing as Canadian architecture?". It is apparent that our very historical and cultural background has left us with a collection of styles which have developed outside of this country before being imported for our own use. Well, the direction of architecture in Canada does seem to be changing. Canadian architects today appear to be moving away from the idea of architecture as universal. Instead, they would appear to be looking towards local needs and values as a basis for design. As well, the problem of Canadian climate has spawned new ideas which are somewhat unique to the Canadian situation. The fact that there is snow on the ground for the better part of the year in most areas of the country (and during the winter temperatures invariably drop below 0° C) has led to development of interior open spaces either within many larger buildings and/or within and between these buildings. It has allowed those of us from the land of cold and snow to experience temperate climates year-round as well as the social interaction this permits. These interior open spaces are manifest in various forms: indoor streets, atria, underground shopping concourses and walkways. And they can be found, in one form or another, in virtually every major city across the country.

The modern Canadian roots for this idea reach back to 1962 and Place Ville Marie in Montreal. It was here that I.M. Pei in association with Affleck, *et al* employed an underground concourse which would insulate pedestrians from both an unpleasant climate and the urban environment at street level. In addition it reached down to connect with rail services and provided a basis for an entire network of similar interconnected walkways extending throughout the downtown. Winter (or just plain bad weather) was no longer a barrier to pedestrian traffic and/or the associated gathering of people. In Toronto a similarily extensive underground system now exists and in Calgary the same ideal has been elevated to the + 15 level. Large atria are also a part of these systems. They provide the open spaces within which much of the social interaction occurs. In buildings without connecting walkways they are usually the central focus and they allow a limited visual connection to the outside environment.

Eaton's Centre, in Toronto, typifies this idea of the atrium space. In this, and other examples, the effort is made to relate the interior space to the social uses and the exterior form to the locational context. Whether this second objective is being met is questionable, but the idea of being able to negate the weather and enjoy social interaction year-round seems to be very popular.

This is not the only way in which Canadian architects have begun to respond to the vagaries of their situation. For there are a number of what one may call 'regional' architects coming into

relative prominance. Architects such as Peter Rose, Clifford Weins, Etienne Gaboury, Barry Downs to mention only a few appear to be responding to climate, culture, history and geography in many of their works. These works are generally small scale and their deployment of forms and materials seem 'characteristic' of the particular region. Some have, at one time or another, been cast as 'Post-Modern' but this is probably because their approach to architecture involves a search for local values and needs, and this is in contrast to a 'universal' solution. The elements they choose reflect the uniqueness of the region and the associations they conjure give meaning to the building as a work of architecture. Even architects who are accomplished within the International Style have demonstrated this ability to design more meaningful works. Arthur Erickson is one example. Many of his works in British Columbia seem to respond more fully to their context (not just physical) and the richness which they express is in apparent contrast to his works elsewhere which seem to follow more universal design principles.

It is clear that ideas about architecture are changing and it is not a shift happening only in Canada. It may be that this new direction is but one aspect of 'Post-Modernism' but for Canada it brings the possibility of developing a uniquely Canadian architecture.

> *Of late years, we have seen, there have been more and more evident departures from inherited forms. The baneful and stultifying influence of the dead hand in structure and decoration is visibly weakening, though the essential harmony of line, mass, colour and form has been retained. From this combination and new eclecticism emerges a novel and stimulating point of view in which the old is suffused with a strong contemporary feeling. Instead therefore of allowing itself to be overwhelmed by the influence of an inherited tradition, modern painting, sculpture and architecture in Canada have developed an individuality and freshness of perception peculiar to our day.*
>
> *Colgate.*
> Canadian Art: Its Origin and Development

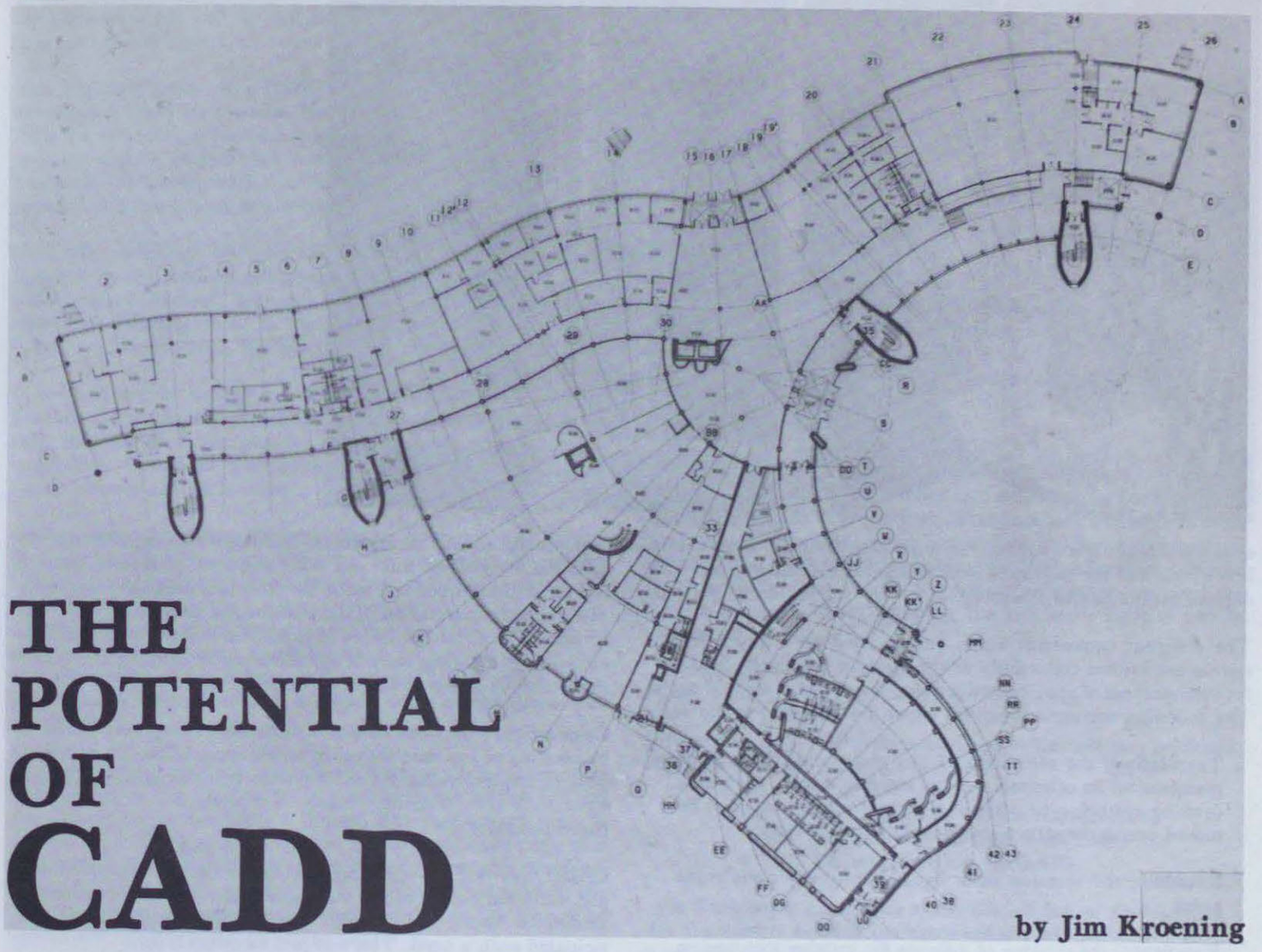
It is apparent, then, that the new directions being taken by Canadian architects may eventually lead to an architecture which is more meaningful to us as Canadians. The exact nature of this architecture is impossible to predict. But based on the cultural, historical, and physical diversity of this wide country, Canadian architecture of the future will likely be much more regional in nature. This is not to say that these architects are making a concerted effort to uncover regional aspects but rather the general tendency of architecture today is leading away from theories based on 'univeral themes'. Instead it is looking towards an expression of those things in our lives which have more immediate meaning to us.

Canada's development as a nation has been through peaceful evolution rather than violent revolution (for examples, the United States). Our adaptation of foreign styles for our architecture has been an integral part of this process. Today, Canada is finally an independent nation but we do not possess a single strong identity. Ours is a nation of multiculturalism as opposed to a melting pot: and integration of cultures and histories rather than an assimilation. It is inevitable that an architecture which gives meaning to our dreams and aspirations will reflect this mosaic. It will be responsive to regional differences. And so, Canadian architecture will likely be identified as a collection of architectures; for it is improbable, given our history, that this culturally, historically, and geographically diverse nation we call Canada will ever mould into a single entity.

Bill Walker is currently in his second year of a Masters of Environmental Design (Architecture) Program at the University of Calgary.

Top: Pavillion Soixante-dix, St. Sauveur (1979, Peter Rose with James Righter and Peter Lanken). Centre: False Creek Development, Vancouver (1979, Downs, Archambault). Bottom: Blessed Sacrament Church, Winnipeg (1970, Etienne Gaboury).

Main floor plan of St. Albert Place, St. Albert, Alberta, drawn using a CADD system by the office of Douglas Cardinal.



THE POTENTIAL OF CADD

by Jim Kroening

CADD is an acronym for Computer Aided Design and Drafting, a new method of producing drawings which may have a significant impact on operating procedures in the design professions.

One of the first Canadian architects to venture into CADD is Douglas Cardinal, of Edmonton. The accompanying drawings and photographs show some of his work. I am indebted to Jim Zulkoskey, of Cardinal's office, for the time he spent with me demonstrating their system and explaining its impact on their work.

We will begin with a discussion of the basic concepts underlying computer graphics, to underline some of the differences between production on a CADD system and traditional drafting. A brief review of some principles of geometry will help describe how computers produce graphic images.

In geometry, two essential concepts are those of the point and the line. A point is a dimensionless location, and a line is two points connected (a distance, or an edge, with no width). Computer grahics involve the manipulation of these two concepts and their representation on a video screen or, ultimately, on mylar or paper.

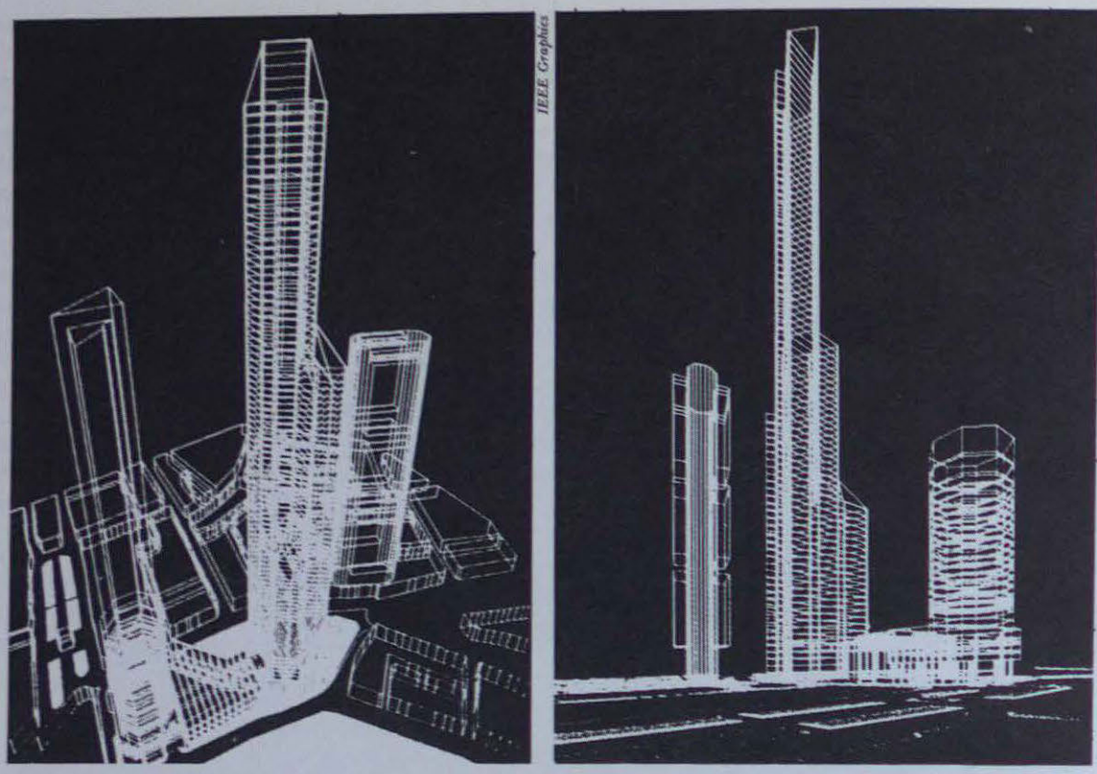
At the computer terminal, the user moves a point on the screen, represented by a flashing 'X'. This is called the cursor, and any command punched into the terminal keyboard will be undertaken on this point. One moves the cursor by various means; by punching some keys which direct it upwards, downwords, to the left or to the right, or by touching the screen or a desk-top tablet with an electrostatic pen. A given command will register the cursor's location as the beginning of a line. Another may define the center of a circle. Or a command could be given to move the cursor to the nearest grid line (which would set a dimensionless point directly on a line without width, something which cannot be accomplished by hand). Still another command would set the cursor at a specified distance from a line or point.

It becomes apparent that the computer is dealing with geometric concepts, interpreting graphic information as coordinates; number-crunching. The computer records distances between points, distances between parallel lines, angles between lines, adding and subtracting. This is consistent with our intuitive notion of a computer; a computer computes, it doesn't draw. It acts as an aid to design and drafting.

Drawing with CADD

The distinction here is that, as a sentence is a verbal idea, a drawing is a visual idea. As a typewriter does not write, a computer does not draw. This is important, as computers are presently being ascribed with all sorts of intelligence. The computer is essentially a

Layout: Jeff Telgarsky



Computer generated graphics allow perspective views of designs from several points, from aerial views to street-level approaches.

dumb machine. It is a sophisticated advance on the T-square, but it is a tool, and the quality of work produced with a computer will depend on the skill of the user.

The different commands which can be used on a given CADD system are known collectively as the system's 'software'. Software for various types of applications is being developed at a rapid pace. The following are some functions which are presently available:

Translation: the relocation of any geometric figure while maintaining its orientation. Any existing figure, such as a drafting symbol, a title block, a bathtub or a room, may be moved across the screen to a new location.

Rotation: the rotation of a figure about any preselected point.

Repetition: the copying of a figure for another location on the drawing.

Scaling: selecting two points, one is given the distance between.

Layering: building drawings, as in overlay drafting. After setting down a rough floor layout, drawings of furnishings, structural members, electrical service, etc. may be overlaid. Any combination of layered drawings may be called up for plotting.

Zoom: to change the scale of the image. Zoom produces an infinite and continuous range of drawing scales, allowing many levels of information on the same drawing. A speck on the floor plan may be, on closer examination, a fully detailed window jamb.

3-D modelling: to give a 3-D image of an object from a chosen vantage point. The image may be a see-through line drawing, or it may represent opaque surfaces. One aspect of 3-D viewing, called 'vector refresh', presents the viewer a series of images by changing the vantage point, as in animation. One can represent a walk-through or a flight around the design.

CADD systems offer many other functions, such as area calculations of any figure, or the flipping or reversing of a figure (with notes automatically re-oriented). Drawings may be built up with different weights of line and with hundred of colors. Material representation functions, such as cross-hatching, are available. Automatic manipulation of dimensions and imperial/metric conversion reduces the incidence of mathematical errors. In addition to layering, drawings may be split into parts, allowing many users simultaneous access to the same drawing.

Once a figure has been drawn, it is on file ('in memory'), and my be recalled at any time for use in a new application. An important part of implementing a CADD system is building this library of figures, be they drafting symbols or representations of manufactured products.

CADD software is improving as architects become involved in its use. Cardinal's office found that their system went down when they attempted their first erasure; the programmers had not anticipated such a need. This was just three years ago.

As CADD applications become more common and software more sophisticated, various opporunities present themselves. The computer industry now has standards set which will allow information transfer between any two computers. Manufacturers, such as Steelcase Canada, have begun to prepare computer files of product information. One can easily foresee the day when Sweet's Catalogue is delivered and updated over the telephone.

CADD and Architectural Practice

The discussion abouve has been concentrated on CADD in the professional's office. The implementation of CADD systems may also affect traditional relationships between architect and client, consultant, and contractor.

CADD makes architectural services more marketable by suggesting a progressive practice and by introducing innovations useful to the client. A CADD system allows architect and client to sit at a terminal and make rapid and significant changes to contract documents. Changes late in the production process, together with a shortened development period, may cut the cost of a project considerably.

CADD improves the coordination of consutants' contributions. CADD systems connected by telephone allow rapid communication, and layering techniques bring out locational problems.

Cardinal's office is presently considering installing a terminal on site for the contractor's use. As a user, the contractor can access the information required. For example, dimensioning is traditionally a game of second-guessing construction methods. With CADD, precise dimensions are implicit in the storage of information, and the contractor can call up any dimensions required. Shop drawings, put on the system, allow substitution decisions on site.

The implementation of a CADD system allows the professional more control over his practice. He may supervise drafting directly from his terminal, interrupting work only as required. Cardinal uses his system to establish precise layouts of his curvaceous buildings. These schematics will not need to be reinterpretted by his staff, his consultants or the contractor.

Generally speaking, the use of CADD removes some of the drudgery in the work and discourages errors. In addition, it improves project control, increases productivity, and allows more significant changes later in the project. one might think that CADD was heaven-sent. But what are the drawbacks?

If you will not be sitting at a CADD terminal soon, it may be because of the expense of these systems. Six-figure prices are the rule. And the more one pays for a CADD system, the greater its capabilities. Computer systems are defined by two parameters; the system's power and its memory.

System power determines how quickly an operation can be performed; how rapidly commands can be processed. If you are familiar with hand-held calculators, you may know that some functions, such as finding a square root, involve a bit of a lag. CADD functions are quite elaborate, and the more terminals in use, the more computing power required. In particular, the shift to 3-D imaging is a big step in computational ability and in price, and, as most production work is in 2-D, most offices choose 2-D systems.

The quantity of system memory determines how much information can be store on file. It is perfectly possible to record every brick, every shingle that goes into a design. But memory capacity is another expensive aspect of a system, and to bring costs down to a reasonable level, it is necessary to carefully circumscribe the information that is essential. Archival information may be stored off the system on magnetic tapes, but current work and the library of figures and symbols must be accessible.

Video terminals are also expensive components in a CADD system. Some firms have reluctantly adopted shift work to reduce the initial investment.

The vendors of CADD systems claim that improved productivity will justify the investment. Cardinal's office has found that their productivity, measured as office cash flow per employee, has doubled. But an important part of their decision to use CADD was the unusual geometry of their buildings. Any analysis of the financial advantages of CADD production must consider the nature of the firm's work. It might be useful to begin with a time-share arrangement, whereby time is rented on a central computer and only terminals need be installed in the office.

Conclusion

A shift to CADD production must be done with conviction, and with allowance for potential difficulties in implementation. Although learning to use the software is not difficult (Cardinal's office finds that it takes two weeks for a new staff member to become proficient), building a library of figures and sysmbols is a significant investment of staff time, and a hitch in the system can stop all production.

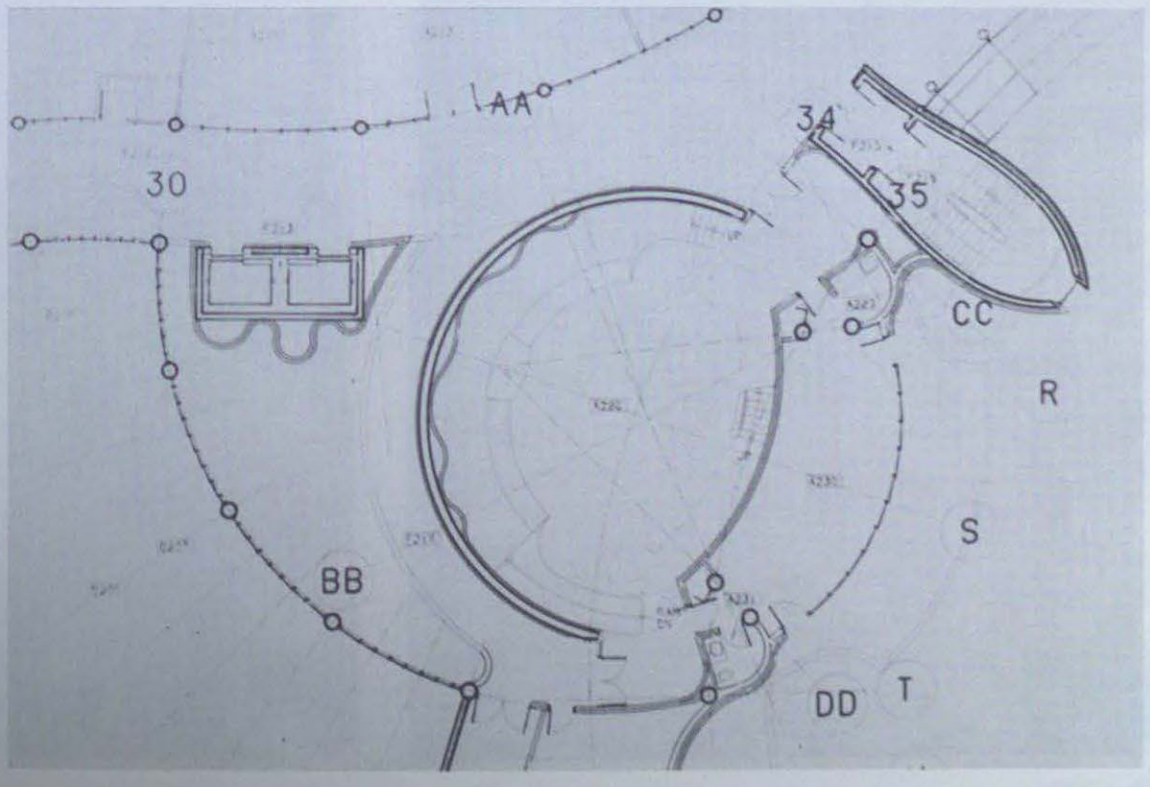
This brief look at CADD has been written in the hopes of demystifying this intrusion of technology into architectural practice. Most significantly, CADD can free the architect and technologist from some repetitive tasks and may improve the quality of architectural services. As one begins to appreciate the design freedom achieved by Douglas Cardinal on a CADD system, a computer begins to appear a natural tool for fulfilling the architect's rightful role in society.

Note

Information on CADD systems available in Canada may be obtained, free of charge, from:

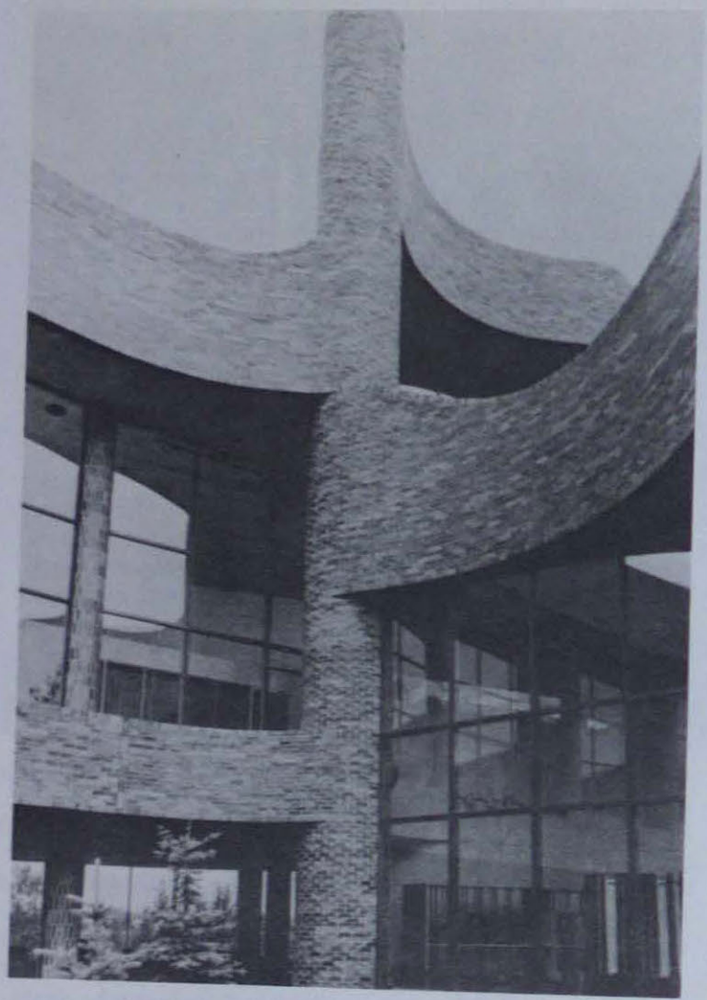
The National Computer Graphics Association,
961 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 200,
Toronto, Ontario, M4G 4B5

Jim Kroening is a graduate of the McGill School Architecture. He is presently working in Edmonton and completing an MBA, part-time, at the University of Alberta.

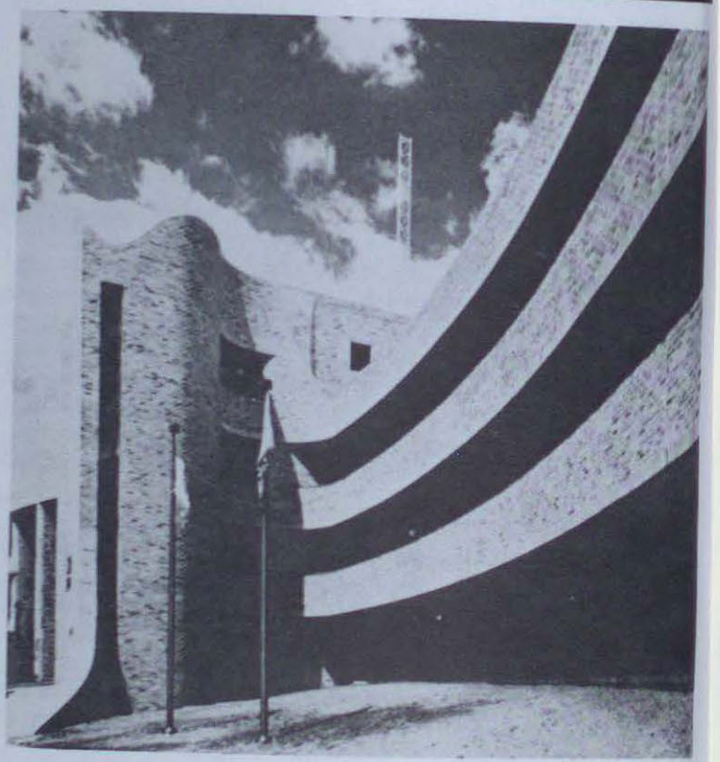


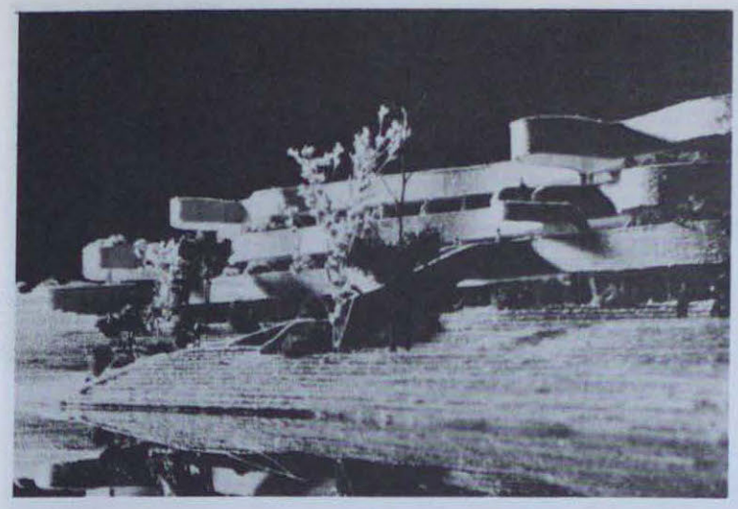
Detail of computer-drawn floor plan showing the high degree of complexity and detail available through the CADD system.

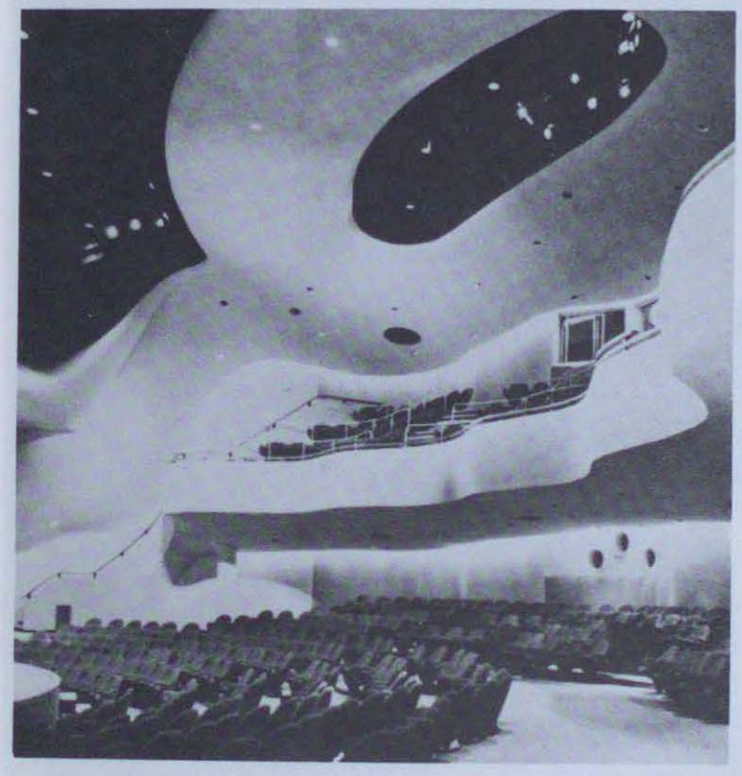
Works of DOUGLAS CARDINAL



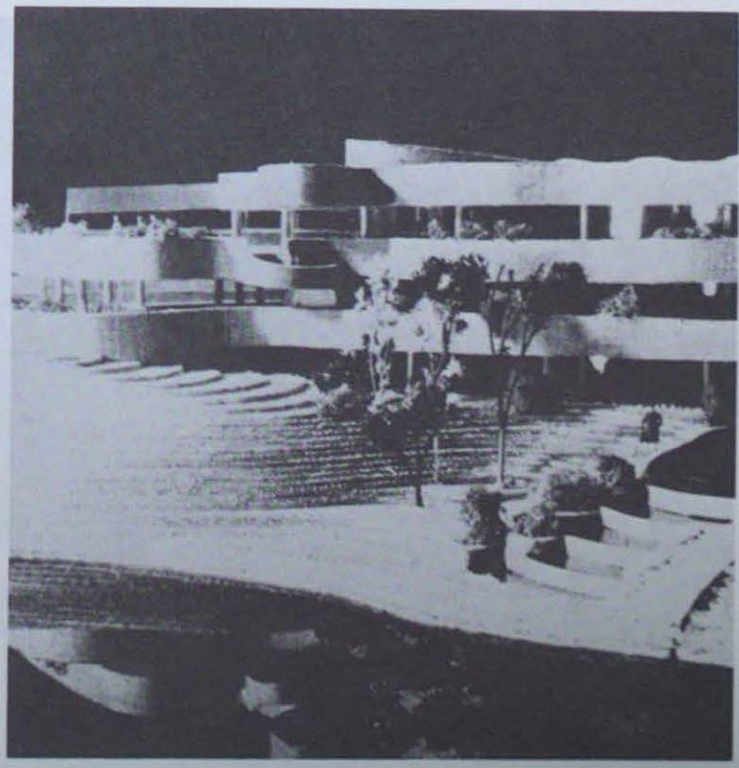
Grand Prairie, Regional College,
Grand Prairie, Alberta

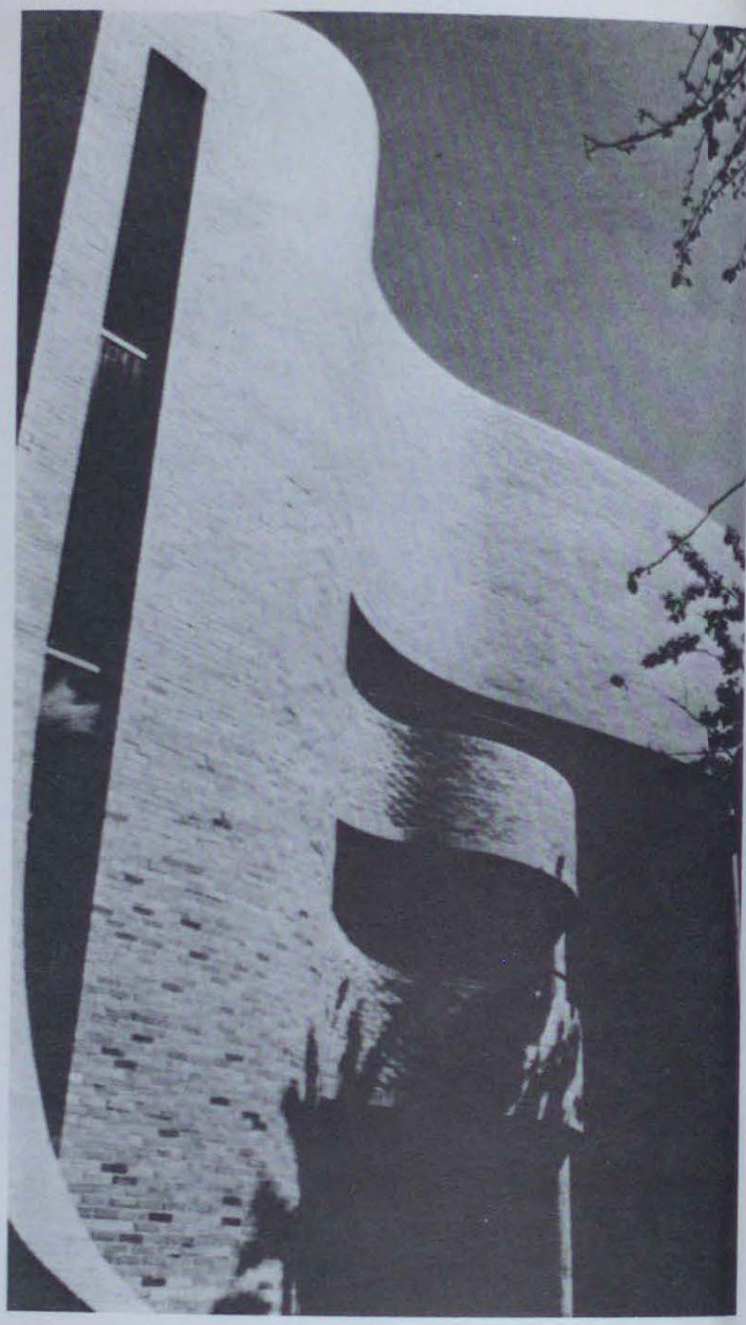




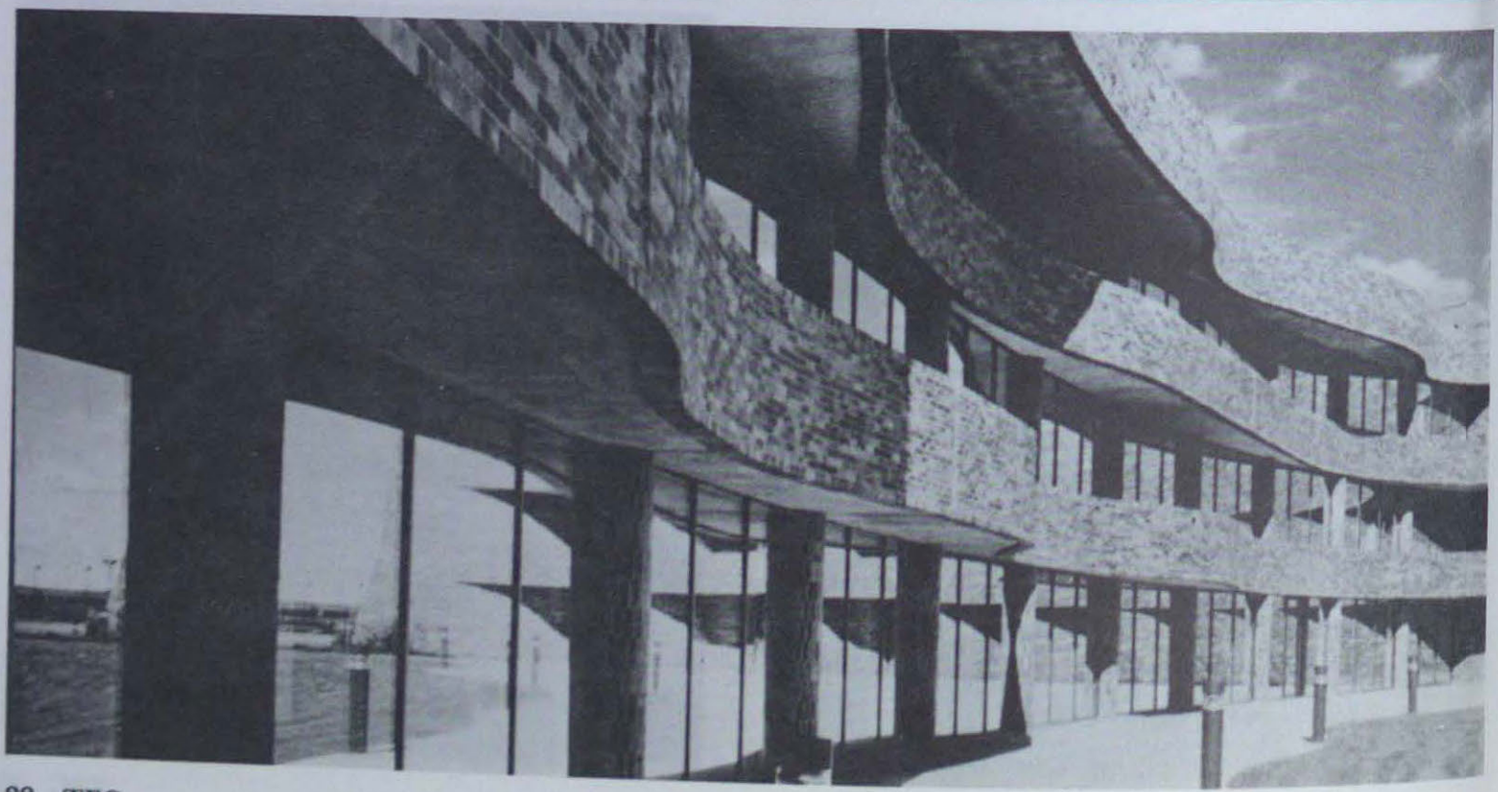


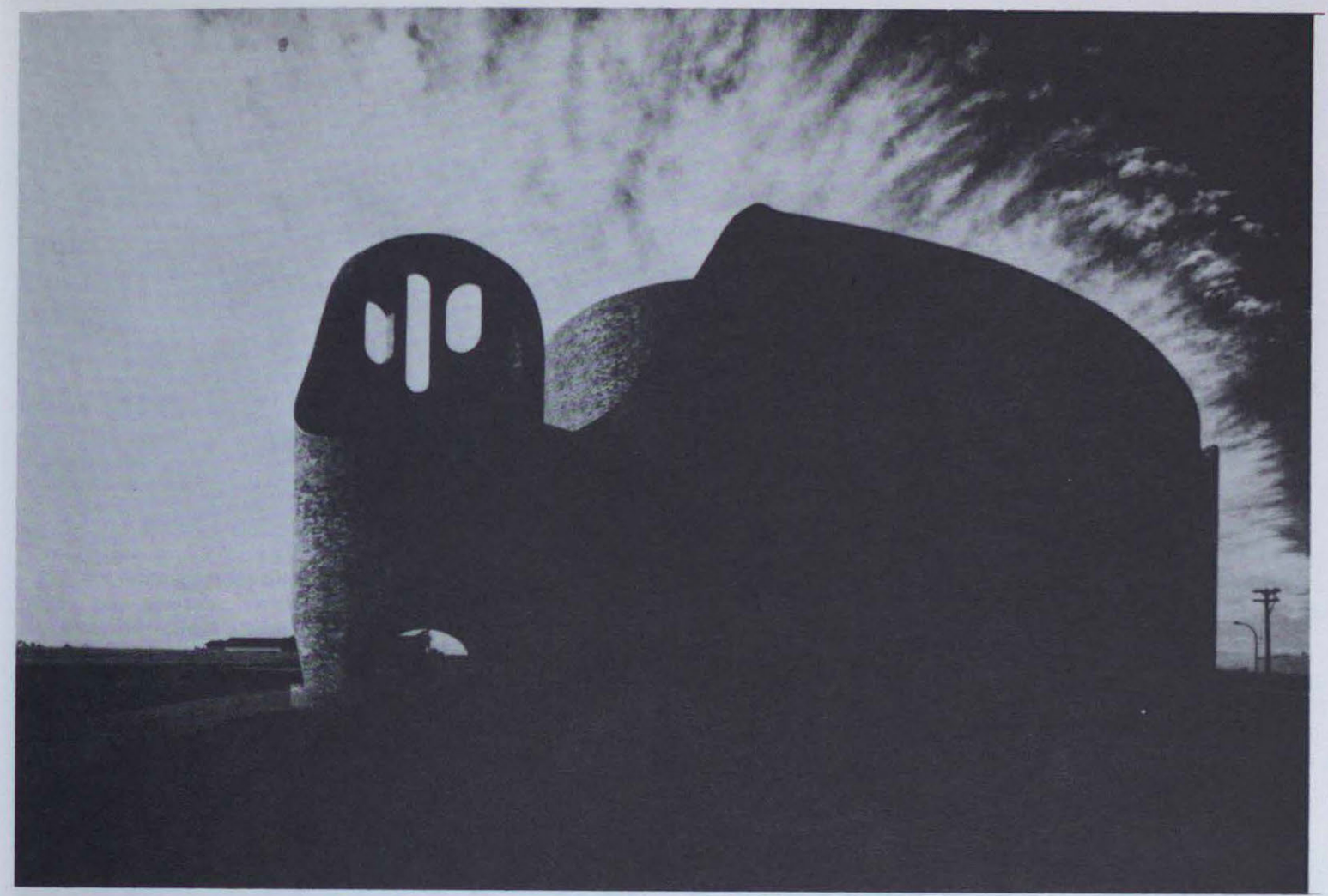
Museum of Man, Model
Hull, Quebec



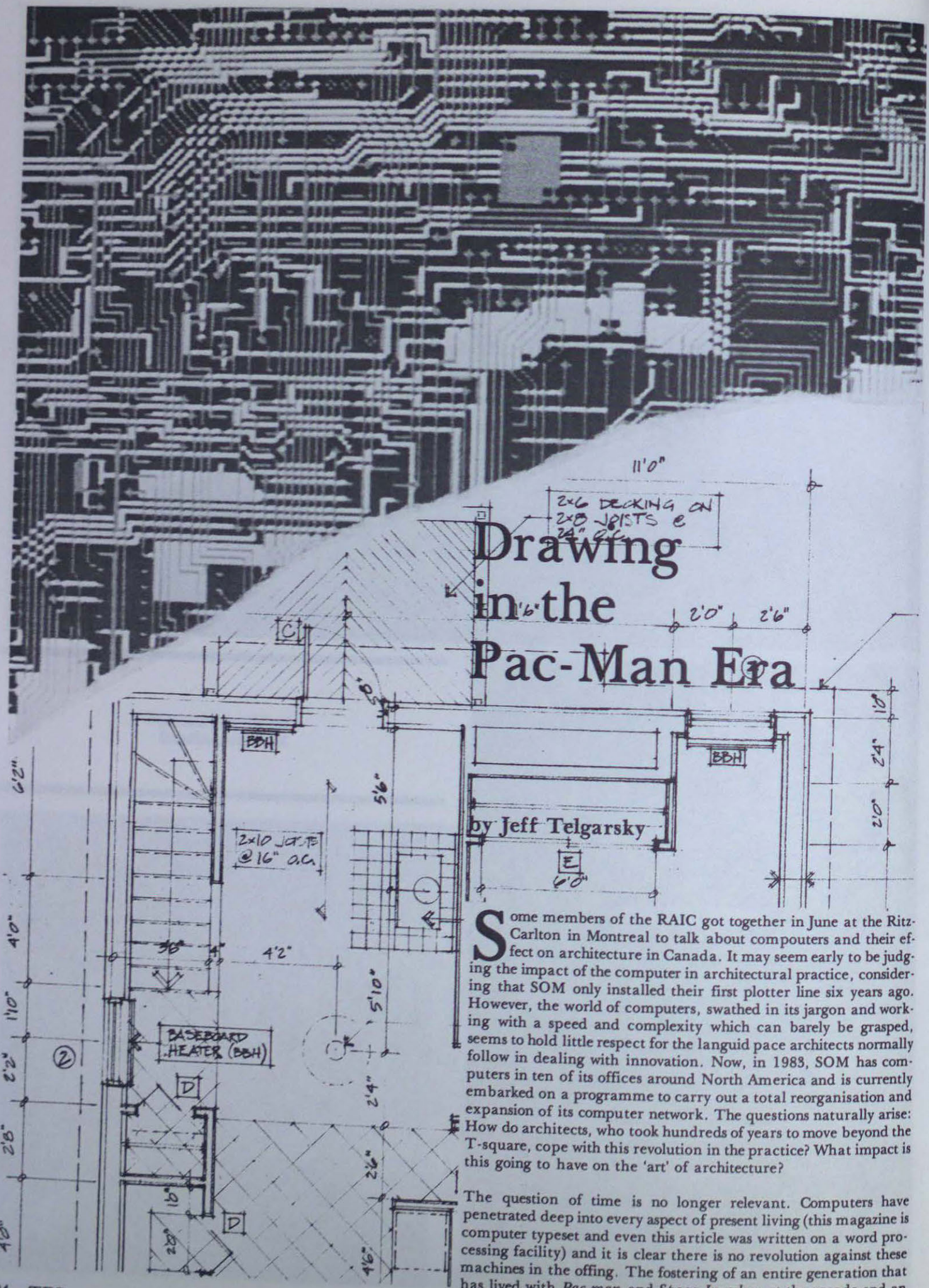


Provincial Building,
Ponoka, Alberta





St. Mary's Church,
Red Deer, Alberta



Layout by the author

Drawing in the Pac-Man Era

by Jeff Telgarsky

Some members of the RAIC got together in June at the Ritz-Carlton in Montreal to talk about compouters and their effect on architecture in Canada. It may seem early to be judging the impact of the computer in architectural practice, considering that SOM only installed their first plotter line six years ago. However, the world of computers, swathed in its jargon and working with a speed and complexity which can barely be grasped, seems to hold little respect for the languid pace architects normally follow in dealing with innovation. Now, in 1983, SOM has computers in ten of its offices around North America and is currently embarked on a programme to carry out a total reorganisation and expansion of its computer network. The questions naturally arise: How do architects, who took hundreds of years to move beyond the T-square, cope with this revolution in the practice? What impact is this going to have on the 'art' of architecture?

The question of time is no longer relevant. Computers have penetrated deep into every aspect of present living (this magazine is computer typeset and even this article was written on a word processing facility) and it is clear there is no revolution against these machines in the offing. The fostering of an entire generation that has lived with *Pac-man* and *Space Invaders* at the arcade and an

Apple in the dining room means that the 'illiterates' cannot merely close their eyes and pretend the computer doesn't exist. The six-year old who invents his own video games and balances the family budget for his beleaguered father is no longer the stuff of science fiction writers; he lives in California.

How to react to the computer is a problem which has generated much discussion in many fields. Yet, it should not be surprising to find that architects take particularly polarised stances on the question. As an 'art', architecture is very wary of the limiations and depersonalisation that use of the computer might engender. On the other hand, architecture is still a 'business' where severe competition and budgets demand efficiency and speed. The controversy between these two viewpoints result from both parties being unable to see the advantages and limitations that the computer carries with it.

Those who are against the use of the computer voice concern for the decline of civilisation, the trend toward depersonalisation and lack of social responsability in today's society, and rightly so. The fault in their argument against computers is that they ascribe the decline to technology. The flaw lies not with the technology but with who uses it and the ends to which it is used. Even of greater concern is their apparent belief that Man, as creator, cannot control his own creations. To resign oneself to such a pessimistic attitude toward human capabilities is very ironic for a group who, for the most part, harken back to the nostalgic days of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the time when the groundwork for today's technological juggernaut was laid.

This group also puts forth the argument that the computer leads to the situation where the user becomes a slave to the machine. They point to the day when the last architect who could draw passes away unnoticed by the 'architects' incapable of functioning away from their keyboards. The misconception here is that the computer 'draws' in the same manner that an architect draws, starting with a blank piece of paper, then progressing, making decisions, until the drawing is complete and the building is created. The computer is only a tool, just like a set square or a lead holder, which helps the user construct the drawing. The computer cannot evaluate decisions made by the user on a semantic or compositional level. It can see logical or factual errors, such as conflicts between structure and services, though.

Finally, those against the use of the computer point out that it is an essentially sterile, unemotional manner of drawing. This, however, illustrates one of the main reasons why architects should not succumb to the master-slave syndrome that afflict other computer users. The computer will never replace the spontaneous sketch with a 6B pencil on tracing paper that is the germ of an architectural concept. The act of drawing is a necessary one for all architects because it reflects the personal struggle of materialising an abstract idea.

This leads one to the other end of the spectrum, to those who see the computer as the solution to every problem. The computer produces drawings at a much greater speed and with greater accuracy than the human draughtsman. It also can work twenty-four hours a day and almost never gets sick, so it cuts production costs, an important attribute in the present hard economic period. There is almost nothing, with enough hardware and software, that the computer cannot do — as long as you tell it exactly what to do. And therein lies the danger of this 'gee-whiz' approach.

The catch-phrase that is being tossed about, quite erroneously, is that the computer has 'artificial intelligence', that it can make decisions. This is true today only for very specific, limited laboratory situations and usually relies on brute force computing, 'number-crunching', where the computer evaluates a large number of alternatives and their results. A computer can play a good game of chess by looking farther ahead than its opponent. However, it can't hope to deal with the myriad complexities involved in the design process, where many, many alternatives are evaluated in terms of criteria that are that are not always possible to describe. A computer cannot be described as 'intelligent' just because it can draw a perspective. The amount of intelligence required by a computer to draw a perspective is zero, because the perspective is just a mathematical and geometric representation of the particular composition created by the architect.

The other factor that this approach neglects, in its quest for greater efficiency, is the human cost, which undeniably exists. Computers reduce the number of people required to do the same amount of work, work which is often tedious and prone to constant change, such as the production of working drawings. The idea of rescuing people from this kind of work appears altruistic, but if the rescue leaves them out on the street, unemployed with an obsolete skill, are they really better off? The danger in this case is that the time and money saved on the production of working drawings is just transferred to the profit column, instead of increasing the participation of office members in the design portion of the process, in an attempt to produce better buildings that still meet budgets.

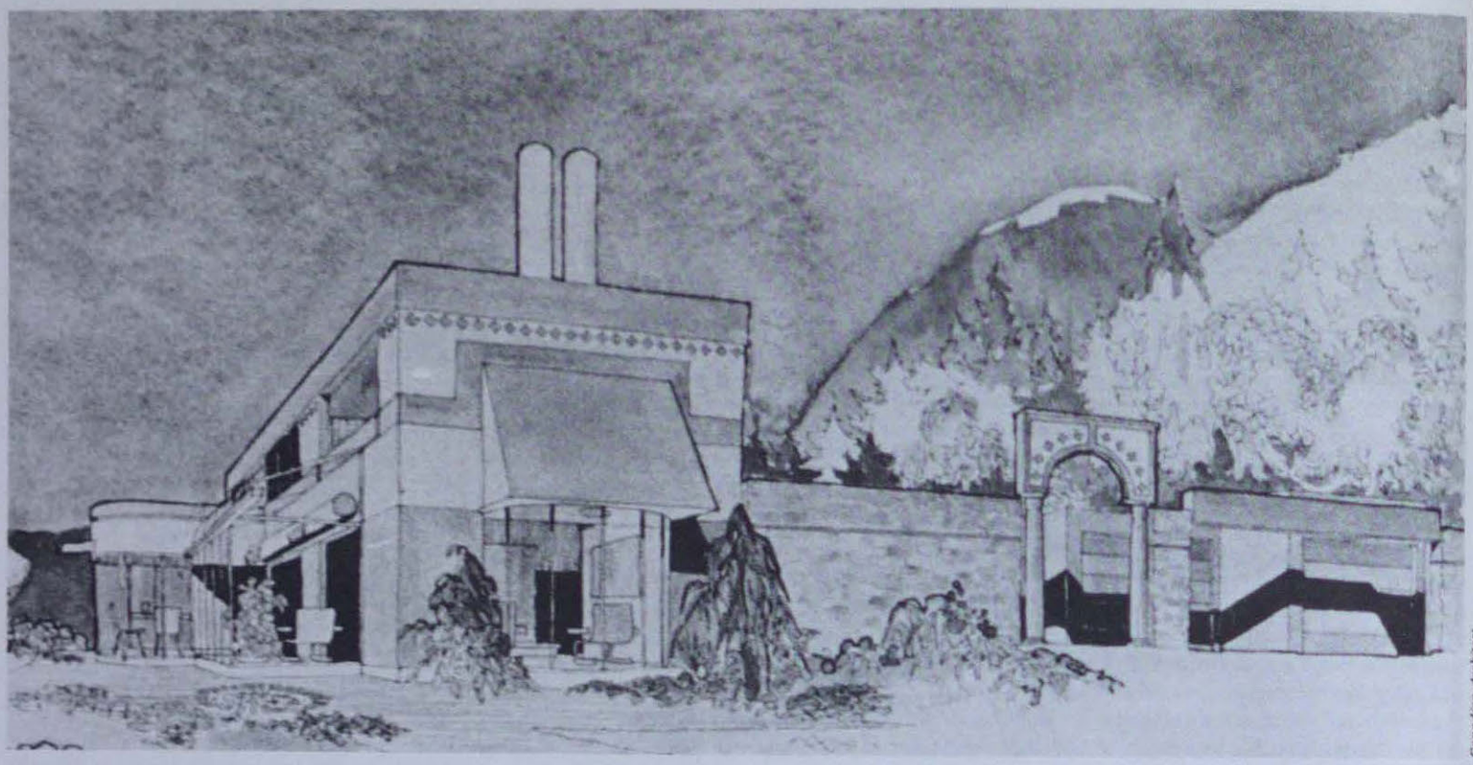
In responding to the growing role of computers in architecture, both sides seem to neglect one salient point: the computer is a tool, whose value depends entirely on the manner in which it is employed. The role of the computer is an evaluative one, acting as an instrument that allows the architect to look at accurate construction of his design without the task physically drawing new drawings for each further view. This is the crux of the development of the use of the computer in the field of architecture. At present, most of the programs developed for computer graphics are designed for engineering applications which are not nearly as complex or sophisticated as those needed in architectural situations. This, however, is beginning to change as more flexible and comprehensive programs are developed.

Further, the computer allows different people to share more information with greater ease. There no longer exists a single copy of a drawing upon which only one person can work at a time. Anyone can see in seconds what someone else is doing and respond accordingly; communication is practically inevitable. The computer does the 'labour' of drawing repeated elements, leaving more time to consider the form and composition of those elements.

In consideration of these arguments, it would seem that the computer has a positive role to play in the future of architecture. However, it is quite wrong to assume that computers will help create better architects. In fact, there is a very real danger that the opposite will occur if the use of the computer is not approached in a serious and careful manner. The skill of the architect and the quality of his designs are related strongly to the talent and judgement that he has developed. The computer makes the motions of design easier; if there is no architectural basis to the design, the computer performs regardless. In effect, the computer makes it easier for less scrupulous practitioner to churn out his work and it is this torrent of mediocrity that one must be cautious of. Indeed, this is the main reason those who believe in the 'art' of architecture must learn to deal with the computer. If they refuse, it is inevitable that economic pressures will create an even greater flood of the mediocre.

Douglas Cardinal, one of the greatest Canadian proponents of the use of the computer in architectural practice and a speaker at the RAIC Convention, stated that "chiselling graphite onto paper is like writing specifications with a quill pen; it is time to put the architect on par with the secretary." Architects must realise that the computer need not lead to the demise of the 'art' of architecture, as long as the computer is given its proper role. Creativity cannot rest in the machine; it lies only in the hand that controls the machine.

Jeff Telgarsky has recently completed his studies at the McGill University School of Architecture and is a member of the Editorial Board of THE FIFTH COLUMN.



Canadian Architect

Building is a handmaiden of power
Architecture is the companion of culture

WESTERN CANADIAN APPROACHES

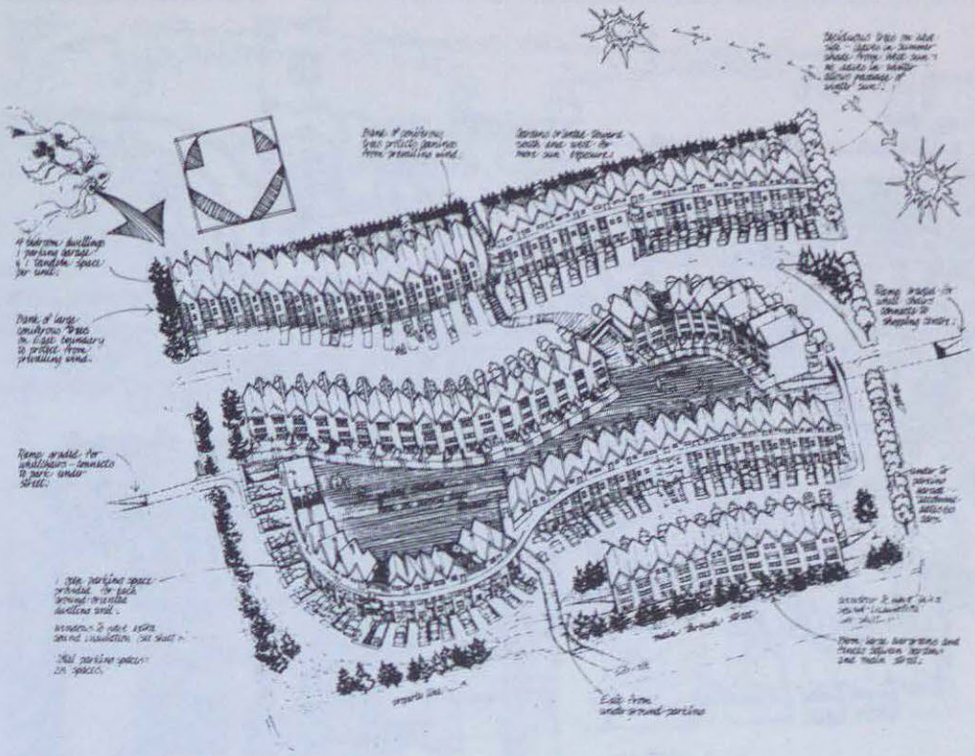
by Roger Kemble

You can imagine my dismay upon reading the British *Architectural Review* issue on Canadian architecture to find that the Holt Renfrew store in Regina was included in the lexicon of our countries greatest. Surely, I thought, we deserve better attention than this. Admittedly our best is somewhat obscured and we must not depend upon external opinions to strengthen our national self-image. Nevertheless, and in spite of the evidently complacent attitude evinced by those editors, our architecture does lack a *zeitgeist* that would inspire the outside observer. This is not to say the architectural profession has failed. It is with absolute admiration that I respect many of my colleagues — hell, I know what they're up against — who, in spite of apparently insurmountable obstacles, occasionally are able to retrieve magnificence in their creative pursuits.

It is unfortunate that so many of the generative decisions to do with architecture and urban design are in the hands of a lacklustre bunch of bureaucrats whose only ambition in life is to protect their wizened little jobs at all costs. I don't wish to engage in a diatribe against governments, corporations or banks, for I sincerely believe that with the best intentions these institutions could, potentially, have a positive influence on the urban environment. Essentially I believe that a national architecture can only come from a cadre of elite whose courage and imagination will give impetus to the bravest of our artists. A role model for a creative bureaucrat for me is a man named Frank Pick. He was, incidentally, a distinguished old boy from my own school in Great Britain. Frank Pick was the general manager of the London transport system during its more dynamic years. It was due to his influences that the strong visual

Layout: Jeff Telgarsky

This medium density urban housing project was part of our submission to an energy conservation competition. I have included it to illustrate my propensity to articulate urban space with free flowing building forms. Upon these forms I apply a profusion of pedestrian scale detailed ornamentation to fulfill the principle of sustained interest. Nevertheless, we didn't win. My approach was *pas au courant*. Heaven knows conservation is a perennial situation. Historically, the traditional rural cottage form was the most cost-effective form we've ever known. All these fatuous sloping skylights, chicken coop shapes, atriums with glass tops have failed to convince me of their effectiveness — at least conservationwise, anyway. It's all a rationalization for trendy style.



image, amongst other things, of that system was developed. The station designs, the logo graphics and the incredibly easy to read schedules were all developed during his tenure. In its prime, the system was a great achievement. The totally integrated London transport system came about only because of courage and imagination.

It isn't worth dwelling upon but, for the most part, the instigators of the architectural monsters that festoon the Canadian landscape show themselves to be mean spirited bottom liners who are frightened to death of their own shadows. This isn't a result of recent economic uncertainties. This condition has been accumulating for the last twenty-five years. What a hell of a way to build a country.

Now having said all that and in spite of having to devote ninety-five percent of my energies to financial survival — and I'll bet I'm not alone — there's still something left over for the greater pursuit of *la vie d'architure*. It's wonderful and I love it.

As for my own work, well I haven't done much building in the past two years. Getting my ideas built is very important to me. But I've had time to cogitate theories and work through many latent ideas. When the opportunities begin to flow again I'll have a comprehensive vocabulary of new ideas to draw upon.

It is urban design that is my consuming interest now. It expands our vision into a complexity of conditions that need architectural preparation and has, for the most part, been neglected.

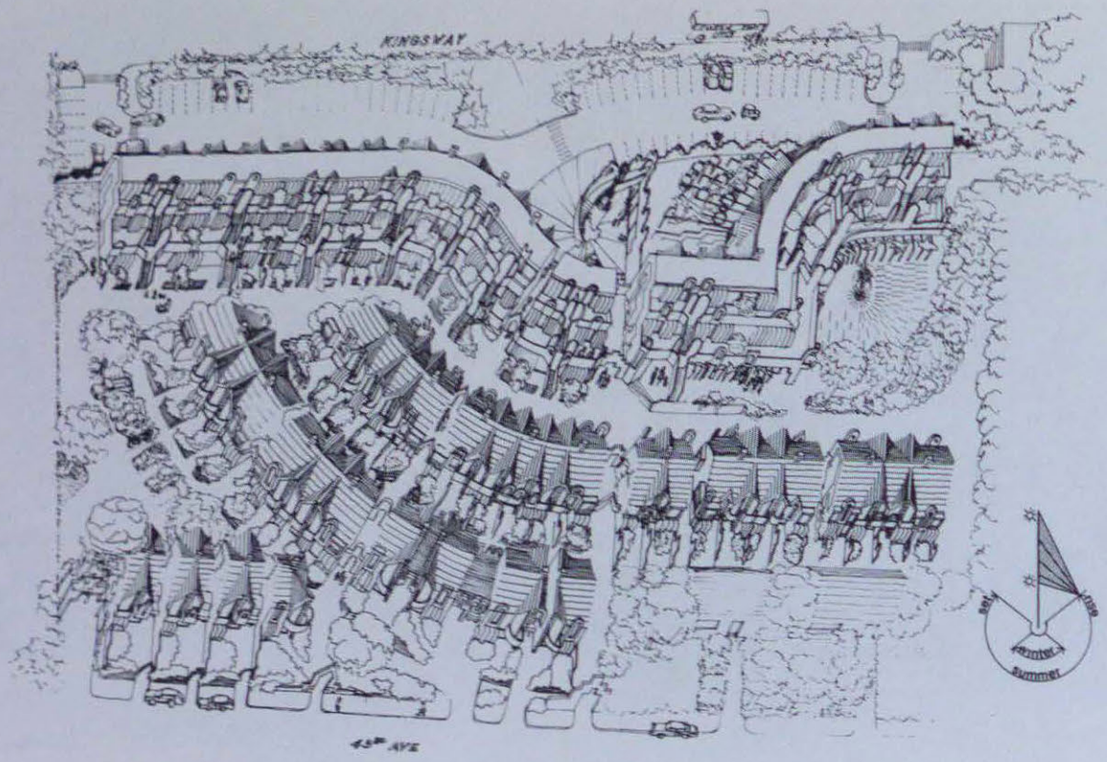
Regional architecture in Canada has always been preoccupied with the 'funky'. I have never seen myself as part of the West Coast movement. It is in my opinion, as it is conventionally practiced, an intellectually lazy style. Admittedly the matrons love it. It's good for business. But essentially everything comes out looking like the shed at the bottom of the garden. Because it is totally residential in character it cannot be adapted to urban design. The West Coast version of landscaping seems capable only of unquestioningly transporting the Black Tusk meadow wilderness into downtown Vancouver. It covers everything with formless bushes and trees, that, when grown to maturity will be so damn huge, drastic action of some sort will have to be carried out.

Even in my residential work I see design in the context of universal principles. Whether I'm designing a house or a city my criteria is based on a clear understanding of the design process. My writings over the last twenty years have helped me develop that process.

Unfortunately, I have, until recently, been dubbed a residential architect. It came about simply because an opportunity was never presented to do anything else. I have tried hard to dislodge this image; I suspect I am about to succeed. That is not to say residential architecture is unimportant. Historically, it has been the crucible that germinated many of our profound ideas. God bless those wonderful house clients who, with courage and imagination (or was it wild abandon), struggled with me to add something, inchoate as it may be, to the lexicon of this great elusive thing we call Canadian architecture.

I have given a great deal of thought to the design of urban architecture recently. I have published a number of articles on the subject. I would like to illustrate some practical applications of these theories. I have included diagrams of two recent projects for this purpose.

The essence of urban architecture is public space. It seems that even the most recent and significant urban design undertakings in this country are still locked into the old nineteen fifties modern architecture habits. We still conceive of cities as solid buildings and roads for getting to them. The interpretation is in large highrise hulks surrounded by meaningless open spaces crisscrossed by roads. These may look fine in model form but they are hell to live



This illustrates a mixed use complex within the urban boundaries of Vancouver. It is situated on a bridging site between a busy thoroughfare and a single-family residential neighbourhood. The commercial component and the apartments faced the thoroughfare. They formed a four storey buffer building to reduce noise interference going to the residential neighbourhood. It serpentines to provide a free-flowing urban space for pedestrian congregation; a focal point for activity. Each lineal form of building curved to follow a southwest orientation in order that each family residence had a sunny garden during the time of day it is in use. The density of townhouses diminished as it approached the residential area.

in. For all the economic rationalizations for persistence in this thinking there are contemporary countervailing reasons for not doing so.

The essence of urban space is the manner by which it is enclosed. The quality of the surfaces, the articulation of enclosure all mitigate toward its ultimate amenity.

In order to guide me — in virgin territory for me at least — through the labyrinth of complexity in the architectural approach to urban design I have developed a guideline. It is called 'The principle of sustained interest'. I have explained this in the Spring edition of the *Montana State Architectural Review*.

The essential approach to the principle is to treat architecture as it is perceived by the pedestrian. It is far too easy to create pedestrian interest by the time worn cliché of shops and boutiques. It is too easy to hide monstrous blank faces behind billows of bushes and other ephemeral paraphernalia. But how many boutiques can a city sustain? Just when do too many bushes become havens for nighttime marauders? I am stretching the point for emphasis. Nevertheless, urban design is a polystemenous condition that goes far beyond parks and boutiques.

The principle of sustained interest, therefore, addresses the vast majority of building surfaces that, of necessity, cannot be plastered with merchandise nor be obscured by bushes.

As for my personal approach to west coast design I find evidence of the most recent vitality to be in the now defunct but greatly admired Art Deco period. On the west coast, no doubt elsewhere too, there is a profusion of examples of this wonderful style. It seemed to prevail into the early Fifties.

The salient characteristics seem to be a texture of prolific decoration applied to a purposeful structural frame enclosing a very well articulated spatial plan configuration. In the smaller scale buildings the form takes on a constructivist briskness, often in stark white stucco. Glazed tile coloured detailing is sometimes set in the stucco. Seldom could the builders resist the urge to include a wavy line cornice or other such device with which to wrap the design. Geometric curves and rectangles were fluidly combined. I enjoy the vast source of forms; I use it. This is the historic icon reference point from which I derive my own west coast idiom.

So much for the idiom as it applies to individual buildings. My reference point for the accumulated building form of urban design is Georgian London. The latter period of this time produced some incredibly moving urban spaces; evinced for instance on the Royal Mile of Regent Street. It was built within the context of an embryonic democratic system. In contrast the European urban design of that time usually came about at the behest of one authoritarian emperor or another; it shows. It looks a bit shabby now but when I was in my late teens it must have been at the apex of its glory. I remember walking past Swan and Edgars. Being a teenager I was not quite conscious of the architectural impact — I couldn't keep my eyes off the, literally, thousands of beautiful women — but the subliminal impact of the free flowing serpentine space as it encouraged the movement of traffic is indelible. Obviously we cannot slavishly emulate this period now. It has, though, a potent historical image role model for me.

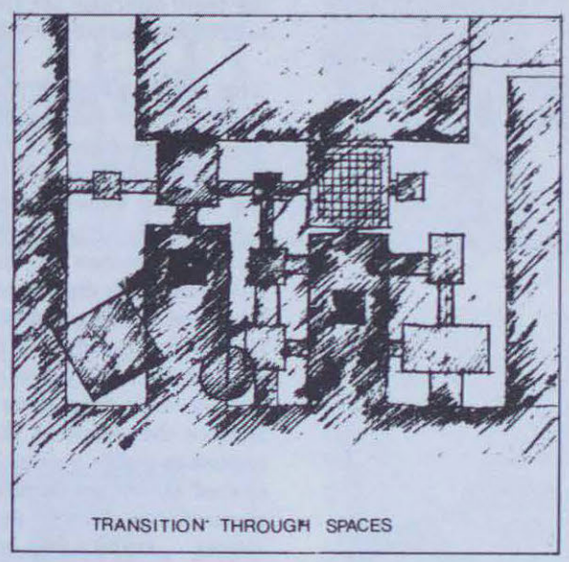
The two illustrations show how I attempt in my design to escape authoritarian banalities by following through on a clearly defined design procedure of principles. I somehow try to avoid the symbolism of power. I believe that any society, organization or individual that has a need for the typology of power have long ago lost it. They are consumed by a mirage of their fantasies.

Roger Kemble is an architect practicing in Vancouver.

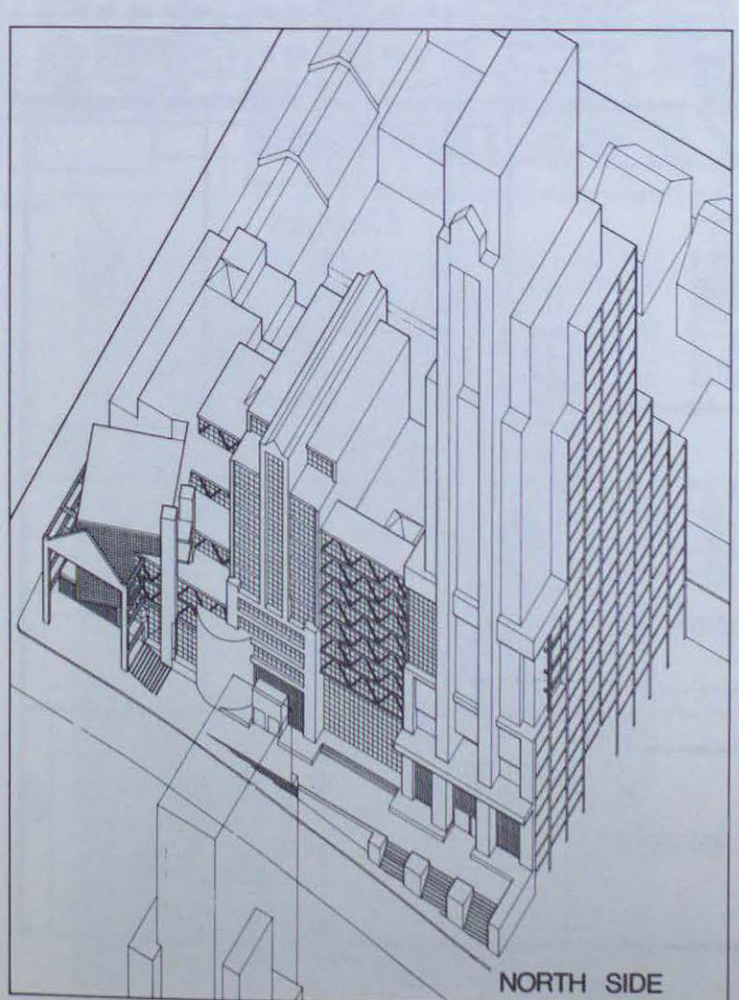
STUDENT WORK

Thesis Project
Jonathon Cohn
Technical University of Nova Scotia, 1983

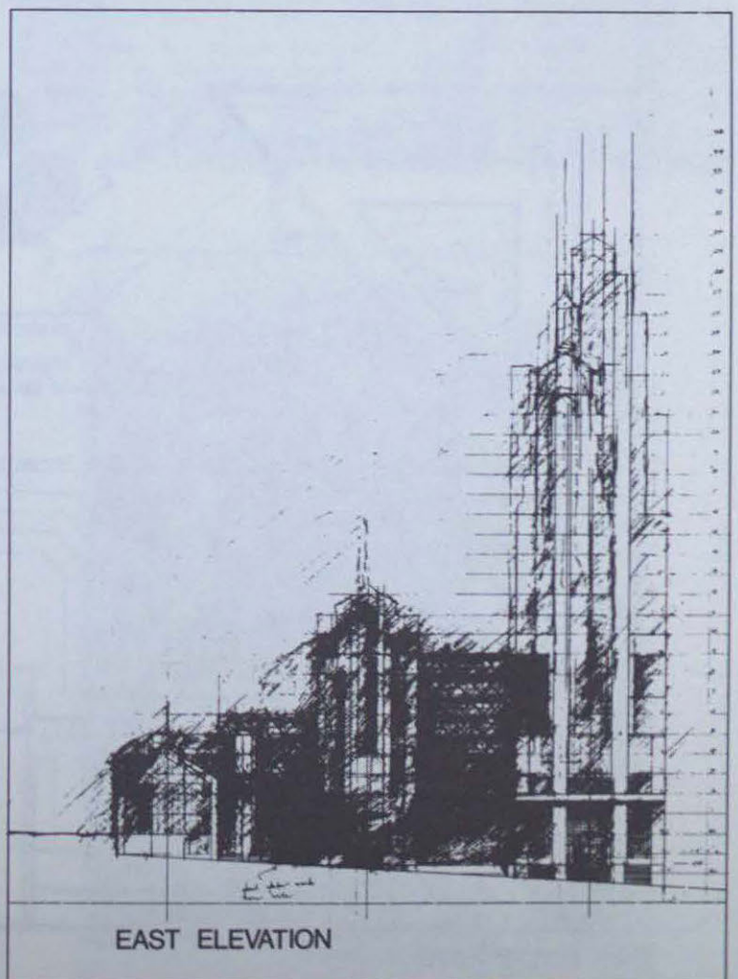
The thesis explores the interrelationship between choice of site and choice of program on urban form. Five sites, different in type, were explored by using designs as statements about aspects of their type. One of these was then explored for five different programs, again using designs as vehicles to say something about the specific nature of each program. Finally, this mixed-use building was designed for the site, using aspects, elements, or ideas from the above. The high-density proposition questions the future type and extent of growth in downtown Halifax.



TRANSITION THROUGH SPACES

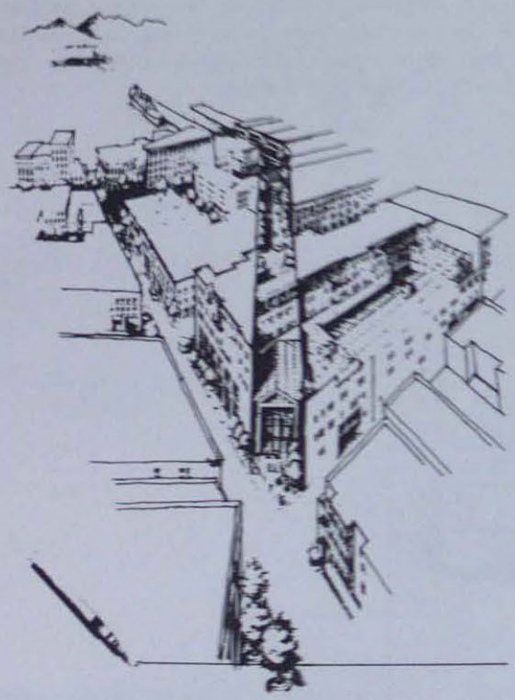


NORTH SIDE



EAST ELEVATION

STUDENT WORK

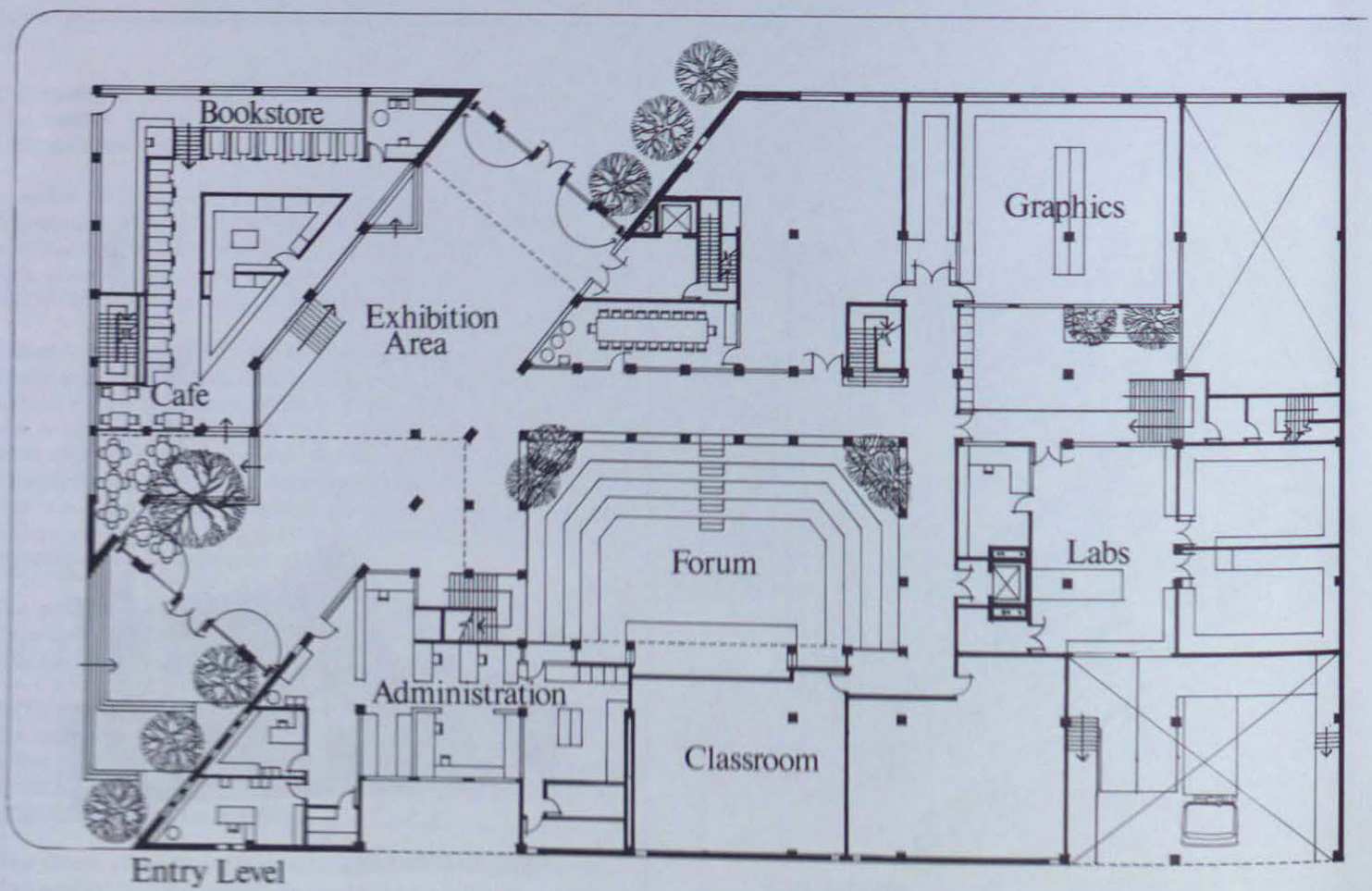


This project attempts to address a continuing lack of communication which exists on both a formal and informal level, between school, profession and public. The 'Architecture Centre' is intended to be an equitable meeting place for these participants in architecture and architectural education. Therefore, the Centre is not just a school of architecture (linked to UBC or independent). Rather, it extends itself to the profession and the public, using the school as a catalyst.

The Architecture Centre would offer a variety of programmes both internal and external to the school's curriculum. Such precedents for these offerings are the IAUS in New York, the Boston Architectural Centre and the AA's original format.

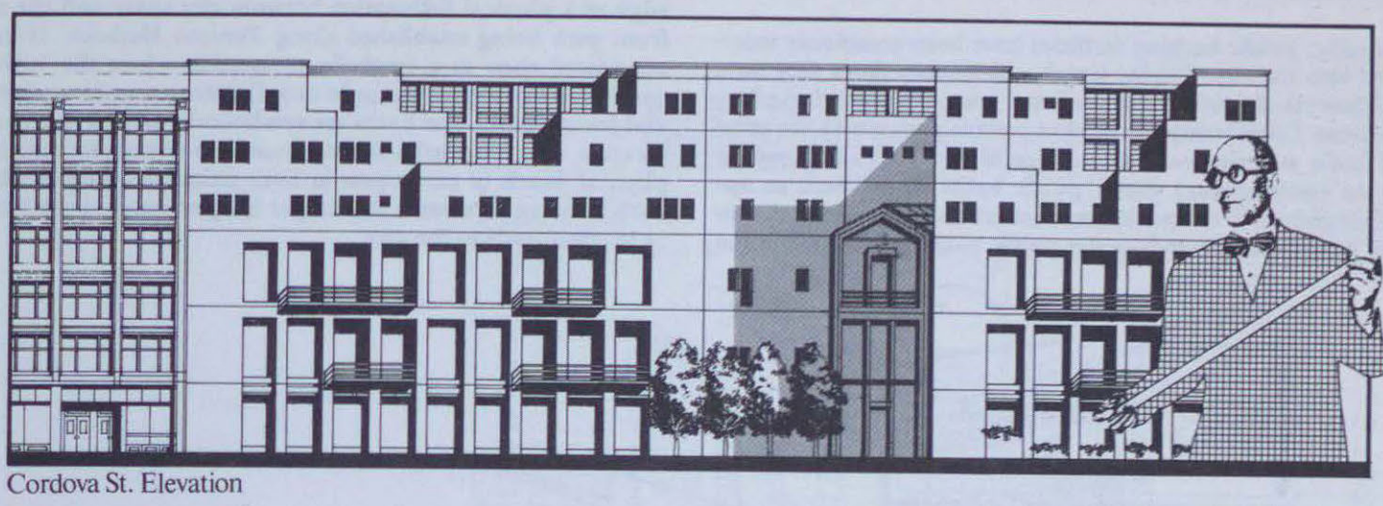
The building itself is an example of selective infill, attempting to deal with the existing city form rather than a restraint-free campus. It is strongly felt that a university, and especially a school of architecture, should be located downtown, so that the students and the city can benefit from their mutual contact.

Located between the historically rich district of Gastown and the culturally rich district of Chinatown, the Centre attempts to reinforce the existing pedestrian link between the two. In addition the building responds to a potential future pedestrian route along an abandoned rail right-of-way which slices diagonally through the city grid. This form-giver has not only been allowed to strongly influence the shape of the building but also its organization with regard to public access. The intention was to give the more public spaces an indoor/outdoor 'street and square' atmosphere, while maintaining a more defined sense of enclosure for the working spaces — studios and offices.

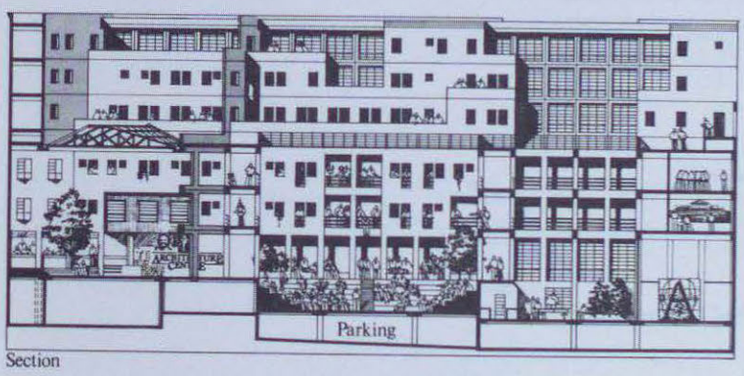


Entry Level

Thesis Project, 'The Architecture Centre'
Tim Lindsay
University of British Columbia, 1983



Cordova St. Elevation



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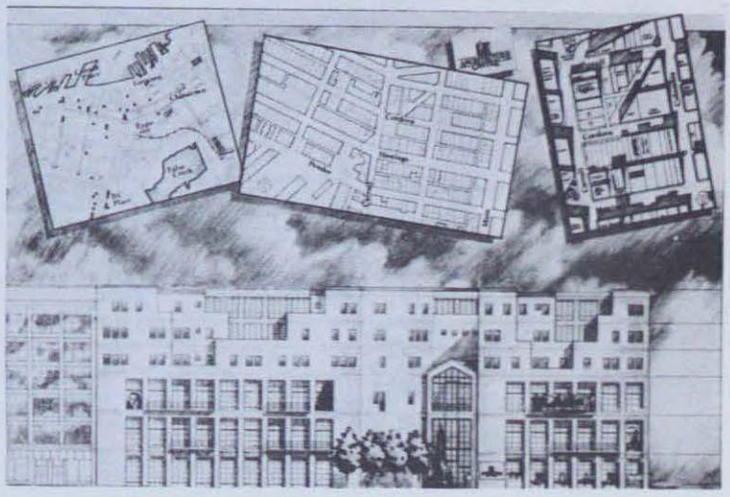
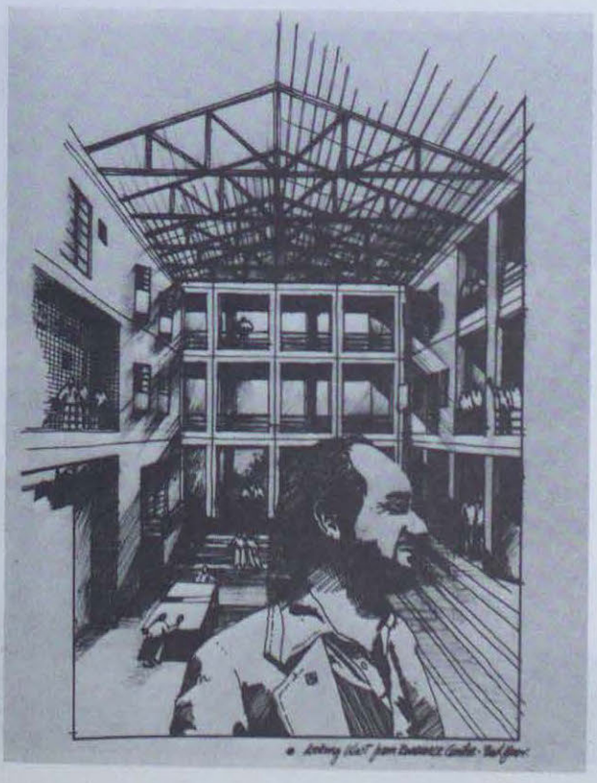
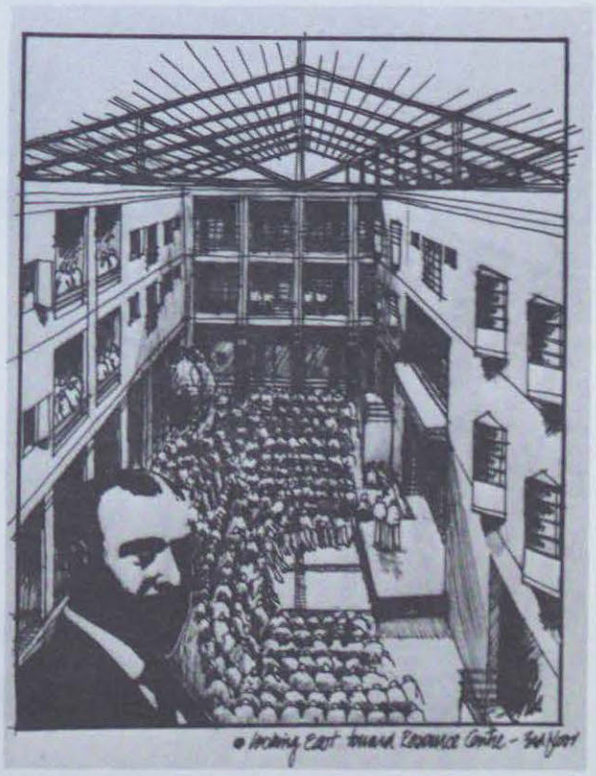


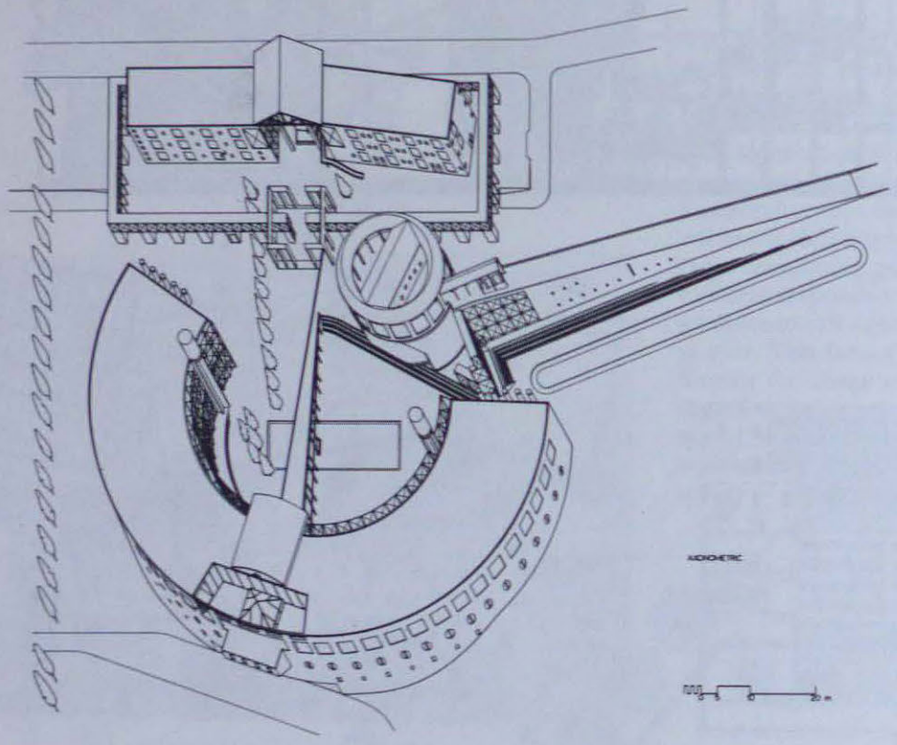


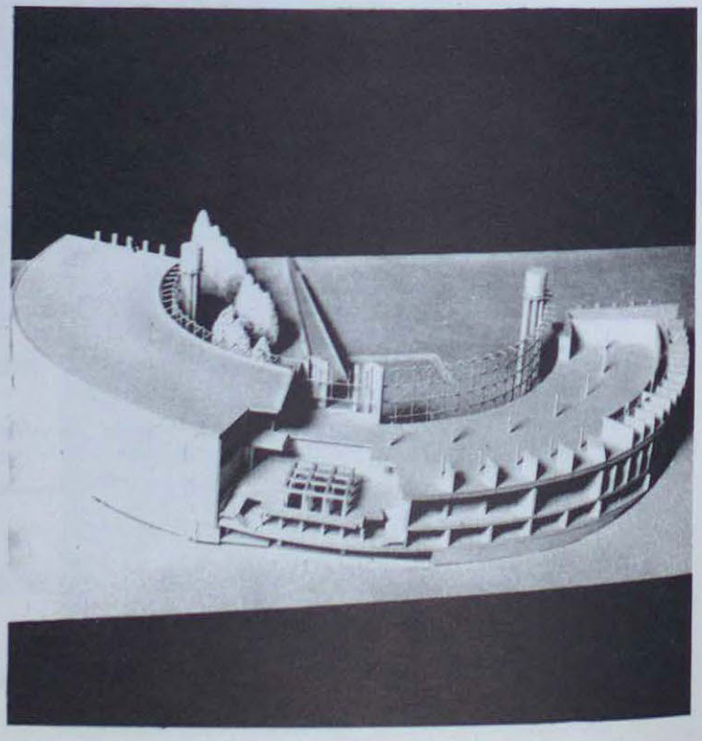


STUDENT WORK

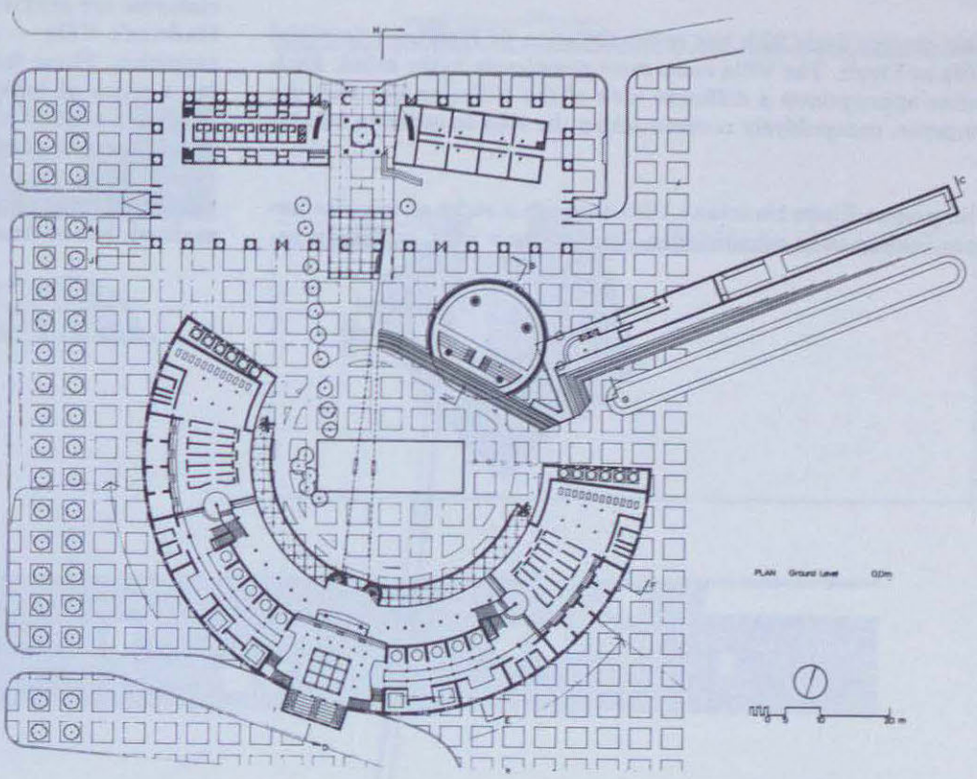
Historically, public bathing facilities have been commonly incorporated into the city. During Greek and Roman times they were establishments of monumental scale and one of the daily foci of urban citizens. Considering our present preoccupation with the emotional strain and physical deterioration of our bodies imposed on us by the contemporary world, public baths would seem an appropriate gesture to the present state of urbanity. To this end, this project intends to reintroduce the public bathing facility into the city with its original notions in mind; exercising the mind as well as the body.

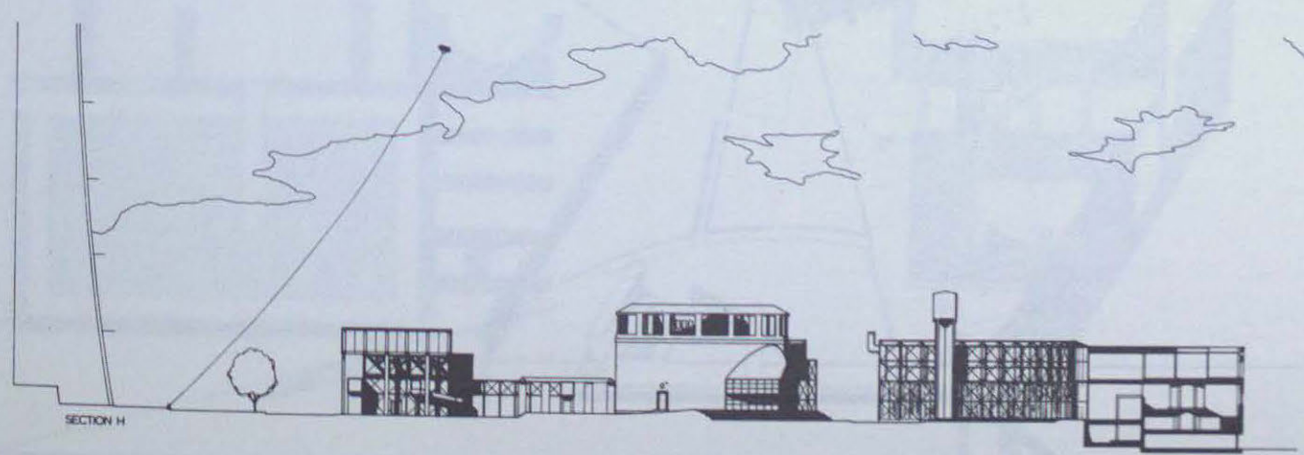
The site in Toronto lies immediately south of the CN Tower and is bounded on the south by the Lakeshore Boulevard and Gardiner Expressway. The site has special significance in that it lies on the edge of a physical delineation between city space and the waterfront park being established along Toronto Harbour. It may be considered then as a symbolic connection where the individual conditions himself to engage in two distinct zones: the working city and leisure park. The baths are symbolically placed in a strategic location where the urbanite may use it to ensure his mental and physical fitness to participate in both attitudes. Allegorically, the bath building represents that larger body of water in the Harbour as it offers itself to the city.





Toronto Harbour Public Baths
Peter S. Hossack
Carleton University, 1983

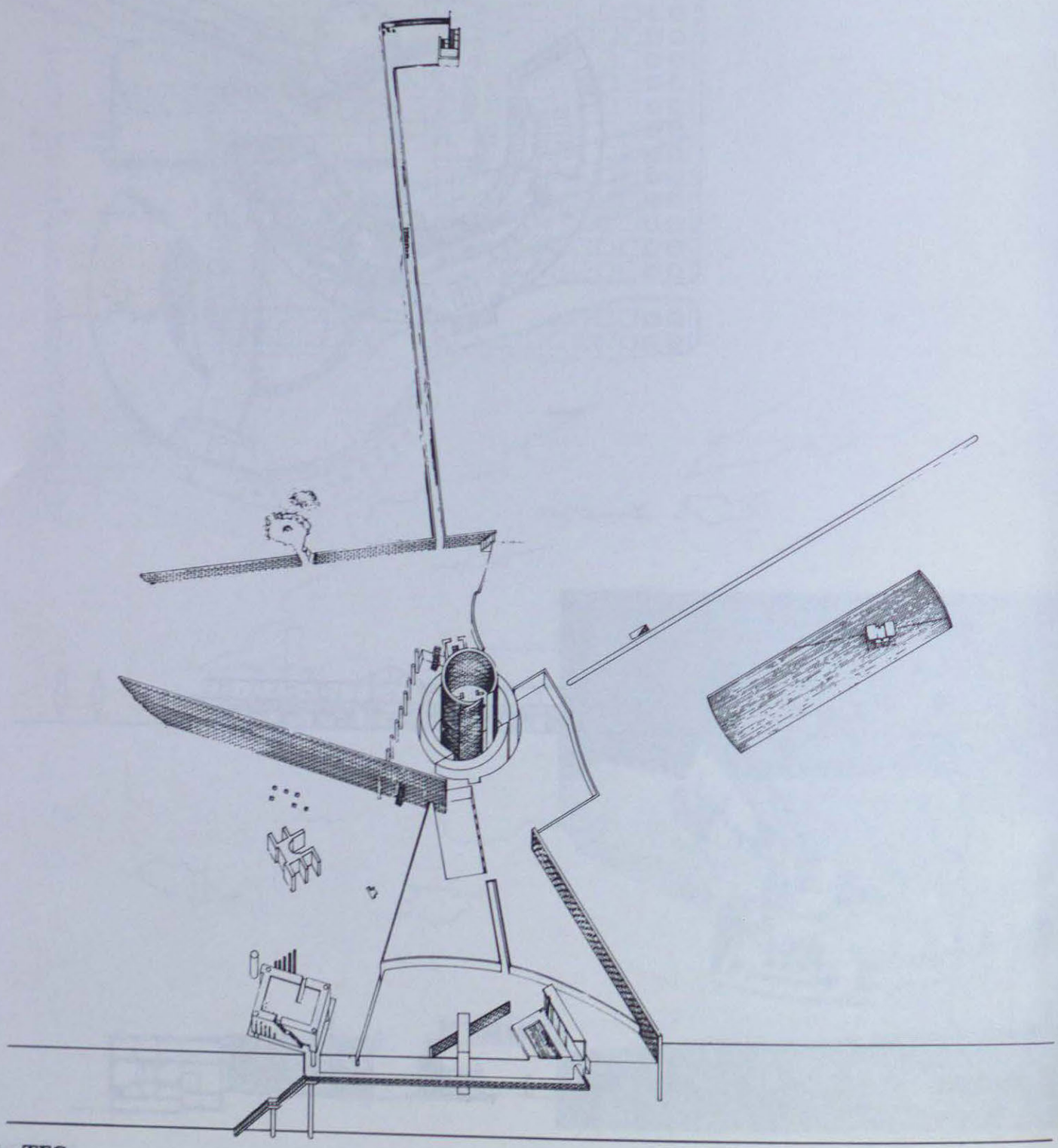




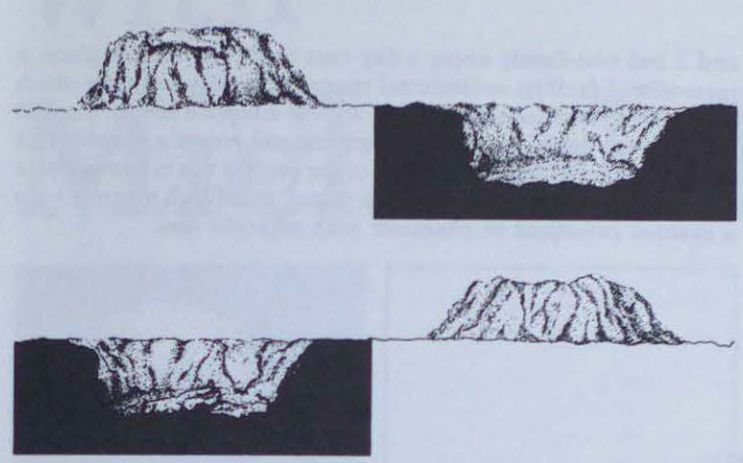
STUDENT WORK

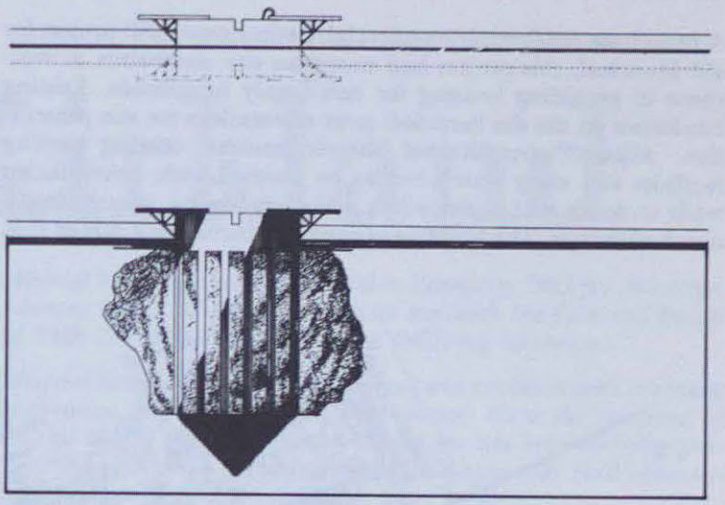
This project deals with the re-inhabitation of Hadrian's Imperial Villa at Tivoli. The Villa exists most completely in the mind. Each visitor appropriates a different idea of the Villa; he becomes the Emperor, compulsively reconstructing the villa in order to inhabit it.

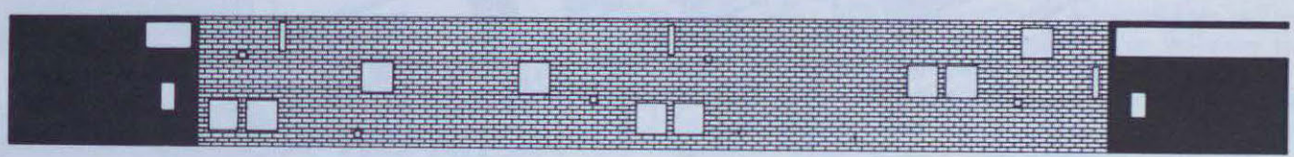
The project filters Hadrian's Villa through a series of transformations leading to its inhabitiation. In Hadrian's Villa, water was used as the critical animating device. Through reflection, the pools of the Villa continually hint at an antithetical villa, its ghost. Hence as a first transformation, the actual villa is reversed, yielding a new site or field of operation — an analogous villa. This move can be understood as a second excavation, one that would occur on paper or in a library. Secondly, a series of seven pieces or elements are selected to describe the essential semantic content of Hadrian's Villa — statue, pool, wall, stairs, tower, court, cryptoportico. These fragments, as autonomous units, form the basis for a series of inhabitation. The list of elements are at once irreducible generic parts of architecture and at the same time constitute specific phenomena which can be references back to the overall Villa. As a final transformation, the pieces are re-instated into the reversed site and the ritualized path of a single day is formalized, hence frozen in time and space.

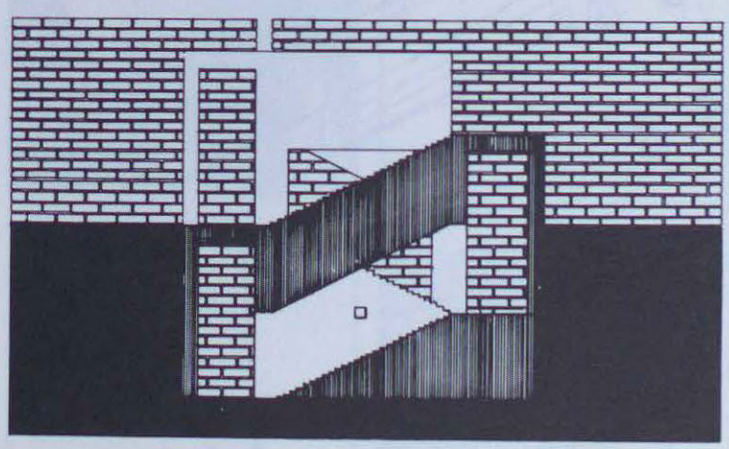


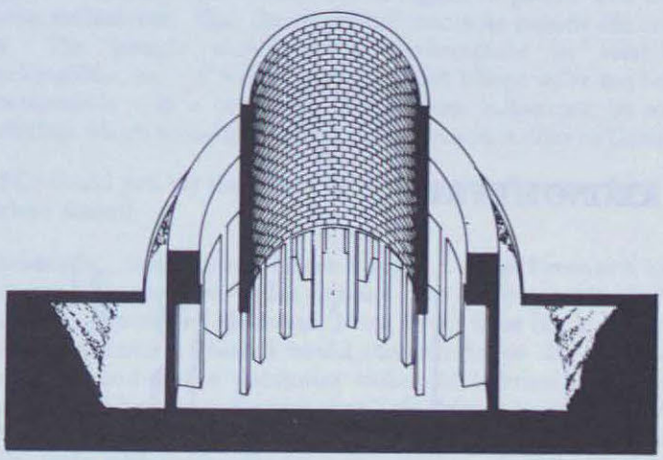
The Inhabitation of Hadrian's Villa
Frank Fantuzzi
Carleton University, 1983

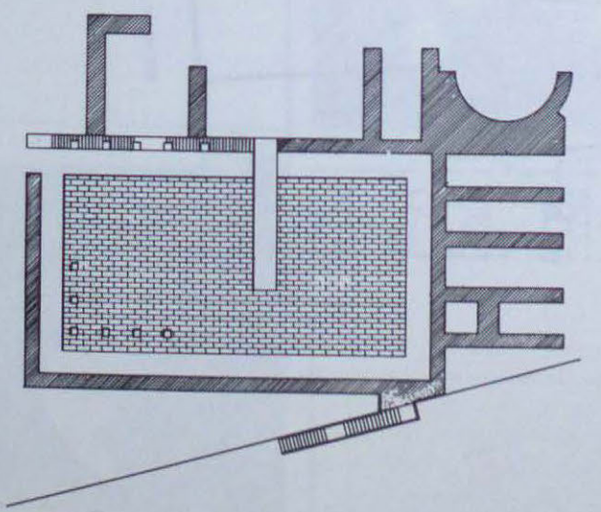


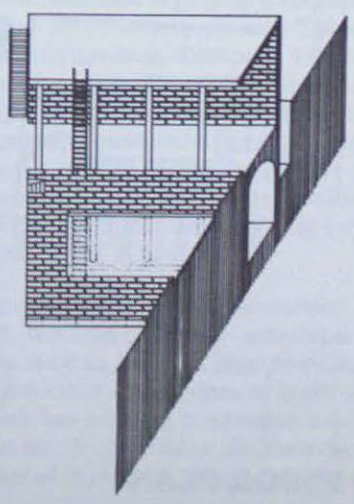








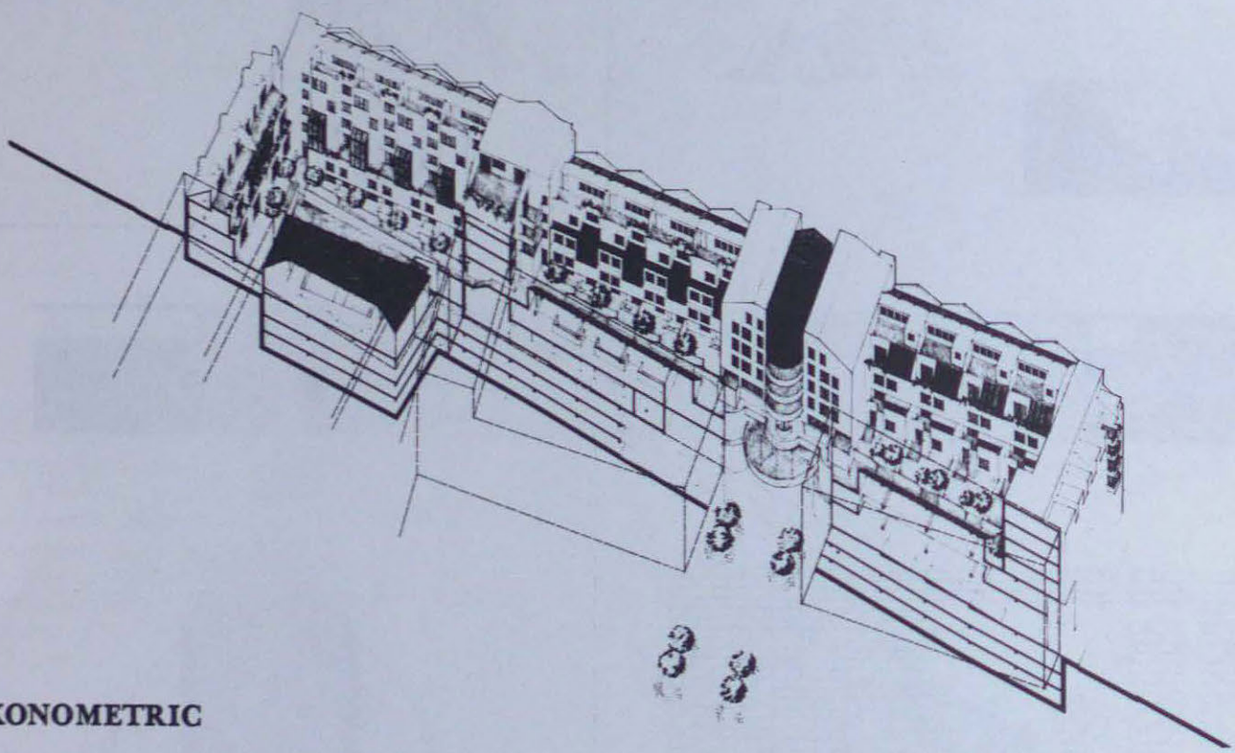




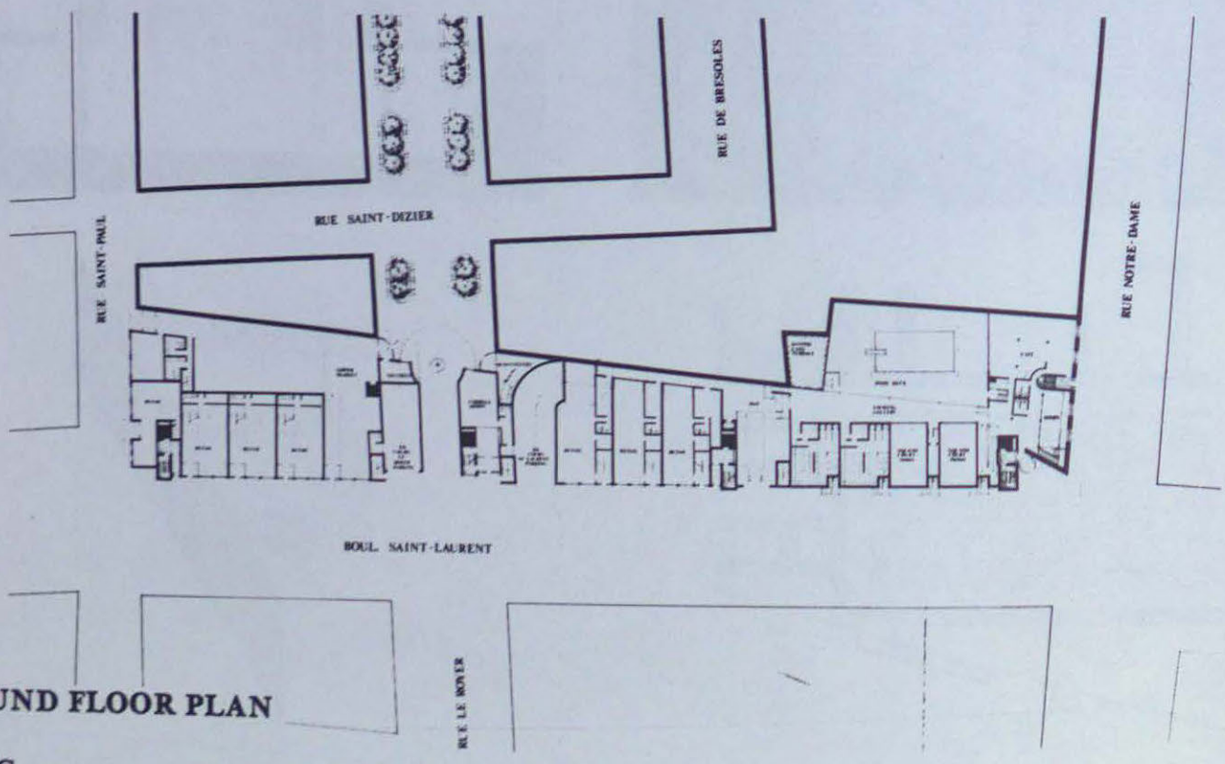
STUDENT WORK

Thesis Project
Therese Leblanc
Technical University of Nova Scotia, 1983

A mixed-use residential/commercial/institutional infill project for old Montreal, this project had enormous site constraints to overcome in providing housing for non-family households. Existing conditions on the site included: poor orientations for sun penetration; adjacent structures of historic interest; existing parking facilities and entry which had to be planned with; north facing walls on south side of site which while windowless, overshadowed much of the site. The building programme included: a mix of 1, 2, and 3 bed non-family units; a day-care facility; a market place; a recreational facility; commercial space; a heritage building which was badly in need of conservation and/or adaptive re-use. The site itself is avery long, narrow and tapering and enjoys a considerable drop across its length. The object of the project was to demonstrate the feasibility of using the site for a mixed use of high amenity – in a manner consistent in character with adjacent uses.



AXONOMETRIC



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

An Interview with Michael Kirkland

Michael Kirkland was in Montreal in February, 1983 for the Alcan Lecture Series. After his lecture, he met with the Editorial Board of THE FIFTH COLUMN *for the following interview.*

Michael Kirkland is an urban designer and architect with extensive experience in public and private practice. He is the recipient of several design awards and well-known for his prize-winning projects for Edmonton City Hall and Mississauga City Hall competitions.

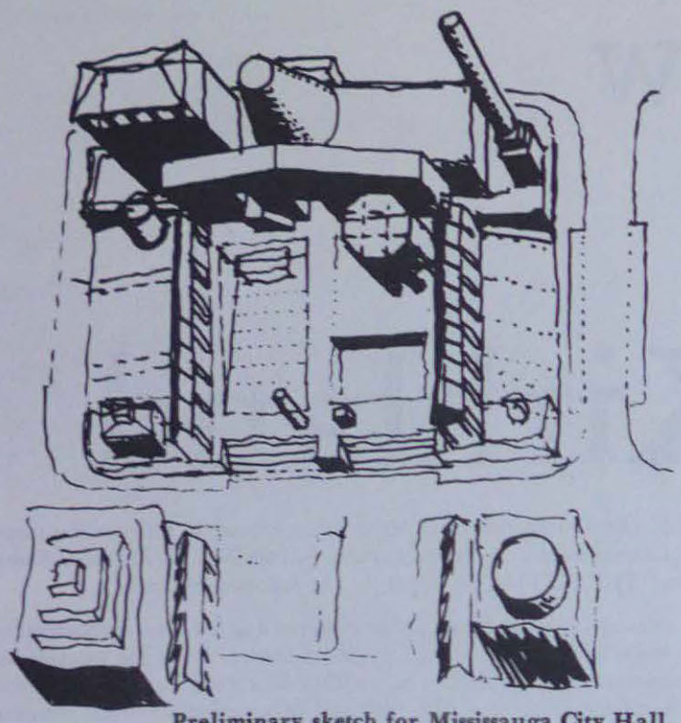
Kirkland: I think one of the problems that Canada has is that it is not an entirely self-confident culture. Consequently, many of the models that influence the country are from outside the country. There are a lot of derivative buildings and there are a handful of buildings that influence certain sectors of architecture in Canada, particularly corporate and some varieties of civic architecture, which don't influence necessarily the better practitioners or students. I could tell you of some in Toronto and I'm sure they exist in Montreal as well. So there's a curiosity that I think lies in regard to people who think about architecture, that the major influences lie outside the country. The people who practise architecture in relatively workmanlike, or — if we're charitable, and I hope we're not being uncharitable - in a corporate format, are influenced by some buildings which actually constitute nefarious directions in Canada.

TFC: Could you say that those influences basically come from the United States?

Kirkland: ...and to some extent Europe. I think Toronto is looking at the Alcan Series, which appears to be the greatest kind of intellectual ferment in Montreal. Now, Peter Rose has a very particular orientation which I would characterize as that of a Northeastern, and even a particular variety of Northeastern United States which has got to do with that Yale-Princeton axis, as opposed to, for example, the Harvard-Cornell-Columbia, sometimes Penn, axis, with two overlapping groups of people. That being so, it seems to me that Montreal is getting a tilt towards a particular variety of American architecture, whereas Toronto, for example, has a much more international, European kind of influence being exerted on it, and the other side of the American equation in the Northeast. So that we tend to be less connected to say, Yale and Princeton, and perhaps more connected to Cornell and Harvard than you would appear to be, particularly since your main vehicle of contact is Alcan and ours is, perhaps, a combination of teachers from outside, people going out and teaching other places, and a lecture series which is not as prolific.

Historically, Toronto has a strong connection to Europe, particularly England, but also to France, somewhat, and there are a number of people, such as Bernard Huet from Paris, who come to Toronto. There are other connections to Italy. And, say, the Institute in New York has a strong connection to certain ones of us, George Baird and me, in particular, in Toronto, so that there's a sort of different set of influences to some extent. Not entirely different.

Layout: Charles-Henri Brunet



Preliminary sketch for Mississauga City Hall.

George Baird has said that Canadian architecture is good upper-middle practitioner architecture, by and large, rather than world-class, and I think that's true. If you talk about the influences that tend to affect Canadian architecture more generally, then you're discussing people like Zeidler and Moriyama and, lately, Barton (Myers), and maybe Webb Zerafa (Menkes and Housden), but you know we're into some strange territory already, when you're discussing some of that sort of work. So, maybe you should prompt me with some questions, otherwise I'm going to be always tilting to what I would consider to be respectable opinion. And who's influencing that? A kind of more nefarious and amorphous phenomenon which is the general production of architecture in the country, which I think is more influenced locally.

TFC: Why did you decide to come to work in Canada and what differences do you find practicing here as opposed to the United States?

Kirkland: Well, I'm a person who is temperamentally an itinerant practitioner, and I have always failed to see national boundaries. I thought of Canada, not as Canada, but rather as Montreal and Toronto, as well as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington. And, I'm temperamentally not a West Coast person. I'm interested in this cosmos and Europe. I also considered going to London and Zurich and Rome, where I was a student. After I thought about it... Montreal was actually a preferred location to me, but I could see at the time that I was going to do the move that Montreal was going to have some terrific problems.

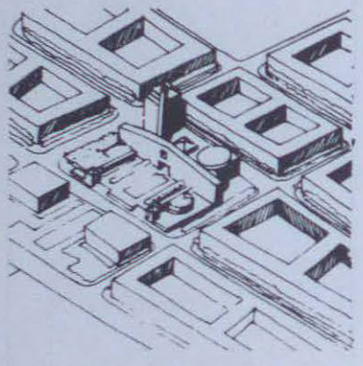
TFC: That was just about 1976.

Kirkland: Yes, between the Anglos and Francophones, I decided that Toronto was better. And my great discovery was that Toronto was geographically east of Miami, which satisfied me quite nicely.

But the reason that I moved out of New York — I was doing very well in New York, thank you — was that I was stuck like everyone else there. You can't be in New York and not be famous, if you want to have a practice which is national, or even the more important projects in the city. I mean, there can be twenty painful years of renovating friends' apartments, which I started doing, and maybe if you are very good, you get to do a house in the Hamptons in your fifth year. At a time when there was a lot of interesting public sector stuff to do, I spent two-and-a-half years at the New York State Urban Development Corporation, where we did housing prototypes and a lot of research analysis on typology, essentially assessing the production that they had done in their first wave. They built thirty-five thousand housing units. While I was there they did twenty-five thousand and I got to travel around a lot, and it was something that was a good companion to teaching at Columbia, which is what I was doing at the time.

The second half of my time, which was another two-and-a-half years, was as the Director of Urban Design for Midtown. The City of New York had a very interesting and ambitious urban design component to it, and it was the latter days of Lindsay, so that was another thing which I found very interesting. During that time I was teaching at Penn and Harvard. So, at the end of that five year run, which I saw as a kind of extension of my general interests from my academic period, it was time for me to decide where to operate. I had the choice of those Northeastern handful of cities, plus Montreal and Toronto, plus some European cities, and at the end of the day decided that Toronto, becoming the national city in Canada, displacing Montreal in that function, was probably a good place to operate from. So it had no significance to me, immigrating to Canada. I could have been going to Philadelphia or Boston, just as well.

Boston has about one architect per square foot. Philadelphia has very few architects of any stature, but also little work, by comparison. Washington is a national city and commissions are given out in a way that commissions are given out in Ottawa, which we won't delve into too deeply — I might get stuck.



"...the dense-pack Acropolis..."

TFC: It's obvious that you, throughout your career, have been connected to a lot of schools and the teaching process. I know that at McGill and some of the other schools, there is a questioning that goes on as to what the role of the professional is in the educational process. I suppose that from your point of view its obvious that the professional really does have an important role to play in architectural education. But how important do you think it is? How much of the actual teaching process should rely on people who are practising? In the United States I believe it is very important that the people who are actually teaching in the design studios of many schools have a practice that's going quite strong.

Kirkland: That's an interesting and difficult question. I think that architecture, like any other applied craft, can't get too distant from some reality about practice, lest it lose its cutting edge. I think the School of Architecture in Toronto has gone through a great trauma. It is, in a sense, the flip side of the American system, the American system being predicated on practicing stars to both generate students and to give a kind of style to the curriculum of different schools. The difficulty with that system, frankly, is that these stars, by the very nature of their activity, tend to be inaccessible. It tends to be an illusion that they give substance to the schools, and I think that many of the American schools are, in fact, a kind of hollow vessel. There's not as much going on as there appears to be.

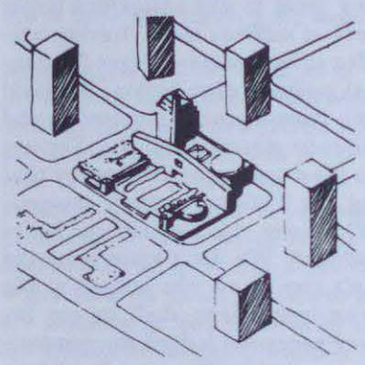
The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies is a perfect ex-

All drawings courtesy of Michael Kirkland.

ample of that. Their education program is, in fact, a fraud. Students come there to study, ostensibly with Peter Eisenmann and Gandelsonas or whoever. They don't show up because they are distracted. Terrific recruiters but not good teachers. Maybe if you saw them, they'd be good teachers, but who knows?

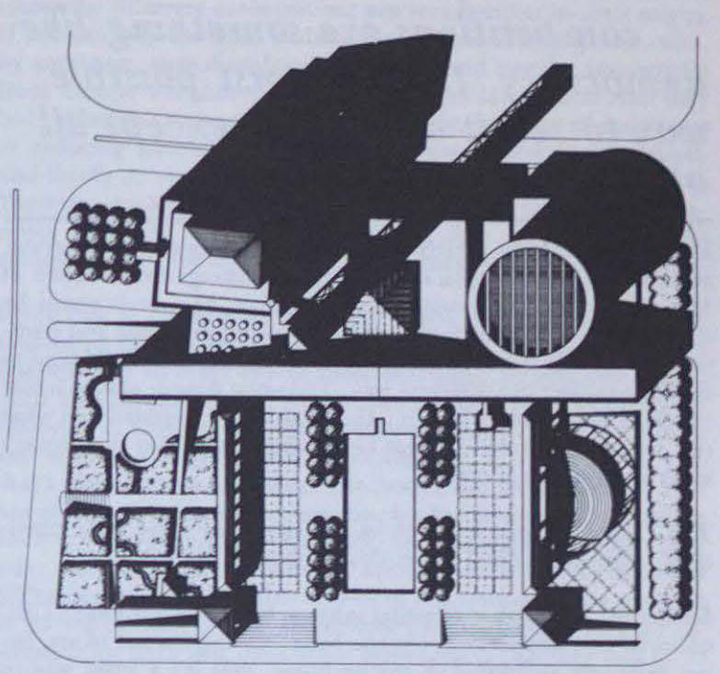
The Toronto system if the opposite in that, in the aftermath of a typical five year North American curriculum, it instituted, under Peter Prangnell, this core problem idea which was a completely integrated analogue to practice as an educational system. However, because they had this old guard of tenure staff, it meant that all the junior and new staff that came into the School had to be full time just for reasons of offsetting the effect, and what was viewed as the ineptitude, of the tenured, existing staff. So, it developed a group of full-time permanent staff members, many of whom had been weak practitioners, or mediocre ones, and because the curriculum is so demanding on personal crit time individually, it means that they haven't developed any sort of interesting theoretical or other academic work. Consequently, the School of Architecture at Toronto has stagnated with this very introverted, if devoted, group of teachers. And a handful of people like Goerge Baird and myself and Klaus Dunker and others who have an ongoing interest in practice and other schools, have recently not been there at all.

I'm on leave. George (Baird) is on leave. Bruce Kuwabara from Barton Myer's office is on leave. Mark Baraness is on leave. You're going to read in *The Globe and Mail* an expose by Adele Freedman. The School of Architecture at Toronto is in terrible disarray. This is going to be a killer. It could be a kind of *National Enquirer* type of piece.



"...the tabula rasa *neutral ground..."*

But the school at Toronto, what I will say about it is that I think that it's in terrible condition momentarily, but it could, just by virtue of the quality of the students and the availability of high quality staff and the minimum tenure that now exists, because we haven't given tenure for a long time, is in a position to spring into a terrific condition in a short period of time. It's very close to striking distance. So I have to say that I think that one of the major reforms we've done here is dismantling the core problem system in favour of a three-afternoon-a-week option studios and other apparently traditional pedagogical mechanisms, essentially because it allows a greater degree of accessibility by practitioners. Which is not to say that you go and get some guy who has no kind of academic interests in architecture, but rather you go and get people who are temperamentally teachers but that want to practice, and you allow them to do a studio a year. I might do one studio a year rather than working five afternoons all through the year. I might do one term, or George (Baird) or Barton (Myers) or Jack (Diamond) or any number of people, who you wouldn't say are the mainstay of the school on a day-to-day basis, nor should they be, but add a lot to the place. And so we can get Michael Wilford, or we can get people from New York to come and do a course on that kind of basis, where it probably would have meant immigrating and living in Toronto in order to stay with the school.



Final design for Mississauga City Hall.

We're saying that the school has got to have some vital dialectic between practitioners or a certain sort and between the core teaching staff. You can never settle into a completely academic core teaching staff, nor can you allow yourself to get into a position where you have Arthur Erickson ostensibly teaching a studio, who shows up once every two weeks for an afternoon. Something in between is what the object has to be.

TFC: At the beginning of your lecture last night you were discussing North American versus European notions of urban space. The Mississauga project transplants a piece of this notion of European positive urban space onto a suburban North American landscape with almost no concessions. Do you feel that this may remain an anomaly? Is there not a difference to the structures of the urban space?

Kirkland: Well, there are two questions there, really. One is the general discussion about North American versus European space, and basically what I was arguing in the talk is that I don't think there's such a thing as the North American city *per se*. Don't forget Europeans laid down the American grid. In so far as it is possible, I would argue that by the dialectical competition for land, buildings have taken on a much more familiar behavior and the cities that are more mature have more familiar European patterns, and the ones that are new tend to have what look like the more hybrid or deviant patterns. I think the idea of the city is that you cannot invent, anymore than you can decide that from now on you will talk a different language. You can't invent a new city. It's an impossibility and Milton Keynes and all those things prove it. So the greater question is whether or not Mississauga, which is what I would consider to be the most primitive urban condition, whether or not that building is a suitable measured response to that place at that point in time. Because if you consider Mississauga within the process that it will eventually become a city, and I'm not sure it will ever become very intense as a city, then one would say: Is the building sort of out of sync with that procedure? The building has a hundred year life and Mississauga is not going to be anyplace for the first fifty. Is that an appropriate response? And I think what we were trying to do, in fact, was to make a building that could both exist as what I call the 'dense-pack' Acropolis, which is sitting on a plinth, complete with a whole spectrum of activities in it, self-supporting, which acted in the suburban way in that people dropped into the building from all over. It had to be able to exist in that

"...competitions are something like democracy. It's the worst possible way to select architects, except all others."

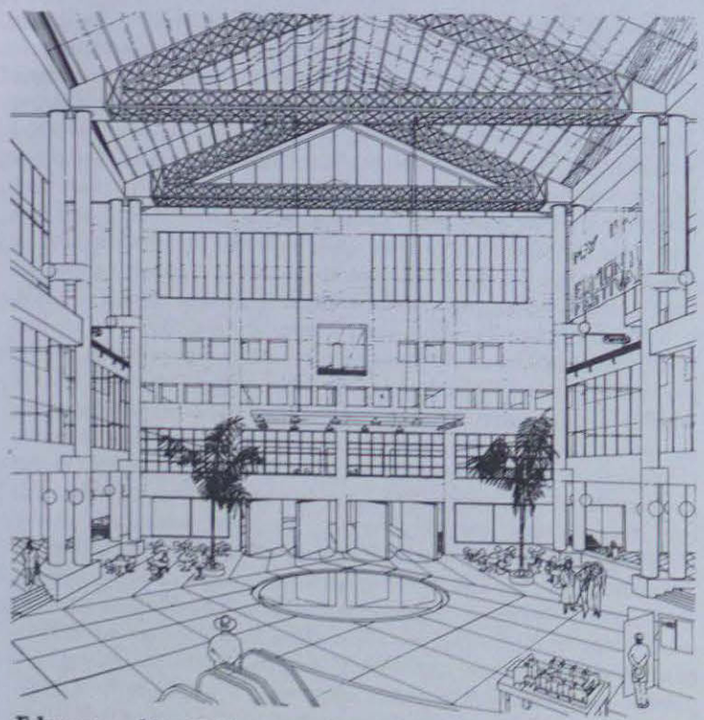
kinds of phenomena which would tend to mediate and moderate, as it always does. If you're building Mississauga in a suburb of Miami, that project wouldn't look like that, because it would be dealing with a whole other set of conditioning problems and traditions. The latin cultural things and also the climate would tend to skew the project in a different way. The worst danger always is that anything that's done which is influential will be imitated and what can one do about that, except to say don't do it. But that doesn't seem to have any effect.

TFC: Your practice seems to be extensively involved in competitions. How do you feel about this method of design?

Kirkland: That's an interesting subject. I just recently gave a CBC editorial on competitions. On one hand, it's easy for me to say, being relatively successful in competitions, that it's a good way to select architects. I'm not sure that five years from now, when I'm tired of doing competitions and I think I deserve to have direct commissions, that I'll be such a grand supporter of competitions, but my version of it is, in fact that competitions are something like democracy. It's the worst possible way to select architects, except for all others.

There are problems with competitions, theoretically, but we have so little experience with them in Canada, we don't even know what the problems are. Europeans don't seem to be worried and they've been doing it a lot longer than we have.

A country like France is having an international opera house competition, which means they see a public building as a cultural event, in which they want to advance or solicit ideas about what an opera house might be, and also advance their own architectural culture. The net benefit of that kind of activity far offsets the vagaries that have to do with other things, like technical competence of small firms, and all of that. Those things are remedied by having joint ventures. There are a number of ways of offsetting those problems having to do with what the submission requirements are, proposing that joint ventures might have to happen to satisfy the client to proceed. They're sometimes expensive and they sometimes take more time to do a building that way, and some kinds of buildings, particularly small ones, are probably not suitable for competitions because they have to do so much with internal spatial accomodations very particular to the user. But when you are dealing with public buildings, that have public space in them, for which normally there is no constituency, and the combination of offices can be conceived in one manner as *poché*, that is, you can make it like that subsequent to the competition, and the building is going to last for a hundred or two hundred years, and you're having a three month delay, it seems to me a fair price to pay.



Edmonton City Hall competition: The City Room.

I have no doubt whatsoever that we would not have gotten the Mississauga as a direct commission, nor if we had ever got it, would we have produced a building of that quality. So that for public buildings, particularly larger and more important ones, I think competition is the best vehicle. One could argue that a limited competition is better than an open one, because the people competing have a good probability of winning, you can give them some money to offset their expenses. But the trouble with limited competitions is who gets to play? I have some grave suspicions about how, for example, in the National Gallery competition the choices were made about who got to play.

Frankly, I think that after giving spots to the obligatory larger firms that either would do or were of suffient merit, having conceded the point that it's a good idea to have some younger firms involved, it was time for a national political distribution. So you'll notice there were not small firms from Toronto involved in the competition because they had already given out all the Toronto spots to the big firms. I find that it's a sad parochial country that behaves like that. Who's judging the National Gallery competition? What were the criteria? What were the alternatives? We're never going to see what was produced. We don't know what the basis for judging was and we don't even know who judged it. We certainly suspect that there was an insufficient, shall we say, informed opinion. And if the Gallery personnel judged the competition, I would say that is totally inappropriate because it's not very interesting what the acoustical or environmental conditions are for a particular collection in a *pochéd* piece of space. Basically what you are judging is the building as an urban design solution plus its public order, which is a matter of public concern, not just for the Gallery. So, I am discouraged by that. I certainly think that that is not a suitable remedy to the problem of the Washington Embassy. That's supposed to be the handout to the Washington Embassy.

TFC: It seems even that with a number of recent competitions people are taking stabs at what possibly a competition could be, what the guidelines should be and how it should be structured. The Mississauga competition has been both praised and criticised because of its rigidly structured and extensive guidelines. How did you feel about the way the competition was arranged?

Kirkland: Personally, I think the people who complained about the Mississauga competition guidelines complained early on. It was more obviously constraining than it was actually constraining. The guidelines were that you would build a minimum square of a recognizable proportion on the south side of the site. The guideline was that the building would face onto that square on the northern edge. The guideline was that the building would not cover more than twenty-five percent of the site. That one was a bit curious, but I suppose it had to do with trying to accumulate open space at grade. And there was a guideline that there be retail on the northern boundary. And all of those guidelines, if you sift the project down to that, that seems to be a minimum given, a minimum set of clues. I can't really imagine why anyone would much object to that. The fact of the matter is, if you've seen the results, anyone who saw the exhibit in Toronto, would realize that there were a hundred and fifty out of two hundred and fifty schemes of profoundly different qualities, all within the same guidelines. So, I

"...A building in the suburb...really is a kind of uninteresting de Chiricoesque enigmatic object sitting on a tabula rasa*..."*

condition which is both the short term and the immediate term future. And at the same time it had to be, it had to induce more familiar patterns around it potentially, which has got to do with the attitude of the facade, the attitude of the street in relation to other things, which are not as they would be if you were building in Belgium. But on the other hand, it is familiar in a certain way and does have certain common attitudes about building on the back street lines, about producing a front and back side, about trying to account for the line of the street with landscape elements where we couldn't do it with building instead. But it's still clear that the building still has to be able to exist in that kind of *tabula rasa* neutral ground, with the cactus buildings around it, for the foreseeable future and I think that I would argue that the building, whether it's successful or not, certainly is aimed at having it both ways. So, it's not everyone who looks at it to judge whether it's credible or not.

One thing I'm interested in is the suburbs, frankly. I don't think the're been very much good work done in the suburbs lately.

Something I'm interested in is taking the kind of understood phenomena of buildings and objects that we know from the city and applying them in different contexts in the suburbs. For example, if you go out and look at the image of any city, what we have now is what I call the *Ville Radieuse* paradox, apparently unrelated to each other or in spatial conception, sitting around the perimeter of every North American city, and then some disconnected low-rise stuff. But if you can imagine large pieces of space which have an iconic relation to major building pieces, and those are hemmed in and defined by the settlement of ground-related low-density housing that works in the way of producing spatial conglomerations in a direct association with the density of buildings, and using those smaller things that define an urban space. It seems to me there's a kind of looser but familiar kind of pattern that might emerge, which would be a very interesting one. You know if you were in a tower out there and actually dominated a piece of space like Versailles, and hemming into Versailles on hedgerows were low-density garden dwellings, that would be fabulous. But that's not what the suburb is. It's a datumlesss, aspatial phenomena lacking in orientation.

It really is a kind of uninteresting de Chiricoesque enigmatic object sitting on a *tabula rasa* because there's no idea to it. It's like landscape architecture. There's no idea in landscape architecture in North America which governs their activity. There's no history. It's a completely economic phenomenon, putting expedient buildings down. But I think there's nothing implicity about the pieces that are being put down, which disallows the possibility of much more interesting formulation in places like Mississauga or, indeed, the fringes of other cities. That's something somebody ought to work on.

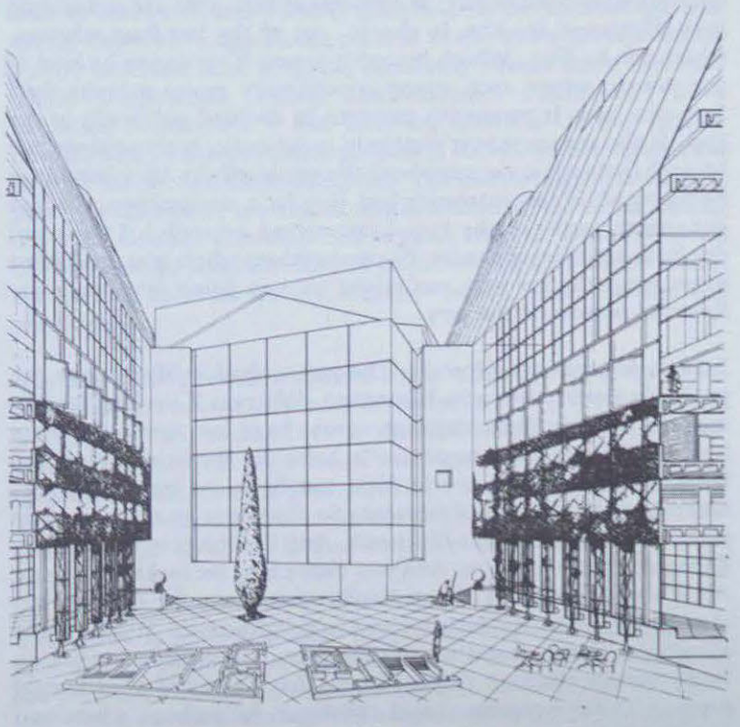
TFC: Your recent work, particularly the Mississauga City Hall, shows a strong influence of certain European architects, particularly Leon Krier and James Stirling. How do you relate that influence to practicing in Canada?

Kirkland: Well, I'm influenced by my environment. It depends what you perceive as your environment. If you accept my argument that there is the Western city and Western architecture — not being an expert on Oriental matters — I'm not sure that there's not a lot of commonality there, too, but I'm not prepared to make any assertions. But I am prepared to say that I can see North America consisting of very familiar building types that have had a somewhat different evolution but are very familiar in their origin. If you can take the villa, we have a continent of immigrants, who, by and large, were disenfranchised from land owning; immigrants from Europe who came and imitated patrician houses. And they built villas on the landscape and gradually, by force of economics or reducing possibility, those things became later compromised, and finally we're getting an anomaly like a semi-detached house in Toronto which tries to look like a villa, has no land, but the instinct is there. It's still behaving in that tradition, and its recognizable if you try to think back where it came from.

If you look at institutional buildings, if you look particularly at the nineteenth century ones, you can see the kind of residue, the then classical past in every one of those buildings. So that one thing I think that the period after Modernism is about is that like all other moments in architectural history where people look again for roots and origins, and that's what Neo-Classicism is always about, and that's where we are in a way. The book *Classicism Is Not A Style* has an arguably interesting position. It's Rykwertesque, it's looking back to what we're all coming from, and consequently I don't consider that Canadian or American architecture is coming from any different place than Belgian or Italian architecture. It's a question of having taken a certain evolutionary course and it's equally interesting for us to look back at the same origins that they look to. It so happens that a lot more people in New York and London and Milan are a lot more interested in theoretical matters than there are in Winnipeg, and so those tend to be people that you read, but there's nothing holy about scriptures being handed from any given place. It's just a question of where are people thinking and writing about such things?

TFC: So you don't think a new International Style is emerging?

Kirkland: I think that any time there is a radical Neo-Classical reaction, you could say there's a danger there becoming a new International Style. But I would argue that Mississauga is verging on regional style, very particular in its choice of parts and behavioural pieces, distinguishable from a lot of the European pieces in certain ways. There's a fascination with platonic Neo-Classical form, but on the other hand there's also an agrarian tradition. There's the particular problem of trying to build something in a place like Mississauga, where you're speculating about a future which isn't here yet and referring to a past which is no longer imminent. And so, I think that there's a danger in that, but on the other hand, it would be tempered by climate and regional traditions and other



Edmonton City Hall competition: The Courtyard.

think at the end of the day, I think that it is very unconvincing to say that the guidelines were a horrifying constraint on the project. I think the guidelines, in the end, the urbanistic ones were the ones that people tended to complain about. In addition to that, there was departmental information. I don't see how one could operate with less information than that. If you look at people who really know how to do competition briefs well, like the French, who have recently done one for La Defense and one for the Opera, which we have received, they are far, far more extensive and specific than George Baird's guidelines for Mississauga. But I think George did a terrific job.

TFC: Ultimately the jury has a great deal of influence on the direction a competition takes. How do you deal with this aspect? What contribution does the jury make?

Kirkland: Well, two things. First, I think it's a dreadful mistake to pander the jury, to do a scheme which you think they will like, because juries are funny animals. You are liable to get what you think of as your patriarch reacting, being embarrassed by your imitation of his work. Better not to try it. Some people did what I would consider pandering to Stirling, which was a burlesque of his work, which I think just devastated their possibilities. On the other hand, the flip side of that is don't enter competitions that don't have juries that you respect. So you could look at our stuff, or Barton Myer's stuff, or whoever was considered to have succeeded in that competition, and you could say, "Look at those projects. They have things that are familiar or sympathetic to Stirling," or Phyllis (Lambert), or whoever you wanted to name. The truth of the matter is, I know in our case, or in Barton's case, it's not because we were pandering to the jury. It's because it tends to be a project which has a sympathetic parallel to the work we normally do, anyway. Consequently, those are the competitions you should enter. You should choose competitions carefully.

It so happens with the Opera, in Paris, there's a horrifying jury, which, were it not for the fact of it being the Paris Opera, which is a kind of once-in-a-century throwing down of the gauntlet; you almost have to show up for a thing like that. It's like not showing up to World War Two, you know. I wouldn't do it, customarily, but we're tempted by the nature of the event. The jury is Mathias Ungers, Aymonino, Huet, Venturi, Hertzberger. This is horrifing — forget the schemes. It's going to be, probably, a brass knuckles fight. So, this is not a promising jury. This is the kind of jury that customarily one would steer away from. The thing will either be decided wholly politically, as a matter of fact, they are submitting it to Mitterand for him to choose, out of the last four schemes, which one he likes. Which probably means it's going to be kind of *pot pourri*, where each strong constituency group submits their favourite one. It means it's going to be decided politically in the end. It also means that it's unlikely to get built, because there can be such fantastic acrimony about the whole affair. All other things being equal, it's an extremely bad jury for a competition. It's also got twenty people on the jury; I just named a handful. I think you don't, as a matter of course, do competitions where you don't have some sympathy for who you might view as being principally influential person on the jury.

I think, for example, if we had the jury we had in Mississauga, we probably would have won Edmonton. Whereas if we had the Edmonton jury on Mississauga, we would have lost again. So, it's a lesson. Ed Jones did a wonderful scheme for the Prime Minister's house in Dublin, and it was Aldo van Eyck, on his high horse, defending the Modern Movement. So there was no chance, right away. For him, that was his lesson. And I think that the jury for Edmonton was my lesson. And you didn't find me looking at doing the Calgary City Hall, immediately after that, for exactly that reason. It took me a year to recover from Edmonton. Stirling came along; that was a promising opportunity. I normally wouldn't do Paris, but it's the Paris Opera House; that's a sort of phenomenal event. I think everyone should think carefully about where you spend your time.

TFC: What would you see as an ideal way to form a jury for a competition in Canada? There were some complaints about why James Stirling was on the jury, about why it was international?

Kirkland: Originally, the jury consisted of James Stirling, Phyllis Lambert, and Barton Myers, and the OAA complained that this jury was not good because it was only one view of architecture. Well, I was waiting with bated breath to hear the OAA explain what view of architecture that was. Apparently, the view of architecture they had in mind was one of people who think and talk about architecture. So, I don't really get it; I don't really understand why one would have any complaints about the jury, with Jerome Markson substituting for Barton (Myers) in the final formulation.

How you would form a jury, this again is a question of... what you have to do is you have to talk to respectable opinion about who would be appropriate to have on the jury, respectable local opinion. In most cases, people who sponsor competitions don't know much about architecture, or at least the ones who have decided to have one, so they have to rely on someone to advise them. A good professional advisor is a good start. A good professional advisor will concoct a jury that has enough coherence and conviviality to it that it will be workable. It's probably a good idea also to consult with others. It's probably a good idea to get some combination of respectable local opinion and someone brought in from outside with a fresh view, who has no political axe to grind.

TFC: There were some complaints here last fall about the OAQ *Prix d'Excellence* because it was all just local people on the jury. There were some complaints that a lot of projects got ignored because of that. They would have liked to have some people from the outside.

Kirkland: I think there's a whole area of discussion in the aftermath. Some of my friends were doing National Gallery or Museum of Man projects, so they weren't really interested in joining the war about how architects are selected. They might now be ready to join the discussion. It's really time to do something about that. The RAIC guidelines for architect selection are appropriate for run-of-the-mill, conventional commissions of relatively small- or medium-sized building. It is prudent for buildings like that, where there are scores of them, hundreds of them done, to have a procedure like they're suggesting.

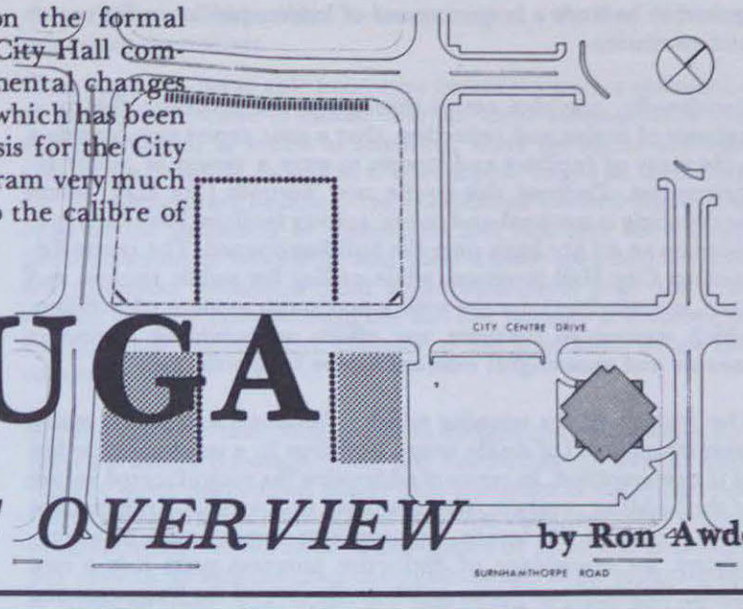
TFC: The selection procedure that they are proposing...

Kirkland: Yes, where there's a list of people and you bring them in and they make proposals and you sort of gradually select someone. For major public buildings, that's simply not acceptable. I think there ought to be some discussion, both at the municipal level and the federal level, on how competitions are designed, in terms of jury and content. We ought to do some real serious work on that. The RAIC guideline has almost nothing to say about that because they are preferring the 'old boy' selection procedure. Macy (Dubois) is a well-intended person, but after all, he is acting on behalf of the RAIC.

TFC: We just have one last question. All architects seem to have a hero. Who would be your hero?

Kirkland: I didn't talk about this last night, but this is a thing which I will fastidiously resist, either naming a hero or a style. The trouble with the Modern Movement was that it, in fact, postulated heroes who were, in some ways, true geniuses, individually. People who you were always waiting for the other shoe to drop, because they were doing mysterious things. Now, when you hear all the discussion about Post-Modernism, Contextualism, Primitivism, and every other -ism, one is inclined to imagine that there is some new, imminent alchemy which will bail architecture out. That's the trouble, that's not the solution. And just as I'm not prepared to cite any new alchemy, I'm not prepared to cite any new messiahs.

While many reviews and articles have concentrated on the formal characteristics of the winning schemes in the Mississauga City Hall competition, or have examined the implications of the fundamental changes in the nature of suburban planning, one important aspect which has been more or less ignored by reviewers is the programmatic basis for the City Hall competition. The richness and complexity of the program very much lent itself to the calling of a a national competition and to the calibre of the winning entries.



MISSISSAUGA

A PROGRAMMATIC OVERVIEW

by Ron Awde

Based on the Secondary City Plan prepared for Mississauga in 1979, George Baird and Associates worked with the city ocuncil to recreate and re-define the city hall as a community centre. The program which they jointly proposed was designed to inspire reflection and creativity by the competition entrants. In this case, if we look for the reasons for fundamental changes in modern architecture, we can look beyond the academic and stylistic changes and assess, as well, the changes in the perceptions of the public toward civic structure as reflected in the program content.

Urbanity is predicated on the notion of a formalized civic structure, both social and physical. One of the major needs of a community is the creation of a civic centre. Beyond the policies and politicians there is an acquired yearning for the corporeal presence of the civic building. While much of the actual workings of a government now are presented by the electronic media, it is still the basic nature of people to congregate for civic functions. In bedroom communities such as Mississauga, however, years may pass before the population perceives the necessity of a City Hall. Many of the commuting residents still feel an affinity for the Toronto City Hall as the seat of power of the Metropolitan Toronto government. It is a daring group of local municipal politicians who, in difficult economic times and facing an election, will propose the spending of thirty-five to forty million dollars of public money. However cloaked in practical reasons, it remains that Mississauga is to get a monument to the growth of the suburban community and its government.

In the most practical terms, a large community requires a sizeable bureaucracy to control taxation, licensing, and planning. Mississauga has shared with the other boroughs of Toronto the astounding suburban growth of the past fifteen years. The Mississauga government has simply outgrown its present quarters and is now leasing additional office space in the area for some departments. Over a period of a decade or two, this becomes an extremely expensive proposition. Accepting the fact, as we have in North America, of larger civic bureaucracies, it only makes sense that a city would want to be its own landlord in expanding facilities.

Beyond this, however, are the more poetic notions of a need for a City Hall. For office space or government chambers more likely to be seen on videotape than in person by the vast majority of citizens, a large office building would have sufficed. The Mississauga decision to carefully develop a richer program and hold a national competition is indicative of a fundamental change in what constitutes a City Hall. Within the Metropolitan Toronto area the city halls which have been built since 1960, starting with the new Toronto City Hall by Viljo Rewel, display an increasing internalization and preoccupation with creating an external singe-image package. In programmatic terms, except for a few obligatory gestures in Council Chambers and lobbies, the vast majority of these city halls are simply office space. The most depressing local example for comparison is the North York Civic Centre, which is engulfed in its glass-shed remoteness that a sign over the door is required to announce the Main Entrance. In terms of City Halls, it represents the low ebb. Another recent example, Moriyama's Scarborough Civic Centre is a bold technological package, crisp and cool and only somewhat more accessible as a public building.

The government of Mississauga, embarking on the development of a program, could not help but be aware of the general alienation of the public in civic affairs as represented by other local City Hall buildings. Therefore, as stated in the program introduction, "A foremost requirement of City Council for the City Hall is the accommodation and promotion of public accessibility and participation in the events of municipal government."

This statement would be so much window dressing if not followed up by the program of a building with more than the usual attention to entrances and viewing galleries. In the Mississauga program, however, a significant portion of the space is required for public activities. The program essentially breaks down into four major components: Public Areas/Council Chambers, Public Facilities, Departments, and Building Services. Of the approximately 37,500 square metres proposed, 25,000 square metres was directly for the first three categories. The public related areas comprised 8,520 square metres, or about a third of the total. Besides the usual Council Chamber and support areas or the main lobby, the Mississauga program detailed requirements for a conservatory, art gallery, business library, daycare centre, fitness centre and retail areas.

It is clear from this that a decided break is being made from the introspective nature of city halls of recent memory. Part of this is practical as well, in that the sparseness of density and the need for revenue supports the inclusion of retail spaces, but in combination with the stated intent for promotion of pedestrian movement in the area, it provides a perfect opportunity to create a ground level screen of activity where in most city halls this is definitely not the case.

The inclusion of such a large proportion of public participation facilities, for either active or passive activities, is carried through in the program for outdoor areas. In addition to the major hard surface plaza, an open air stage, an amphitheatre for 300 people and a reflecting pool, which could be used for winter skating, were re-

Layout: Hal Ingberg

quired to balance a large amount of landscaped areas for repose and recreation.

Continually, one idea comes through in the program; that is, a balance of action and reflection, that a civic centre can provide a wide array of facilities and images to serve a variety of public requirements. Contrast this to the new Toronto City Hall, where landscaping is minimal and public activity facilities have been provided on an *ad hoc* basis since the building opened. The recent Edmonton City Hall program, while calling for public squares and such, overwhelmed the site with a mammoth amount of building, which seemed to consume any efforts at providing distinctive useable and meaningful external spaces for public use.

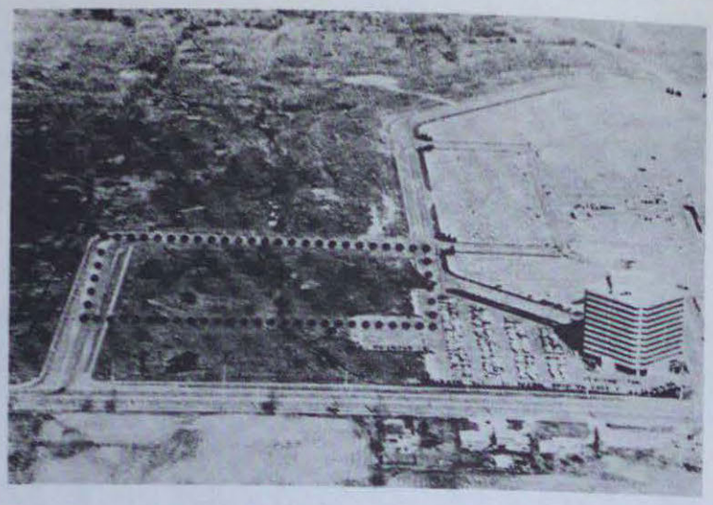
The authors of the winning scheme, Kirkland and Jones, stated their disapproval of single image buildings in a subsequent review of the competition. In terms of addressing the multi-faceted nature of the building program, they managed to continually respond not only to content but intent. By proposing a microcosm of a community, an assemblage of distinctive program parts into a new whole, Kirkland and Jones struck at the core of the fragmentation of intent and image in the program. In terms of response to the program, the awards jury was unanimous that the winning entry was "...the clear winner, superior by a significant margin to any other entry. The jurors were impressed by the fact that this submission so positively responded to the conditions of the program, in the ordering of its internal elements as well as in its positive, if simple, means of creating a strong relationship between the City Hall building itself and the Civic Square to the south."

The key to the winning scheme was the resolution of the primary major forms, the purity of the singular volume areas and, from initial appearances, an almost casual disregard for the supporting areas, although the planning displays a complex system of rituals of movement, internal and external views, and the like evidencing a great deal of thought in how a building once again might inform by its logic of arrangement of services as much as through the exterior form.

Many of the other 246 entrants' submissions were pre-occupied if not obsessed with the external image package they were proposing, at the expense of any system of coherent or rich planning. In the same way that the program represents a fragmentation of the image of the building, the submissions as a body are indicative of the dilemma in the field of Canadian architecture and the signficant differences in coming to terms with a very highly defined program.

Two of the most interesting criteria for evaluating the entries were the twenty-five percent building footprint on the site and the forty percent frontage for at least three storeys on the north facade. The latter requirement reflects the intent of the Secondary City plan, of promoting infill around the existing Square One Shoping Mall and turning away from the existing radial road system in favour of an orthogonal grid. This is predicated on the idea of dense street scale buildings as being 'urban forms'. The footprint requirement in this light seemed to be a direct contradiction since the City Hall site itself would be scarcely inhabited by the building. The program stated that buildings to the east and west would give the edge to the civic square, but for many of the applicants the sense of enclosure of this special area became a principal concern. Although the resolution by wrapping the building around the perimeter of the site was difficult, the majority of submissions used the arcade as a form of mediating zones of activity in the square and to spread the building out as much as possible.

Submissions which attempted to wrap the square with the building tended to end up with sprawling expanses of low roof areas and a loss of building height. While not a stated requirement for the submission, the program did state that "City Hall will be the tallest building in the Square..." Occupied space could go up to twelve storeys in height with unoccupied areas going higher. It is evident that some sort of significant massing was expected to achieve this



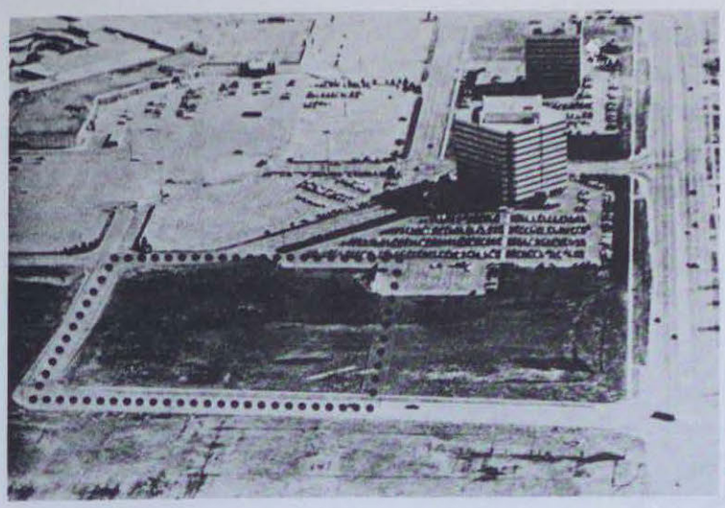
City Centre: View of the competition site looking north.

height which required a sacrifice of building area on the ground floor. As well, with building height allowances to the north and east of twelve storeys, a low rise solution would stand every chance of being overwhelmed visually by buildings on these sites. While some entrants, like the winning scheme, used the office portion of the building to achieve the maximum height, there were a relatively large number of entries which used a single slab extending across the site to create a more substantial 'set piece' wall toward Burnamthorpe.

One of the most interesting comparisons related to the massing was in the general distribution of the building at the north end of the site. In terms of balance, entrants either had a central major element with relatively symetrical massing, or the building shifted to one corner, most often the north-east, relating to the Square One Mall. Programmatically, the only key to the solution, such as that chosen by Kirkland and Jones, was a respect for the north-east intersection, which would, with its relatively low rise density, be in shade from tall buildings on the city hall site for much of the day unless such tall parts were kept to the north-west corner.

As well as the general distribution of the City Hall on the site and suggestions within the program for the general massing, the internal building program clearly outlined the functional intent with suggestions for the poetic intent for each principal area. These included the lobby which as large volume space was proposed as the 'indoor' equivalent to the Civic Square, with space for assembly, exhibitions and recreation. The conservatory was noted as being a 'garden' to the lobby, a place for repose as well as a showcase for the Parks and Recreation department. The Council Chamber, perhaps the most important elemental focus in the majority of submissions was described as the "symbolic and active centre of municipal politics". Of the three, the last suggested the most extraordinary exterior expression as a mediator or continuum of the long distance, immediate and internal views.

In evaluating the general program criteria, as well as simple stylistics, there were three major categories which presented themselves: the single image mass, the multiple image complex and the anti-image. The first category had by far the greatest number of examples which basically broke down into two stylistic categories. Most reflected (almost literally) the still current preoccupation with the sculptural massing of the building as a long distance viewing object, in much the same way as one of hundreds of new office buildings display ways of angling mirrored glass or as singular buildings such as Erickson's new Roy Thompson Hall in Toronto attempt to redefine the form of all known building types. These 'objects' immediately strike the viewer as totally contradictory to the program requirement of accessibility of the building on either a physical or mental level.



City Centre: View of the competition site looking east.

The other category, while referential in a broader sense to the historical building types or classicist compositions, have a coldness and remoteness in the comprehensibiltiy and unity of their composition. Many of these entries seemed to rely heavily on the massing approach used by Graves in his Portland scheme, with overlays of the rationalist sensibilities of Rossi or the Kriers. While visually these entries were often more competent in terms of facades than the winning scheme, there is no struggling evident in this work. One is struck with the idea that the architectural firms who did them have thrown aside their Miesian design ethics and adopted a new formalist composition system without expending much time or thought. In comparison with the single image sculpture buildings, many of the former buildings display more sense of struggling and energy than these clever re-interpretations of the contemporary work.

Most depressing of all of these single image entries were the office/hotel blocks. There is a deadly earnestness and absolute lack of humour or sensitivity in these schemes. There is no doubt that functionally and technically they are buildable within the established budget. They say absolutely nothing about the intent of the symbolic nature of the building and respond only to the dry mechanics of the program. Many such submissions were prepared by the largest 'establishment' architectural firms in the country. The interior atrium/lobby/conservatory has lost the freshness of interpretation in this work, having become merely an extension of an idea being used in every other of their major buildings under construction.

The response to the outdoor spaces in these buildings further reflects the dispassionate nature. Empty plazas, fringes of planting and a free-floating collection of objects with no seeming relationship to each other, the building or the surrounding fabric in the future is evident. These entries for the most part seemed preoccupied with the requirement for a "coherent and identifiable image" at the expense of all other requirements.

The most fascinating category contained those entries which interpreted the program as a Gestalt exercise whereby the whole is disassembled and the parts re-assembled into a richer, more meaningful whole. In the same way that the authors of the program would have us believe in the natural inclusion of conservatories, daycare centres and fitness complexes to create a richer civic centre, these compositions assume that the viewer and user are competent enough to comprehend the layering of multiple images.

In the winning entry, this decomposition and recomposition is masterfully executed not only in terms of physical elements but in the sophistication of derivation. The academic references are never quite allowed to overpower the distinctive vernacular allusions or the almost idiosyncratic re-interpretation of the historical references themselves.

With respect to being able to capture the contemporary philosophy of architecture, there is indeed only one clear winning entry and this determines, as much as anything, what the social attitudes toward the building, as well as to the content, might be. In calling for a contemporary building, the Mississauga Council placed the onus on the architects to understand and interpret the current preoccupations of the public and their stylistic mentors. That so few Canadian architects could shake themselves from the continuum of their work through the last two decades is evidence of the generally introspective attitude of the profession across the country.

Beyond the two basic differences in categorization of single and multiple image buildings, there is a third category, which, while visually quite distincitive, shares characteristics of the other two. Only several entries truly fitted into this category. The evident preoccupation was not with contemporary or historicist buildings, but more to do with the graphic fragmentation of the program and of building itself. The results are unresolved graphic images, extremes of linear abstractions. There is so little corporeal presence to the buildings in these proposals that they eliminated themselves as possible or desirable alternatives. They have, in general, a similarity with Mies Van der Rohe's Opera Hall, a graphic collage which anticipates, but does not practically propose a futurist solution. In the same way that the Opera Hall anticipated the advent of electronic music, the new wave city hall schemes seem to herald the disintegration of civic government structure or of buildings as civic theatre. Unfortunately, while there is a freshness of approach, these schemes are antithetical to the richness suggested in the program. They are an extension of the starkness of the prismatic glass or stone sculptures of the single image buildings.

By way of comparison, the 'old guard' architects with their consummate respect for practicality and the massing of objects seemed to throw away the opportunities for extension. The classicist, historicist entries, while reflecting some international movement toward making more approachable and appreciated structure, still did not demonstrate that they could break the rules significantly enough to give anything but someone else's aesthetic. Much of the work submitted to the competition, then, seemed to suffer from politeness and excess restraint. There is no sense of exploitation of a building program. Rather, it seemed that it was accepted as a necessary evil. The hundreds of questions by competition entrants were obsessed with the precise clarification of each program point, indicating a definite lack of faith in the act of interpretation by the architects themselves. This attitude was present in many of the schemes, the safety in proposing what has worked in the recent past, simply adjusted to hold the City Hall functions. Contrasted to the playfulness and in some respects the clumsiness of the winning scheme or even the anti-image proposals, there was a demonstration of competence on the most mundane level.

The competition, which drew 246 entries from all across Canada was to represent the calibre of our national architecture. That one of these entries, developed by a team headed by an American and a British architect was considered superlative in its response to the program suggests that the Canadian architectural community should re-evaluate how such documents can be more creatively and richly exploited.

Note

We can look forward to the publication sometime in early 1984, of the Mississauga City Hall competition results in a book from Rizzoli of New York. In the tradition of the Humana Competition in Louisville, the book wil include a look at each one of the competition entries with jury comments.

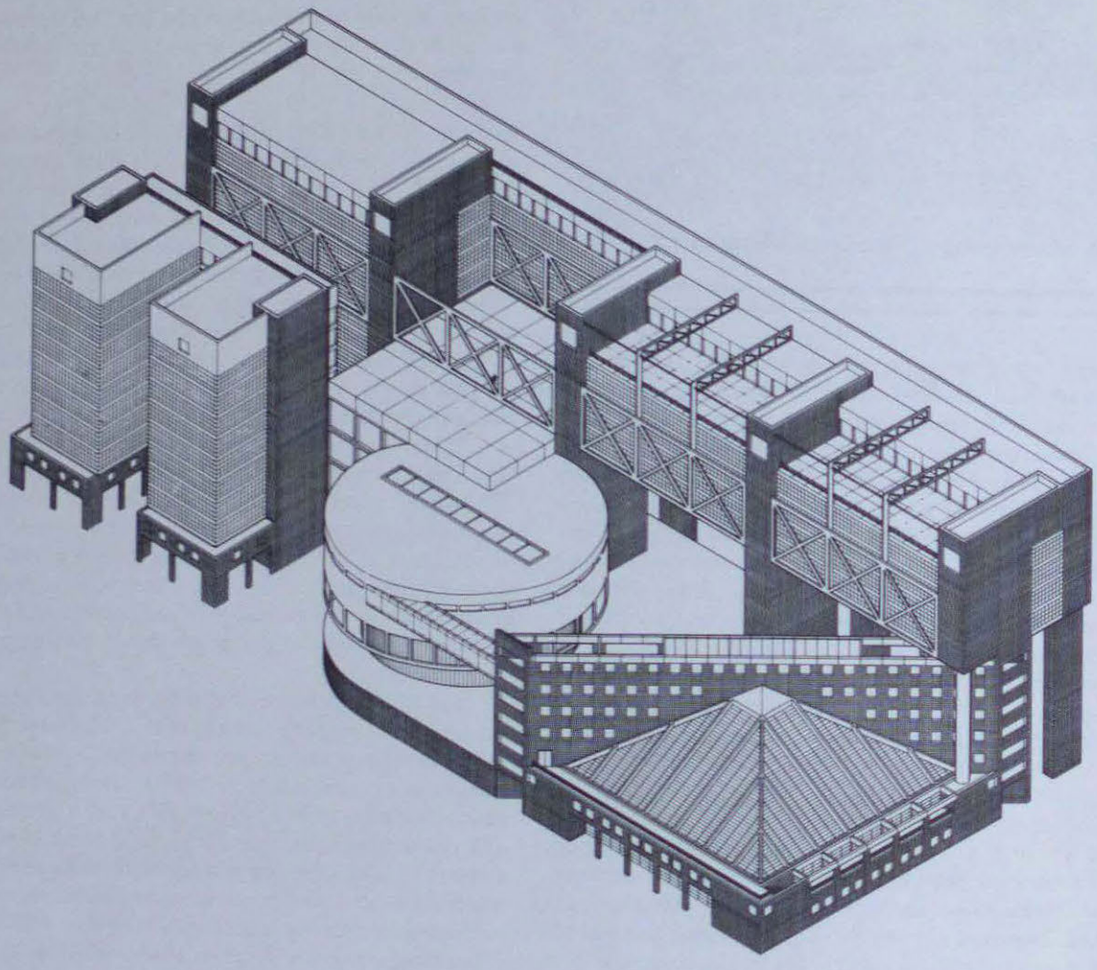
Ron Awde is a student at the University of Waterloo and is currently in the employ of Phillip Carter.

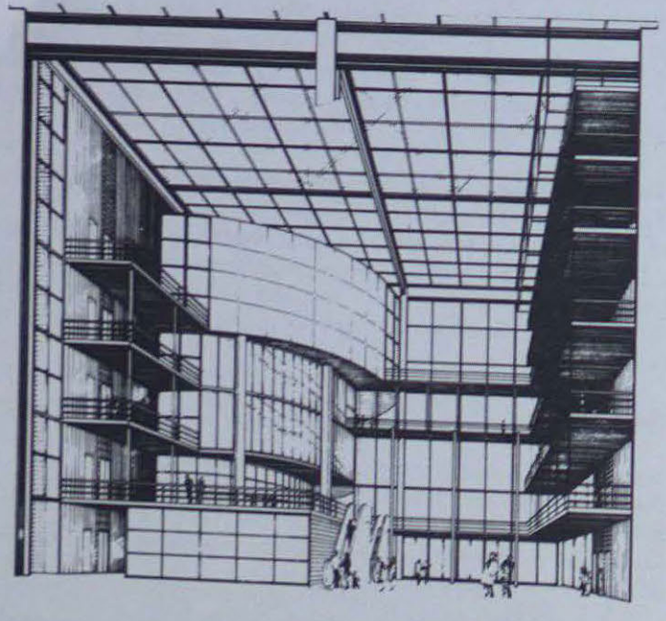
Photographs and drawings: *Mississauga City Hall Conditions and Program Manual*

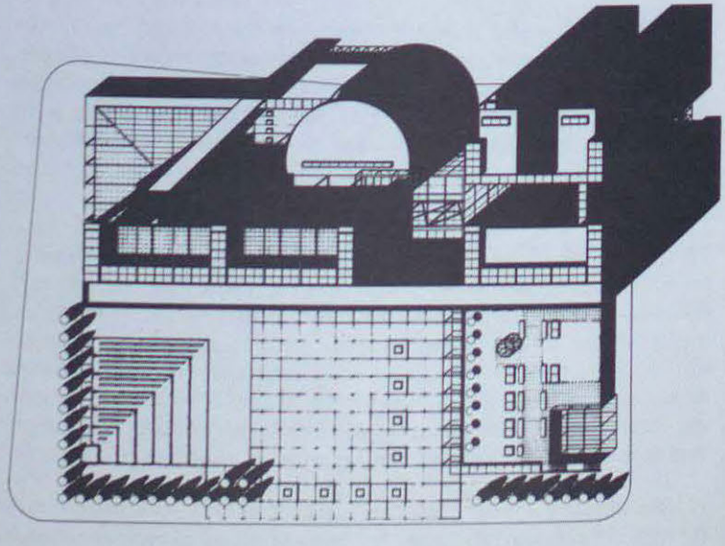
Mississauga City Hall
Mississauga, Ontario

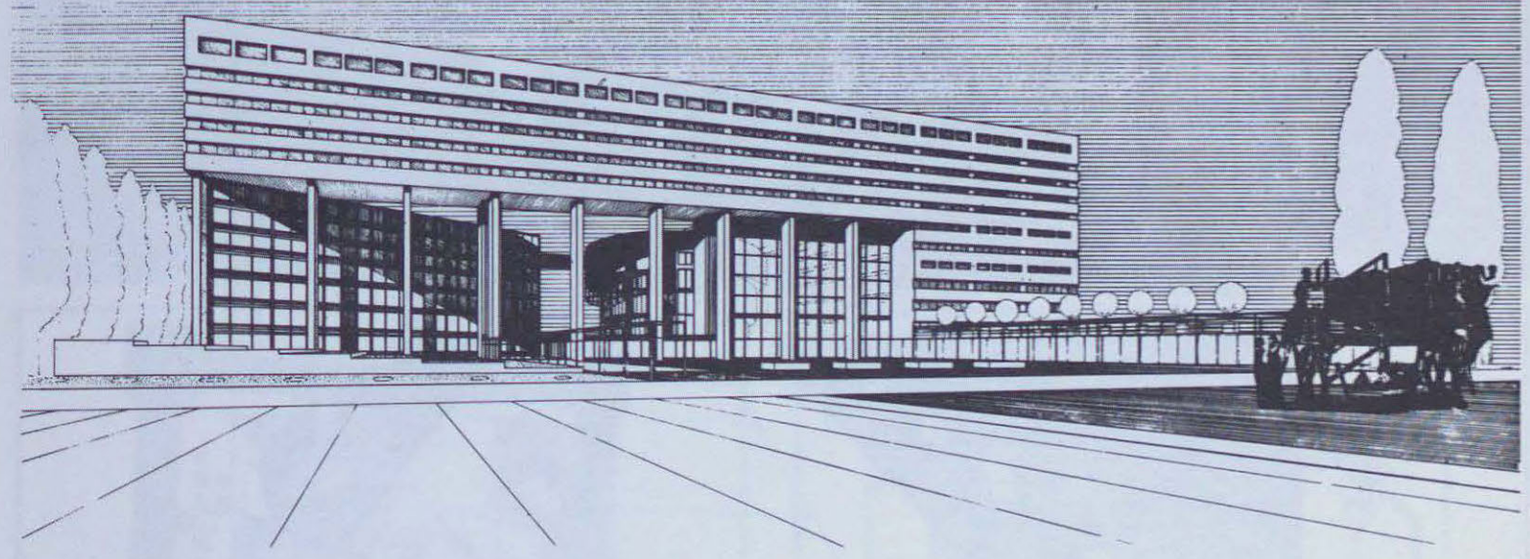
Michael Fieldman
Kenneth Frampton
Brigitte de Cosmi
Jay Johnsons
Miles Cigolte

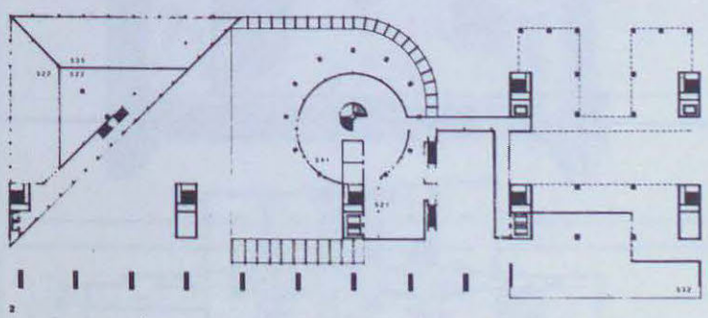
Bowbrow and Fieldman, Architects, Montreal



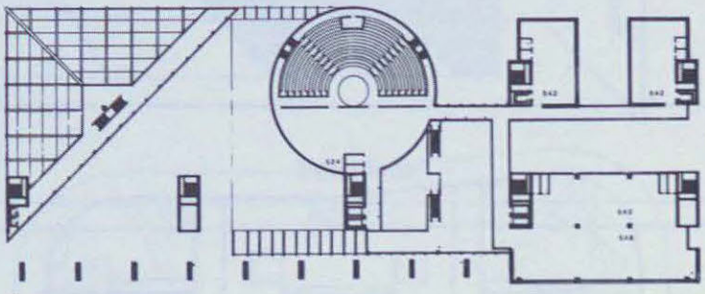




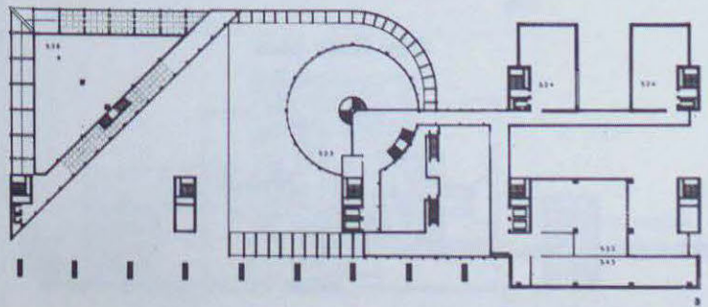




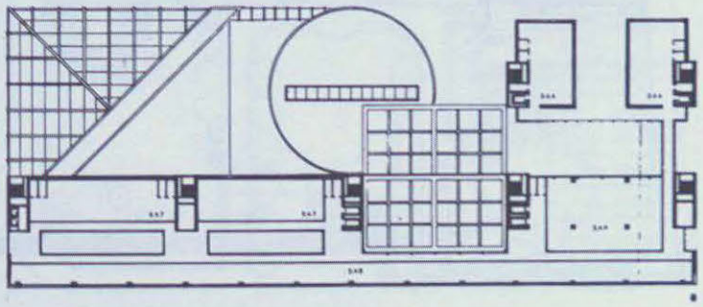
Second floor plan



Fifth floor plan



Third floor plan

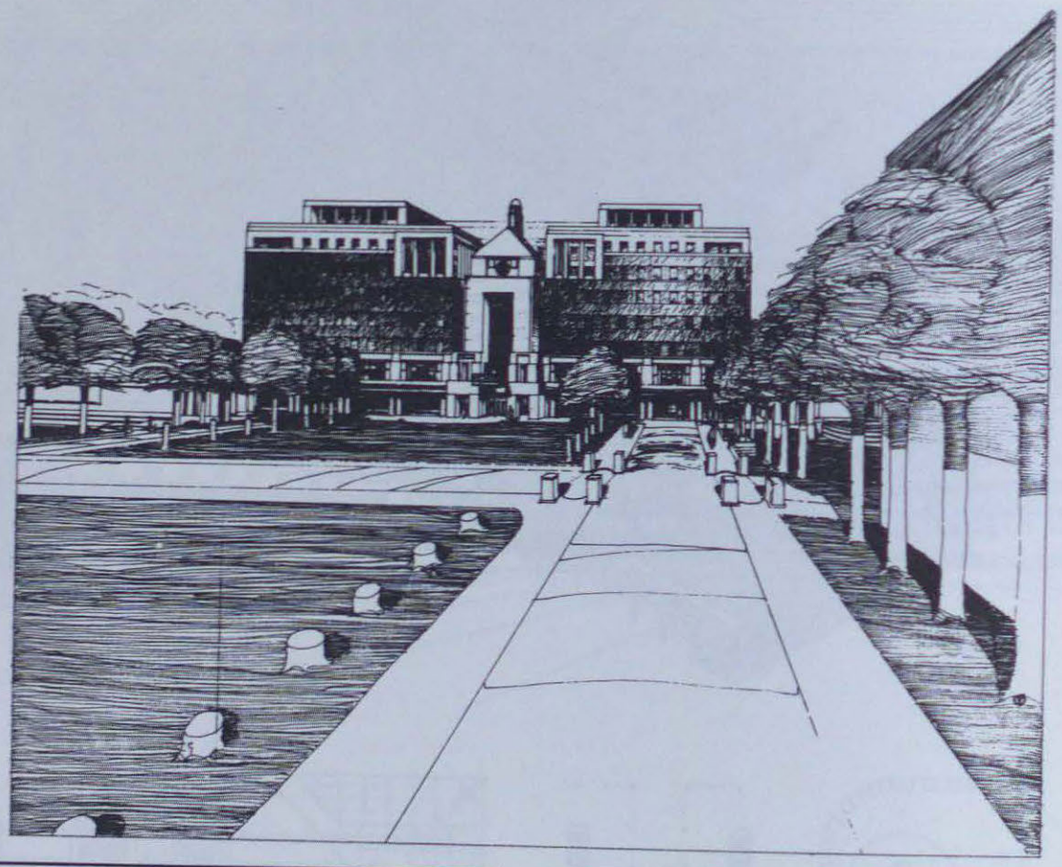


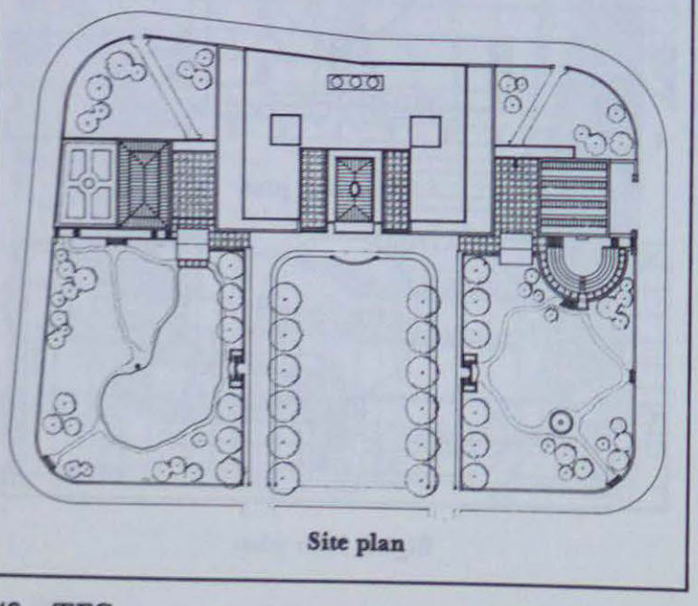
Eighth floor plan

Mississauga City Hall
Mississauga, Ontario

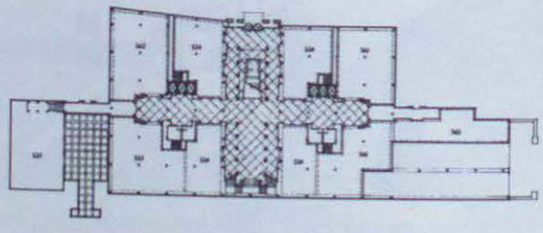
Peter Rose
Ronald Keays
W. Mark Pimlott
Randy Cohen
Tom Bish
Maria Drummond
Hugh Morgan
Carlo Molino

Peter Rose, Architect, Montreal

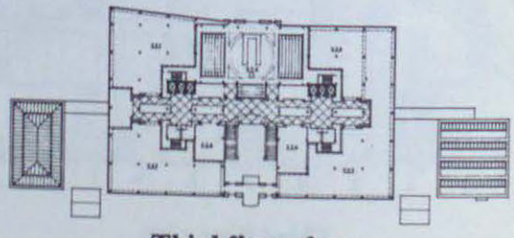




Site plan



First floor plan

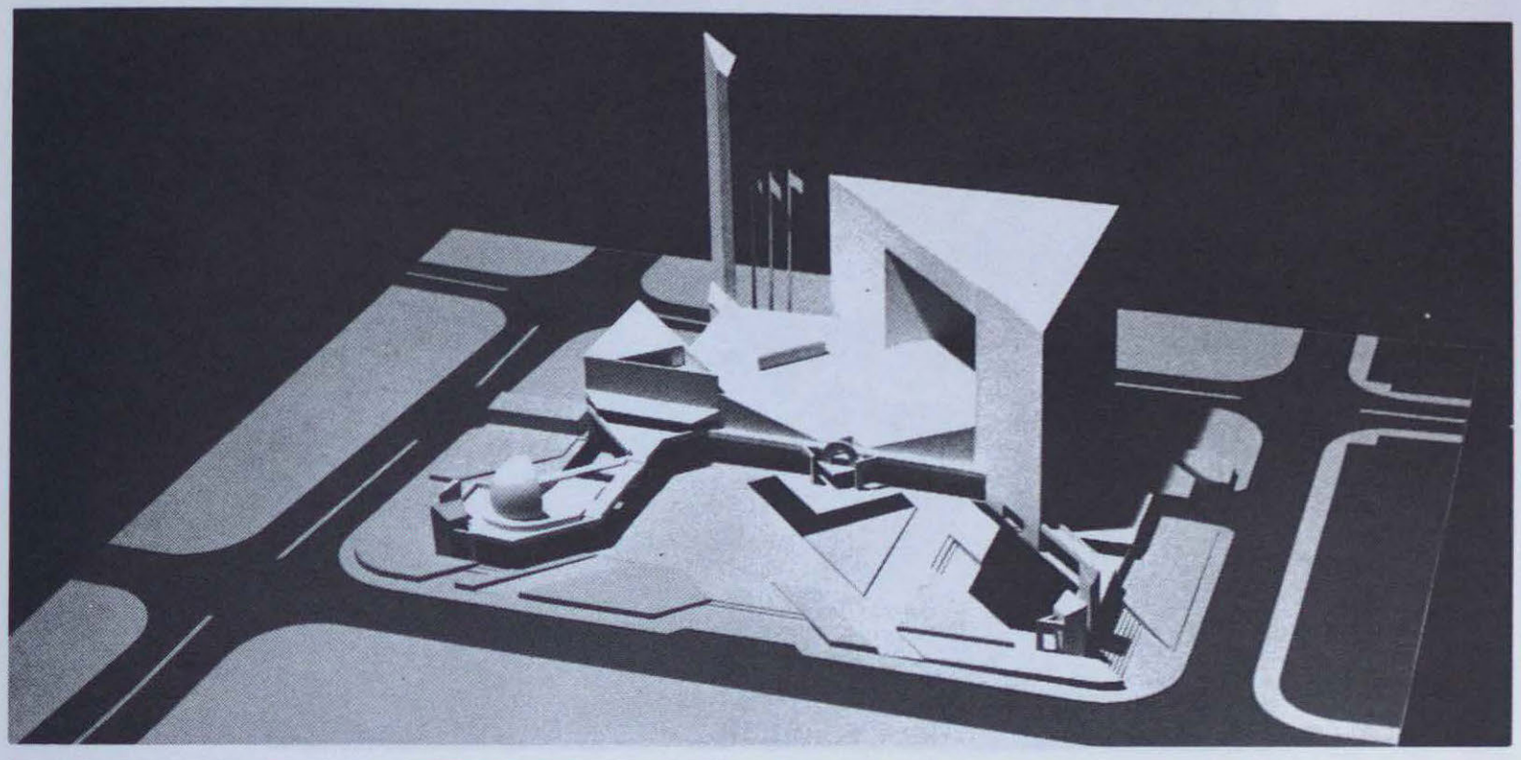


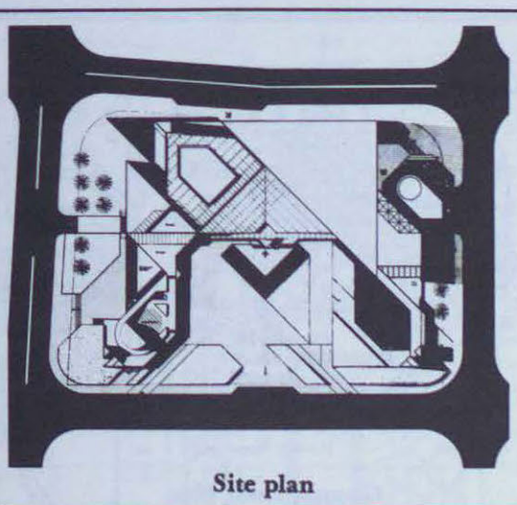
Third floor plan

Mississauga City Hall
Mississauga, Ontario

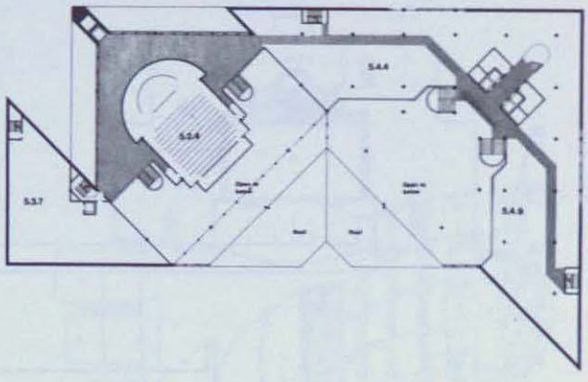
Stahl and Nicolaidis, Architects, Montreal

Masaharu Fukushima, Chief designer
Costas Nicolaidis
Nicholas Stahl
Alan Orton
Ann Lawson
Glen Fincham

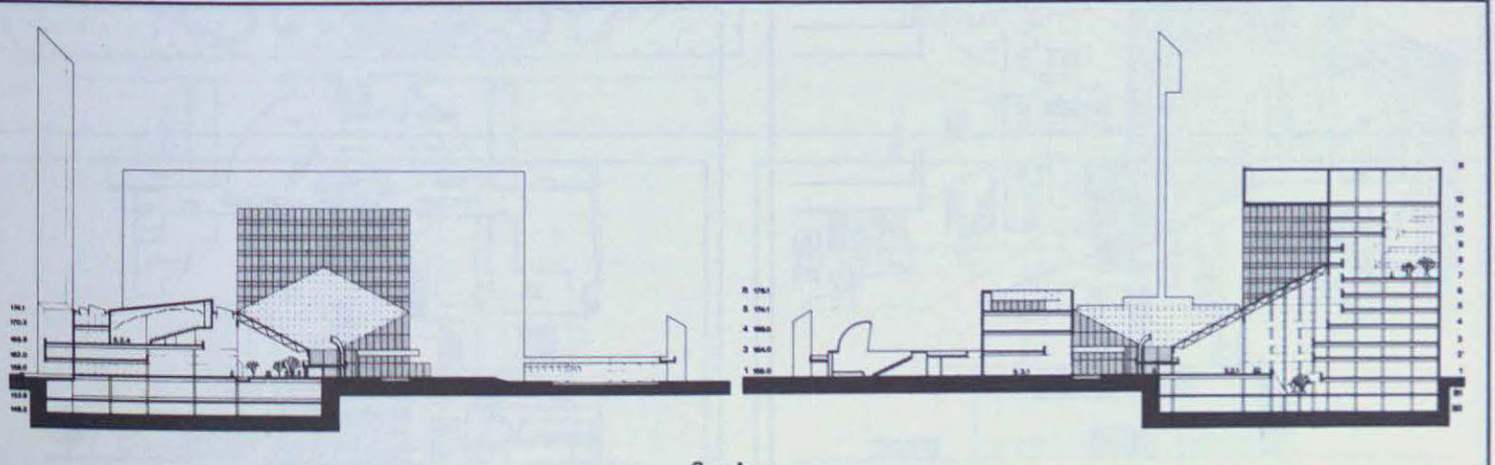




Site plan



Level four

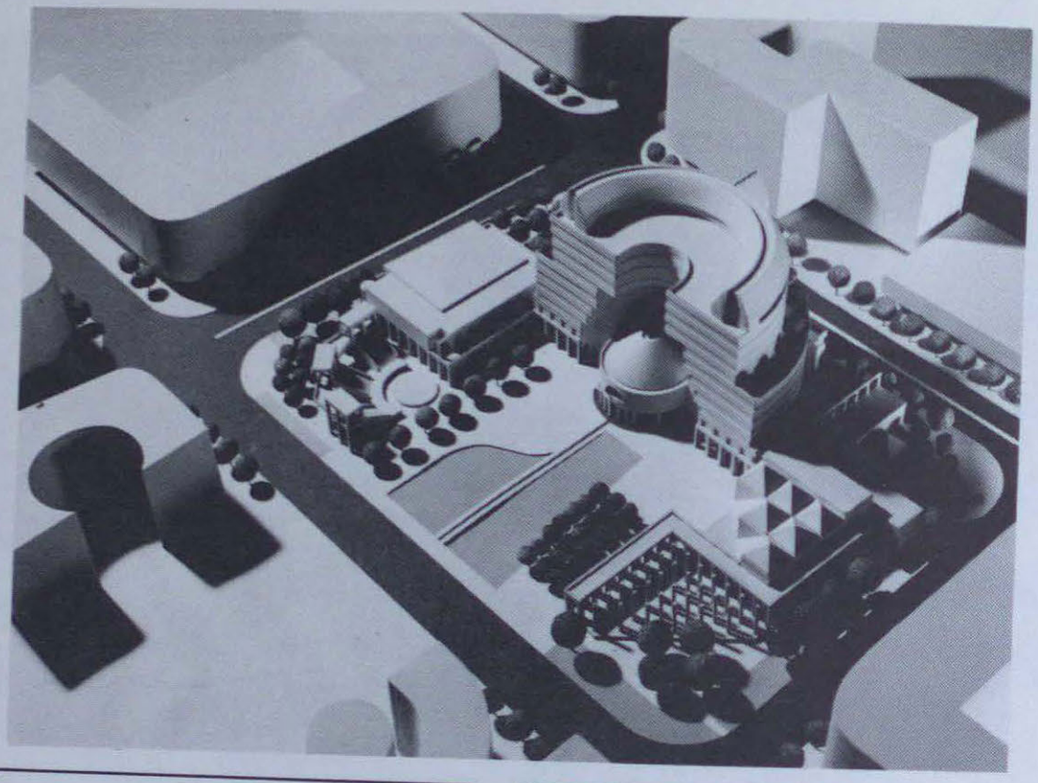


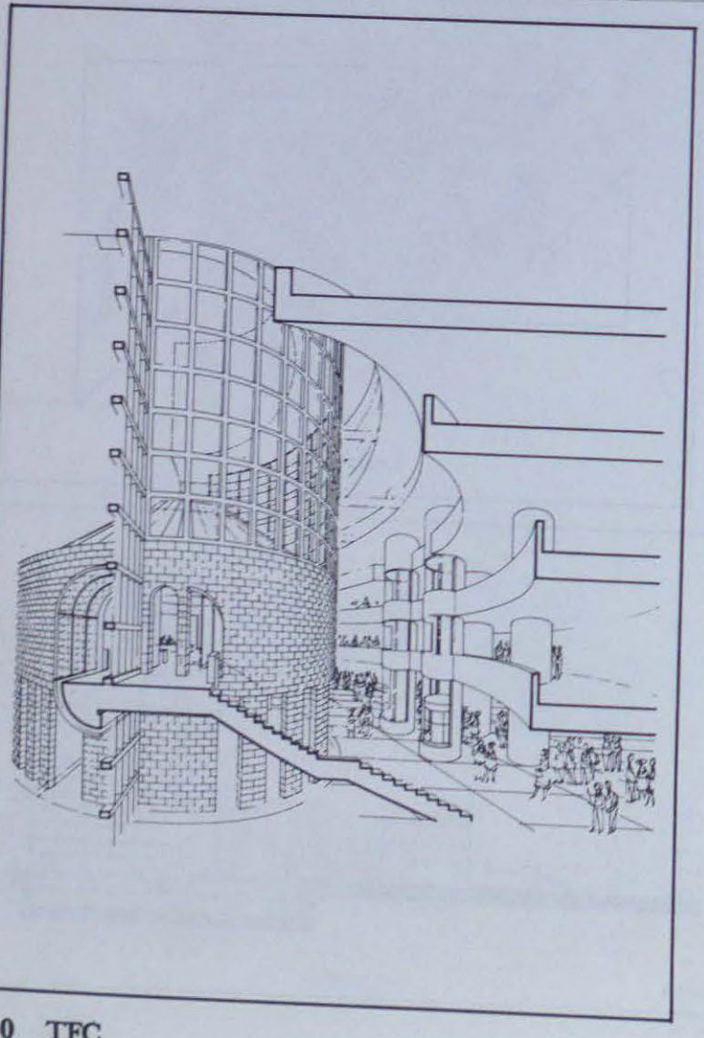
Sections

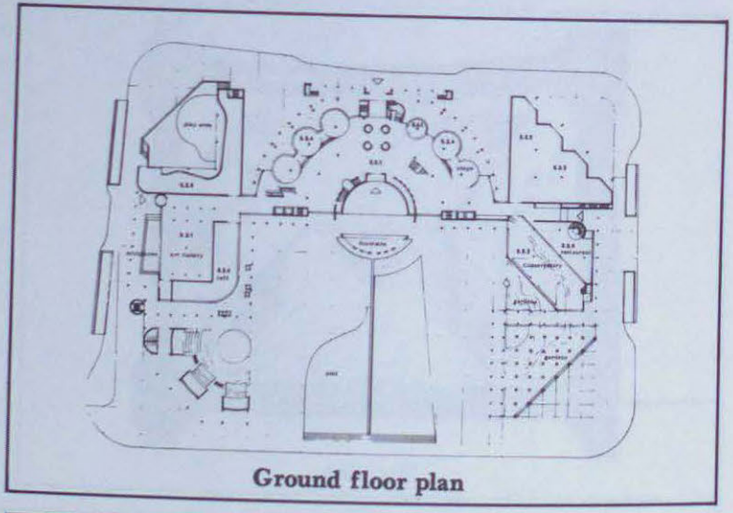
Mississauga City Hall
Mississauga, Ontario

Victor Prus
Maria Prus

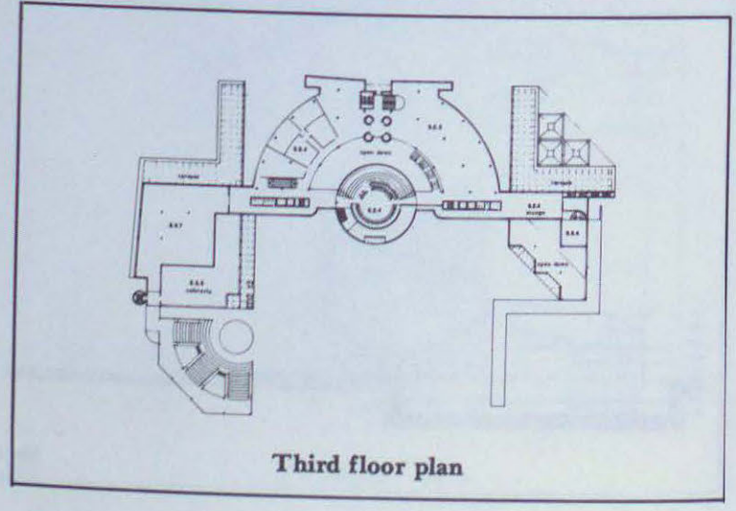
Victor Prus & Associés, Montreal







Ground floor plan

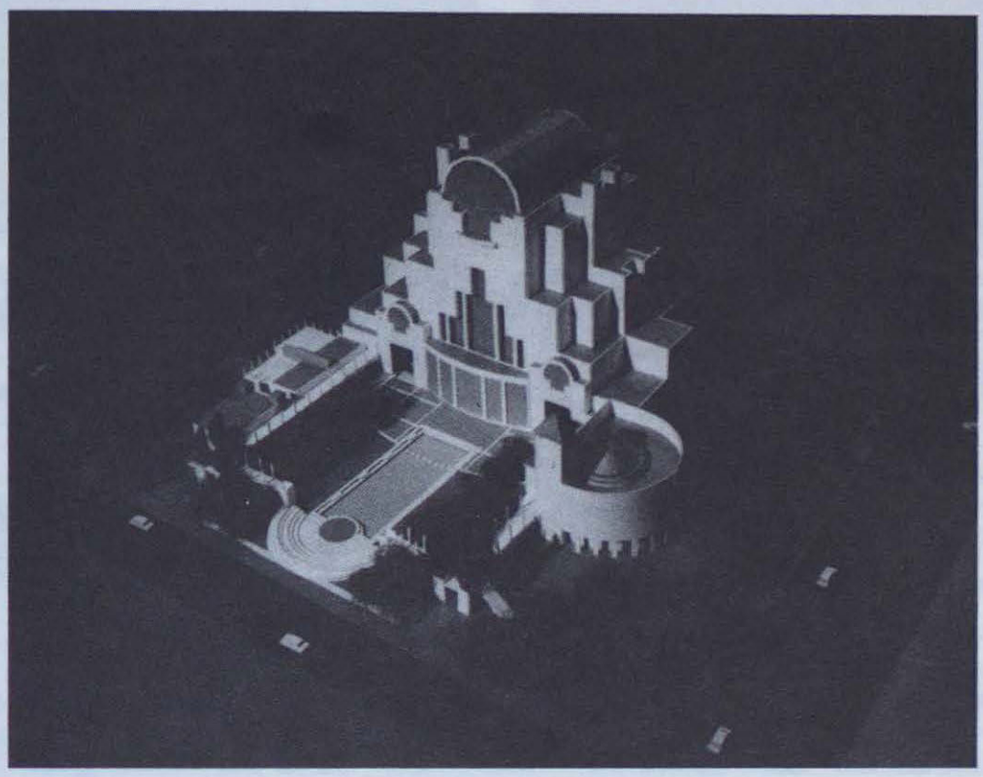


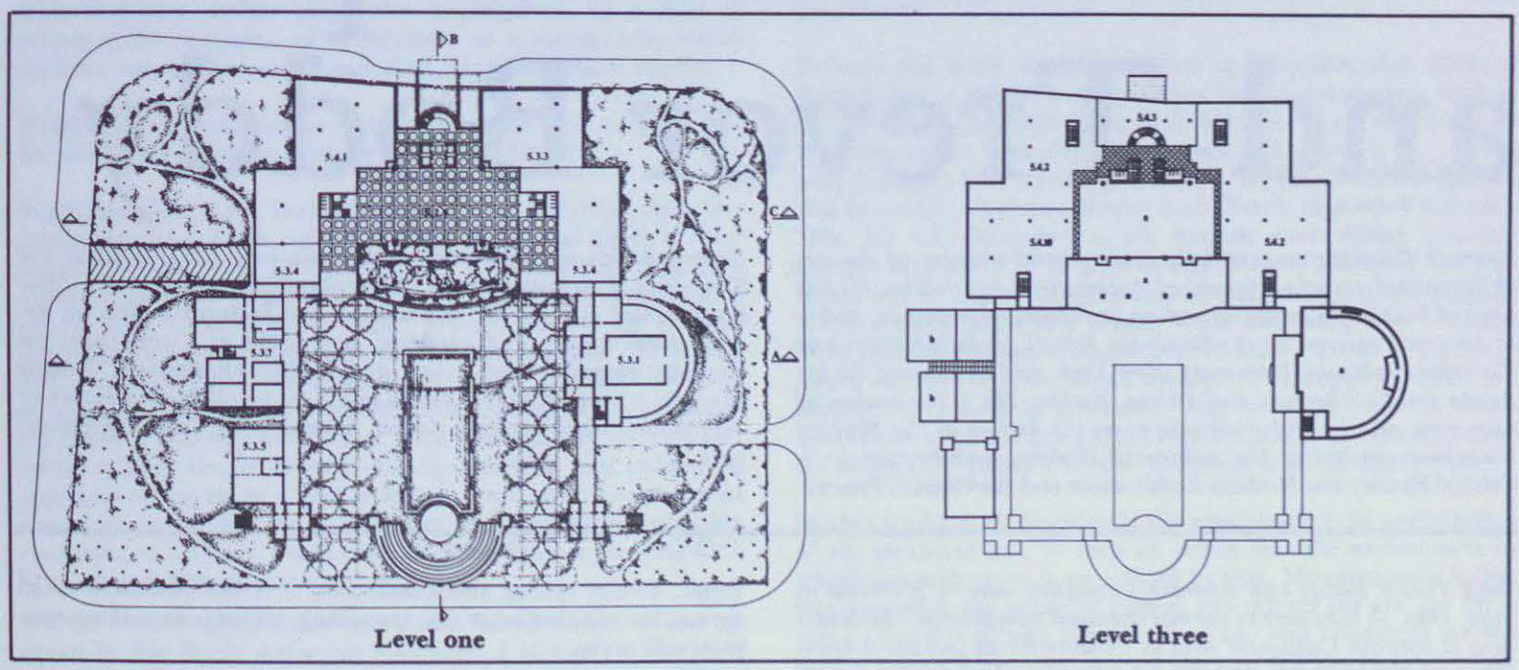
Third floor plan

Mississauga City Hall
Mississauga, Ontario

Arcop, Toronto

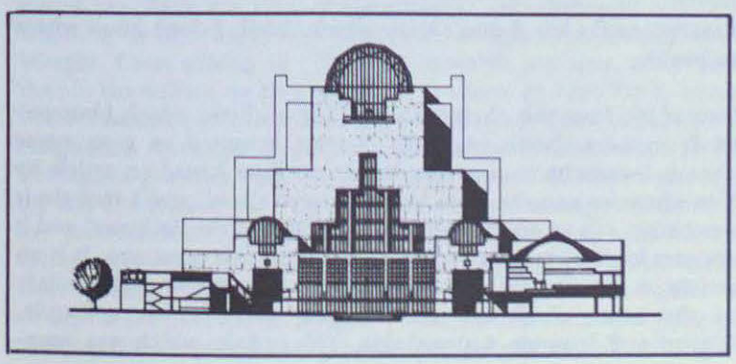
Paul Hughs, Partner-in-charge
Ryszand Slivka
Alan Woodham
Andrew Levitt
Lynn Raymond
Karen Chisvin

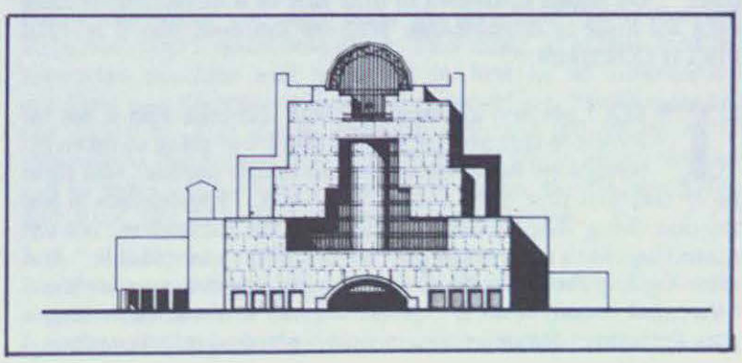




Level one

Level three





Roger Breton

Roger Breton

REGIONALISM

A Discussion with Kenneth Frampton and Trevor Boddy

Kenneth Frampton received his architectural training at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. He has worked both as an architect and an architectural historian, and is at present Professor at the Graduate School of Architecture and Planning, Columbia University, New York, and a Fellow of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies. He is the author of numerous articles and publications on the history of the Modern Movement, including the influential Modern Architecture — A Critical History *and* Modern Architecture and the Critical Present.

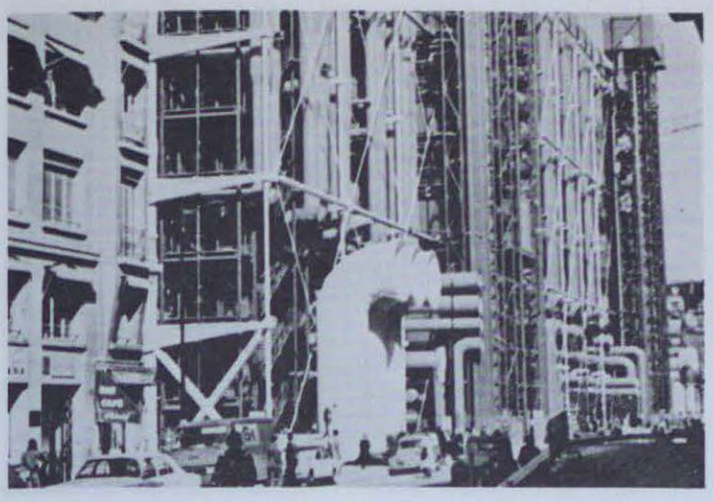
Trevor Boddy is an Edmonton architect who has studied at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary's Faculty of Environmental Design. He has written and lectured widely on architectural history and criticism and works as a consultant on heritage planning and urban design. His publications include Modern Architecture in Alberta *and he is working on a theory of historically based regional design,* Sources for a Prairie Architecture.

Both Trevor Boddy and Kenneth Frampton were in Montreal in May, 1983, to take part in the international Symposium, 'Architecture et Identité Culturelle' *held at l'Université de Québec à Montréal. They kindly consented to take part in a discussion, dealing with the topic of Regionalism, with the Editorial Board of* THE FIFTH COLUMN.

TFC: I got into an argument with someone who is not involved in architecture when I said I was going to do an interview on Regionalism and all that it implies. And right away they just flew back at me. They said, "Regionalism is just another thing that architects reinvented for themselves. It's not something that's every really gone away and it's unavoidable." And after arguing for two hours over it, I really began to wonder in my own mind exactly what is regionalism and why are we making a plea for it now? It can be seen in purely physical manifestations, I think, if we're talking about materials, or it can be seen in visual forms. I think that what you are talking about is something considerably more.

Frampton: Or less. I don't know which. Well, I don't know where to begin.

First of all, I use this phrase, 'critical regionalism', which I borrowed from Alex Tsonis. Actually, I once invented an even worse phrase, 'unsentimental regionalism', but then I read an article by him where he uses the term 'critical regionalism', and I thought it was better. It's an article called "The Grid and the Pathway" and it appears in *Architecture in Greece*, I think, two years ago. It is an article on the work of a Greek architect, who is very active today, by the name of Dimitri Antonakakis; actually, it's a couple, Dimitri and Suzanne Antonakakis. This article, which was osten-



Architectural Review

"The perpetual cult of the avant garde, *the perpetual change of that which is art in the twentieth century...requires a building which destroys art."*

sibly written to introduce their work, was also a discussion of regionalism in Greece and critical regionalism. Or, in the course of discussing regionalism in Greece, Tsonis made the distinction between regionalism and critical regionalism. I thought that the term 'critical regionalism' was convenient, useful and much better than a term which, in any case, I hadn't dared to use in public, 'unsentimental regionalism'. Nevertheless, I think critical regionalism is awfully close. On the other hand, I don't know how to talk about certain preoccupations without giving it some kind of node around which to structure this preoccupation. OK, that's the first step.

The second step is to say that for me there is a reason behind this, a subtext. Why did I get involved in all this, in any case? Perhaps it's an over-reaction. But, at least in the North American situation, it became rather clear to me that there was this sort of very polarized discourse between high-tech on one side — although there is a very primitive school of high-tech in the United States compared to what is happening in England — and what I referred to, perhaps with somewhat unfair perjorative implications, as a kind of scenographic reduction of architecture to a scenography which makes a very gratuitous, or parodied, use of historicist motifs.

Boddy: Is that synonomous with what you speak of as populism? Do you mean the same thing by those two things?

Frampton: Yes, I do, really, because I have identified those two things together. Again, of course, like all of these kinds of shorthand, it needs a lot of qualification. I use the term populism because it seemed to me that the ideological arguments made by people like Charles Jencks and Vincent Scully, in perhaps somewhat different terms, were more or less populist. They were riding on a wave of reaction, an understandable wave of reaction, to a kind of reductive modern architecture, and a very brutal kind. I personally felt very unsure that what was proposed as the alternative was not also, in its turn, equally reductive. And although it appeared not to be, at a kind of surface level, when you penetrate inside, often you find the same reduction, or a kind of reduction compared to, let's say, Frank Lloyd Wright. I'm not pleading for a Frank Lloyd Wright revival, exactly.

It's not without significance that Frank Lloyd Wright is very ignored in the North American continent. I should be precise; I would say there is a kind of consensus of establishment criticism which is, by and large, very careful not to talk about Frank Lloyd Wright. I was talking to (Thomas) Howarth just now, and I said that in the debate we had inside the Institute in New York, where Peter Eisenman set me up as a kind of fall guy, I had to justify my resignation from the Venice *Biennale* on the occasion when Paolo Portoghesi presented his whole number on the *Strada Novissima*, on *The Presence of the Past* and all that. And during the course of my presentation, after he had presented, I suddenly had this inspired moment, at which I said, "There is an absent ghost at the Post-Modern feast." Then I paused, and I said, "And the name of this ghost is Frank Lloyd Wright." Well, I think I scored a point on that occasion which I rarely have had the pleasure of scoring to quite the same extent. And some measure of that is the fact that Scully, in answering me, said, "You're quite wrong about that. Venturi began where Frank Lloyd Wright left off." I think you'd have say that to reduce criticism and the perception to such a vulgar, demogogic level — to say a thing like that is not worth really responding to.

Boddy: Could you go back and fill in the two reductionisms: the reductionism of,populism, which would seem to be, in your case, a reductionism down to images and what you were saying tonight about shallow images alone constituting architecture. What is, then, the parallel reductionism of Modernism itself?

Frampton: Well, it is this tendency on the part of some very distinguished people — let us say, Norman Foster, who just recently got the RIBA Gold Medal, Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, and I suppose there are others — to reduce architecture to a manifestation of production, of a kind of transparent economic production.

Perhaps this is best told in the form of a parable, also. Richard Rogers gave a talk in London. Alan Colquhoun made a kind of critical public challenge where he said that the use of the colour on the pipes on the back side, or front side, whichever it is — I suppose it doesn't have a front or a back — of the Centre Pompidou, was decorative. And then Rogers immediately responded and said, "No, it's not decorative at all, because each colour indicates another substance." It is quite easy to see that that reply is inadequate and is a kind of quasi-moral, quasi-functionalist position which doesn't mean very much. What difference does it make? Why is it of functionalist importance that they should all be in different colours? In other words, obviously it is decorative. Yet, the position of Rogers, in particular, and, of course, of that whole school is to reduce it to a kind of technical fact. In defending Centre Pompidou, Richard always compared it to the Eiffel Tower.

So that is a kind of reduction in the sense that it is an optimization of the technical fact, to such an extent that the environment in which you look at art is prejudiced by that. My experience is that you wander in the space; of course, you can see the art, the art is there. But out of your peripheral vision, you constantly see the struts of the tubular steel and all the rest. It's a nervous environment. Ultimately, you could make the argument that it is an environment that is destructive of art. That thing, at its best, is an information machine and works at its best as an information machine, as a library or a bookshop or something. That's where all the action is. And if you compare it to the old Musee de la Moderne in Paris, there is no kind of tranquility in which one can just be with the art, where once can just wander around peacefully. Somehow, the whole set-up is much more nervous.

Boddy: But would not Rogers, with his Modernist hat, his Modernist ideology in place, not just say that? The perpetual cult of the *avant garde*, the perpetual change of that which is art in the twen-

tieth century, in fact, requires that, requires a building which destroys art.

Frampton: Oh yes, I think he would say that. I had an interesting discussion, it was not elaborated because I am not really capable of carrying it very far, but I do know a little bit about this critic you might have heard of, named Jean Boudrias, with a woman called Monique Hein, who I think is an art historian who teaches at a place somewhere in Montreal, who said to me, "You and Boudrias would have no point in common." Then I raised the question, which she said she had recently discussed with somebody, whether one can still look at an intellectual like Boudrias as a critical figure at all. It's not fair to say that he celebrates, but he stresses the privatisation of society, the reduction of things to images, for example. It is very much a part of Boudrias' apocalyptic theme. My feeling in that regard is that it becomes increasingly difficult to practise the culture of architecture in any kind of critical or refined way if you simply take this kind of apocalyptic position.

You see, I think it's no accident that if you take photography, cinematography, some kinds of media art — in those fields, there is no withdrawal from the modern project, the *avant gardist* project. I don't think it's an accident that that is the case. Whereas if you take literature, music, architecture, painting — there is a very evident reaction in all these fields. I think it's no accident that there is a reaction in these fields and not in the fields that were produced, as it were, by the twentieth century, by technology. There is no need for them to react. They are it; they are the leading edge. Whereas all the other fields are threatened, and so, therefore, they react. Well, in that sense, of course, you can say that my whole critical position is also a reaction. But it's a reaction which I like to think has political aspects to it, although I don't wish to suggest that I think that this political effort can have any kind of global impact. So, in a sense, it's also a sort of resignation, a sense of holding operation, a sense of resistance. The juggernaut of technique, universal technique, is in the saddles, it's obvious. It would be totally unrealistic to imagine that it can be, in a global sense, challenged. In that sense, architecture is not essential to it, of course. Architecture is a marginal field in relation to its project.

There is this very interesting essay of Jurgen Habermas which was given in Frankfurt two years ago — actually, there is a very beautiful journal, which I can entirely reccommend, called *New German Critique*, published out of Ann Arbor, by the German department of Wisconsin. In it there's the English version of Habermas's address, which was given in Frankfurt two years ago, on Post-Modernism, and he begins with the Venice *Biennale*. He begins with the whole architectural situation. And he makes a kind of criticism of neo-conservative philosophers and cultural post-modernism as being reactionary. He says a very beautiful thing there. I can't remember the exact words, but he says that the frictions or social disturbance brought about by the process of modernisation was not called into being by modernist intellectuals. It's a very beautiful phrase. The alienation which people feel as a result of super-development, of what happened to the city, to thousands of other cities. You can say, "This is the architect's fault." Certainly, architects have played convenient roles in relation to this demand, let us say, but I am not convinced that the super-over-development and the rapacity of development, to say that that is the architect's fault, is just plain ridiculous. Architect's oscillate between megalomania and guilt. It's completely absurd.

TFC: And what point are at we now?

Frampton: I feel that one really has to make an effort to kind of resensitize ourselves in relation to the possibilities of architecture. And also to try to find some kind of scalar, or method, with which to deal with the present situation. I had a very interesting discussion with Siza during this (symposium). I said that just recently I was at reviews at Columbia and I began to sense that the work was very disappointing — let's put it that way. I felt that, underneath, why all this work was disappointing was because there was no

"...there is a sort of dialectical relationship possible between typology on the one hand, and topography, on the other; or, if you like, typology and morphology, if you want to talk about the urban situation."

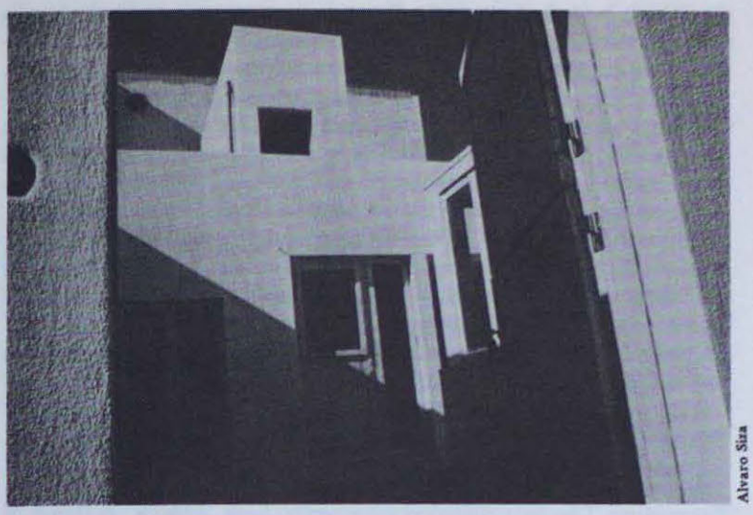
methodology anymore. Somehow or other, the bombardment of the field by all this imagery had even reduced the faculty to a state of confusion about "What are we doing? What do really think is of value?"

It was a much too big a project for the level of the students, but Michael Schwarting gave an extension to Carnegie Hall in New York, which was on a sort of rather narrow piece of the other block, in which he wanted to have a Centre for Contemporary Music, and then studios, and god-knows-what. A sort of semi-highrise building which was to be mixed use. And they had a fifty foot frontage. They got very hung up about how to deal with this question, about how to represent contemporary music. A big, horrible, sort of elephant trap for students. In any case, what was very clear was that they had no feeling — I'm being, I suppose, very patronizing — at all for what is a public foyer; what is a reasonable space in which people should enter before going into a concert. So, some people cut down the fifty foot frontage to twenty feet. Instead of thinking it would be reasonable to optimize the frontage, they started to reduce the frontage, and then fill it full of columns and staircases and god-knows-what.

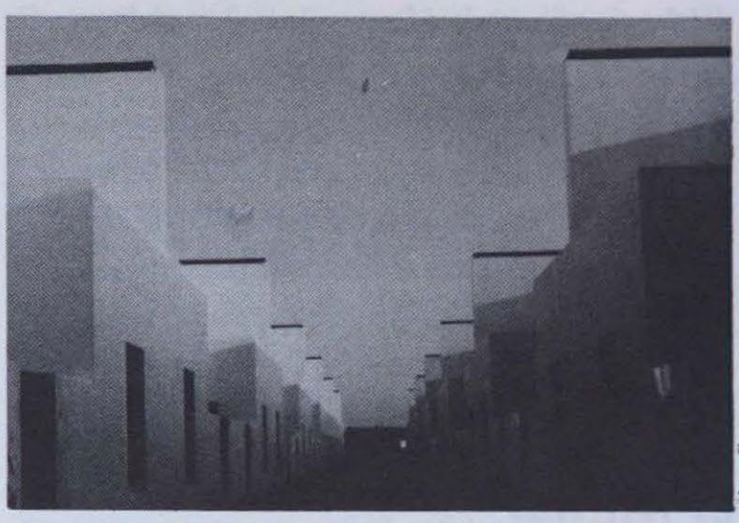
It suddenly occurred to me that maybe, and, of course, this is the Italian argument, typology is the one method that one can really still work with, in terms of inscribing history in a more profound way, but inscribing it in terms of images. But then I had this talk with Siza, and it's something that I had been feeling my way towards because, at some point, I had been trying to write the thing I gave last night, but I had never really got it together correctly. It occurred to me, in fact, you could say that there is a sort of dialectical relationship possible between typology, on the one hand, and topography on the other; or, if you like, typology and morphology, if you want to talk about the urban situation. So that one takes a kind of type and then one is aware of the fact that this thing has to be mediated, or reflected, by the full level of the context into which the type is set, which also must mean, to some extent, that it has to be mediated by the specifics of that programme rather than any other.

Boddy: And including images, surely?

Frampton: Well, including images, but you see that already I would argue that the typological history of the foyer of the Opera in Paris, and the foyer of Perret's Champs Elysee, and the foyer of... I don't know what; we could go on — Royal Festival Hall, maybe — these images, these volumes and their architectonic rhythm, and all that, and their progressive thresholds, are typological deposits. They're not just images but one can start there. I don't think one should end there, but I think if you start with the image first, then you have nothing to anchor it to; you're just there floating with these things. That is the difficulty about the present situation.



Alvaro Siza



Alvaro Siza

So, when talking to Siza, it was gratifying for me that he thinks that that is the way he works and he thinks it's the only way to work — this idea of transformation of types which are transformed under the impact of circumstantial things such a topography, such as geology, such as urban morphology, such as something specific to that programme.

Boddy: Now, can you turn the full circle and reconcile the transformation of type with what you first spoke of about regionalism. Are the two methods compatible? Do they work at the same level?

Frampton: It's a hell of a problem. And I don't think I have an answer to that, not, perhaps, a very clear one. But if you say that what I have just described can be taken as a point of departure, then it seems to me that sensitivity towards light, sensitivity towards surfaces, towards detail, towards material, towards sound, towards air movement, that one can try to develop these things as components which are to be experienced not totally by the eyes. Now, I realise that there is a sort of over-deterimined aspect, in making this argument the way I do, I suppose it's a kind of over-compensation in some way, or you could say it has a certain exaggeration, let's say. You see, I don't really think a vernacular really exists.

You know this very beautiful parable of Loos that appears in this essay, titled *Architecture*, written in 1910. It's a beautiful essay, in which he says, "Well, here I am." He describes a mountain countryside, a lake and all the rest of the surroundings. He says that a state of harmony exists between the buildings, the farm buildings, and the barns and the cottages and the countryside. There's such an order that they do not look as though they are man made, but they look as though they are from the hand of God; that is, of course, they look as though they are natural. Then he says, "But what is this? A modern villa, an unwelcome scream." And all the harmony of the scene that he has described is destroyed. And then he says, "And why is that? Because the villa is designed by an architect. Is it a good architect or a bad architect? It doesn't matter; next to the throne of God, all architects are equal." And then he say the shocking thing, "Because the architect comes from the city and has no culture." Very deep.

Boddy: That sounds like Ivan Illich.

Frampton: Of course, it should: clear. But you see, it's more ironic than Ivan Illich, because Illich starts to fall into utopic, global propositions. Loos doesn't do that number and I think that that's where he's clever. He makes it clear that, in a sense, all these urbanised people, and they are all urbanised people, are uprooted. In that sense, it means we don't really have the vernacular any more. And he does that in a very beautiful parable, also.

He then says, "A peasant builds a roof. And what kind of roof? It's the same roof that his father built, that his grandfather built, that his great-grandfather built." Then he asks the peasant a question, "Is it a beautiful roof or an ugly roof?" And then he answers for the peasant, "He doesn't know. It's the roof." I mean, that's vernacular. We use this word 'vernacular', as we use this word 'regionalism'. Therefore, in answering this question with which you began the whole thing, this 'regionalism' is what Michel Freitag, as I understood him, said yesterday. To evoke this 'regionalism' is to evoke a strategy, a kind of critical strategic position. If you try to concretise it, of course, it's a mirage. You fall into kitsch, or you fall into this demagogy again. By implication, I would be a little critical of your (Boddy's) presentation, though I think you took the presentation with much more modesty than I did, and with a certain open-ness, 'that this might not be', you put it very tentatively. But that's the danger, that one will fall into something which can just be manipulated, but which isn't really something that we can cultivate, a level of a complexity which could be enriching — it risks not being able to be cultivated to a level which would really be enriching. So, I am uncomfortable with the word 'regionalism' or 'critical regionalism', but I don't know where else to stand at this moment.

Boddy: I'd like to go into that a bit. I know, certainly, going though the issue, *Modern Architecture and the Critical Present*, when it came out, and going through your essay a couple of times, that was a very troubling phrase.

Frampton: Critical regionalism?

Boddy: Yes. And non-sentimental regionalism would have been equally troubling. What I see, in fact, in your position, is that the rhetoric of the argument propels one towards what is, without a doubt, a romantic position. A position charged with romanticism in the formal sense, thinking back to Rousseau, the nature of response to landscape and to nature, small-r romanticism. And, also, almost inevitably, tied up with this romanticism is an element of sentimentality. Now, to have reached that breach, to look in, and to see kitsch below, and to pull back and say, "Oh no! We must have an unsentimental regionalism. We must have an unromantic regionalism." We must have, what I would hold out to be a contradiction of terms, a critical regionalism. I think that regionalism is, by its very nature, a romantic notion. In the final analysis, after the rhetoric builds you up, you pulled back from that precipice. Do you want to describe that decision and, perhaps, talk a bit about critical regionalism *vis à vis* romanticism? Your talk tonight could have been given by William Morris to the Arts and Crafts Society in 1981.

Frampton: Except I think that there is one difference. I think that it's true that the critical tradition is double-edged, and a lot of people have said that; that is, the critical tradition of Pugin, Morris, and so on, is double-edged. There is a critical aspect and there is also a regressive and reactionary aspect. That's clear. Ruskin, the same story. So, in that sense, I am in that line, without a question.

"My feeling is that you should try to develop a generation of younger people and architects who have, somehow, the equipment to take a subtle approach to this problem, at the level of the discipline itself. Hence, emphasis upon specificity of material, the quality of sound, the possibility of having fenestration that isn't all sealed, ***the possibility of resisting.****"*

You see, the difficulty with modernisation and the reason why I think there is a great deal of anxiety, altogether irrespective of architecture, completely, is that, it's quite obvious, and we live with it all the time and most of the time we forget it, but the capacity exists to destroy us tomorrow, all of us. And this capacity exists as a consquence of modernisation. This is the triumph of Western Cartesian instrumental reason. Most of the time, we forget it, of course, otherwise it would be impossible. Clearly, this is a buried, repressed element, heavily repressed.

We have a rather violent relationship with nature. Western technology has a somewhat violent relationship with nature. You could say that that same violent relationship is quite manifest in the rapacity of development. It is rather clear that many people who are very real, not romantic at all, who are, after all, speculators, developers. Many of them, by the way, are not Canadian. The triumph of the multi-national corporation: What could be more abstract, more Cartesian, distanced and universal than that? And others that participate in the same ideology but are, let's say, lower level members of the same, they aspire to such power but don't have it — speculators. Well, you can say there have always been speculators, but what's interesting is that the bourgeois class of speculators, in the case of Haussmann's operation in Paris, not only profited from this operation but lived in it. Nor is it the game of the other level of gentlemen I tried to allude to. One of the problems is, of course, the production of objects which are really abstractions from beginning to end. If they could make the profit in some other way they would. It's just an accident they happen to be buildings. They're not interested in living in their buildings and they're never going to. Moreover, they're not ultimately interested in the quality of life in these buildings. They see them as abstractions which will sell for certain prices and return a certain amount of money. This is a pretty violent operation. It's not mediated by those positive aspects of bourgeois civilization, which I think are still quite, for all the exploitation, readily detectable in the bourgeois city, and clearly, of course, that city for which Leon Krier has so much nostalgia.

So, in the face of these things, one response has been the response of Manfredo Tafuri, quite clearly: communism. A Marxist response which — also, I'm vulgarising his position — in the end, is someone who is withdrawn. Today, he says, and I think he's going to stick to it, "Forget about the Modern period." As far as he is concerned, until all of that is sorted out, in some kind of decisive, fundamental historical change, meaning the end of capitalism, there is no point in discussing it any more. Now, I'm probably vulgarising his position, but, in any case, at a certain date, that was the effect of his position. My theory is that for intelligent, critical minds, that's a rather demoralising position.

I will admit that there is a certain romanticism to my position, but what I am trying to do is to build a threshold, or some kind of base, on which it is possible for a few people to stand, to make works which have a certain level of sensitivity and do not fall into a kind of media conditioning, which is also another aspect of that universal technology which is the universal technology that is closely integrated with the multi-national corporation and, say, the most advanced forms of technology you can imagine. I don't think I'm alone in this regard, because, if you take a country like Japan, some of the most intelligent young Japanese architects have decided to withdraw. They will only build houses, in fact, and those houses are totally introspective. They're introspective because, as far as they are concerned, the modernisation of Japan is an apocalypse with which one can have nothing to do. These defended little houses are microcosms that sit, absurd as they are, in this apocalyptic scene. That's romantic, but...

Boddy: What's the difference between that and the 'dome-zone', Sixties counter-culture architecture?

Frampton: The only difference between these, I think, is that it is possible in some kind of effective nature, in relation to the site it's perhaps not very much, except that there is an effort there to make rather pungent statements. 'Dome-zone' culture is not pungent. It participates in this kind of floating, nomadic anarchy which is very exposed, I would say, to the rapacity of the whole thing.

Boddy: Are not the houses that are created in Japan subject to speculation, swarmed by the very forces which they are rejecting?

Frampton: Let me come at that another way. I had a very interesting discussion with Salmona, for example, and you saw his presentation. I wanted to say it publicly, and now I regret that I didn't say it. Let me go through the whole thing.

Very recently, I looked at two books that have been produced in Barcelona; they are on Basque architects, Luis Pena and Jose Antonio Coderch. Coderch has been practising architecture for forty years in Barcelona. And in that book, which is some little book on his work, there is a residential project in an area of Barcelona which is called Saria. It consists of eight-storey brick apartment buildings, built for a middle-class level, no question, a relatively comfortable middle class. The way these rooms are modulated in the buildings, in terms of the appropriateness of the very proportions and dimensions of these rooms to their probably furnishability, and the way they are then related in terms of a kind of convenient proximity to other things, and the sizes of bathrooms, and all the rest of it, and their terraces, and so on and so forth, had been worked on very heavily, to bring them to some kind of level of harmony. Perhaps a better word is appropriateness, refined appropriateness. Apart from this, it is all very well-built. I looked at this thing, and I had never seen it in person, and I thought that why is it that it is not possible to find those plans in England or in the North American continent; or difficult, let's say.

Then, I jumped from this and I went to Houston and I saw Pelli's Four Leaf Towers, which are apartments designed by speculators and he simply wrapped the buildings in this skin. The crudity of these plans... well, it's hardly worth talking about. Of course, there are no terraces; the whole thing is hermetic because that's... what? Uneconomic? In any case, they are sixty storey blocks, they're not eight, of course. The point is, they are four hundred thousand dollars apiece. I was asking some Spanish students, "What do you think, in '68, those apartments in Saria cost?" And they hazarded a guess that they were probably something like the equivalent of two hundred thousand, at the most, maybe as low as a hundred twenty thousand dollars. Then, I remembered, in the anthology of Gillo Dorfles on kitsch, there is a very beautiful article — I thoroughly recommend it — by Vittorio Gregotti on kitsch and architecture in which he talks about "the slums of the rich piling up oustide our cities". And Four Leaf Towers in Houston is slums of the rich.

Then you have this funny thing. You have this stuff by Salmona, and I went to Salmona and I said that the difference here is, and this is a cultural difference, very deep, which is also very hard to do

anything about if you don't have it, that my feeling of the North American continent, and I think it's also true in England, is that people do not build with the sense that they are going to stay there and that they are going to leave these apartments to their children. No, they have the idea that they will buy this house and then they will sell it and they will buy another house and so on and so forth. They already have this idea that this is a commodity; it is not where this family is going to live. Such is the impact of mobility.

In more, somewhat backward cultures, backward like Barcelona, which sometimes is very modern, or Bogota, you have a class that still has this idea that they will put money into this thing and that their children will take it and all the rest of it. So, what I'm getting at is that I feel this fundamental loss and it makes the whole business of being an architect extremely difficult. In a certain sense, you could say that Cesar Pelli is imaginative, or let's himself be imaginative in the game of being the big architect. Cover the thing with a curtain wall, get paid a fee. But what is the object? It is the slums of the rich.

It reminds me of a Jewish joke where Jews are selling sardines to each other, and one day one of them opens up the sardines, and then is furious to find that they're rotten. He calls up his friend, and says, "Hymie, you sold me rotten sardines! What are you doing? We've been doing business for years!" And then the man says, "You mean, you opened them up? You idiot or something? They're not sardines for eating, they're sardines for buying and selling!" In a sense, these apartments built in Houston are not apartments to live in, they're apartments for marketing purposes. They're not doing so well, at the moment, because they can't sell them at four hundred thousand dollars apiece.

Boddy: But, Kenneth, what is the fundamental difference between that commoditisation of architecture and some of the stuff Kagan showed us. When you see that dreadful, dreadful mile after mile stuff, it is commodity, it is produced by agencies under economic regimes towards ends, it is disposable, it is dreadful, it is all of them.

Frampton: It's not easy to respond to that challenge...

Boddy: I just don't think it's a tenable position, in the last few years of the twentieth century, to reject, totally and out of hand and out of nature, the commoditisation of architecture. One must, in fact, deal with it.

Frampton: But how do you deal with it? What do you do? Do you dress it in bits and pieces to make it look more palatable? What do you do? The question is what do you do with the reality of this? It's a big question. My feeling is that you should try to develop a generation of younger people and architects who have, somehow, the equipment to take a subtle approach to this problem, at the level of the discipline itself. Hence, emphasis upon specificity of material, the quality of sound, the possibility of having fenestration that isn't all sealed, the possibility of resisting.

The trick that's being worked now is, in my opinion — again, paranoia and conspiracy theory — that I think that it's no accident that the schools of architecture are in such a mess and that the priority set for the society on the schools of architecture is so low. At some point in the history of architecture schools, in the name of economy, American Ivy League schools decide, "No more five year programs. We're going to do it in three years, just like we do law and all the rest of it." And they are allowed to do it. It's hard to say who is the authority, utimately. But still, there is no disagreement; everyone follows suit. OK, school is alright, but you finally get finished in offices, so it doesn't matter. Something happened in that jump, in terms of the way architecture is bandied about as a *métier* which has a real density in it. And I think that what I find disturbing about Drexler's *Transformation* show or Jenck's position — the specificity of the discipline, in terms of the way you make things. There is still the main potential to articulate things in ways which are rich and nuanced and liberative.

The last time I was in the Toronto School of Architecture, I could not believe the level of the work, to such a degree that I asked myself, "What is the explanation? What is the explanation for this abysmal incapacity to think about architecture?" I didn't ask anybody that question, and I can't answer it myself. I'm just left with a kind of total blank.

Boddy: But surely the situation in architecture schools is one result of the ideological situation; in fact, a lack of paradigm reasoning, a notion of how one approaches or formulates the paradigm. And perhaps, getting back to regionalism, that's why I think a well-defined, workable notion of regionalism could help in this dreadful fix we're in, in this dreadful confusion.

Frampton: Well, here we're agreeing about it, except that, as soon as one touches it, we both experience this, but in different ways, although it comes down to the same thing. As soon as you try to touch this issue publicly, then you are somehow strangely caught. You are forced to ask you, yourself, and then, of course, the others ask, "Well, what is it, exactly, a realistic cultural policy of this period?"

Boddy: So I can use it Monday morning.

Frampton: Yes. So, in that sense, we are in the same boat.

Boddy: Although, for example, we differ on the issue of historicism. I see it as a possible option for forms of regionalism. You would seem to reject it out of hand; *ipso facto*, historicism, or you call it manipulation of images, is not a possible strategy for a regionalism.

Frampton: Well, I am very preoccupied with this idea of transformation, that it has to be worked on, it cannot just be taken like that. This is my position because I feel that it has, somehow or other, to reflect the dialectic, if you like, or the tension of the historical moment in which it is made. Now, that makes it a little bit less accessible; this is a *maison du patriote*, therefore, *signant... pip... pip... pip...* that's a *maison du patriote*, I'll buy it — that's it. The trick is turned.

Boddy: But the issue here is not the source of inspiration, be it historicism, be it a concern for light, be it a concern for sound, but, in fact, the quality of the depth of analysis by which it is done. Surely there is terrible, dreadful, 'shlock' kitsch historicism; there is also, let's say, in token, deeply thought out, profoundly analysed historicism, and to deny it as an option for architects, I think, is an over-reaction. And I can see why you have taken that position, given the Charles Moores of the world doing daffy theme parks, *etcetera*. I can see why one has to, as I put it before, pull back from that precipice, with the teeming sea of populist kitsch below, yet, I think it is going too far. I think, in fact, what you are arguing for — so much of your definition of regionalism could be repackaged, and I could go through history and show other, similar analyses — what you really, in fact, are arguing for is good architecture. And I'm not sure if regionalism is a bit of a red herring in this entire discussion, because you seem to be arguing for a well-thought-out, sombre, controlled, deeply sensitive architecture. Surely, that is what Salmona's architecture is.

Now, if regionalism is something as simple as using the local brick, then, Corbu in Algiers was a regionalist, and one can go through the world. Where does one stop? It's got to be a deeper level of analysis than appropriating Bogota brick, *ipso facto* makes it regionalist. I think if you go through the other factors that make Salmona's work so profound, they, in fact, point at the fact that it's very good architecture, well thought out, deeply sensitive to the needs of the users, offering options, as we talked about before, about opening windows, and aspect and view and ventilation. I would like you to distinguish what it is, in your definition of regionalism, that makes it regional, and not simply a definition of good architecture?

Frampton: I think it is much more to do with the specificity of the place, and that, to me, would be the key factor. And then those aspects which are contingent upon the specificity of the place, that is, the transformation of the given topography, or the given morphology. I like this phrase of Siza's, 'transformation of reality', and then his later qualification of that, in stating that then the problem is to have a sensitivity to complexity of that reality. Then that reality, or 'placeness', is also the light. Then, of course, that can be challenged, in terms of a more hard-nosed response, which would say, "Well, what can you do about the light? What, exactly, specifically, can you do?" To which it's very hard to give a direct, concrete answer, just like that. Except, many buildings are designed and god-knows how much teaching I've experienced in which the question of the light and the sun were never discussed. For example, this business about light, I'm convinced of, of course. You could say it's subjectivity, but I don't think it is — because of the landform and the way the island is oriented — the light on the east side of Manhattan is entirely different from the light on the west side of Manhattan. Therfore, there is a specificity of place, in terms of being sensitive to that light.

Now, on those grounds, Michael Grave's Portland Buildings is a monstrosity. We have reached such a limit that even the people in that area have to say, "You must make these square windows that much bigger because we cannot put up with this business." And they did make it bigger. But even then, in that gray climate, what is the game, after all, in terms of light?

Boddy: But would not the same analysis say that, by the same token, Corbu's Unité d'habitation is good, because it does treat the different elevations in different ways?

Frampton: Well, indeed, but this is where there is great confusion today and this is where one falls into demagogy. You take the name Le Corbusier and you put a red cross through it, *à la* Leon Krier. This is a level of primitivism which is destructive to culture.

Boddy: Now, be that as it may, would your analysis not result in the conclusion that Unité d'habitation is a pre-eminent regionalist building: sensitivity of proportion, concern with space adaptability, cross-ventilation, variety of unit type, differentiation of aspect, and certainly, control and manipulation of light with the *brise soleil*.

Frampton: Up to a certain point. There is a point at which it is also deeply committed into a kind of Cartesian project, of a certain kind of reason, where the isolated slab in the park is the manifestation of this enlightenment reasoning, this new world. That aspect of it, that uncritical commitment to *avant gardism*...

Boddy: I agree with you, but that seems to result in the fact that Corbu, *sans* the urbanism, is a regionalist.

Frampton: Indeed. Well, I think, it's very important that Maison Weekend, 1935, is a move in this direction. What is very poetic and beautiful about the Maison Weekend is the tension between modern materials and archaic materials; the two are there, they play off each other. And then there follows Seychelles, North Africa, and the Maison Jaoul.

Boddy: Even La Tourette, I would argue.

Frampton: Indeed. This is already a piece of auto-criticism. This is the dimension of this person in terms of his own development. This is where, to put a red cross through Le Corbusier, is the greatest kind of... Siza said yesterday that this reaction to Le Corbusier is just crazy. It's like pushing him out without seeing, it's like megalomania and guilt, it's like the complete opposite; he's either everything or he's nothing.

Boddy: In fact, what we have, also, among the commoditisation of everything else, of buildings and modern life, is the commoditisation of architects and architectural reputations. I think it's one of

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the most tragic things in our clumsy, club-footed discourse that we have today.

Frampton: Absolutely, I agree totally. The fact that Wright's efforts with the Usonian Houses, in terms of accepting the reality of the suburb and trying to raise this reality — I suppose you could say that it is a romantic perception — to a level of cultivation, which is at the same time economic, is something which I think people never realised. That is something upon which one could build, as opposed to just consigning it to the dustbin of history.

But you asked me quite complex questions about historicism, and then I wanted to ask you a question back. Who do you think, today, has manifested a building which is historicist and where the full dimensions of that historicism have been developed to a very rich level?

Boddy: That is a very difficult question. I would probably sidestep by pointing to the nineteenth century and saying, "Well, people did it then." That's no problem, from Ledoux on, to find people who were sensitive. Today, it's much more difficult. It depends upon what one means by historicism. If Riccardo Legoretta's use of the street wall, with Mexican colours, of elemental forms of traditional architecture, is historicist, then I'm fully in favour of it.

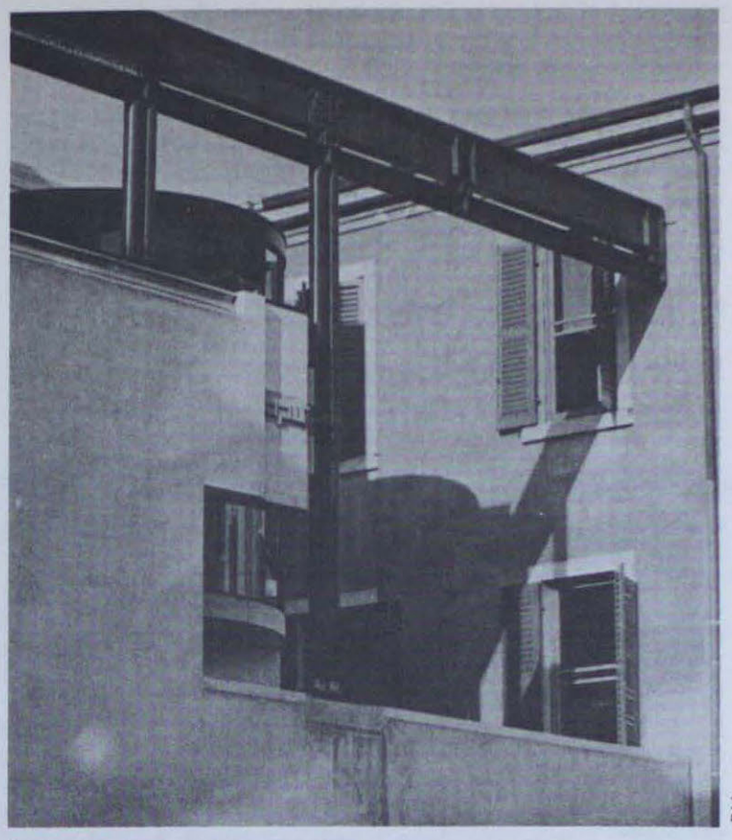
Frampton: And so am I. So, we have no disagreement there.

Boddy: It's certainly dealing with images, and populist vernacular images at that, and I think it can be done at that level. But once again, I think that the Bob Stern appropriation of ridiculous ornament, poorly understood and grossly misapplied, is the paradigm of how to do it wrong, and what is bad, evil and dangerous about historicism today.

Frampton: It is also interesting that he, of course, is now reacting to his own position. He, at least ostensibly, says that he wants to now do classicism, and looks to Allan Greenberg to tell him to do it. What that will produce, I don't know. He's rather intelligent, in his own game, so to speak; he's really moved away, or at least has the verbal intention, from the gratuitous business to kind of being a 'gent'. We'll see. I don't know what he'll make of it.

Boddy: It's an extremely difficult issue and I don't think we're as far apart as we might think. I do object to the wholesale buying and selling, appropriation of architectural imagery, their reduction to TV images, the plastering on of facades. I was down at Complexe Desjardins and there are two constructions of entrance ways. Did you see them? The absolute worst of the flaky post-*Strada Novissima* post-modern colour, an entrance which is not an entrance, a little *objet* full of cute little voussoirs and funny little crenellations. I was abhorred when I saw that. I went down with Peter Rose, and I was accusing Peter Rose of, in fact, doing them. I took that back right away because I realised that Peter Rose is too smart and too good an architect to have done that and then we looked at it and it wasn't.

That bothers me, the historicism that was appropriated there has absolutely nothing to do with Montreal, as well. It was straight out of the glossy magazines, circa '79-80. In fact, if someone had gone to the trouble of studying the grammar of ornament of Old Montreal, had really looked at those nineteenth-century cast-iron warehouses, I would have forgiven them. In fact, I might have even supported them. Perhaps you would, too. Perhaps I have over-characterised you as so pointedly anti-historicist: perhaps



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"I think Scarpa is the only person, really, to follow Wright in a way that's fully interesting."

there are situations where they can go forward.

Frampton: Certainly, your Legoretta example...

Boddy: Or in Botta, your own examples from the essay. There's no doubt he's referring to polychrome traditions in that part of the world. He's understood them and he has reiterated them wonderfully in different materials. And that is the only example, which is also interesting, of the series of projects you helped put forth as regionalist which does make that explicit reference.

Frampton: To colour, you mean?

Boddy: To colour and to overt historical form. Perhaps to type in some of them, but not to exaggeration.

Frampton: Well, in the Lumignano farm, for example. You see, Scarpa is someone who interests me a lot, and Scarpa was Botta's master. I think Scarpa is the only person, really, to follow Wright in a way that's fully interesting.

In the Lumignano farm, you know that thing where he extends the barn in the forecourt in the front of the house, then the tiles are the same and I suppose the timber that supports the tiles is the same. But the major truss structure, which then supports the rafters on which the tile are hanging, is welded steel, not wood. It's welded steel, but then, of course, the way the steel pieces are put together still makes some allusion to traditional truss construction. That jump is very interesting and important. I think it then both speaks of a continuity and then, also, it speaks of its own historic moment, in a very manneristic way. I think Botta got all of this from Scarpa. For example, Botta used polished plaster, which is a tecnhique I think they still know how to do in Italian Switzerland, some technique where you put the dye, coloured dye, into the plaster, and then you bring the surface of the plaster with some kind of very highly glossed level, which all sounds, in itself, not all that interesting, except that it gives an effect like gesso, of the colour glowing from inside the material.

In Morbio, I don't know what it is — I'm going to ask him, actually, because it really interests me — he has used a wash on the concrete inside, in the hall, which is a kind of Pompeiian red. This is not Pompeiian red paint; this is some kind of wash that goes onto the concrete and there is this curious sensation that there is some kind of veil, which gives the concrete the quality that the colour is also coming from inside. Still, it's concrete and not painted concrete. It's very delicate. That, I think, is deeply interesting. This kind of thing is the way I think we can really make something.

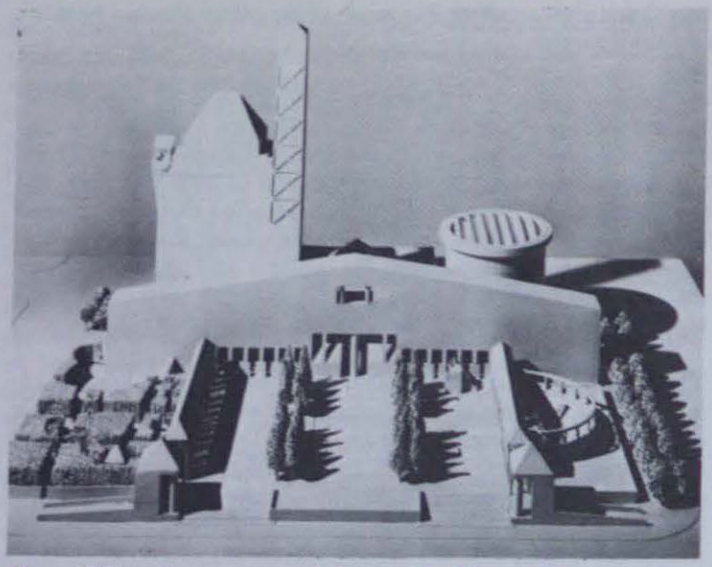
Then again, another conversation with Siza. I've long been an admirer and I'm more of an admirer then ever. Actually, I've not ever seen his buildings, I have to admit. I'm going to go and see him this summer, or kill myself. But he told me something very interesting that happened in Berlin, the story of Bruno Taut's buildings, painted in polychrome. They decided to repaint. They match the colour, but they have to use, or they do use, because it's available, a plastic based paint. They put it on the building. In a year or so, the building starts to rot because, they discovered, it can't breathe. Then they have to go to East Germany to buy paint that's not plastic paint, because they can't buy, in West Germany, any kind of paint but plastic paint. Then you see, suddenly, the connection between multi-national corporations, creation of markets — "You all have to buy this stuff or nothing" — and culture. This is where you can really touch it. If one tries to think like that, one can sort of try to get oneself back to some way of working.

TFC: I just have one other question, talking about megalomania or guilt, as you mentioned before. What is our Mississauga City Hall?

Frampton: I asked for that, didn't I? Actually, what you (Boddy) had to say about Mississauga is very interesting and I had never really looked at it like that before, and it certainly is very encouraging to look at it like that. Also, you didn't say, which Odile Hénault referred to, is the other aspect of it, in a certain sense. This is a very presumptuous thing to say, but I do know Ed Jones very well, I also know that, at a certain point in London, he became very influenced, extremely influenced by Leon Krier. So, certain aspects of that building are very influenced by Leon Krier, and a number of projects Ed has done before.

First of all, the competition conditions were really set up to produce a classical, or symmetrical, operation, on a very difficult site because there is this monster shopping thing and these high-rises already compromising the situation from the beginning. So, I think that the solution is an extremely good solution, from the point of view of its richness, volumetrically, and also in terms of meeting all the specifics of the programme. I personally hope that they will re-work, rather heavily, in order to give a less schematic reading to all these sort of historical motifs because they are schematic, I think. If they are converted like that into working drawings, they will remain a little graphic, I think. So, if they can develop — somehow integrate — those references with the way the thing is built, and, therefore, change them in that process, or refine them, then I think they will have to come to something and that building will become more and more interesting.

Boddy: I, for one, would like to see, if not removal, then wholescale reduction of the Krieresque elements. The things that were implicity in George's programme, the arcade around the base is perfunctory and redundant and shouldn't be there, the pergolas, much of the treatment down at the grade level is not well thought out. Granted, it was implicit in the programme, but I think it should be changed. It's one of those cases where that programme has generated a good solution; now, one throws away the programme and adapts it to the final need. I think some of the severity, the Ledoux formality, strength of that main facade needs to be tempered. It could be quite appalling and rough.



"...Mississauga City Hall at least attempts to make reference to the place of its creation. Mississauga City Hall is a regionalist building."

One thing I did in my essay for Rizzoli, a theme I developed for the book, was a comparison-contrast, typical Banister Fletcher technique, with Grave's Portland Building, because they are very similar. Similar programs, similar size; in a sense, new cities, searching for identity, wanting a civic symbol. Even qualifying, as I have, the Krieresque elements, I think the Mississauga building is far more profound, although I think it will have a fraction of the impact. It is, in fact, a more difficult building, and a more complex one spatially. It took me many times through to understand how those interior spaces connected — in fact, how a city room, a sense of space, on the interior, was created in a quite wonderful way and yet the building does work at the level of moving people, moving materials and goods.

Once again, this get's back to the sad state of architectural discourse and, perhaps, the commoditisation of architects; there are no easy, hang-onto images generated by Mississauga, whereas there are at Portland. One looks at those bloody keystones, the voussoirs, the colour and the temple on the roof, and one's got it. You can walk through any bloody architecture school in the world right now and see legions of young women and men attempting to imitate that, without having the courtesy to Mister Graves and to his building to have understood how he arrived at those elements and, in fact, understanding his sources. It's just, as you said, appropriation of images. It's buying and selling of images; sticking them on places they don't apply.

I think that one of the great strengths of the Mississauga building is its local reference and having the guts to make rural references. We all want to live in world cities. It takes great guts on the behalf of urban, sophisticate architects to take things like barn silos, those sort of things, seriously and, in fact, as a repetoire for inspiration in architecture. I think, for example, it's far more profound than Piano and Roger's appropriation of industrial imagery. In fact, it has something to do with the society which has produced Mississauga, which, by and large, was rural by birth, has come to the city, maintains links, often family links, back to the countryside. It is, really, quite a wonderful analysis. It's an interesting point of comparison, those two buildings.

Frampton: Yes, I would agree with your comparison. The thing about the Graves building is that it's very emblematic. It's sort of use of Ledoux — in a way, he does relate to Ledoux — the emblematic element of Ledoux is there. And I think you're right that Mississauga is less emblematic and more volumetric, more concerned with the creation of a public realm. But, of course, you have to say also that the program was already more concerned to create the public realm.

Boddy: Be that as it may, even strictly at the level of imagery, the imagery of Mississauga City Hall at least attempts to make reference to the place of its creation. Mississauga City Hall is a regionalist building. Whereas Portland did not, although Graves attempts to justify, saying that this motif and that relate to that, the colour came from the surroundings, all this bafflegab.

Frampton: You've seen Portland?

Boddy: Yes, I've seen it.

Frampton: The amazing thing about Portland is that the two adjacent buildings on either side, which are by the same architects, dated 1907 and 1914, one is the City Hall proper and one is the County Law Courts, have provision for pedestrian linkage through their bodies, so to speak, between the park and all that. Therefore, it seems to me that a really profound, contextual statement on Grave's site would have been very wise to have followed the same thing, and to have made some kind of galleria going through and to have brought the cars underneath some other way. That's what's implied by the scheme, of course, because it has its entrance on axis on the outside. of course, it's nothing of the sort. In that sense, it's a really disturbing, very curious building, publicly. And the *parti* — not understandable; turn the shops outward, instead of in on themselves to consolidate them, making cafeteria space, so-called on the plan, an eating terrace, but who would ever want to eat there?

Boddy: And the whole notion of that dreadful parking garage entrance on that wonderful park, the nicest space in the city. It's a tragic shame.

TFC: Getting back to Mississauga, what came first, the regionalism you speak of or the reference to Krier's school at St. Quentin-en-Yvelines? Which was the first image? Which was really the most important?

Frampton: It's very hard to say, I think. Absolutely.

Boddy: I think you have to go behind both and go to Baird's programme and the line of thinking it generated. I entered the competition with a group of people and I know that programme well. It was bloody frustrating to work with it and, especially knowing George personally, those little light bulbs would go off and, "Oh no! That's what it's going towards." So, it was a massive generator of notions, of what is an urban building and what is this room doing. It was the first progenitor of the building. Very early on was this rural reference element, the inspiration of the barn silo, *etcetera*; that was in quite early. I think that was one of the original *partis* on behalf of Jones. And a lot of the formalist stuff...

Frampton: What you call the Waldorf Astoria.

Boddy: Yes, the Waldorf Astoria, the chateau stuff, that's Kirkland, once again, tempering Jones. I would gladly see that go. I could do without that stuff, along with the Krier stuff, and I think it could still be a marvelous, powerful and, I hope, influential building.

Once again, getting back to Kenneth's earlier question, you do grasp for adequate examples of regionalism, now, especially ones that are profound and do it on more than one level, do it in more than the use of Bogota brick, do it more than Douglas Cardinal curving curvilinear buildings set against the prairie landscape. This is a very crude, simple regionalism, if you want. I hope and pray that there is a deeper level to it. If the concept has got any validity and any application, it must. That's why a building as complex and as rich, and there is no other word for Mississauga City Hall but rich, especially as it has been transformed since the competition, as rich a building as that bodes well for the concept.

MAINTAINING A CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE

By Gayle Webber

That architecture is designed and built in Canada is, of course, insufficient to make it Canadian in the sense which concerns us architects. We are looking for a combination of features, qualities, attitudes, that, when blended together create something described by the term 'Canadian'. This desired end has two obvious advantages; we would belong to a 'group', building in the Canadian style and whether we chose to break free of it or adhere to dictates of the style we would at least be provided with a basis from which to work, and the second advantage would be recognition in the worldwide architectural scene. With pride the Canadian cultural identity would be advanced and further defined. Credibility, respectability as Canadian architects would await. Others could come here to study our Villages and monuments!

So where is this style we want so badly? The emergence of Canadian architecture is dependent upon a variety of factors, but foremost among these must be a general and unified set of values and ambitions held by Canadian architects. Above and beyond local or regional influences, we must look for a consensus of opinion in architectural values in their largest sense, among Canadian architects. We cannot hope to patiently wait for this promised form, this Canadian architecture, to appear. We cannot look to the forests and say wooden, shingled architecture is ours and therefore we shall build only with these materials, nor can we reason that because our climate is cold (?) our architecture has no northern windows (thus eclipsing any opportunity to view the northern lights from indoors?) and that this shall be its determining characteristic. These are important aspects, but, they cannot form the essence or heart of our architecture. Climate, environment, pattern nor detail generate architecture although certainly contribute to its creation. Ideals, given in terms of architecture, are needed to describe Canadian architecture and these ideals must be gracious enough to span across every building tupe and every building location.

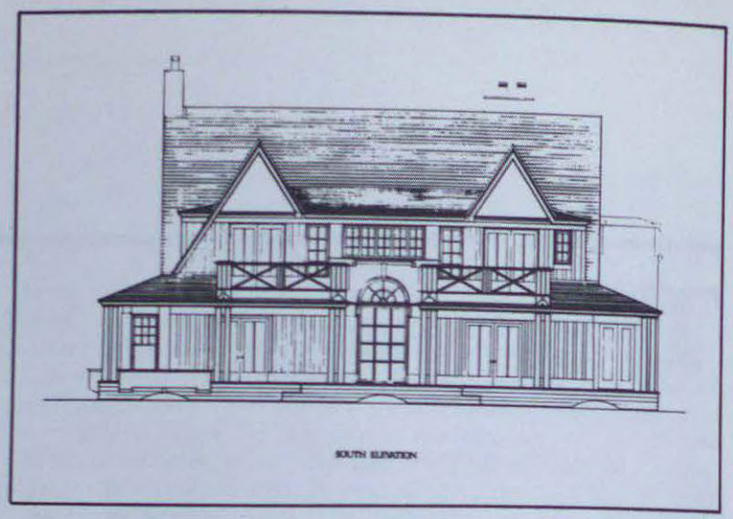
We, as Canadian architects must establish what we want, what we like, and what is relevant to us and to the society for which we build. We must find and examine our own values, updating them to suit today and our future. Rennaissance buildings, for examples, spead of proportion, symmetry, attention to detail, but also represent a more abstracted set of ideals celebrating the rebirth of humanism, the value of man. Modernism, while creating smooth, planar white images, was fascinated by the power and promise of technology. What we believe in, perhaps, is not important; feeding ourselves and our families, beauty, proportion, chickens in all pots, so long as we *do* believe in something. A response is necessary. Last year, while speaking at my school, Peter Rose asked who our heroes were. Unfortunately no on answered. Have we really no heroes? No values? (surely if we had values, others with similar values and greater architectural skill would be found to admire?) How can we expect to have architecture?

The vast exchange of information via the international architectural media also plays a role in Canadian architecture. Innovative design throughout the world is almost immediately available on glossy pages, as are the latest technological advancements. This cannot help but provide inspiration and/or spark the architect to higher quality design. Editorials and critiques pointout that all is not yet perfect in the world, that hope remains for the unpublished masses. This media information often leans towards 'trendy' design. Our perceptions of one particular architectural style may be slanted out of proportion while we ignore the 'just plain good' design of another. Circulation value can oppose quality architectural design only if the consumer desires to see flashy, more superficial work. We have an obligation to know what our peers do; to realize the state of the art. Many students, however, can better carry on a discussion of directions in Italian rationalism than they can one on directions in Canadian architecture (I've yet to discover what real practitioners best discuss). In school, as an academic exercise and learning tool, this is valuable. Perhaps one can be more objective about a foreign culture and its architecture. But, a time must come when we rid ourselves of our obsession with Italian rationalism, post modernism, or whatever and turn our eye to Canadian 'something-or-otherism'. Once our own architectural values are established, in relation to this culture, the merit of other styles and trends can be seen in our own terms. Of course architectural events in the rest of the world have meaning for us, but the useful nature of this meaning in our own design can only be determined when we know what we are looking for and even, why we search. For Canadian architecture we can only look to ourselves, and by extension to our culture, realizing the importance of consciously acting in the formation and direction of our own stylistic expression,

Gayle Webber is a recent graduate of the Technical University of Nova Scotia and is currently working in Moncton.

Layout: Susan Ross

FISHER HOUSE
LAKE CORNU, QUEBEC

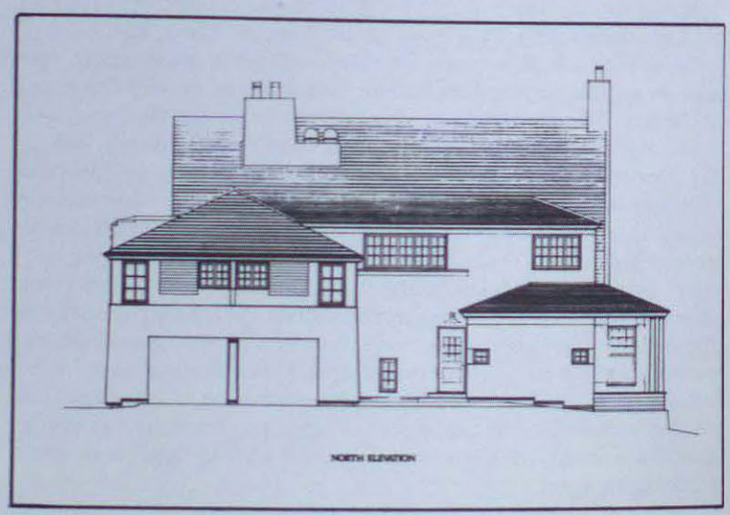


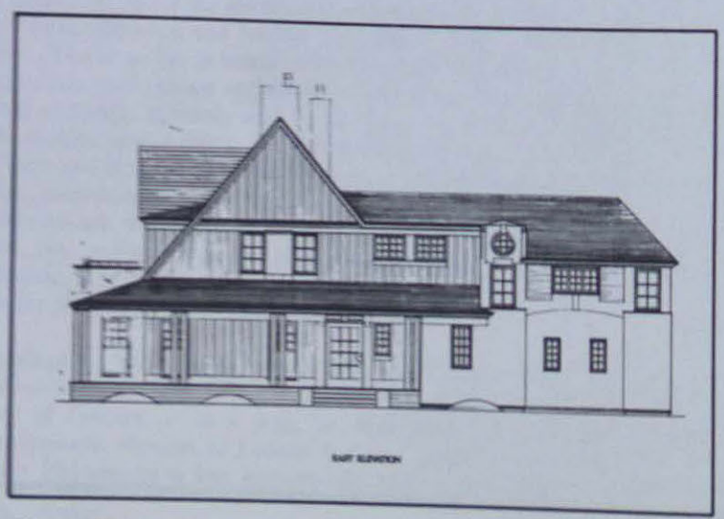
This page: View from the south
View from the east

Opposite: Sun-room doors
Window at west gable end

The Fisher House is set amid carefully kept lawns and flower beds on a rolling and meticulously tended property which juts out into Lake Memphramagog. Its sprawling veranda and large gables respond in spirit to the decidedly English flavour of both its surroundings and the original Victorian country home which was destroyed by fire a few years ago.

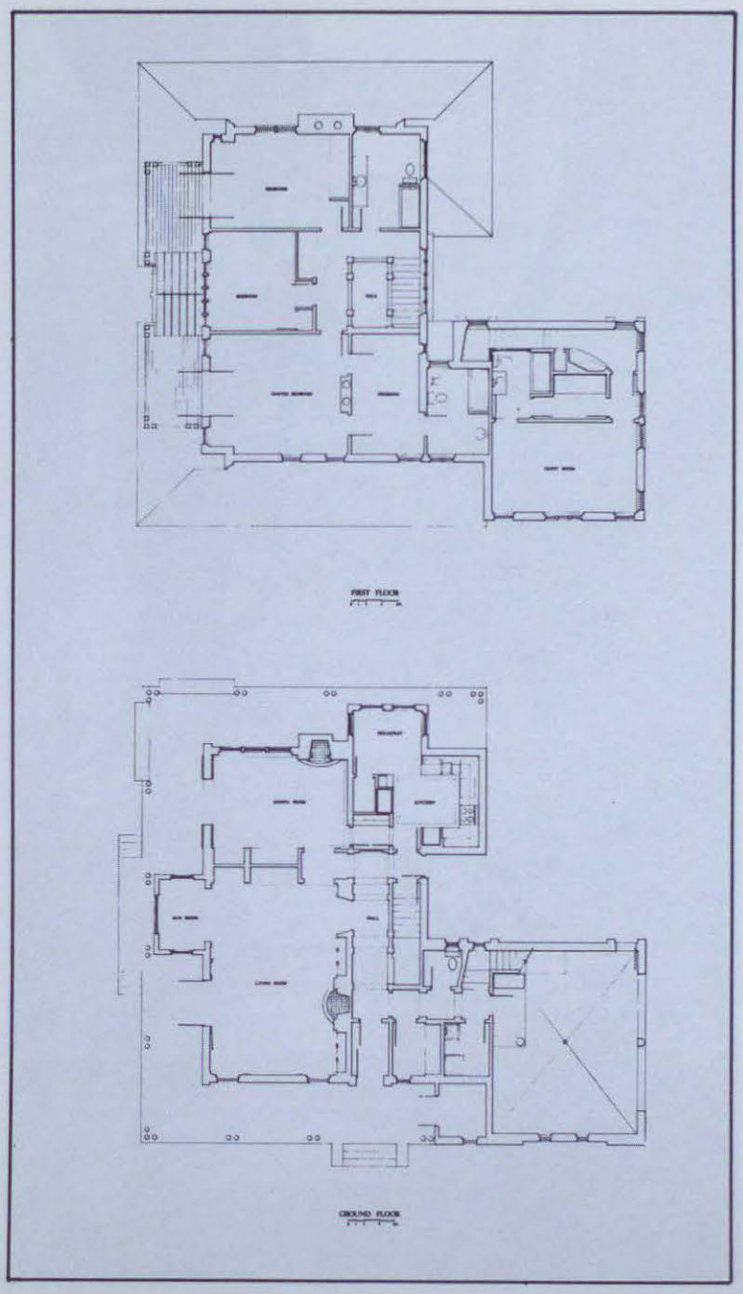
In addition to large generous rooms for entertainment and relaxation (with 4200 square feet of floor space), the new house provides the Fishers with the many rooms which they and their visiting children or guests require. Punctuated by a two-storey stair hall, a large central corridor orients all major rooms southward towards the gardens beyond which like the lake.





Layout: Susan Ross

PETER ROSE
ARCHITECT



Architects: Peter Rose with William Mark Pimlott

General Contractor: Sherma Construction, Magog

Photography: Peter Rose and Carlo Molino

Drawings from the architect's office

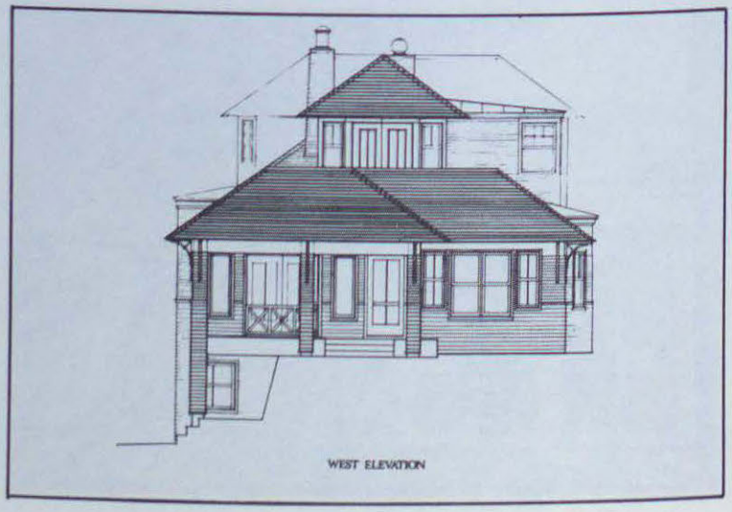
RIBKOFF HOUSE
AUSTIN, QUEBEC

EAST ELEVATION

With the adjacent boathouse and granite cliffs, the Ribkoff House creates a formal courtyard in the midst of the Laurentian landscape. The house is situated in such a way as to provide intimate view of the stone cliffs and nearby forests and wider vistas over the lake and surrounding mountains.

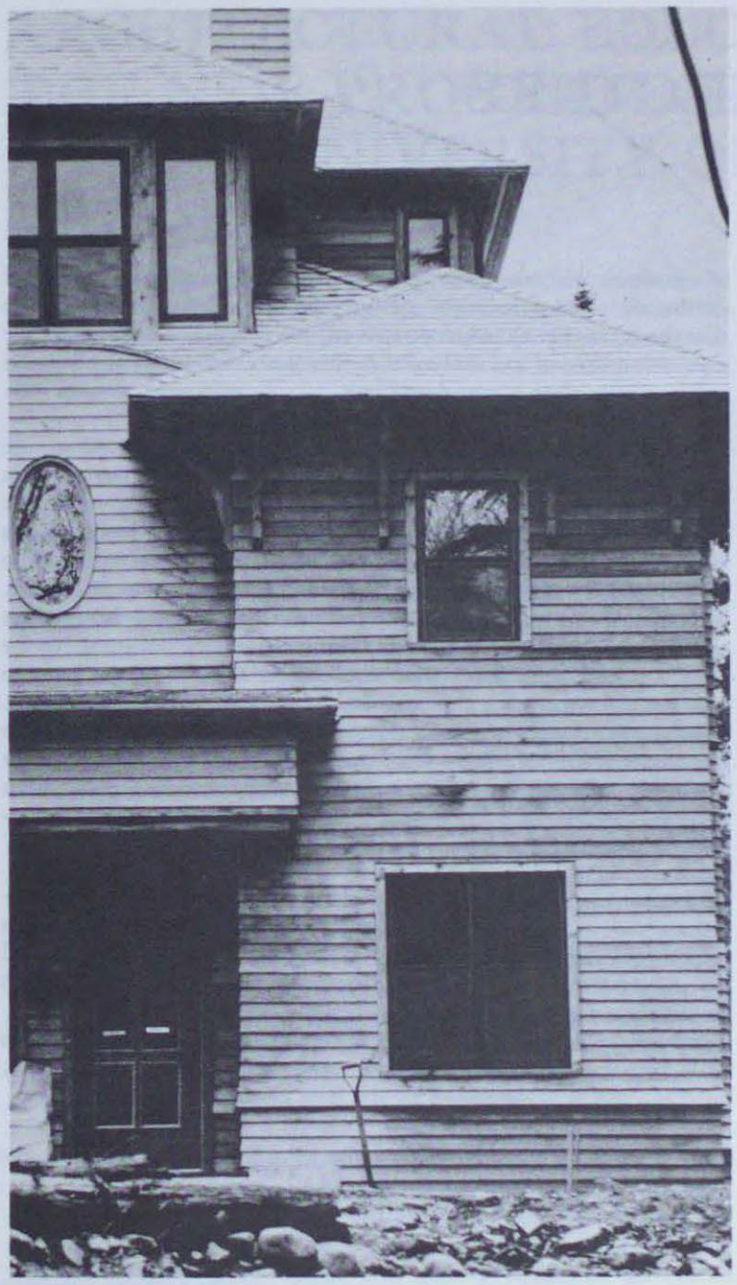
Wherease the order created here alludes to a certain sense of ceremony, the house and the boathouse were designed in a picturesque fashion appropriate to the long tradition of country houses. Furthermore, the rich architectural language of the country house is reflected in the use of wood as a finishing material both inside and out, as well as in the specific development of details.

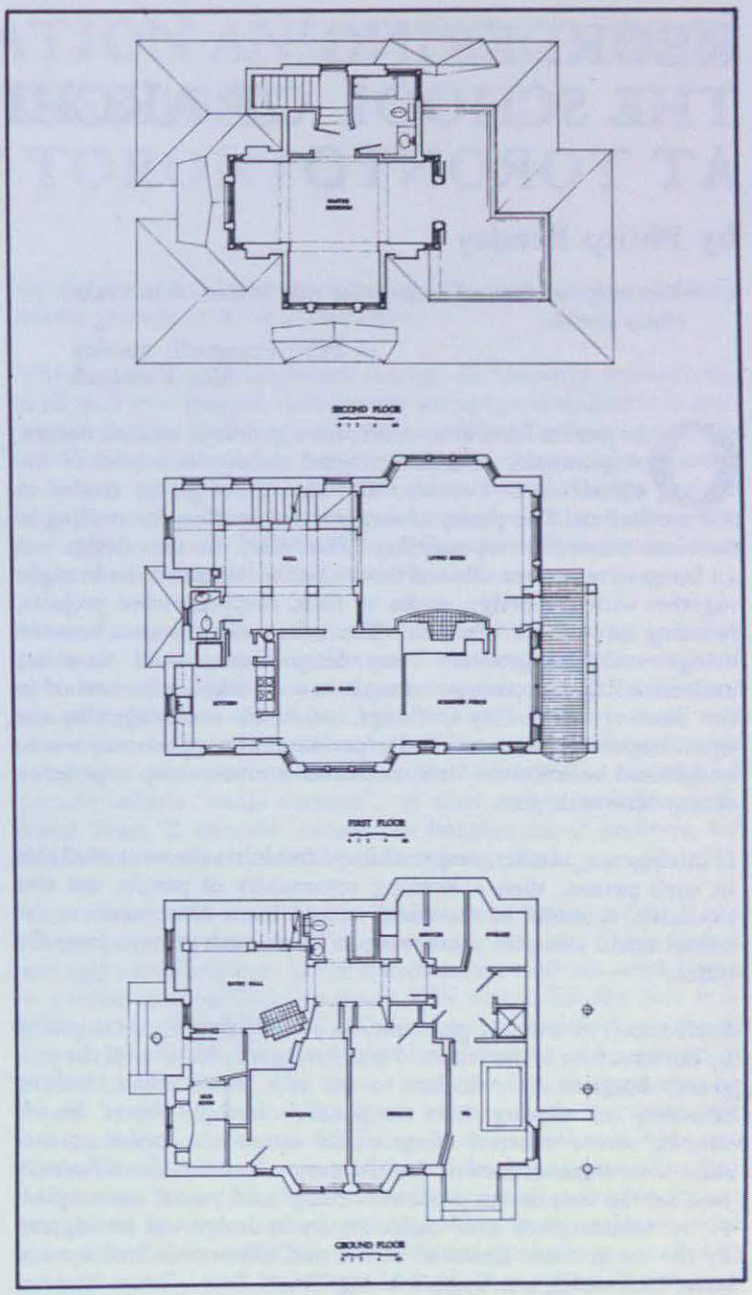
Architects: Peter Rose with Erich Marosi and Ron Keays
General Contractor: Pierre Travailland and Construction, Saint-Saveur
Photography: Peter Rose and Carlo Molino
Drawings from the architect's office

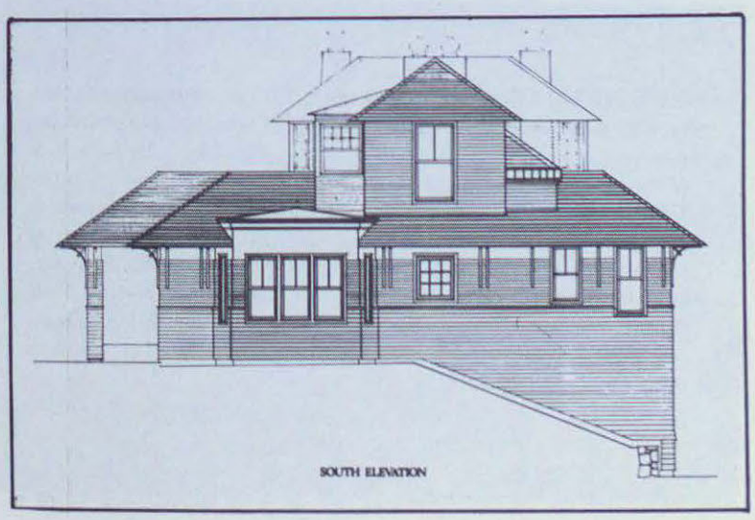


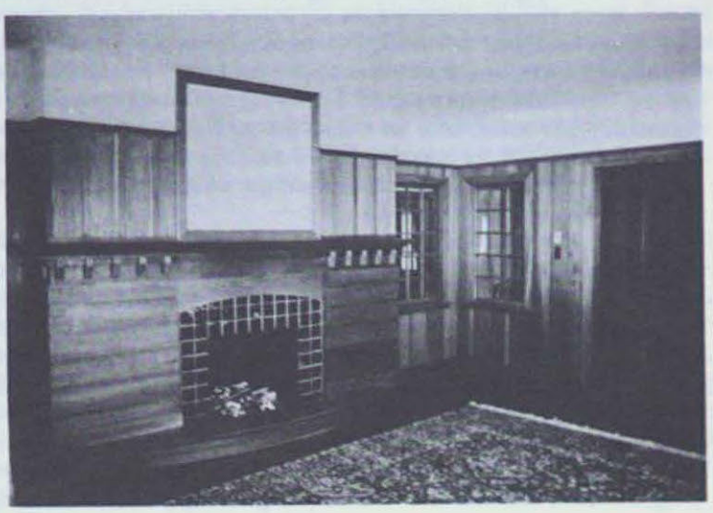
WEST ELEVATION

PETER ROSE
ARCHITECT









REORDERING THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AT TORONTO

by Philip Beesley

The only function of order, this side of Evil, is to make chaos livable.

— Peter Prangnell, quoting
Aldo Van Eyck

One yearns for a free world, for a generous human nature. A generosity of trust attracted me to the School of Architecture at Toronto. The absence of grades trusted in self motivation. The parity of students and staff in the making of decisions trusted in responsibility. The belief was that design was an integrative process allowed theory and technique to be brought together with the design studio to form comprehensive projects, running throughout the year. The connections drawn between things would be proven — my design work would show my understanding. Becoming a stranger to one's self, a stance to aid to the discovery of quality in things, would be encouraged by the equal respect of innocence and experience. My opportunity was to understand both Robert Venturi and the summer camp experience of my thirteenth year.

If intelligence, vitality, responsibility, and initiative were available in each person, then a working community of people was also available. A model of the world wished for... Newcomers to the school would join with those ready to leave, each to learn from the other.

Such a level of trust, of generosity in our relationships was guided by the structure of the school. Peter Prangnell, founder of the program, designed a curriculum to act as a fertile arena, inviting discovery and sharing. Like the parallel 'friendly object' he advanced, where material things would act as our 'peers', rather than as servants or masters, the structure was active. Hot titles were used for the core design problems: 'camp' and 'motel' were replaced by 'summerplace' and 'oasis'. Poetry in design was anticipated by the curriculum. Issues of arrival and orientation had a mandate: 'welcoming a stranger', 'being There'.

The stance of a peer is a finely balanced one. A peer participates, adapts, provokes, accomodates... a peer will play with us if we are willihg. Enthusiasm has waned for Prangnell's curriculum. It is commonly perceived now as either too nebulous, with freedom becoming vacuous, or too dominant, its behaviour-centred study interfering with other interests — a master or a servant, no longer a peer. Fewer students want to play.

The school will change this year, relinquishing its informal stance to a traditional university structure: technical courses, grades, and quiet design projects titled 'camp' and 'motel'. It might be said, however, that the cooling of the school curriculum sets up a greater trust than before. Trust in the ability to connect things makes unnecessary an integrated core. Instead, a generosity of undigested information sources is offered, to be taken by choice. Development, integration, is for the student, not the structure. Likewise, judgements of teachers will be made tangible by grades: the ability of students to use these judgements is trusted. Moreover, a deliberate ordinariness of design themes allows poetry to be discovered rather than preconceived. An original design, whether a summerplace or a cemetery of monuments, will no doubt have no more energy than a mandated one.

Like a symmetrical table setting, which springs to life when one starts passing pepper and salt, the new formality of the school's curriculum is workable. It is clear, though, that such an order falls short of the 'peer' stance that Prangnell has hoped for in the things to be built. If a system is rigid, I will complete it by using its limits as a frame for my free activity. But a pecking order comes of this, of humans, the lyric ones, dependent on walls and machines to do the dirty work of making limits. I don't want, as a human, to be only a poet, and I don't want the objects around me to be only mechanical. Mechanical rituals are as viable in me as lyricism — the same is true for any built thing. A cue might be taken from Le Corbusier's use of rigid structure together with free plans in building... the variety of the building allows me to find pleasure in uniforms and bowing, against a wavy wall, no less than dancing erratically through a column grid.

The new formality of the architecture school at Toronto will prompt many more romantic designs, seeking in improvised forms what rigid courses lack. Formalism, as a style, currently energized by the *ad hoc* curriculum, may very well wane. What will be less available, as a cue for design work, is the example of a school structure that wished to make participants independent, by virtue of its own integrity. Prangnell's vision was hardly realized at Toronto, and my regret is deepened by the new changes at the school.

Philip Beesley is a student in the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of Toronto.

Editor's Note

THE FIFTH COLUMN *is a forum for many points of view. It is by now well known that in the past few months there has been a great deal of discussion at the School of Architecture (Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture) at the University of Toronto. There are almost as many opinions as there are students, and in this issue we are printing three of these as an indication of just how varied, and with what conviction, students involved in the program are presenting their points of view. Out of just this sort of respectful dialectic many hope for the most challenging atmosphere for the learning of architecture.*

— *Kathy Dolgy*

Layout: Susan Ross

ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION AND ITS DOUBLE: THE NEW PROGRAMME 1968-1982 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

by Paul Boulard

In September, 1968, amidst a great deal of optimistic prose, a New Curriculum was instituted at the University of Toronto's Department of Architecture. It was proclaimed shortly thereafter that, with this Curriculum, the school was "at the front of a new architecture".

In the fall of 1982, a new Acting Dean was appointed to the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. His mandate, from the University's governing body, quickly became clear. In an address to the Faculty Council in October, he asked the rhetorical question, "What is the use of retaining an undergraduate programme in Architecture that, after fourteen years, continues to alienate the rest of the University, the profession, and the Department's own best students?"

What had happened in those fourteen years? I believe that, in the re-evaluation of the New Programme now under way, the evidence coming to light suggests that implications of educational malpractice, and of the victimization of students, will have to be given serious and thoughtful consideration. Yet it now appears possible that such a state of affairs did not come about through the deterioration of what initially were good intentions. This paper seeks to provoke much-needed debate on the possibility that the New Programme embodied, from the very beginning, mechanisms that tended to militate against academic freedom in the learning of architecture. Moreover, it is not merely a story of parochial interest. The case of the New Programme at the University of Toronto raises issues that concern schools of architecture everywhere, whether they retain any legacy of the '60's or not.

By all accounts, Toronto's Department of Architecture prior to 1968 was a solid if not particularly high-profile school, with close ties to the profession. But university expansion was still under way, employment was high and traditional standards of educational quality were being thrown into question. 'Progressive education' was the banner of the times. The New Programme set out to dismantle the traditional structure of university architectural education — based on the lecture, the practical class and the design studio — and claimed to re-assemble the necessary content in the form of the "Core Problem". Within the Core Problem, a design project was to be understood as an "open-ended probe". There were no longer to be the usual mandatory lectures on matters of technology, history, theory, and design methods, nor practical classes in drawing and presentation methods. Instead, it was claimed that the student, as he progressed through one year-long design project, would at certain points in the project realize his need for certain kinds of information. At such times, it would be his responsibility to seek such information from the staff — who were no longer teachers, but had become, in the best Newspeak of the time, "resource persons". Each year of the five-year programme was divided into stages, some of which were designated as technical or historical "workshops", but always "relevant" to the theme of the year's project. Elective courses were still presented in a more traditional format, but the activities of the Core Problem were the central concern, occupying in practice approximately ninety percent of the student's time.

There was a further important change. As "resource persons", the staff were to relinquish their former pedagogical authority in matters of design. Staff and students now formed a "peer group" in which everyone's opinion was of equal value, it was claimed, being based on his everyday experience of the world. Design projects were just as "open-ended" for professors as for students; there were "no right answers", and "the outcome was the truly unknown" or so claimed the school's Calendars at the time.

Here was a programme, then, that offered the appealing *cachet* of being in tune with the times; of meeting militant students' criticisms of outmoded educational structures and Establishment attitudes. The fact that it had been imported from a scene of real unrest and militancy — Columbia, 1967 — to one of backwoods calm was not often mentioned. The comparative novelty of pseudo-Leftists "social concern", of what was in reality second-hand Team X rhetoric, caught the imagination of students; for some, here was a respectable and inspiring cause.

Yet, even at the start, contradictions were conspicuous. If the design projects were truly "open-ended", why was there such a strongly moralistic tone in the criticism that students' work began to receive in those first few years? Why was it that the New Programme's legacy of Team X beliefs was never dealt with openly, in the context of more recent polemical positions and criticism of Team X's work? And why was it that, even though there were no "right answers", those students whose work parroted the iconography and rhetoric of Team X in general and Aldo van Eyck, Herman Hertzberger and Le Corbusier in particular (but without any sense of the sophisticated principles involved in the latter's work) became elevated to membership in an exclusive social group (the *Schutzstaffel*, as a disenchanted graduate once called it) around certain staff members? Indeed, if the New Programme sought the implementation in architecture of "the most diverse precedents" and the development of a student's personal position — as distinct from a position assimilated from accepted authorities — why were certain approaches to design consistently denigrated when they appeared in students' work? More importantly, why did some students seem to be being consistently subjected to public humiliation by certain staff during presentation of their work?

When such questions are asked, the possibility arises that what went on at Toronto after 1968 was, for some, not so much educational reform as the building of a little empire. It would, of course, be naïve to suggest that empire-building, hypocrisy and the establishment of a party line are unusual in schools of architecture. But what was unusual at Toronto was, first, the degree of disparity between the idealism of its rhetoric and the student's actual everyday experience in the school; and, concomitantly, the degree to which the teaching of architecture suffered in the course of the empire's construction.

The empire at Toronto was built on and sustained by myths rather than pedagogical content. First and foremost among these myths was that of **architect as creative genius**: heroic, intuitive and original rather than rational, explicit and catholic. It is ironic that in North America we owe this myth most of all to the self-promotional efforts of Frank Lloyd Wright, who always suffered neglect at the hands of the New Programme's ideologues. It is even more ironic given the New Programme's professed disdain for "prima donna-ism. Yet Wright's legacy was taken up by Louis Kahn, whose "sincerity" went over better at the school, especially considering his influence on Hertzberger and van Eyck, while Le Corbusier's Nietzschean visions of grandeur were part and parcel of his role in the school's mythology as chief deity and role model.

The myth, as it affected the student at Toronto on a day-to-day basis, had the further function of establishing a set of criteria by which he would be judged. It first manifested itself in the admissions process; conventional standards of evaluation (high school marks or previous university studies) were to be disregarded in favour of the results of an interview and the examination of a portfolio, which together would reveal whether or not an applicant "had what it takes". This mysterious and indefinable "certain something" was often outwardly indicated, so it seems, by a certain naïveté. Such were the first indications, in the Programme's mythology, of a deeply entrenched anti-intellectualism, and a variation on Rousseau's notion of the Noble Savage. A clarity of insight born of child-like innocence was to be aspired to; an "insight" undistorted by the artificialities of consumerist society.

But this did not mean that craftsmanship and hands-on experience were necessarily to be considered laudable qualities in a student. Within the programme, the myth was sustained and elaborated: crudeness (a "rude vigour", perhaps) in one's graphic work and some suggestion of profound inner struggle were much to be desired, in the view of some of the more influential staff. Icons and anti-icons were co-opted to the task of reinforcing the myth: every year it was proclaimed that Matisse was manly, Aubrey Beardsley effete, Mies an anal retentitve and Corbusier vigorous and vital. Approved precedents were, however, rarely analyzed rigorously in terms of their formal principles — their grammar and syntax — but only **described**, in terms of the (dubious) implications for human behaviour within them.

For, as has been said, the roots of the Programme's ideology lay in Team X "Behaviourism". The fallaciousness of the Behaviourist doctrine has been dealt with elsewhere. It would be inappropriate to take up the case again, because in fact the New Programme did not even deal with Team X principles rigorously, but clouded their formal implications with its own myths.

Acceptance by students of the myth of genius allowed the Programme to claim that architecture could not be **taught** but only **inspired**. Either a student "had what it takes" or he didn't; and if he didn't, there wasn't much that could be done by the school. Any suggestion that, for his tuition, a student might expect to receive formal instruction in methods and skills was likely to be answered, "Surely you don't want to be **spoon-fed**?". Apparent deficiencies in a student's work could thus always be attributed to a personal weakness, not to a lack in his training. In addition, it could always be claimed that he had not sought the help of the "resource persons" when he ought to have done so, or indeed that he had not **realized** that he needed to seek it.

Within the rhetoric of the New Programme, it became extremely difficult, if not impossible, to attribute deficiencies in a student's work to anything other than his own shortcomings — not to the Programme's actual lack of content, for example, nor to actual incompetence on the part of the staff. The student was encouraged to believe that the New Programme existed as a mechanism within which he would achieve competence in architectural design only, so long as he was willing to commit himself to becoming a more "open", "straightforward" and "confident" person. If he was told that he had failed to achieve this competence — and the staff, though "peers" in an "open-ended probe", were still judges of that — he had only himself to blame. In this way, a second myth — the myth of character — was introduced, and linked to the first.

A document presented to the Fourth Year class of 1973-74 by its Co-ordinator, entitled *Towards a Contract for Assessment*, makes the situation clear:

> Although we are engaged in professional education, inevitably we are concerned with our own development. That is to say architecture, like everything else, reflects the values of its creators and so assessment should deal with our values as they can be manifested through our work.
>
> What we are trying to do then, it seems to me, is to articulate those values we admire in people (and, therefore architects, and ultimately, buildings)... The values then that I can admire can, for the start, conveniently be taken from Bertrand Russel. They are vitality, courage, sensitivity and intelligence. I believe they are manifested in architecture just as they are in any other aspect of life. The work you undertake in a Core Problem will inevitably reveal your character when looked at in these lights.

(It is significant that, although called a "contract", the document nowhere specifies the Co-ordinator's responsibilities).

In such documents as these, and in countless unrecorded extempore monologues in reviews of student work, the switch was made by sophistic sleight-of-hand from the discussion of the discipline of Architecture to the discussion of **character**. Many students willingly accepted this. After all, this was a university school of architecture, and it was not entirely unreasonable for students to assume, at least in their early years at the school, that the staff were acting ethically and in good faith, with the students' best interests in mind insofar as the teaching of architecture was concerned.

Yet it seems that there was never much question raised over the fact that the educational principles most often cited as being fundamental to the New Programme were derived from texts on the education of **children**, not adults. Russell's four qualities of character were those he hoped to inculcate in children attending his Beacon House School. A.S. Neill's Summerhill was frequently presented as a model for the New Programme, as was David Holbrook's *The Exploring Word*, dealing with the teaching of poetry to children as a means of engendering (Holbrook's) moral values in them. These ideological references become all the more significant given that Aldo van Eyck's seminal work was a building for children: the Orphanage in Amsterdam. In the same way, Hertzberger's Montessori Primary School and Kindergarten in Delft, considered by its architect as a machine for developing "identity" in its occupants, is the model for all his other projects. And, indeed, it is no accident that the New Programme's First Year Core Problem was the design of a summer camp for children; nor, indeed, that the Second and Third Year Cores, in their original format, carried unmistakable overtones of summer vacations ("Oasis" — a highway motel — and "Resort"); and that the Fourth Year Core Problem, "Education", involved the design of facilities to house "progressive" child education programmes — Montessori, for example. The New Programme thus contained its automatic justification, and its own mechanism of indoctrination. The presence of such a mechanism explains in part why the Programme was able to survive for so long without internal revolt.

Myth substituted for content; beliefs (quasi-religious, pseudo-Leftist) substituted for ideas; a cult, in effect, substituted for teaching: this was the charlatanism of the New Programme. Let us hypothesize that, for some of its more unscrupulous participants, the purpose of the New Programme may have been to engender a situation in which they — who were being paid to teach — would be able to relieve themselves of the responsibility of actually teaching. As a "resource person", an unscrupulous staff member

who aligned himself with the New Programme could, if he chose, relinquish all conventional pedagogical duties of organizing and conveying content — and suffer no penalty. As a "peer" to student, drawing on his "experience as a man", and declaring himself opposed to intellectualism (as being effete, and synonymous with Rightist formalism), he could further relinquish all responsibilities of undertaking scholarly research. To be sure, desk crits and juries — the essence of any design studio — would still be his responsibility. But with the myth of creative genius in force, an incompetent tutor would not appear incompetent. Such a situation would become self-perpetuating: the less active and well-read a staff member might be, or become, the more it would become necessary to keep the student ignorant in order to maintain minimal credibility as a "resource person". Under such circumstances, teaching would be the very thing a teacher would have to avoid doing: vagueness would become the order of the day.

Furthermore, since the Core Problem was not based on a specific and realistic brief, the staff member would never be obliged, in juries to appraise a project in terms of such a programme (implicitly revealing his own design abilities, or lack of same), but only in a descriptive and *ad hoc* manner. For some, the sooner they could steer the discussion from architectural matters in to a commentary on the student's personality and values as (supposedly) readable from his work, the better. Since a student was obliged to construct his own brief for each project, and since, in the New Programme, reviews (juries) were intended to criticize a design in terms of its "intentions", he would, more often than not, get it at both ends. For those non-cultists who had taught themselves how to programme, how to design and how to draw, the reviews were not so much pedagogical instruments as potential psychodramas, in which they risked undergoing vindictive and destructive personal attacks. And since the staff member was required, if acting as Year Co-ordinator, to be accountable for an evaluation of a student's work only once in an entire year (at the end, as 'Honours', 'Pass' or 'Fail' only), the Co-ordinator would not be obliged by the Programme's structure to present a substantial, consistent and justifiable attitude to that work in the course of the year.

Indeed, under such circumstances, it would be in the student's best interests to ingratiate himself with his Year Co-ordinator in any way he could. The absence of marks on individual stages of the Core Problems — and thus the absence of any structure of staff accountability through the course of each year, until the very end — seems to have constituted another mechanism of victimization in the New Programme. It was also for this reason that the much-vaunted staff-student parity on the school's Council was of no more than rhetorical value. With staff members holding absolute power over a student's future in the school, free speech on his part was hardly advisable, and any real student-initiated change to the Programme hardly feasible. This was the second major reason for the Programme's longevity.

Thus, dissenting students could find themselves in a truly Kafkaesque situation. Without letter grades or numerical marks it became difficult to transfer to another school. No matter how good their work might be (by outside standards and through self-directed study and work experience), it was constantly in danger of being subjected to ideological condemnation (especially if well-drawn). Since it was only officially marked once each year, their security in the programme was constantly in doubt.

In the second half of the '70's, the situation altered somewhat, in that a split began to occur between the first three years of the Programme and the last two. New staff, and old staff willing to pursue new directions, gravitated towards the upper years, and students who had until that point been teaching themselves saw the possibility of support and encouragement. Competing ideological positions began to assert themselves, and those who adhered to the old faith fared less consistently well than they had previously. The period from about 1976 to 1981 became known to some as The Big Thaw, when some of the school's best work was produced; but after 1981, things seemed to be getting cold again.

In fact, the new faces had not lasted long. Confronted with the Core Problem's built-in resistance to a pluralism of approaches, and with the antagonism of the New Programme's ideologues (who still held power in the lower years, but now saw that power fading), the recent arrivals sought more respectable and accommodating opportunities elsewhere. In addition, a change in administration in 1981 had precipitated a crisis among those long-term faculty who were more open-minded. The *laissez-faire* attitude of the "Thaw" period had given way to confrontational tactics that favoured the New Programme's own old guard. In protest, a boycott of upper-year staff ensued. Such was the situation confronting the Department's Acting Dean when he took up the appointment.

It was the cold of provincialism that he found to be regaining a hold on the school. It was a cold that for year had not allowed pluralism to flourish, but had enabled dogmas of the 1950's to remain grotesquely preserved, immune to the current of discourse and change that was going on elsewhere on the international scene. Now, in early 1983, the future of the school is an open question. It is the intention of this paper to provoke open debate on the effects and implications of the New Programme. Through such a debate, the recent history of the school may be further clarified, and present choices facing it and other Canadian schools may become clearer.

Paul Boulard is a pseudonym for a graduate of the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of Toronto.

SITE STUDIES: THE TERRAIN OF IDEOLOGY

This is the landscape of war
Shards and stumps and Broken Men
By the wayside
As metaphor of some truth, hidden.
This is the climate of battle
Tundra taken for granted
And shivering
Each individual out in the cold
Like wounded birds
Left behind in winter.
This is the whimper inaudible
Existent, reverberating
As if something someone said
At one moment
Might have meaning at another
Or forever.

And so there was a cause
And so people took it up
For fear, for vengeance
For lack of better things to do,
To give their lives meaning.

Someone whispered in my ear
Architecture is my love
Now we are comrades in the field.

Luigi Ferrara

Luigi Ferrara is a student in the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Toronto

TEACHING ARCHITECTURE IN THE THIRD MILLENIUM

by Richard Seaton

Students entering Canadian schools of architecture in 1984 will reach their decade of prime production at the turn of the century. It is fit, therefore, to view them as potentially a new breed of professionals fit for the values and purposes of the coming third milennium.

Looking back on the history of western twentieth century architecture, a colleague recently asked his students, "So what? What positive things have the theories of the first three quarters of the century done for architecture and life in the last quarter? What negative things? Has there been any 'progress' toward a better architectural world? Have things regressed? Have they stayed the same? Most important of all: in what directions would you like the future of architecture to move?"

He reports that his students generally thought that developments in architecture over the past seventy-five years were natural and inevitable, irrespective of the 'stars' and intellectuals of the period, and no doubt would continue to do so.

In this determinist view of history, the succession of architectural styles — Beaux Arts, Art Nouveau, mannerist, cottage functionalist, Modern, Post-Modern — derives from a sort of Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis, synthesis and thesis. There is nothing uniquely Canadian in these. Through 1984 and beyond, the trade winds of architectural change in Canada will continue to blow westward from Europe and northward from the United States and from the Latin nations to the south of it. These two Orwellian centres generate much of the architectural ferment which spills over the southern and eastern edges of Canada. Often it is by looking at them now that we can tell where we may be a decade hence.

Prediction of qualities of the future architect need not depend, however, solely on extrapolation. The sections to follow reaffirm the ancient model of the architect as **mediator** between groups and individuals on the one hand, and environment on the other. Now, after the 1960's and 1970's, the model is under intellectual pressures to which it will fail to respond at its peril. Thus it is likely that the time for a new thrust in architectural education — such as that achieved in 1910 by the Flexner Report on medical education in North America — is now.

Role Model I

A key premise of these notes is that the architect is a mediator — that is, she/he mediates the environment for people to us. The starting point for this view is the old 'stimulus arc' idea advanced by the gestaltists wherein an event or act is, figuratively, launched by its creator through a series of media to reach the eyes and brain of the perceiver.

This simple paradigm models aspects of traditional architectural practice. At its most elementary 'Fountainhead' level, the actor (Rand's Rouark) generates a design which is complete in its own right, regardless of its realization in construction. As the product of the architect, the design is solely his alone, it represents an extension of himself and his world view.

At a slightly more sophisticated level, the design creation achieves merit in its representation in a **medium** or setting, such as in a museum or glossy magazine, where it is placed on view for critical viewing — often for other architects to see. Inevitably, in a gestalt sense, the medium of design representation — whether as a rendering, model, photo of a completed building, laser plate, or drawings — colours viewer judgments.

The design or building is typically viewed from outside as an expressive object as noted in the Autumn 1982 edition of THE FIFTH COLUMN, "It is crucial to grasp the meaning of expression, and although it is most explicit on the exterior, it is by no means limited there." A quick look at a random selection of two dozen pages from a dozen contemporary architectural magazines confirms this; seventy-five percent showed exteriors. (Obviously, we would expect to see very few underground or bermed structures.) Further, it is as expressive **objects** that the designs are treated; only a few of the images included people who might actually see the spaces. Often buildings are photographed with their context trimmed away. The objectivity or **thingness** of the architectural event is enhanced by attention to materials for cladding colours, shadowing, structures, and detailing. To paraphrase e.e. cummings, "Things are in the saddle and ride architecture."

Finally, the simple gestalt model in Figure 1 has a **unidirectional** quality; the architect/designer is the initiator of expressive form, and the client/user is the receiver/viewer.

Role Model II

In contemporary architecture, the designer, however, is not an autonomous initiator of the design. The

Layout: Gina Sarafidis

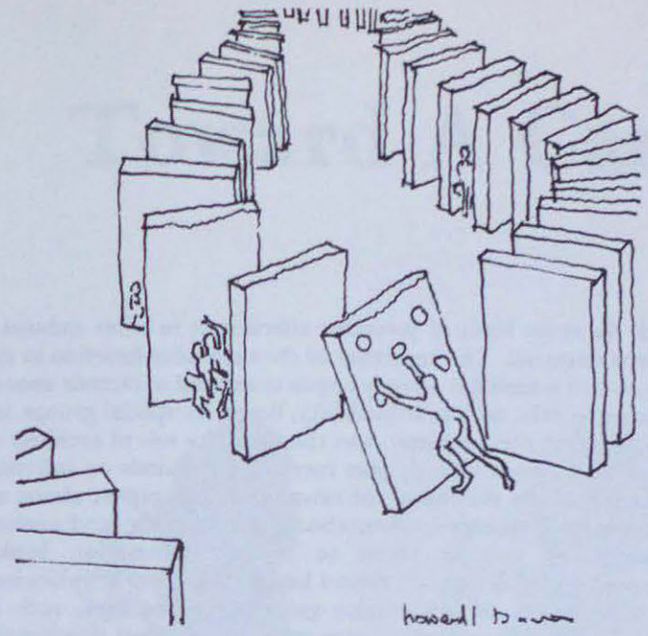


Figure 1. Architect as Initiator

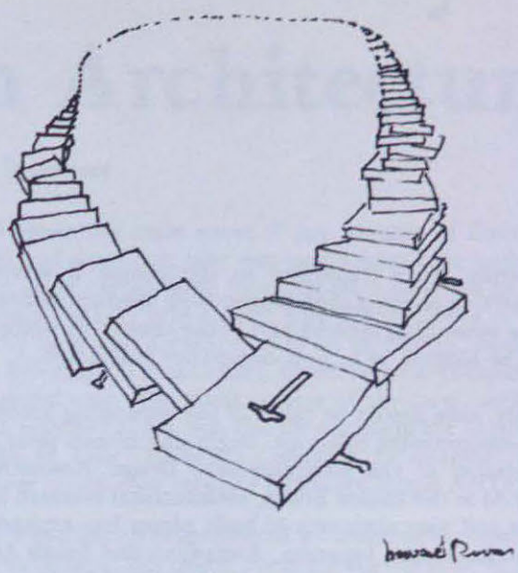


Figure 2. Architect as Mediator

physical/technical/economic environments delimit the decision space of feasible alternative edifices. Such environments also can serve as the wellspring of design, as in the beautiful forms created by Nervi. Thus the environment serves as both taskmaster and pathfinder for the architect (Figure 2).

The stimulus arc model here is more complicated, insofar as the designer herself/himself becomes a translator/mediator of the physical/technical/economic environment. Design outcomes themselves are mediated in their realization, and the built environment itself only gains its existential meaning through a gamut of further intervening, conditioning, representation and experience.

The preceding model of the architect's role no doubt suffers from excess simplicity. In particular, it largely ignores the interaction between the elements. It does have the virtue, however, of clarifying her/his pivotal role as a licensed professional, with the responsibilities in **two** directions: **toward** the environment, and **toward** the user.

The model also includes a feedback loop, wherein — based on user experience rather than merely viewer percepts — user responses become part of the design environment. In architecture, the fundamental human experience takes place in spaces, not just before facades. The success of architecture then comes to depend on space and place design rather than on massing or facade treatment *per se*. Further, the design becomes imbedded in its context; its dominant expressive function thus inevitably is conditioned by its setting and purposes. Indeed, as Ashihara emphasizes in *Exterior Design in Architecture*, facades represented in glossy magazines often could better be viewed as walls of outdoor rooms.

Thus the architect is embedded between building environment and building use. His role in Model II is that of mediator of 'man in the middle'. In Model II, the unidirectional quality of the earlier model is modified by a loop connecting user knowledge, ideas and experiences back to the design process. Such user feedbacks will in the second model inevitably subsume expressive concerns and go beyond them into other aspects of user performance and satisfaction throughout building life. It follows that as 'man in the middle', the architect/designer is in future to be subject to diverse information and varied expectations. In the future, she/he will be expected to include technical knowledge of contexts, settings, user propensities and environmental impacts in his armamentum, rather than emphasizing perceptual sophistication about scale, proportion, rhythm, symmetry or pattern.

Implications

What concerns, then, currently impinge on the architect as mediator. Any listing must be open-ended, but some we can readily include:

a) Public heritage concerns constrain and delimit the universe of design alternatives to those sympathetic with context and traditions.

b) Tools, hardware and materials of our time, impact on architectural process and expression. These include a host of developments ranging from plexiglass and thermopane, computer-aided design, the cost of oil and energy-conscious design, to new earthquake standards, computer information bases, and high tensile steels.

c) Ideation is changing too. We have 'post-modern' architecture, 'contextualism', 'design with nature'. Oscar Newman invents 'defensible space', and 'community of interest'; W.H. Whyte instructs us on 'the social life of small urban spaces'; Stan Milgram dramatizes loneliness and overload in 'the city and the self'; and Ashihara enlarges on N-space and P-space in 'exterior design in architecture'. Such ideas are gaining currency in the professional of architecture and in the architectural schools; like the golden section they are unlikely to be forgotten in future because they are partly confirmed by what scientists term 'hard evidence'. We can expects in future to see their expressions manifest in forms and spaces.

d) In a sense, the future of the profession of architecture in Canada depends on its future clients. In the past, the prototypic client was a single rich powerful individual or cabal which commanded or commissioned the architect to build. The current century brought a shift to predominantly corporate clients, whether public or private. More recently funding priorities have brought new client groups to the fore: for example, residential cooperatives, special populations (patients, children, elderly, handicapped) and heritage advocates, among others. The consensual — rather than autarchic, oligopolistic, or bureaucratic — nature of such groups implies differing kinds of communication and information between architect and client, including participatory design, incremental changes, residential satisfaction, client growth and realization of potential. These kinds of concerns in turn make ar-

chitecture more responsive to the people it serves or accommodates, in terms of their perceptions, predispositions and actions. These terms then become part of the criteria by which architecture shall be judged, as in post-occupancy evaluation.

Finally, note should be taken of the expanding knowledge base of man-environment relations. Beginning fifteen years ago with the foundation of the Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA) in the United States, architectural research in design processes and user responses to built places has expanded to all the major European, Japanese, Australian and South American centres. Thousands of articles and hundreds of books bear directly on this feedback function in the gestalt arc of Figure 2. At least half a dozen pertinent journals in English and French have gained international circulation. This massive accumulation of empirical, verifiable evidence on human responses to design, design issues and design processes inevitably must have a sharp influence on the architecture of the twenty-first century including that in Canada.

Parable

At the turn of the last century, American academic medicine was in a state of flux. Different schools advanced different philosophies; one physician termed it a "chaotic era... Beset with fads and fancies." Leeches were, in a few instances, still being imported from France to bleed patients.

The art of clinical medicine was at that time dominant in the medical schools, the pre-clinical and basic medical sciences in the first two years of professional training were taught typically on a part-time basis or in occasional lectures by clinicians as a stepping stone to the prestige of a clinical chair. Research had low status in the profession and consequently in the schools. When not intuitive, the relative merits of differing treatments were resolved by polemics or by logic unsubstantiated by the pragmatics of results. Treatment outcomes occurring months or years later had little or nothing to do with the art of practice.

Then the American Medical Association (AMA) was reorganized in the first year of the twentieth century. In the second year (1902), a committee was struck to investigate the current state of professional education and the role of the AMA in its improvement. The current state was found to be sad, with some schools having a very spotty record. In the fifth year the AMA therefore created its Council on Medical Education. This established an ideal standard for professional education and then matched the 160 medical schools into three classes: acceptable, doubtful and unacceptable. Although only half were judged acceptable, vested interests resisted upgrading of the others. In response, the AMA turned to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for consultation, with Abraham Flexner, M.D., Ph.D., assigned to the problem. Flexner's findings, largely based on the earlier AMA findings, were delineated in the Foundation's famous Bulletin no. 4, *Medical Education in the United States and Canada* (1910). This recommended upgrading of pre-professional requirements for admission to professional school, full-time teaching and research in the medical sciences, and upgrading of physical plant and laboratories. By 1915, 65 medical schools had closed for failure to meet such requirements.

Conclusion

Architecture in Canada in the third millenium will be subject to much the same kinds of pressures affecting it in other industrial western countries. The centrality of the expressive function in the peer reward system has already begun to expand to include awards on other criteria, such as habitability, fitness for special groups, ingenious use of site, economy, and the like. The role of architect as mediator/manager already puts increasing demands on information retrieval. By the end of the century, we can expect almost all firms own pre-packaged information, programming, and analysis packages, as well as access to central information banks. Computer-aided design will extend beyond computer graphics into computer-supported information-gathering procedures, such as interactive questionnaires, or gaming of hypothetical situations).

Professional training in architecture also will be much changed. New Ph.D. programmes in Architecture and Behaviour, Architectural Technology and Systems, or computer-aided design have appeared in a dozen places in the United States. In the past fifteen years, and one of these days we can expect to see the first of these in Canada. Energy-conscious design will not disappear with occasional price drops in Canada. For half a century we've recognized that our energy consumption is lunatic in terms of world resources; a generation hence, our consumption inevitably will be more proportionate to our numbers.

The last decade has marked the burgeoning of the B.E.D. Degree. The bulk of these graduates can be expected to enter into or join client groups in interface roles with architects. In this sort of role, these design-sophisticated agents will increasingly serve as advocates advancing client and user interests other than — or in addition to — those central to the traditional architectural reward system.

Despite the recent growth of man-environment research, it still is miniscule relative to other expenditure in architecture and the built environment.

In pharmacy, for examples, five percent of gross revenues go into research; three percent of food revenue are so spent; one percent of medical expenditures; one-half of one percent of building and construction expenditures; but probably only one-tenth of one percent of architecture effort is in research. This figure inevitably must change in the face of competition from alternative design-related professions.

A clear corollary of Model 2, the architect as mediator, is the resurging social involvement with urban design of exterior open spaces, their arrangements and their edges. Urban design has a long tradition in planning, but in recent years concern for it has increasingly absorbed architects. We can expect this trend to continue, in the light of the role of architect as mediator versus Formmaker.

In short, a new balance between "art and science" in architecture can be expected in the next century, congruent with role shifts, new research and knowledge retrieval, client sophistication, client participation in design, environmental (heritage, energy) concerns, and competition from related professionals.

Richard Seaton is Associate Professor at the School of Architecture, University of British Columbia.

John M. Lyle
Toward A Canadian Architecture

by Timothy Morawetz

A walk down the main street of any number of Canadian towns and cities may take you past a John Lyle building. Many street corner bank branches were designed by Lyle during his illustrious fifty year career. The life and work of John Lyle has finally been well documented in an exhibition, mounted by the Agnes Etherington Arts Centre, which recently completed a 15 month national tour. The guest curator of the show, architectural historian Geoffrey Hunt, was also the author of the exhibition catalogue *John M. Lyle: Toward a Canadian Architecture/creer une architecture canadienne* recently published by the Art Centre.

John M. Lyle was a strong proponent of a Canadian architecture. Born in 1872 in Ireland, but raised in Hamilton, Ontario, he spent four years studying at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Here, he acquired his love and mastery of the Beaux-Arts style which was to influence his work for the next thirty years. After a decade of practice in New York City, primarily as a renderer with several large firms, he eventually established his own office in Toronto.

Lyle had a varied practice, including commissions for houses, commercial buildings and, of course, banks, which were to become the mainstay of his architectural firm. In 1907 he prepared plans for the Royal Alexandra Theatre, while in 1915, work began on Union Station, Toronto, in which he participated in the design process.

Lyle continued to build houses and banks during the twenties, culminating in the design for the Head Office, Bank of Nova Scotia, Halifax, in 1929. This building is perhaps the climax of his development of a Canadian iconography; a system of ornament and decoration based on Canadian sources including native flora and fauna, Indian motifs, plus images depicting local industrial activites and historical events. This, in combination with a shift in emphasis from the traditional Beaux-Arts to a more modern treatment, based on flattened, planar facades, constituted a novel approach to Canadian building. Lyle's work incorporated a new language of ornament to express the political and artistic climate of the country.

The later works of his career, including 'Highfields', a residence he designed for himself, show the final phase of Lyle's development. Much of the ornament has been stripped away to leave a sparse, crisp building which concentrated primarily on geometry and asymmetrical massing in keeping with the International Style. However, Lyle felt that a degree of ornament must still be incorporated, for "without symbolism in the form of fresh, vital contemporary decoration, the public's interest in architecture is bound to wane, if not die altogether." John Lyle passed away suddenly in December of 1945 at the age of seventy-four, after a long and fruitful career.

The impact of John Lyle extended far beyond the many buildings he actually designed. He was also a teacher, offering evening classes at Atelier Lyle two nights per week in a room above a Chinese laundry in Yorkville. The aim of this class was to provide a better knowledge of the principles of building design than was to be obtained in the average architectural office at the time. Lyle became a promoter of Canadian art and architecture, witnessed by the numerous exhibitions he organized. Finally, he was a sought-after lecturer and critic. Lyle's design work often extended throughout the building to encompass furnishings and other household accessories. He was truly a talented and thorough designer, as capable of creating fireplace fittings as he was of planning grand avenues for Canada's growing cities.

Timothy Morawetz is a student at the School of Architecture of Carleton University. A review of the Lyle exhibit, TOWARD A CANADIAN ARCHITECTURE, from which this introduction is excerpted, appears in the June-July issue of Section a *(Volume 1, Number 3).*

Layout: Mark Poddubiuk

Bank of Nova Scotia Archives

Perspective Rendering, Bank of Nova Scotia, Halifax (John M. Lyle, Architect)

Canadian Decorative Forms

John M. Lyle

John Lyle's struggle to achieve a meaningful architecture in the midst of lingering Victorian historicism and the emergence of a hostile modernism is still noteworthy today. In light of current architectural dilemmas, his work has become an important point of discussion. The following text is from an address delivered by Lyle at the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in February, 1932. It was reprinted in the RAIC Journal *of March, 1932.*

Before showing you the slides on the screen, I should like to make a few general remarks on present day Canadian architecture. Is there such a thing? Has it any national characteristic, or is it merely a repetition of historical forms and ornament, or of the prevailing mode of Paris, London or New York? What road will it travel? Towards a modernism based on international forms and ornament or on Canadian forms and ornament — or is it to remain a dead thing chained to the moss-grown chariot of Rome or to the mystic spirit of the middle ages?

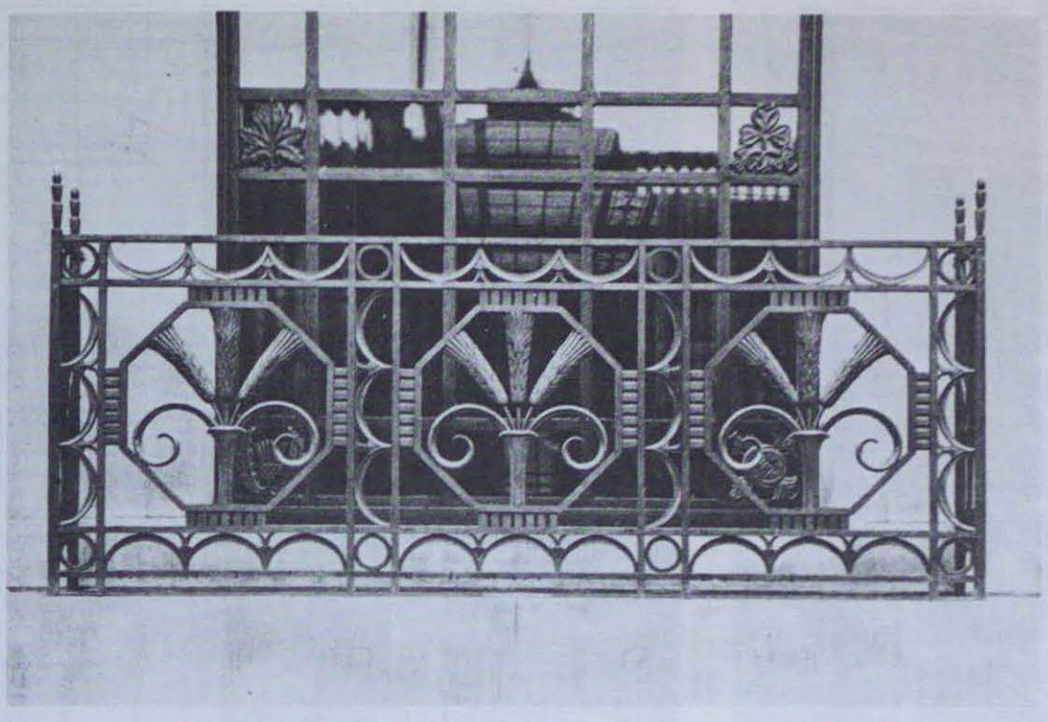
Let us be honest and admit that we have no architecture that can be claimed or recognized as Canadian. It is true, however, that we have in the early French-Canadian houses a certain individual note, principally in the extreme bell casting of the roof. The parentage, however is Norman and lacks the variety that one can see any day on the road from Cherbourg to Cabourg.

The early houses of English Canada are simply American Colonial carried across the border by the United Empire Loyalists. There is a certain local note in the two-coloured brick architecture of Ontario of the middle nineteenth century.

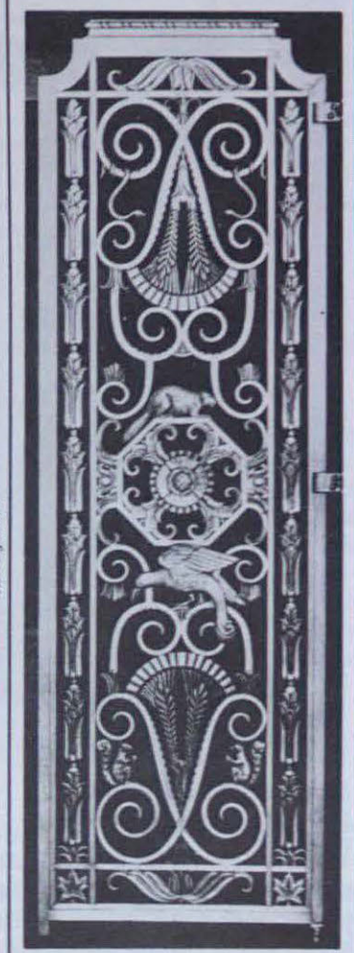
When we come to examine our more serious architecture, we look in vain for a distinctly national note. It is true that we have a number of buildings of distinction to the credit of our profession, and a few that are personal and can be classed as the work of the inspired traditionalist, but we look in vain among the great mass of building for a Canadian note.

Nineteenth century eclecticism still has architectural Canada by the throat — the Gothic architects are copying the mouldings and ornament of the twelfth century, and the classic architects go even farther back to five hundred years before Christ. Surely the slavish copying of mouldings and decorative forms that died five hundred or a thousand years ago will not lead us anywhere. It is not architecture but archeology, and I am firmly convinced that future generations will regard the great mass of Canadian work as merely interesting specimens of craftsmanship, and not as creative works of art. I think that we need to be jolted out of a too-complacent attitude towards our work. We need a tonic and I see signs that a few of us have been at the bottle — some take it in moderation, others have been more reckless, while others again claim that it is more nauseating than castor-oil.

This new medicine is called "Modernism", and it seems to make the old young, and the young frantic — everybody has their own pet interpretation of what "Modernism" in architecture terms means. Some think of it in terms of geometry, others again stress the importance of efficiency — then functionalism has its devotees, and again there are the designers that claim that because we live in a machine age that architecture should look like machinery. They all seem to forget, however, the essential that differentiates architecture from mere building or engineering, namely — beauty, without which attribute no style or vogue can hope to last. The extreme modernist is, in my opinion, equally at fault with the extreme traditionalist, in that he is trying to tie up architecture to a definite set of formulas. Surely you must keep it free if you wish to keep it alive. If, however, you look at the modern movement as a new spirit of design and a release from the historical styles of the past, then I see a germ of greatness which offers rewards to the skilful designer. Particularly should this new movement make a strong appeal to Canadians as it offers a new field in the use of Canadian decorative forms.



RAIC Journal



RAIC Journal

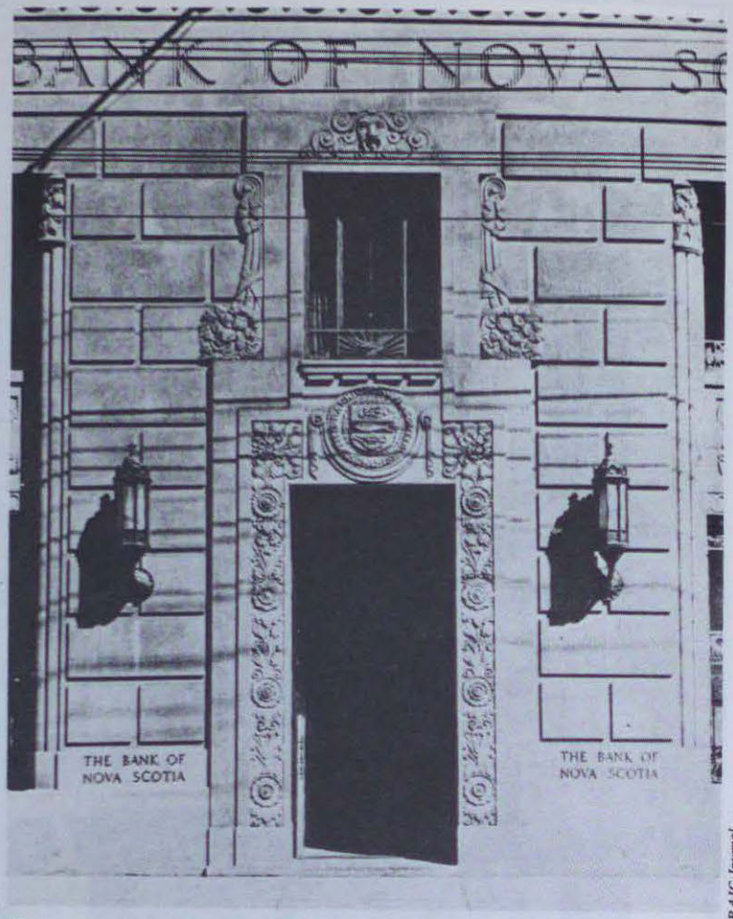
RAIC Journal

Details from the Bank of Nova Scotia, Calgary and Halifax, and the Dominion Bank, Toronto (John M. Lyle, Architect).

RAIC Journal

RAIC Journal

Bronze entrance doors, Dominion Bank, Toronto (John M. Lyle, Architect).



RAIC Journal

Main entrance, Bank of Nova Scotia, Halifax (John M. Lyle, Architect)

I cannot help feeling that the field of form has been thoroughly explored during the past three thousand years. We can, however, hope for new combinations of old forms and a new language of ornament. This new movement, as I see it, does not mean the abandoning of tradition but rather the adoption of a more critical attitude as to the lessons it can teach as well as the mistakes it can make.

While we may agree with the extreme modernist of the engineering view-point, that certain types of buildings lend themselves to a blocky, bald treatment and the elimination of all ornament, we most certainly do not accept this point of view as the last word in the development of a new architecture. If this conception of architecture was to dominate, we would have no national or distinctive architecture, all architecture would look alike. It would become international and the slab-sided box outlines of Germany and France would be identical with those of Canada and the United States.

There is no question that the modern movement has been responsible for the elimination of much of the meaningless ornament that has disfigured nineteenth century building. We must not forget, however, that without symbolism in the form of fresh, vital, contemporary decoration, the public's interest in architecture is bound to wane if not die altogether.

If all buildings are to be devoid of ornament and lacking in any special motifs that might indicate the character of that particular building, then architecture is deprived of its principal means of expression and becomes a standardized mechanical effort.

Why have we in the United States and Canada always borrowed our ornament from Europe? The plan and construction of many of our buildings is distinctly North American. Why do we have to go to Europe for either our traditional or modern ornament? Simply because we have been in a rut for years and as architects have not had the enterprise to search for new decorative forms, nor the courage to use them. Our architectural schools could advance this movement by teaching design in original ornament.

If Canadian architecture is to be a living, vital force, it must satisfy the spirit of our people and of the times in which we live. While we cannot claim, as yet, a distinctive Canadian style, may we not hope that this new freedom for the designer will sweep us along towards a national architecture, for there are present in this modern movement, the same great principles of development that held true in the past. This view-point seemed to us to offer a sound approach to the development of a national note in our architecture, so four years ago we began a search for Canadian forms that would lend themselves to architectural decoration.

We had in mind that "form in art constitutes precisely that element in which the individuality of an artist can make itself distinct from the ordinary realities of nature," or to put it in other words, we have endeavoured to conventionalize the different realistic forms to conform to the desired rhythm or space in which they were to go, mindful always of the material in which they were to be executed.

We are only beginning; it is just four years since we embarked on this new and unchartered sea. We have made many mistakes and it was not without much travail that we were able to get our office staff interested, and kept on the track. I am firmly convinced, however, that we do not need to go to Greece, Rome, England or France for our decorative forms, and that we have here in Canada in our fauna, flora, bird, animal and marine life, a wealth of possible material, as Allan Sims, writing in the English journal *Architectural Design and Construction* says: "Now is the time, when we are being urged to buy British in every other category, for a bold repudiation of our enslavement to foreign sources, whether ancient or modern, in respect of architectural detail."

An Interview With

BAIRD & SAMPSON

Associates, Toronto

RAIC Journal

Vancouver Public Library (circa 1958)

"...if history means shutters, then obviously the Fifties aren't history...."

George Baird was educated at the University of Toronto and University College, London, and has practised in Toronto since 1968. He has lectured in Canada, the United States, Europe, and Australia. He was co-editor, with Charles Jencks, of Meaning in Architecture *and is the author of* Alvar Aalto. *He was recently appointed Chairman of the School of Architecture at the University of Toronto, where he has been as associate professor since 1972.*

Barry Sampson was educated at the University of Toronto and has worked with George Baird since 1972, forming a partnership with him in 1982. He has worked in Paris and did independent study research on the relationship of the formal garden and urban form. He has lectured in Toronto, Waterloo, and Halifax, exhibited work in Toronto and Princeton and contributed to a number of magazines. He is presently an assistant professor at the University of Toronto.

Layout: Peter Scriver

TFC: The theme of this issue of THE FIFTH COLUMN is 'A Canadian Architecture'. I would like to begin with a discussion of Canadian architecture itself, and whether or not there is such a thing?

Baird: I don't think you can isolate it. You can isolate tendencies that have some local significance, but I don't think you can identify something that is truly generic. Mind you, I'm not sure that they can do that anywhere else, either.

TFC: Let's say within the Ontario context, as described in "Essays in the Vernacular". Could you see it as a more localised condition?

Baird: To some extent you can...

Sampson: ...if you want to designate some regional tendencies rather than a Canadian architecture.

Baird: Yes. If you want to talk about all of that eighteenth century building in the Maritimes, it constitutes a clearly discernible pattern, which, of course, is not that distinct from New England. It has a lot in common with that, but it has identifiable motifs. The same is true of Quebec, where you have a pattern that is recognisable as distinct from other areas of Canada. In the nineteenth century, a certain kind of primitive Baroque was going on in all the churches that, again, would be characteristic of only Quebec. Or, all those wooden buildings that were built on the West Coast. These are identifiable.

Sampson: They are a synthesis and adaptation of a kind of colonial architectural heritage.

Baird: They all come from someplace else. The New England stuff comes from England, the French stuff from Brittany, and the Vancouver stuff is not that distinct from the contemporary stuff further down the coast. In "Essays in the Vernacular" I was depressed at the way buildings got wrecked in the process of renovation — all of those projects were renovations. None of them were new buildings. At the time it was published, you tended to get fake historical stuff going on. There was an architect, Napier Simpson, who had a career, a large part of which consisted of building and renovating country estates for people. He had developed a kind of technique of adding on '1850' family rooms to 1850 houses. Four-car garages and cabanas were all in the genre of your standard Ontario farmhouse. They were all meticulously done; the guy was by no means a hack architect. It's a funny kind of image of a farmhouse to accomodate the exurban gentleman farmer's social programme. The other tradition was...

Sampson: ...the one of just ignoring it.

Baird: That's right. Just hack; brick up the windows, sandblast it, paint the front grey.

Sampson: Or, at its most extreme, you cover it all over with aluminium siding. There are several examples of this on Spadina Avenue.

Baird: We were interested in a way of working with these buildings, which played off their existing formal characteristics, without making fake history out of it.

TFC: Don't you think the process of trivialisation of history is more of a problem now than it was eight years ago when you published the article?

Baird: Well, yes and no. It's a more complicated situation now. Back then you either got fake history or the hack stuff. Now we have a funny situation where a more complex attitude to history has entered the mainstream of architecture.

Sampson: A potentially more complicated attitude toward history. Then, people were reacting to the mustiness of all this old stuff and the rest was seen as progressive and modern. They just covered it all over and transformed it. The others respected it to the point that they reproduced it, so that you couldn't tell what was genuine. The new stuff tended to call into question the historicity of the old stuff. Now there seems to be a similar reaction except that it's anti-modern. You have either complete transformations of modern structures or their demolition, as we previously had with the historical structures. One would like to think that it is a more complicated possibility of working with historical structures, except that it still has this reactive component to it, except that it is reversed. Now things need to be historical and things that are modern are not good. So you have this transformation of that yellow brick, modern industrial showroom that was down on Front Street, by Moriyama's office, into a pseudo-historical building, in keeping with the historical precinct that it is in.

Baird: It wasn't a great building. It was a kind of passable piece of Fifties, with a buff brick and glazed front. It was a machinery showroom and had an open plan to show all that stuff. Up above, it has strip windows. They covered them all up with brick arches — it's very disconcerting. It depends on what your view of history is. If history means shutters, then obviously the Fifties aren't history. If you have a more interesting idea of what you think history is, then the Fifties are history by now. If you take the Williams and Wilson showroom, it wasn't a building of great significance, but the addition to the Park Plaza Hotel was a building of some significance which got trashed up six or seven years ago.

TFC: The gas station on the corner of Carlton and Jarvis which was being demolished just yesterday.

Baird: Another case in point. That was the original Four Seasons Hotel next door.

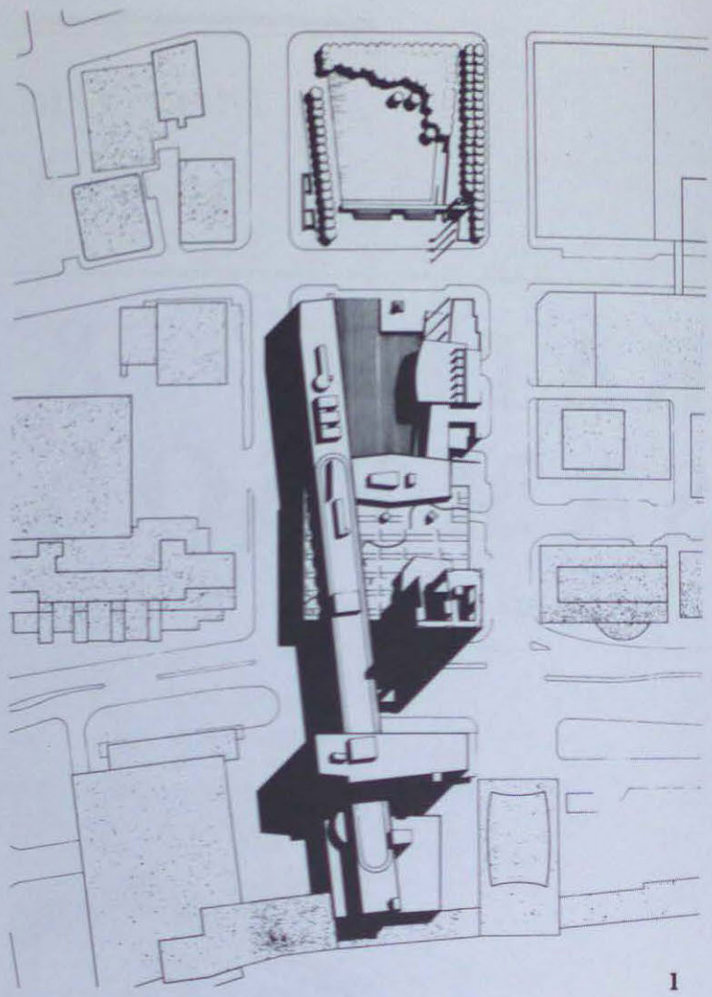
Sampson: The Lothian Mews.

Baird: These are all works of Peter Dickinson, who was an interesting Fifties architect, probably the most interesting Fifties architect working in Toronto. The O'Keefe Centre is another building by him, also recently renovated. Lots of these buildings are threatened. Another interesting one is the Vancouver Public Library. It is considered to be functionally obsolete and there is an idea for a new one, which would make the old one — what does the government call them — 'surplus property'. It is interesting to see how the cycles of fashion and usage are such that, except for Queen Street West, the Fifties are as out of fashion as you can get. Any day now, we will be called on to rescue Scarborough College as the wheels of indifference move ever onward.

TFC: How is the approach taken here in the office any different? Is the consciousness of history enough?

Sampson: I guess we are interested in entering into a discourse with history. It's important that some continuity be maintained in the city, rather than go through these continual complete transformations. It is well within the realm of possibility that the Toronto fabric will not have any examples of buildings from the Thirties. There are very few examples of Art Deco buildings left even now — they could easily vanish. We are not interested in keeping buildings just for their own sake, but it's not necessary to take a culturally vandalistic view of the city. In the Edmonton City Hall (competition), we opposed the destruction of the existing building primarily because Edmonton is going through these cycles of demolition that have now gotten up to the Sixties. Given that the existing City Hall is one of the higher quality modern buildings built in Edmonton, we decided that we would try to do the scheme around it.

Baird: In a certain way, there is an attempt to elaborate an idea of a certain kind of cultural space that has texture and definition to it, so that it is not just these historical fragments that have some



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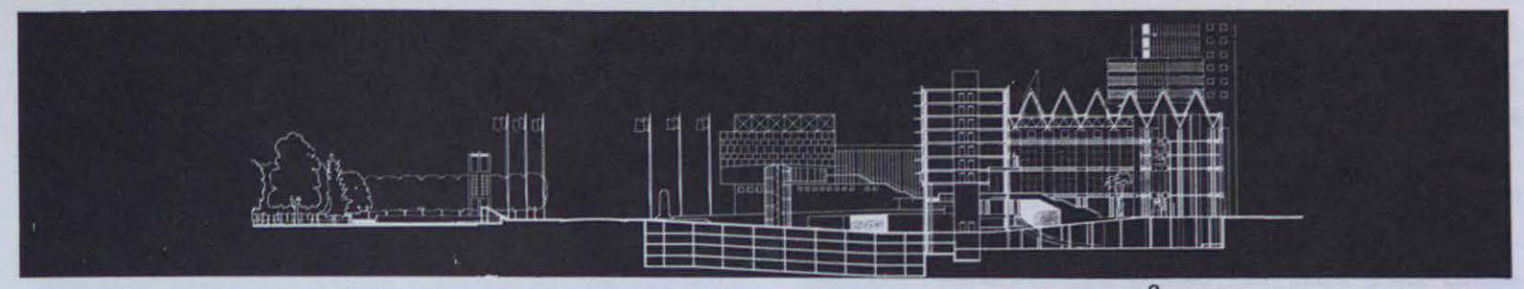
value in their own right, but that (idea), by virtue of somehow positing them as a configuration that is recognisable within a certain set of characteristics, in historical status, and also elaborating a second kind of system which is something to do with our time. To me, the superimposition of one on the other is more significant. It's not just one plus one, it's more than that, because a third term enters the equation, whereby you can actually see the possibility of an extended cultural metaphor having to do with the fact that there is this place and it has these things in it from some time ago. It also has a present and there exists a possibility of positing a relation between them. That implies something about the larger historical possibility of the society. That's why, to me, it is consistent, on the one hand, to oppose the cavalier treatment of these older buildings and, at the same time, oppose the historical emulations. Both of these obviate on the question of what the relation of the past to the present really is.

TFC: In this process you are involved in the intellectual selection of those aspects of a given historical element that you will keep in the transformation. Again, how do you keep from trivialising the object that remains?

Sampson: By taking a certain distant respect for them and then by entering into a discourse with them. It is in the city fabric that the city generations touch in a concrete way. There have been events that, for me, throughout our studies, have been Epiphanies. The disappearance of Victoria Square in Montreal, the complete destruction of the market square in Brantford, and the complete transformation of Confederation Square in Ottawa are examples where a very coherent period of city building just completely disappears, completely destroyed and made unrecognisable to the next generation by only one or two generations who saw no value in them. They saw them as surplus elements in the city.

Baird: The examples that Barry has mentioned are the most startl-



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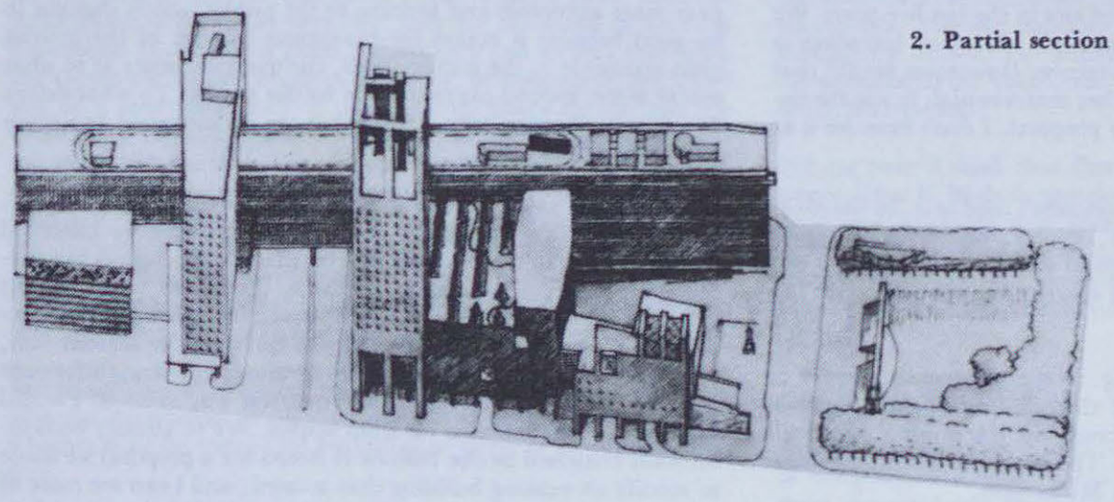
Baird & Sampson/Edmonton City Hall competition proposal

1. Site plan

2. Partial section through principle public spaces

3. Axonometric view



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ing ones. Unless you go back and look at the picture books, you would not even be able to know that these were once squares. The transformation of the ground plan and the surrounding elements is so complete that they are just vacant lots. Take, for example, in Toronto; I'm extremely resentful about the churchyards of St. James Cathedral and the Metropolitan United Church. Both used to have wrought iron fences around them, which constituted a kind of low level mechanism of space definition. To make a square that has buildings around it is tricky and normally relies on a constant and reasonably high wall around the edge on the other side of the street. Well, in Toronto, where there was a variable condition, the fence provided a buttress of space definition. Again, in the Fifties, as an act of vandalism against an earlier generation, those churches made a deal with the City whereby the City took over the maintenance because they were being used by the public. City Parks agreed to take them over in exchange for removal of the fences, the idea being that they would become more of a public place. Formally, it has been a catastrophe because the spatial definition is gone. There is no longer any structured pattern of movement. They, of course, have discovered that the old paths don't correspond with the new patterns of movement, so they hack up the park. It is a kind of progressive deterioration of what used to be some rather fine spaces. Those are some examples of the progressive loss of judgement as to the status of formal elements as part of the urban fabric.

TFC: When faced with a programme that doesn't have much context, such as the Mississauga City Hall Competition, what do architects do, then?

Baird: First of all, Mississauga is not without context. The historical introduction to the competition programme, having to do with the patterns of land division, the organization of the farm lands, and the concession grid, forms a kind of first order for any kind of building in Ontario. Following that, you have all the patterns of regional growth that came out of the Sixties; that produced Mississauga City Centre. On top of that are sets of assumptions about what is the current typology of suburban practice, which, in a community as fast-growing as Mississauga, form a sort of nascent context. One of the things clever about Edward Jones's and Michael Kirkland's position was manifest in those little alternative drawings they made. There is an implication in the Secondary City Plan for a more traditional city fabric, with buildings forming street walls. On the other hand, the planning approval process is not exactly powerfully directed toward obtaining that result and, in the meantime, the developers that are building in Mississauga are, to varying degrees, resisting it. What gets built are —

TFC: The 'cactus' Michael Kirkland speaks about.

Baird: That's right. It doesn't correspond with what is sought, at least to date. Michael (Kirkland) and Edward (Jones) did set their scheme up in such a way that it could respond to either kind of configuration, as foreseen in the city plan or, alternatively, as something that is a more straightforward extrapolation of the present development patterns in the area. Well, that's a contextual response.

Sampson: One of the things we have discovered while studying the formation of the towns in the nineteenth century in Ontario is that one started from an empty field or clearing. In fact, there were deliberate efforts to set out controlling lines for a city that had shape. The shape of that city could not be manifest initially in building, so there were strategic moves that might be made, in the first instance, to create the basic structure of that city, to guide the town as it grew. It was a condition that might be described as contextual, as the basis there was the concessional grid.

Baird: I think that one of the most amazing characteristics of modernism is that it entails the abandonment of the idea that an urban fabric was an accumulated creation over time by...

Sampson: ...generations.

Baird: Different actors in one generation followed by subsequent generations, all of whom would be proceeding on the basis of some common assumptions as to what kind of objectives were desired.

Sampson: Like a chain letter.

TRC: Your guidelines for the Mississauga competition were much stricter than either the Calgary or Edmonton competition guidelines. Are these strict guidelines the way to restore the continuity to city building?

Baird: Only in terms of the urban design. In other respects, the guidelines were much looser. It's not so mysterious, you know, the notion of 'build-to' lines and other obligations of the building to the definition of public space. There are some rather elementary rules of thumb which in very recent times have become reasonably familiar again. Things have changed alot in the last five years. We recommend to the people in Vancouver that they introduce a 'build-to' line, in relation to the "Greening Downtown Study" that we did for them. That has been rather controversial. It was the only really controversial aspect of our proposal. I don't even see it as being particularly directive.

Sampson: It's just that the developers aren't used to it. In the nineteenth century or the eighteenth century, one didn't have to legislate it because there was a cultural assumption that when you built a building, it faced the public space. They contributed to the appearance of the public space.

Baird: In fact, generally speaking, in the nineteenth century in Toronto, the only architecture of the buildings is their facades. They don't have any other architecture, the rest is just a party wall and a blank wall against the lane. The notion of a building as an object in its own right comes with Modernism.

TFC: In Colquhoun's discussion of the 'superblock', he says that it is not only a change in aesthetic sensibility but changes in the scale of interventions in the city that makes things modern. Within Toronto, where developers play with whole city blocks, doesn't this create an opportunity for architecture that is more than just street facades?

Baird: Yes and no.

Samspon: The question I have is: What?

Baird: I'm not saying that you shouldn't impose a new pattern. In any event, there will always be a relationship of the new pattern to the larger pattern around it; that's inevitable. You are always relating to a road that is already there. Within the larger framework, setting up some kind of pattern that doesn't exist can't be done. It can, instead, come from principles that don't necessarily derive from what is there: patterns of movement, microclimate, all sorts of things could give you clues.

Samspon: Comprehensive development was encouraged in the Fifties and Sixties, but it wasn't actually new. Eaton's College Street was a comprehensive development that was to envelop the whole block. It was uncommon at the time, here, as few people had the financial and organisational ability to carry it out. In London, there were major precincts that were developed, such as Grosvenor Square and so on. It is more a question of what opportunities are presented and the thing itself that is created by these redevelopments.

Baird: Take a superblock development like College Park, which is the son of Eaton's College Street, where they again have closed one more street and it has grown from two blocks to three blocks. Then they made diagonal entrances in the corner and the park in the middle. I must confess that I find the whole thing rather introverted and I can't see what the city gets out of that kind of development. Alright, it gets a park and there is this rather low level sentimentality about the idea that having a park is somehow better than not having a park. This cloying idea that always having more parks and green space is better is highly questionable. Indeed, for me, it is a kind of pathological response to the hatred of Modernism; that people are so alienated from the idea of urban form, that the anti-city is always better. This is the state of our civilsation.

Sampson: That's where I think that what is happening is that the idea of the city has been divorced from any sense of politics associated with the city. Subsequently, you have some very loose ideas like 'public accessibility', that everything should be made accessible. There is a tendency to generate more and more publicly accessible terrain but there are fewer and fewer places that have a public intensity, the low side of public action, be it political demonstration or the more informal kinds of meetings that take place between people. The issue is to make gardens and plazas appear more accessible and inviting to the public; this is thought to be good because it makes the maximum amount of the ground plan accessible to the public. Well, the question arises as to what extent is the ground plane useable by the public. To what extent does it actually constitute a place that can be identified as a place of public action?

Baird: I want to go back to something you went off a bit earlier. You were talking about the trivialisation response to historical form. It seems to me that at the level that the discussion has proceeded so far, there is step one; that is, that history is important and that one actually responds to it, which by now is generally accepted. The second one would then be this point we started with, the fact that while history is important, the straightforward rehashing of it isn't necessarily the smartest way to do it. I would say that that argument is far from settled. We've already been informally criticised by the Historical Board for a proposal we made to modify an existing building that is listed, and I can see more of that kind of thing coming. So, it seems to me that that is a whole new threshold of debate as to how you respond. Even that is still a rather rudimentary level of a more complex discussion, which would presumably lead on to considerations having to do with formal relationships and typologies in which you could say, given that you are taking history as a given which merits consideration and you are not emulating it, then what kind of generalised principles of response could one talk about that would imply the possibility of a kind of architecture which exists in this broader historical and cultural spectrum. I would say, just to cite one example in this third level of the discussion, take the case of entrances. Any kind of plan type is going to revolve, rather critically, around the consideration of where you go into it. I think it is extremely interesting that, in respect to the kind of modernisation or transformation of historical monuments in relation to modern programmes, the crisis of the entrance is really an acute one.

In the renovations of the branch libraries all around Toronto, the Beaches and Wychwood were (two libraries) which were basilica plan types or medieval hall plan types. Very powerful typological axiality and, in both cases, I don't think the architects did not have a deliberate intention to change the entrance, but they were cornered by interpretations of function.

Sampson: The existing organisation was difficult and it was easier to abandon the existing entrance sequence in favour of a new location for the entrance.

TFC: Yet, in the Beaches Library, there is still this incredible urge to walk up to where the bay window is now.

Baird: Of course; it's the residual power. It seems to me that there are available and unavailable transformation moves. We've closed up an entrance, recently; the first time we've done it, so I'm not saying it's impossible. All I'm saying is that it is a little like poker. If the building sets up a powerful plan order where the entrance is implied in a particular position, then if you are going to change it,

the question is: What kind of corresponding moves do you have to elaborate in order that the misleading cues are then definitively redirected? So, it's a question of secondary and tertiary moves that go with the residual motif that still seems to make more sense than not being an entrance, while still being a prominent part of the visual array of the building. In neither of these cases does this seem to have been successfully dealt with. Now, if we move from those two, we have the most notorious example, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, where they just welded the doors shut. This is the collapse of the imaginative faculties, it seems to me. And now Arthur Erickson is doing the same thing to the Court House in Vancouver, which is going to have its doors...

Sampson: ...turned around.

TFC: You'll obviously have to enter his plaza from behind.

Baird: That's right, in that case. There, I don't know what the final resolution of it has been, but they are not going to weld the doors shut; that much is given. I think they had an idea that when the Queen comes she can go in that door, or something, but it will not be a functional door to the building; that's a real crisis for Courthouse Square. These are really fundamental questions having to do with the language of architecture. Now, to my mind, the discussion of these kinds (of questions) hasn't even gotten to this level yet. The debate over whether old buildings are worth keeping, it seems to me, has largely been won. But then this question of the relationship of modern to old isn't there, although it is coming. But this more sophisticated discussion, that would have to do with how you actually do it, hasn't even begun yet.

Sampson: This is, of course, an age-old discussion for those people who see themselves as inevitably involved with existing fabrics, whether they be individual buildings or parts of an urban situation.

TFC: This debate, then, comes from Europe?

Sampson: It comes from any situation in which the amount of building that is existing is such that one can't tear it all down and build something new and 'proper'. It means that, inevitably, you will have to involve yourself with the analysis of structural characteristics, which George is talking about in terms of the typology of the fabric. You have to understand its tolerances, its advantages, its codes, and in transforming it, you have to enter into some kind of dialogue with that structure and set of codes. It will allow certain things and not allow others. And I would extend that from building an entrance to building a street.

"...if you are talking to architects who are supposed to know something about the history of architecture, then...you can't just throw Terragni out the window."

TFC: The conscious use of history is something that is attributed to the Post Modern and, from our discussion today, I sense a critical stance towards traditional Modernism, so where does that place you?

Baird: It's really tricky. You place me in a room with Moshe Safdie, then I'm Post Modernist, but if you place me in a room with Robert Stern, then I'm not.

Sampson: I think that one of the problems is that Post Modernism has been developed on an extreme reduction of the history of Modernism and has a tendency to depend on that. Modernism should not be reduced to Fifties American corporate Modernism. I've always been interested in our contradicting this revisionist history and Modern ideology with examples of Modernism that are contextual, that are street related, that are city buildings. There are lots of these.

TFC: So the Post Modernists have accepted certain aspects of Modernism and rejected others?

Sampson: They had to work in a context that was strong enough that it was not possible to create a full-blown example of Modernism, with respect to Modernist tendencies in urbanism. Even then, I don't think it as as simple as the Post Modern histories tend to suggest. One should always be suspicious of a critical position that depends on the re-writing of history. The Graves lecture was a good example. Matched against his very amusing criticism of the Villa Cook, you could put Palladio's Villa Barbero. The Villa Barbero has a false entrance; in fact, its an entrance to the kitchen on the axis. The real entrance to the *piano nobile* of the house is through the arcade. The entrance is concealed by the arcade, as is the entrance to the Villa Cook. That example is taken as exemplar of all Modernism.

For my part, I think that Post Modernism is a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, by declaring the end of Modernism and, by general consensus, believing in it, then it probably is true. I'm concerned about its reactive nature *vis-à-vis* Modernism. I'm very much interested in Modern compositional codes. I think that you will find that Michael Graves makes no sense without understanding collage.

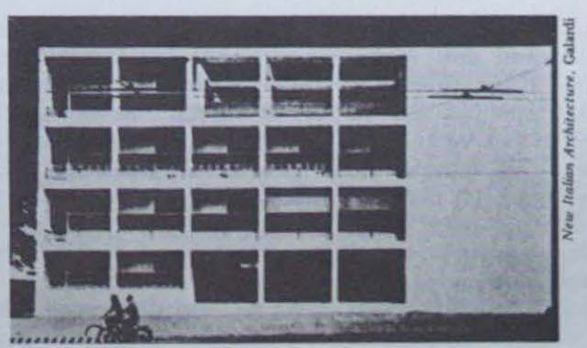
Baird: And non-frontality.

Sampson: We're very interested in Constructivism, *de Stijl* modes of composition. I think that of all the interiors Graves showed, the most powerful was the Maison de Verre, which is one of the canonical works of Modernism. I would compare it with any of the interiors that he showed. There is a tradition there that, as far as I'm concerned, is not closed and informs our work. In that respect, I'm quite prepared to let history decide whether or not we are Modern or Post Modern. What we are interested in, I think, is contemporary architecture.

Baird: There are some lineages there that are explicit. If you are interested in an architecture that is historically allusive and has iconographical connotations at a variety of levels and is full of anthropomorphic references, which I would say I am, you can find that all within the repertoire of Modernism. it's just that you probably won't talk about Mies, but you would definitely talk about Corb, Terragni, Aalto, and Scarpa.

Sampson: Absolutely. The Italian Modernists' work really invites comparison.

Casa del Fascio, Como
Giusseppe Terragni (1936)



Baird: Its materiality, its figuration; all of these components are there. The Modernism to which Post Modernism is generally opposed polemically is a bit of a straw man. Even Mies — those really bad pictures you're shown aren't even by them. Gropius might just get into the running, but what you are typically shown is Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and Kevin Roche; I'm not going to bat for them. The general public's view of Modernism is determined by what they see on the streets, which is largely appalling. On the other hand, if you are talking to architects who are supposed to know something about the history of architecture, then, in that more knowlegeable milieu, one has to take the position that you just can't throw Terragni out the window.

Sampson: Post Modernism takes a critical position *vis-à-vis* Modernism — modern practice and the ideology behind those aspects of modern practice that you are discussing with the general public. If you look at Peter Dickinson's work again, you'll find now that there is a guy who should fall into this revisionist history of Modernism. You have the building at College and Bay which is one of the best corner buildings in the city, in that it has both the tower that is square, or at least rectilinear, and a base that is inflected, *à la* Venturi, to deal with the inflection of the context. The Park Plaza uses a hotel court to deal with the modern problem of entry by automobile. The building that he did at Merton and Yonge also makes use of an auto court and builds a screen wall to the street.

Baird: The Wawanesa Insurance.

Sampson: That gas station we talked about has those rubble stone walls that act as those fences George was talking about previously with respect to the churches. So there is a guy who fits in to this nasty period and yet he seems to have some sort of commitment to ciy building which actually informs the way he constructs buildings in the city. He was also the one that initiated the Lothian Mews, which was an effort to...

Baird: It was an 'infill' project.

Sampson: That's right. It maintains buildings on Bloor Street and intensifies the use of the block and then becomes a model for York Square, which is done by people who are already critical of modern comprehensive development. So what is he (Dickinson) in respect to this critique?

TFC: He doesn't fit any attempt to classify him. My last question would be to find out what you perceive to be the advantages and disadvantages of teaching and practising?

Baird: I'm interested in the combination. Indeed, I suppose, for myself, I see it as an essential mixture. I suppose there is some question in my mind as to the variability of the weight of those commitments over time. The truth of the matter is that I haven't been that engaged in teaching recently.

Sampson: I think they need to vary. There are three components to our practice. One is the teaching component, which is individual. George teaches and I teach, for different reasons.

Baird: In fact, we have never taught together.

Sampson: There has always been a major research component of the practice and that research component has largely been research into urban development and the ways that cities have evolved. But there has been an interest beyond that, in theories evolving out of that research as well as theoretical interests *vis-à-vis* architecture itself, separate from issues of city building. Then there is the day-to-day practice of designing and having buildings built and doing all those things that architects have to do: client liason, trying to get work, and all that. Teaching can be a liability, with respect to the latter, because there is a traditional view in Canada that people who teach, don't do, and that people who think and write are likely to be less practical than people who have their sleeves rolled up all the time and are doing things. Sometimes, clients are quite reserved about the fact that one teaches as well as runs a practice. I think that, for my own part, teaching is something that I always like to do because I'm concerned about the generations of people that actually practice in the city. I'm concerned that the schools produce not only brilliant practitioners, but also practitioners that are capable and will improve the average level of building in the city. There are going to be the stars and there are also going to be the good solid people that do a lot of the building. Cities are, frankly, built not only out of great monuments but out of sensible well-built buildings. I like teaching because it is sometimes stimulating with respect to the practice, as practice becomes pragmatic and one can become forgetful of some theoretical issues.

TFC: The second aspect of your practice that makes you different from the common practitioner is the commitment to office research. Is that paired with your teaching at the University, or is it something that would go on independently, even if you stopped teaching?

Sampson: It has tended to go on, anyway. I guess it's partly that we have developed a reputation for it. In the old days, we often did it because we didn't have anything else to do.

Baird: I was just going to say that my attitude toward education has changed somewhat, in that it seems to me that we have entered a phase where architectural teaching once again needs to be more didactic. This kind of relationship, between the making of judgements to the rules that Barry elaborated earlier, I share as a kind of general principle for the relationship of theory and practice. But it does not seem to me that, whether one likes it or not, the principles of Modernism have been sufficiently diffused by now, pedagogically speaking; there is at issue the expository setting out of familiar architectural principles. Not so much that one would have to follow them absolutely, but it does seem to me that one needs to have an awareness of them existing as a body of principles, which at the very least could be considered to be the way that buildings are made — such a body of principles would be subject to critical revision to the kind of model of action one would be looking forward to seeing. At the moment, we have a kind of vacuum of principles, in which various attempts are made to fill it with intuition or *ad hoc* perceptions of faculty. This is a finger in the dike, you know. So, I'm interested in the possibiltiy of a more didactic pedagogy and I'm not saying that this is for all time and all applications but, relative to the situations that I've been used to, I think it is an appropriate move to make.

TFC: Where would those rules come from?

Baird: For my part, it would, probably, primarily consist of case studies. One would just take...

Sampson: Principles.

Baird: Take a Terragni building and just take it apart, see how it works.

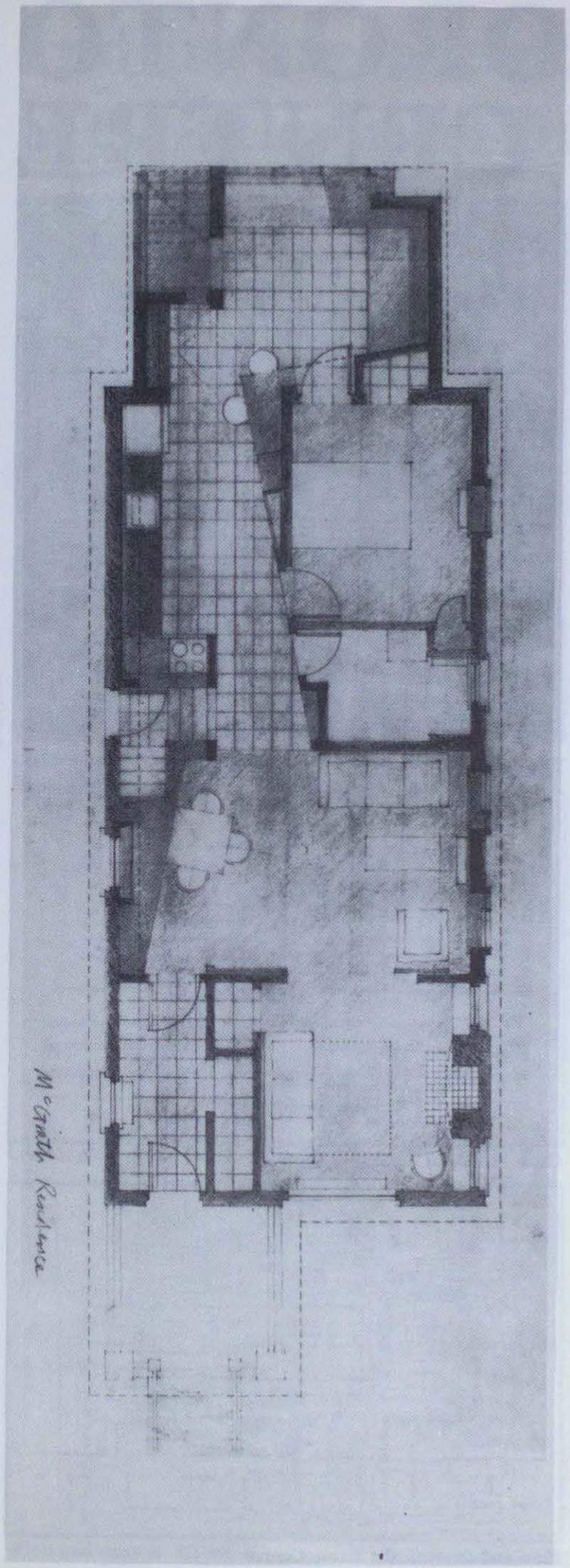
Sampson: It is another thing that one discovers in teaching; alot of these canonical works are not known. People see them in magazines, but they don't really know them.

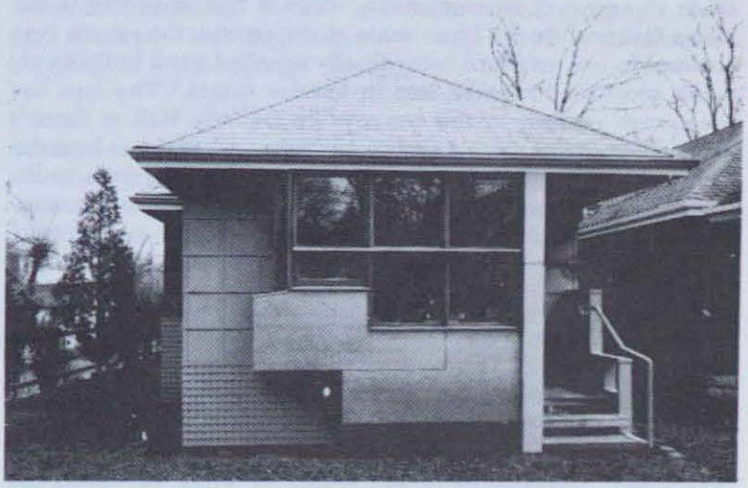
Baird: They acquire a kind of iconographic or polemical status, but that doesn't mean that they are understood.

TFC: Without the analysis?

Sampson: For sure. At the University of Toronto, for example, if you talk in detail of Corb buildings, students, who thought they had been overexposed to Le Corbusier, will be amazed, having never known that all that was there.

Baird: Others, of course, will deny that it is there.





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Baird & Sampson/McGrath Residence renovation

1. Reorganized floor plan of bungalow

2. View through skewed corridor

3. Rear elevation with addition

George Baird and Barry Sampson were interviewed in Toronto for THE FIFTH COLUMN *by Leo DeSorcy. Leo DeSorcy has attended the University of Calgary and the University of Manitoba and is presently completing his final year in the B.Arch. program at the University of Toronto. From 1979 to 1981 he worked with the Sturgess Partnership in Calagary and was a contributor to* Release *magazine.*

THE TORONTO EATON CENTRE

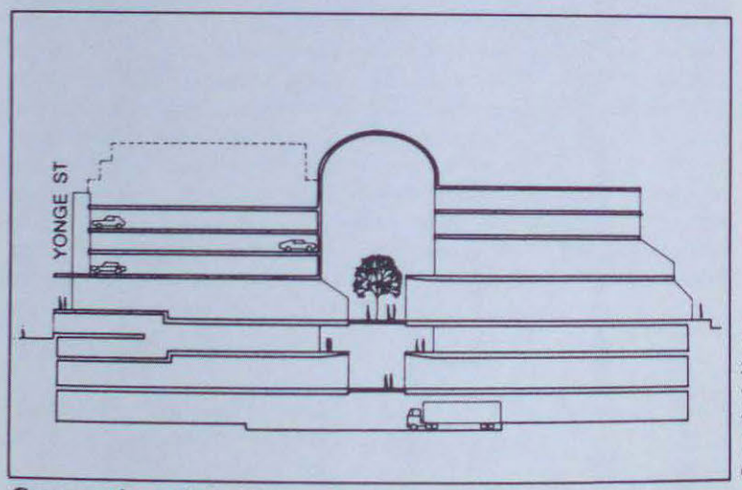
by Pauline Fowler

A comparative analysis between these two buildings is especially interesting, I think, inasmuch as the Galleria Vittorio II in Milan was quoted as a precedent in the early days of planning the Galleria Mall portion of the Eaton's Centre.[1] The arcade type at the most general level consists of a pedestrian thoroughfare, usually roofed in glass, and the building which borders it on both sides. In commercial applications there are shops behind the facades along the passage, dependent for their prosperity on the urban context, as the passage usually connects two busy streets. The idea was brought to Europe in pictorial fashion from the bazaars of the East by travellers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and exhibits many diverse influences: classical colonnades, markets and basilicas; medieval market squares and trading halls; the interior galleries of Paxton's Crystal Palace. It evolved through the nineteenth century to include an aspect of monumentality which is best embodied in the Milan Galleria. In the latter years of the century the arcade type declined in use, its death being finally signalled when building officials prohibited exposed iron in interior spaces.[2] The type has reappeared recently in this century, the Galleria Mall at Eaton's being one such instance. Although the Eaton's Centre has been the object of much comment, controversy, and criticism since its inception, references to its precedent have been casual and passing, in spite of some obvious similarities between the two structures.

The Galleria Vittorio Emanuele in Milan connects the Piazza del Duomo on the south with La Scala through the city fabric to the north. The idea for this connection dated from the time of the Austrian occupation and was finally implemented after the unification of Italy under Vittorio Emanuele II. Intervening schemes, of which there were many, found expressions of most of their major components in the design by Mengoni which was evenutally built: the enlargement of the Piazza del Duomo to give Milan a centre, a colonnaded street to connect it to La Scala, a bazaar through the fabric with an octagon at its centre, a glass cover over the street, a semi-circular (apse) ending for the oblique entrance to the north, the triumphal arch motif as exterior facade, and the flanking arcades. The proposal was clearly conceived as an urban renewal project, in which Mengoni saw represented all the glory of a unified Italy. The imagery is most strongly influenced by Roman Imperial models, incorporating the vaulting and proportions of the Roman baths, the triumphal arch entry which appears as a free-standing element, and the large dome at the centre, which has exactly the same diameter as St. Peter's. As a street, it is included in the regular construction of the block, with the two sides backing into neighbouring properties in the manner of the Uffizi in Florence. Early plans show no actual building, only the arcade. The cruciform plan came much later, probably deriving from the contemporary Galleria de Cristoforis in Trieste, finally giving a structural autonomy to the form of the building. It is possible that the Latin cross is a reference at the larger scale to the Savoy coat of arms which appears in the floor under the dome, but it is more likely a direct and ambitious intention to create a secular counterpart to the cathedral, symbolizing the new King, service to trade and commerce, and contemporary bourgeois society. Commissioned by public authorities, designed by competition, and built through international cooperation, it represents the zenith of the arcade's development and was pronounced a great success by all on opening.

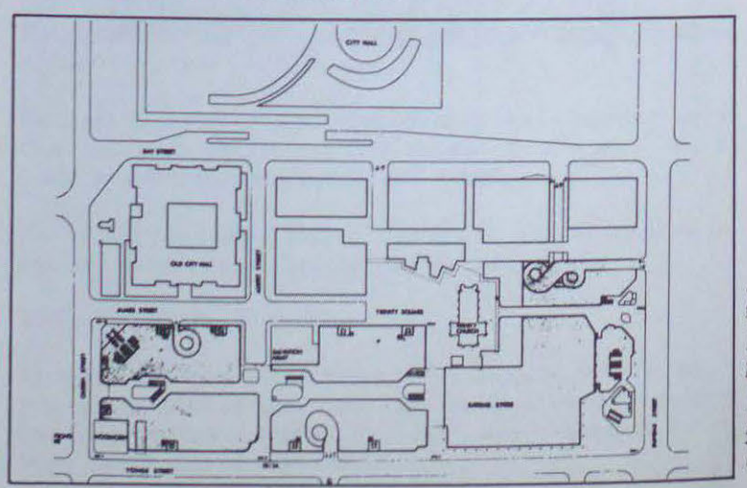
Pauline Fowler

The Eaton Centre



Progressite Architecture

Cross section of the Eaton Centre



Architecture d'Aujourd'hui

Plan and context, the Eaton Centre

Layout: Jill Hogan

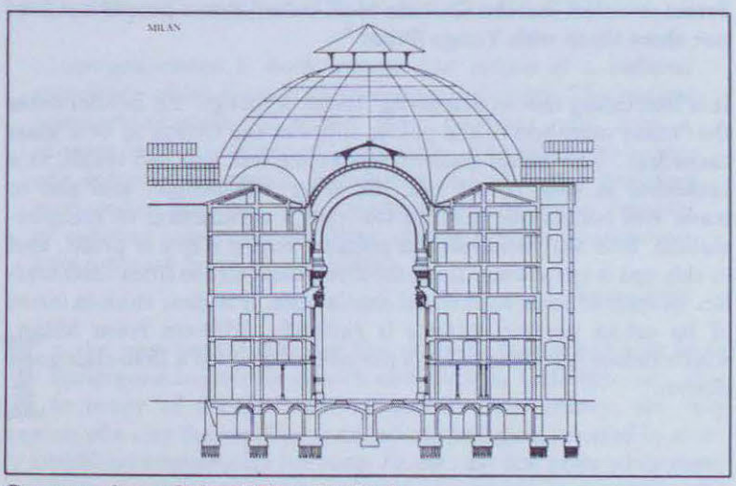
and its precedent, the Galleria in Milan

Lithograph, Uffico Ceremoniale, Municipo di Milano

Streets for People, Rudofsky

> Every Milanese feels compelled to take his stroll in the Galleria at least once a week so as to treat himself to a Campari or a rabarbaro at the "Camparino" or to window shop, to buy things and generally enjoy his own living-room...[3]

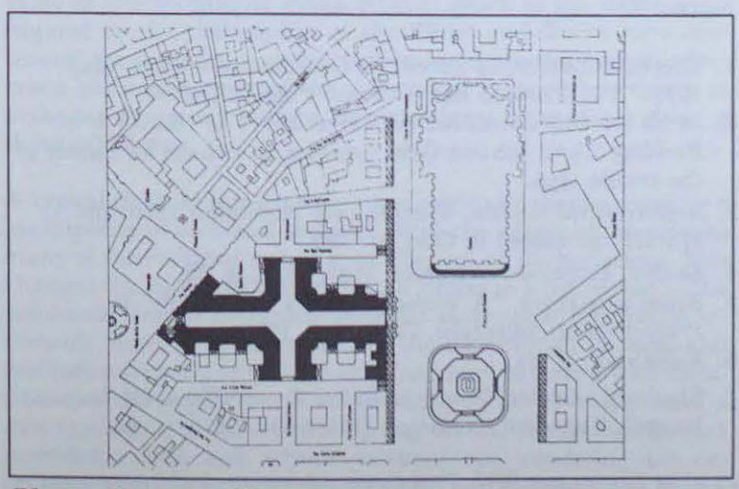
The galleria space is seven floors (29m) high in all places except under the dome, with regular, rhythmical arcades along the interior facades. Stairs, washrooms and other functional elements are located so as not to disturb the visual unity of these facades. Its horizontal dimensions are of street scale, 197m long by 15m wide. This vaulted space ia a near-apotheosis of the Italian street, being forum and foyer for the Milanese and more than just a place to shop. While its many layers of references are now no longer directly meaningful, it remains a memorial to the era and national consciousness. The Milan Galleria marks the development of the arcade type at a point when it is the furtherest from being merely an anonymous object of private speculation: it is instead a national political symbol which takes its place in history among the theatres, palaces of justice, city halls, stock exchanges, and parliamentary buildings as one of the great representative buildings of the nineteenth century.



Cross section of the Milan Galleria

Arcades: The History of a Building Type, Geist

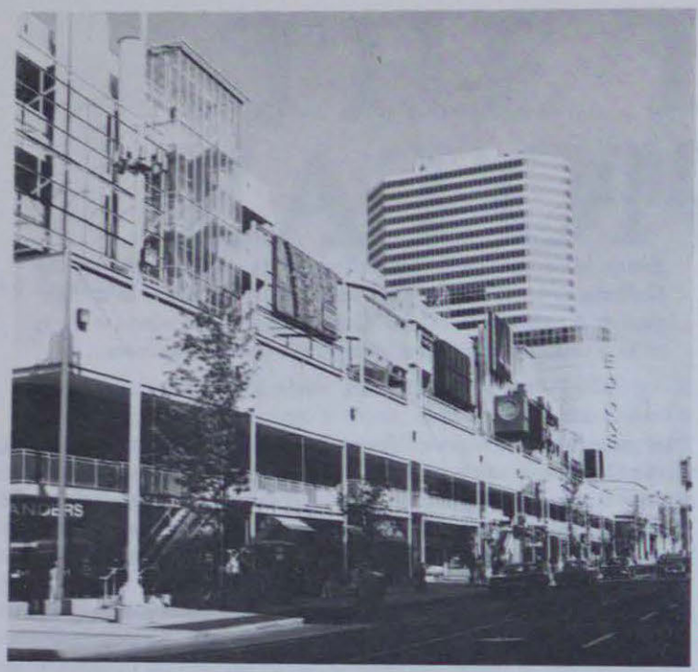
Since its inception in 1967, the Toronto Eaton's Centre has been discussed primarily in terms of its commercial success or failure. The centre of Toronto, unlike many North American cities in the 1960's, maintained relatively good economic health, but the T. Eaton company was looking nonetheless for a way of boosting flagging retail sales, perhaps lost to Simpson's across the street. The scheme developed by the architects was to move Eaton's north and then connect it by means of a skylit shopping gallery to Simpson's on the south, a concept already well tested in suburban shopping centres. It was this grand space — the Galleria Mall — for which the Milan Galleria was quoted as a precedent. It was not a civic or governmental gesture, but the architects postulated that a successful urban space can grow from purely commercial needs: it was to be "a major urban event, an interior street that would be image and orientation to the city".[4] This 'street' was discussed as having an independent right within the grid pattern, knitting the centre into the fabric without a break. The largest single question in many minds as the project developed was whether it would contribute to the demise or the revitalization of an already-ailing Yonge Street.



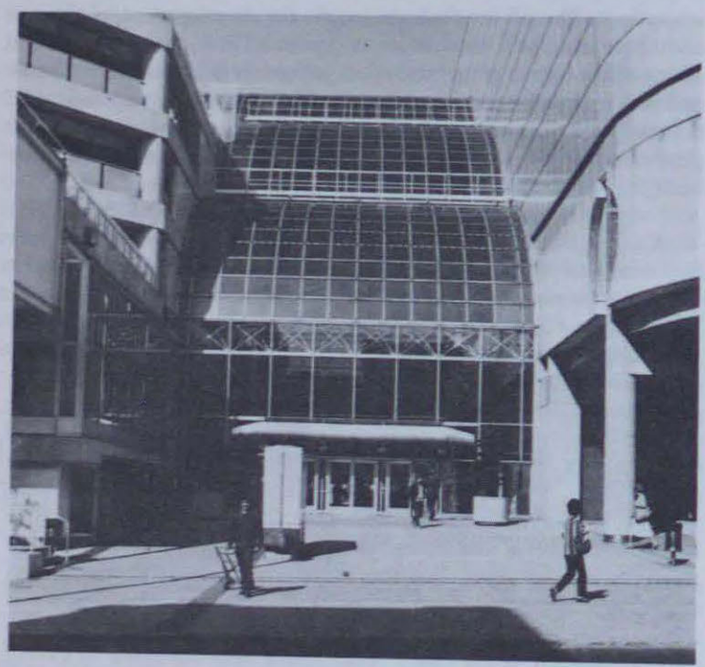
Plan and context, Milan

Arcades: The History of a Building Type, Geist

The primary similarity between the Milan Galleria and the Eaton's Galleria Mall exists in the fact of their being large, vaulted, skylit spaces; they are quite similar in their cross sections, although the Eaton's Galleria is substantially longer. The interior facades at Milan are highly regular and symmetrical; at Eaton's the facades are more a structural framework which has become distinctly secondary to the push and pull of function within the bays. In some places the need for more floor space has diminished the Galleria volume literally by half. In Eaton's the space is used as access to the 300-odd independent ships which are inside, and in this way is true to the earliest models as a form which organized retail trade. However, unlike these earlier examples and the Milan Galleria, access here is on three levels (50% below grade), with access ramps, stairs, and bridges further giving a functional emphasis to the large volume. The busyness of the space requires the strength and visual unity of the huge skylight down its length, distinctly similar to that in Milan.



Pauline Fowler



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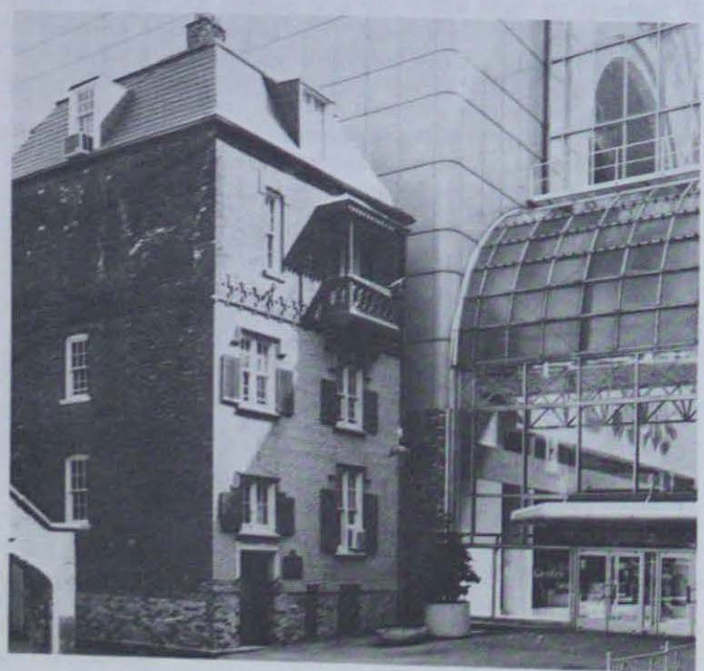


Pauline Fowler

Beyond the quality of this space, however, Eaton's Galleria begins to depart from the Milan precedent. Milan connects two street spaces, which means that the visitor continues on the main axis of the space directly into the Piazza del Duomo to the south and obliquely onto a street to the north. The Eaton's Galleria connects two department stores, so that to the south one passes into Simpson's and to the north into Eaton's. To rejoin the street system, a right angle turn is necessary, which gives this option a very secondary position. On the facade of Eaton's which terminates the Galleria are store displays contained within a large arched recess, a pale reference to the magnificent triumphal arches which form the actual entries to the Milan Galleria. The entries into Eaton's at various points around the perimeter, by contrast, make clear its true identity: they are multiple storefront and revolving doors, just like any other department store. Outside the building another substantial difference emerges. The Eaton Centre is a free-standing building — one can walk all the way around it — whereas the Milan buildings had only two, relatively short street facades and backs into the fabric on the other two sides. In conception the two are radically different: Milan's identity as a building came well after the Galleria had been established as a connecting street, but Eaton's was always considered as a building with the Galleria being primarily internal circulation. As such, Eaton's in fact turns its back on the already-established street system. The James Street elevation shows this condition more clearly: exit and loading doors, exhaust vents, and blank walls of such a scale as to make the adjacent historical buildings of Trinity Square look ridiculous by comparison. On the Yonge Street side there actually are seventeen stores which face it, but these for the most part represent lower-grade businesses which have replaced retailers who moved inside.[5] This role in the city is direct opposite of Milan, which contributes as part of the street wall as a much-needed connector through a very large block in the existing fabric. There was no such need when the Eaton's Galleria was conceived; it splits lengthwise a block which is already narrow by comparison, suggesting that it would draw form existing street traffic. A 1978 study of Yonge Street revealed that the Galleria Mall indeed draws people but does not share them with Yonge Street.[6]

It is interesting that in discussing 'Issues of Image'[7] Ed Zeidler notes that many members of the public consider the Centre to be a 'glass cathedral'. The Milan Galleria was conceived, one will recall, as a cathedral as well, to the era, the King, the people, and also to trade and commerce. Eaton's Galleria is a cathedral to commercialism, first and foremost. Its primary *raison d'être* is profit, and to this end it turns away from the streets and draws from their traffic. In spite of some superficial similarities, it is clear than in terms of its urban context Eaton's is radically different from Milan, which before all else is Milan's premier street and a first-class good citizen.

Notes

1. Eberhard Zeidler, as quoted in *Canadian Architect*, May 1977: "The Toronto Eaton Centre Phase I", p. 30.
2. In his recently-translated work *Arcades: The History of a Building Type*, Johann Geist provides an exhaustive history of the arcade type.
3. *Architectural Review*, Volume 140, November 1966, pp. 373-375, as quoted in Geist, p. 399.
4. Zeidler, *Canadian Architect*, May, 1977, p. 32.
5. Bruce Kuwabara, "A White Ship or a Black Hole" in *Progressive Architecture*, December, 1978, p. 68.
6. Kuwabara, p. 69.
7. Eberhard, Zeidler, "Toronto Eaton Centre Phase II: Issues of Image", *Canadian Architect*, November, 1979, p. 26.

Pauline Fowler is a Fifth Year thesis student in Architecture at the University of Toronto.

Crang and Boake, Architects

THE RIDEAU AREA PROJECT:

Another Point of View

by Lise-Anne Couture

...our generation is both witness and victim of a cultural tragedy to which there is no precedent in history. The radical commercialization of urban land becomes now even a menace to the architectural profession. The architects as servile executors of grand speculation and the large building monopolies have lost their traditional credibility as creators of a better tomorrow. Building once a promise, constitutes now a threat for the collectivity.

Leon Krier

In the past several decades the cities of North America have undergone incredible growth and change. Unfortunately, due to many of the attitudes unique to this century, the very aspects of a city that renders it urban are being threatened by overly ambitious commercial interests. In the past few years while there has been on the one hand a strong movement to recognize the value of the traditional urban setting, much of the damage instigated by the philosophies of the Fifties and Sixties have continued. As a result, new commercial development, being undertaken under the guise of urban renewal, is now threatening to make our downtown regions, the traditional cores of our cities, a thing of the past.

A typical city's downtown region was originally characterized by a mulitiplicity of users and activities. With the advent of the suburbs many of the residents moved from the core to the periphery. This changed the nature of the downtown region to some extent — the residential density decreased while the automobile population increased. However it still remained the commercial, cultural and institutional center of the city and continued to serve a wide cross-section of the population. Until the fairly recent development of a new typology, the suburban shopping centre, the downtown core provided a rich and vibrant environment, rendering the experience of frequenting it pleasurable if not exciting. The shopping centre has done much to change this in recent years. It has caused the city to dissolve into a series of commercial nodes which compete with the downtown core. The shopping centre has strived to fulfill a multiplicity of need in terms of goods and services and even entertainment; as a result, both the suburban dwellers and the city have suffered. A majority of the population foresook the diversity that a rich and vibrant city centre can provide for the limited selection of mediocre shops and merchandise that were conveniently accessible. As the shopping centre increased in popularity, signs of vitality began to dwindle with the city... the siege having been successful, the shopping centre now attempted to invade the city core itself.

The Rideau Area Project

Hardly anyone today is concerned about town planning as a work of art; instead (it is seen) only as a technical problem.

Camillo Sitte

In Ottawa, the recent development and construction of the Rideau Area Project is unfortunately an example of a downtown core under attack. Placed in the once active center of the city, it is now a new development that is nothing more than a huge suburban shopping centre, with a hotel and convention centre attached for assured commercial success. Situated along Rideau Street, potentially the most vital street in the area, this new complex is surrounded by parkland, an active market area with many interesting urban characteristics, a variety of typical low scale buildings and is in proximity to many of our present and future national monuments. As the urban aspects of the area have changed so too has the nature of the activity. No longer is this a place for leisurely strolls, observing people and being observed, window shopping, and discovering intriguing shops and intimate places. The transformation of the city as a result of the intervention of this commercial complex with its over-emphasized traffic considerations, evoke concern for true "urban" space which has all too often been replaced by organization based on purely functional and quantitative principles.

Photographs: by the author

Above: Glass enclosed walkways lining both sides of the Rideau Street bus mall. Right: Escalators in one of the 'court' spaces.

The rejection of streets and squares as defined planning elements was linked with the destruction of the fabric of the city... The spirit of the 'city for the car' drove out the principle of the humane city environment susceptible to logical and sensual perception.

Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani

The few token gestures afforded the real needs of the people are superficial and secondary. A recent Rideau Area Project newsletter stresses the improvement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic as a major goal. In order to achieve this, radical steps have been taken to transform a portion of Rideau Street, just blocks away from the Parliament Buildings, into a bus transit mall. At great expense, a maze of one-way streets and a collection of confusing intersections were created in order to accommodate increased traffic along previously less travelled routes. It would seem logical for all of this to occur if at least the pedestrian situation benefited dramatically. This however is hardly the case.

What began as an attempt to serve the pedestrian has resulted in an expensive and grandiose failure. Perhaps believing that exposure to the elements is the worst possible problem faced by the pedestrian, the architects have provided glass enclosed walkways along either side of the bus mall. These take up almost the whole width of the sidewalk and are supported by large steel "greenhouse" type structures. Needless to say, these appear somewhat inappropriate superimposed on the existing facades. Although the provision of shelter at bus stops seems thoughtful and sensible, the presence of these together with the glass and steel structures, which are continuous for several blocks, seems excessive if not a little extreme. It might be noted that the sidewalk enclosures might well be necessary in order to protect the pedestrian from the fumes of the buses which are constantly travelling the length of the mall. Perhaps it would have been easier (and less expensive) to have removed the cause in the first place.

Even a town alive with building activity will die if in the course of this building the challenge to accept a more wide-ranging commitment, to recognize a broader definition of 'needs', is ignored.

Josef Paul Kleihues

The implementation of these sidewalk structures seems to indicate a deep misunderstanding or lack of acknowledgement of the true nature of the 'street'. As a place for display, exchange, exposure and observation, the street remains one of the last vestiges of the public realm. The planners of the Rideau Area Project however have perceived the street as fulfilling a much narrower role. The emphasis is placed solely on man's need for mobility — to go from A to B in comfort — and not on the events one might encounter or the sensations one might experience along the way. With their preoccupation for promoting efficient mass transit and 'improving' pedestrian circulation, the planners seem to have lost sight of the many qualitative aspects that are important to the life of a street. From the point of view of the pedestrian much of the feeling of being in the city is removed. Enclosed in a glass cage, the pedestrian environment becomes totally artifical: the sounds of the street are muffled, the views become somewhat obscurred. The people in the buses can no longer partake in the street experience either, for they can no longer see the store windows nor the people who parade before them.

...what is needed is a hybrid architecture for the hybrid city, an architecture of rooms as well as space, of facades as well as frames, an architecture which makes urban space as well as comsuming it.

Michael Dennis

There exists, in the area around the Rideau Centre — namely in the market area and along Sussex Drive, a number of pedestrian-scaled pathways and intimate courtyards that could have served as valuable clues for the reconstruction of what is now a development that rivals the megastructures of the Fifties and Sixties. If we are to strive for a coherent urban form with a continuously changing context, it is necessary for a dialectical relationship between the whole and the parts to occur, but, for this to be done successfully, new forms must be derived from the existing structural order.

The Rideau Area Project rejects the inherent structure of the city by choosing to ignore the existing grid as a basis for establishing further development. Instead it has created a new order that detracts from a potentially legible fabric. The solution is not to ignore contemporary urban constraints but to re-adapt and refine the given structure to suit our present needs. This approach would perhaps have provided a more satisfactory result in terms of pedestrian movement, for in lieu of a system that provides a sense of path and place, the Rideau Centre provides a confusing sequence of malls and bridges that remove people from the street and manipulate then through a series of relatively unexciting commercial corridors.

Above: A mall terminating at Eaton Court. Left: A skylight providing light to one of the lower floors.

The Rideau Centre

> *Architecture is becoming ever more tarnished, faded and dim... It is shabby, poor and bare. It no longer expresses anything not even the memory of another age's art. Confined to itself, abandoned by the other arts because human thought abandons it, architecture recruits labourers for want of artists. Every trace of the vitality, originality, life and intelligence is gone.*
>
> *Victor Hugo*

Since the Rideau Centre fails to make a positive statement urbanistically, it seems reasonable to assume that it would at least make a valid architectural statement. The Rideau Centre however fails on this level as well, it is quite evident that the main purpose of its existence is to achieve commercial success. The act of spending money seems to be the only part of the experience of 'being downtown' that the planners acknowledge. The architecture accommodates business not people.

Even to an architect with a so-called trained eye, the plan of the building remains confusing. It is difficult to sense where one is in relation to anywhere else. This is due mainly to the irregularity of the plan and the repetition of similar materials and themes. A two-dimensional diagram reveals the rationale behind the plan quite clearly, however. The circulation system consists simply of a series of straight lines connecting the three anchor department stores (the traditional shopping mall solution) with an additional mall parallel to Rideau Street (the only path derived from existing geometry). The organization is based solely on the maximization of rentable space.

This typifies the attitude of the architect towards planning; the 'needs' of the shopper as a human being are of the last importance. The architectural features leave much to be desire, the skylit atrium spaces called 'courts' that occur at the three major intersections within the mall do provide natural light and relief from the relatively low ceiling heights. However, the courts, which all tend to look the same, have resulted in a visually confusing array of stairs, ramps, escalators and elevators. The use of mirror cladding only adds to this cluttered effect, created by too many elements in a relatively small space. The skylight motif is repeated throughout the complex with the seemingly noble intention of providing natural light to the lower floors through cut-outs in those above. Again the results are less than satisfactory; at times, the skylights line up with the cut-outs for a moderately pleasing effect despite the fact the openings are rather small. However, at other times their relative positions make less sense sectionally and, even worse, there are instances where one glances up through the openings above to see that there aren't any skylights at all. The reflected ceiling plan of the lighting fixtures and structure fails to correspond to the plan below, and this becomes somewhat visually disturbing.

Further criticism of the architecture is based on some fundamental architectural notions, such as the acknowledgement of formal principles. Because of their nature, we would expect that at the end of axes, we would find some form of termination that would justify the gymnastics that occur in plan. Such notions however are addressed by only the most meagre attempts. In one instance, as we proceed down the mall toward a court space, we find ourselves on axis with a wall that is all but blank, save for a firehose cabinet and a door to a broom-closet. In an attempt to camouflage this obvious mistake, three lampposts have been placed side by side in front of the wall. This type of poor consideration or lack of resolution to the endpoints of the various malls is repeated throughout

Above: Long rows of benches down the centre of a mall offer little enticement to sit down. Right: Service-like entrance on Daly Street.

the center. In another similar instance, we find that as we descend an escalator towards one of the main exits, we are on axis with the fire stairs. The entrances themselves are anything but grand; at times, they are best characterized by low doors, low ceilings and low levels of light.

Perhaps the architects hope that the shoppers will remain oblivious to all this, but they will surely notice the lack of consideration afforded them in terms of space provided for the purpose of relaxation. The few seating areas that do exist consist mostly of rows of benches aligned down the centre of the malls, often without the benefit of natural light or an appealing view. Even less accomodation is to be found on the upper floors, where the space left over by the floor cut-outs is insufficient to provide both for circulation and seating. The court areas offer little opportunity to relax. There is virtually no additional seating nor anything of visual interest save the exposed elevator that disappears into a fountain and the overused skylight motif.

...the endless reports and regulations on isolated technical problems — real orgies of quantitative thinking — have been accompanied by a generalized decay of our environment.

Leon Krier

Except for a roof garden which consists of bits of greenery planted between the mechanical rooms and vents, there is little attempt to provide any outdoor space. At ground level we find an expansive lawn upon which sits a tiny heritage building, the scale of which is only emphasized by the unarticulated, fortress-like facade behind it. Also, along this east elevation are two entrances to the shopping mall. One terminates Besserer Street in a so called court, although this narrow space wedged between a parking structure and a long unrelieved wall is hardly enticing. The other entrance must be approached via a long ramp ascending towards what appears to be a service entrance. Along the south side of the building the entrance is located on the MacKenzie Bridge and again the building appears monolithic, and uninviting. On the canal side and on Rideau St. however the articulated facades are overwhelming. The choice of concrete, steel and tinted glass as materials, and the scale of the elements serve only to emphasize the presence of this building as a foreign body. The overscaled walkways that link the second level of the Rideau Centre to the Bay department stores across Rideau Street lack elegance and obstruct the view. To further damage the nature of Rideau Street, the concentration of activity on the inside of the centre has caused the commercial space at ground level to turn its back on the street. The new scheme has imposed service doors on the street where there were once "active" entries into stores. It becomes quite apparent that a change in priorities has occurred when the architects and planners begin to treat a major downtown street as a service alley.

Conclusion

Progress owes itself to the discontented.

Aldous Huxley

The intent of this article is not solely to criticize the various aspects of the Rideau Area Project, but rather, through this, to illustrate an important issue at this point in time. That is, in order for us to provide a most appropriate and humane environment through our architecture, there must be an on-going critical dialogue occurring within the profession. With this it is hoped that many of the flaws and failures, such as those of the Rideau Area Project, can be prevented from ever happening in the first place, or at least through criticism after the fact, be prevented from ever happening again. A more open critical forum would help improve the standard of quality in architectural and urban design, as well as demand greater conviction from all with respect to critical issues. This article also tries to illustrate that architects are often placed in difficult situations that are beyond their control. These are the result of developers, entrepreneurs and politicans who make decisions in their own interest often at the expense of the average citizen. What is being asked for is that a more socially responsible attitude and approach be taken and reflected in both functional and aesthetic terms. The architect must re-examine and re-adjust his priorities, and in the end take on a more important role in the shaping of our cities. The re-development of the Rideau Area held great potential... had the intitial decisions been more sensitive to the existing context, the nature of a city centre and the real "needs" of people, it could have resulted in a much more positive architectural and urbanisitic statement.

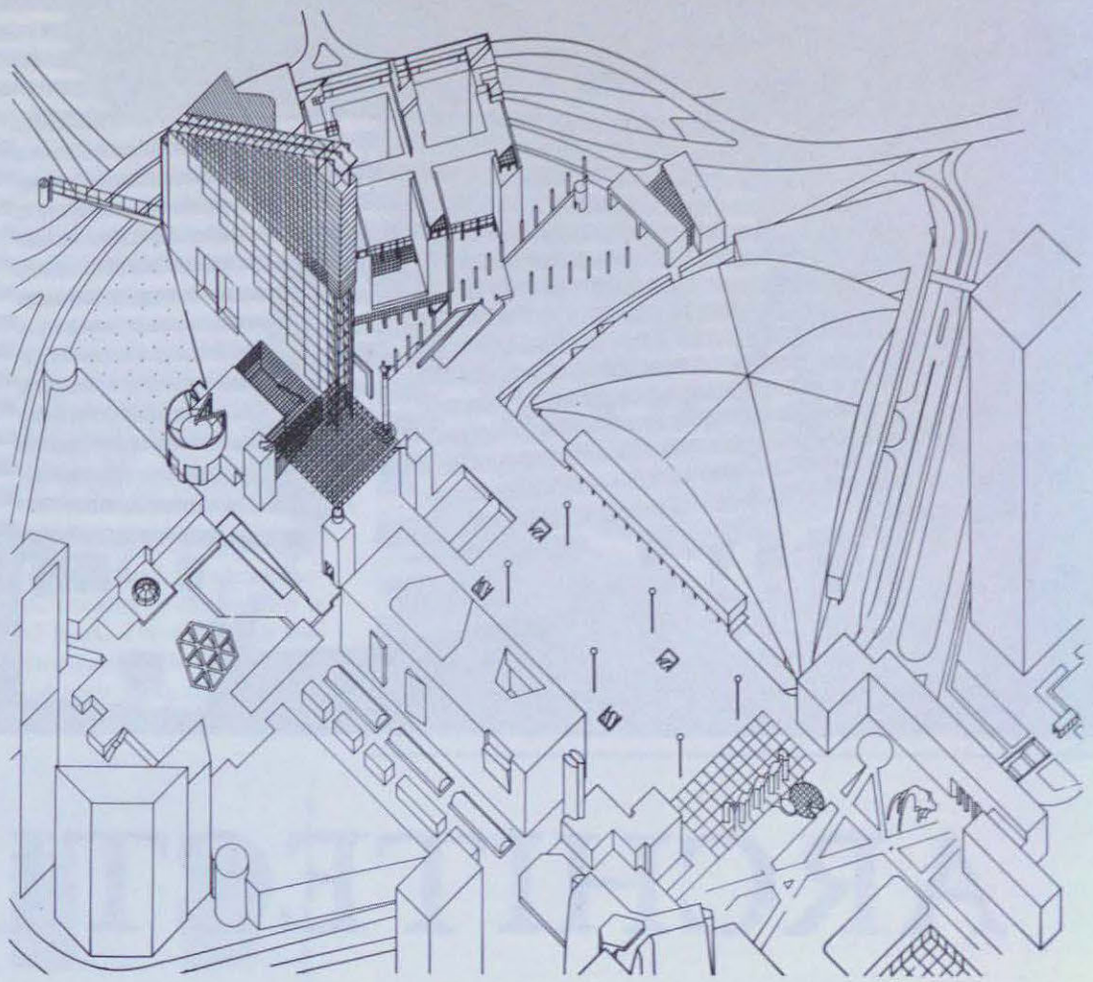
Lise Anne Couture is a recent graduate of Carleton University School of Architecture.

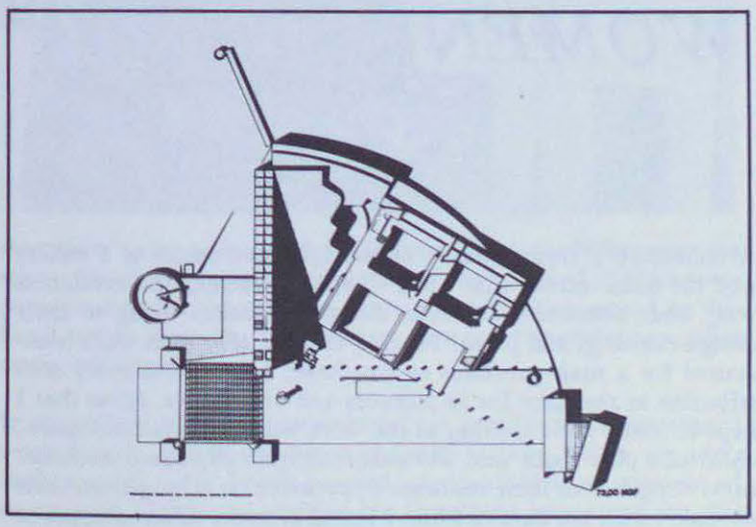
Note

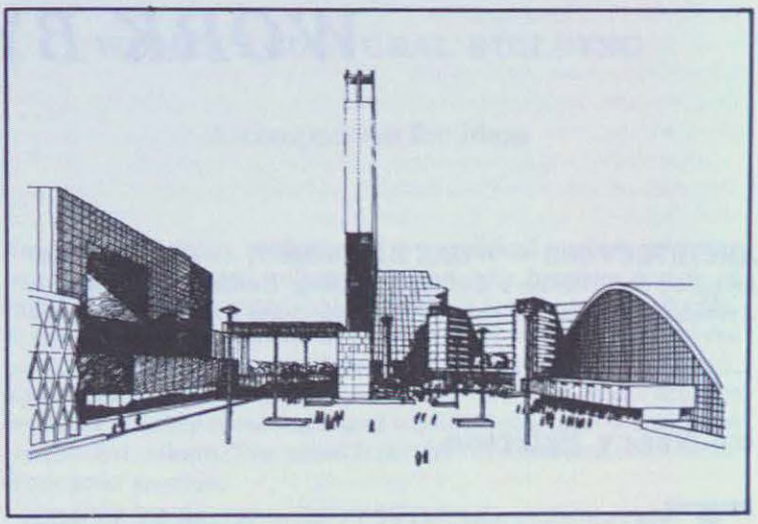
This article served as a follow-up to a previous one published by the *Ottawa Citizen*. Special thanks to Christopher Genik for having co-written the original condensed version.

Tête Défense Competition, Paris France

Crang and Boake Architects







DESIGN CONCEPT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF COMMUNICATION; MINISTRY OF TOWN PLANNING AND HOUSING; AND MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The French government, through the International Union of Architects, recently initiated a design competition for a one-million square foot complex to house the International Centre of Communication and the Ministries of Town Planning and Housing, and the Environment to be located in the Defense District of downtown Paris.

Close to 900 registrations were received from around the world, including 18 from Canada. Crang and Boake Architects, Toronto, were among the four finalists and received a second prize.

The site is located at the west end of the Avenue Charles de Gaulle, a historical axis of the city. The Louvre is located at the far end of the avenue and the Arch de Triumphe is in the middle.

Crang and Boake set out to interpret the aspirations of contemporary French society; ensure the continuation of the process of revitalizing the District; and provide a counterveiling culmination to the vista. The concept also accentuates the metamorphosis of architectural styles to be found along the length of the avenue.

The Parisian street, square, park, garden and obelisk were reinterpreted in a contemporary vein. A dynamic tension between high and low elements of the complex was deliberately sought to emphasise the contemporary and future viewpoint of the complex. Suggested exterior cladding included polished stone, aluminium and glass.

Illustrations courtesy of Crang and Boake, Architects.

ARCHITECTURE

WORK BY WOMEN

ARCHITECTURE — WORK BY WOMEN, an exhibition sponsored by the Women's Cultural Building Collective, was held at Artculture Resource Centre in Toronto from 2 April to 16 April.

by Nancy Paterson

The exhibition ARCHITECTURE — WORK BY WOMEN brought together over 30 women architects and students from Ontario and New York. The core of the idea originated from a Toronto group called the Women's Architecture League, an *ad hoc* group of women architects who periodically got together to discuss ideas and commonalities. The interest in the exhibition grew as Kerri Kwinter, the curator from the Women's Cultural Building Collective began to actively solicit work. The diversity of character represented in the exhibition ranged from students in third or fourth year right through to practicing women architects with their own firms. The women had their own particular ideas on the theme of Architecture and Feminism and contributed a small written statement displayed next to their work.

The women met as a result of assembling the exhibition and exchanged concepts and ideas on the design of the show. They exchanged a great deal in terms of mutual respect and admiration through assessment of each other's work as well as how well they worked preparing the exhibition.

Architecture is representative of the collective values of a society and the main interest that I had when approaching the exhibition was, what distinctive concerns did these women bring to their design drawings and plans? Bearing in mind that most work is executed for a male professor or employer, I examined every contribution to the show for its nuances and uniqueness. Ideas that I kept in mind while looking at the work were non-planned space, children's play space and less anthromorphically-based architectural designs with their resultant oppressiveness arising from their obsession with the human form. I found as many different types of work as there were differnt kinds of women involved. Some claimed no difference in their work from men's and it showed. Some claimed a philosophical difference but were still working out the form and shape of it. Some were radical in their design approach. Instead of the expressions of feminine anger and rage that is seen in literature and music, I found a sense of making light of tradition and established order in design. A sense of humour, even a kind of mocking of ideas, procedures and methods in an effort to break free and work on ideas that were distinctively the woman's own, free of the constraints of ideology, expectations and economics. Many of the pieces exhibited questioned the validity and criteria of spatial representation and illusion. Architecture is one of the more difficult fields for women to break through as the practice of architectural design function in the very political realm of domestic, commercial and public architecture.

Nancy Paterson is Associate Coordinator at the Artculture Resource Centre and Archives Assistant at Art Metropole.

by S. Hero

Exhibits of architecture are rare enough in a city of this size and cultural ego to be appreciateve of any attempts to forward the discourse. It is laudable that this particular exhibition included the work of non-established architects and students. The mounting of an exhibit such as this makes painfully evident the lack of public expression of interest in architecture, even from the Ontario Association of Architects. So it is almost extra-ordinary that an institution of this type and size would be interested in promoting and architectural discussion.

The exhibition included a range of work derived primarily from the Universities of Toronto and Waterloo, consisting of Fourth-year Study-Abroad projects. Thesis work, small-scale propositions, furniture design, graphic studies and some larger realized projects by established architects. Particularly impressive were models of room and furniture designs by Fifth-year Waterloo students.

On the whole however, the work lacked evidence of theoretical concerns, reflecting rather a preoccupation with programme-oriented issues. If there was any thematic content to the exhibit it was on a social rather than architectural level. The emphasis was clearly on women rather than on architecture. If the exhibit intended to merely confirm that women and men share equal ability or inability, it seems redundant. However, if more was intended,

that there exists some general difference in attitude between the sexes, the organizers would have been better advised to use a comparative format, though even then such a position would be difficult to take seriously. Architecture, as a creative profession, relies upon individual talent.

In the end the issue must be architecture, and the representation of work from a group composed through criteria which are non-architectural, risks being accused of equal bias, narrowness of scope, and ultimately irrelevance. One finds interesting the difference in attitudes among the participants as reflected through their written statements. Ellis Gallea wrote:

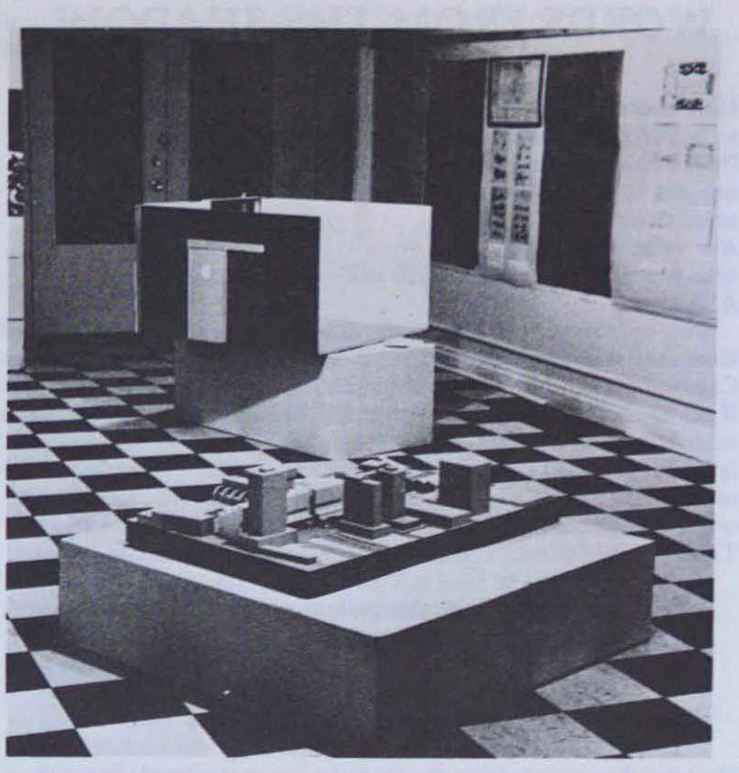
> My ambitions as a woman architect: the same as a man's, not more, not less.

And Helen Vorster:

> (I have) never been in a situation in which I worked in an office of only women.

Just as architecture in itself is autonomous from political positions, neither can it be sexist or feminist. We would be well-advised to let architecture be architecture, not propaganda.

S. Hero is the pseudonym of a student currently studying at the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of Toronto.



WOMEN'S CULTURAL BUILDING

A competition for ideas

Feminism is not an aesthetic. It is a political analysis of being women in patriarchal culture. This analysis becomes a state of mind, a way of being and thinking when it is reflected in one's life. It can be articulated in art, and the art itself can contribute to the process of analysis and consciousness. If art and life are connected, and if one is a feminist artist — that is, one must make art that reflects a political consciousness of what it means to be a woman in patriarchal culture. The visual form this consciousness takes varies from artist to artist.

Harmony Hammond
"horseblinders"
Heresies

A competition for the Women's cultural building, 'women building culture', due Fall, 1983. Winning entries will be exhibited at A.R.C. gallery. For entry forms and the competition brief please contact: Sandra McKee 924-7846.

WOMEN'S CULTURAL BUILDING COMPETITION
1 Homewood Avenue, Apt. 414
Toronto, Ontario
M4Y 2J8

WORDS FROM THE SHADOW

by Randy Cohen

How does one begin to write about something,
so important, so all-encompassing?
Does one begin with words as
images,
or of thoughts far away?
Are we in a vacuum
or is it a shadow...
A shadow.

How deep is a shadow?
Can you reach it?
If so,
how deeply?
Is it that we don't care about the shadow,
or is it that we are afraid of the shadow,
or do we not understand the shadow?
This must be it!

...but the law of individuality collects its secret strength; you are you and I am I, and so we remain.

Ralph Waldo Emerson
"Uses of Great Men"
Representative Men, Volume IV

Now get this: we're within the shadow. Just metaphorically speaking, as a place to be; just space, you understand? We're not floating, but the space is large, and there are no details to speak of, no mouldings, nothing, OK?

It is a make-believe. It is no the real thing. We see the marble capitals; we trace the acanthus leaves of a celebrated model — ***incredulous: it is not a temple.***

Horatio Greenough,
American Architecture, Form and Function

No, it's not. You see, it's just a space that we'll consider some images in, and think about them; just ponder through envisioning. This is the way we can discuss things, openly, democratically, freely, right?

...but partly it was because pecuniary canons of taste began to exercise an undue influence: ***to be correct was more important than to be alive.***

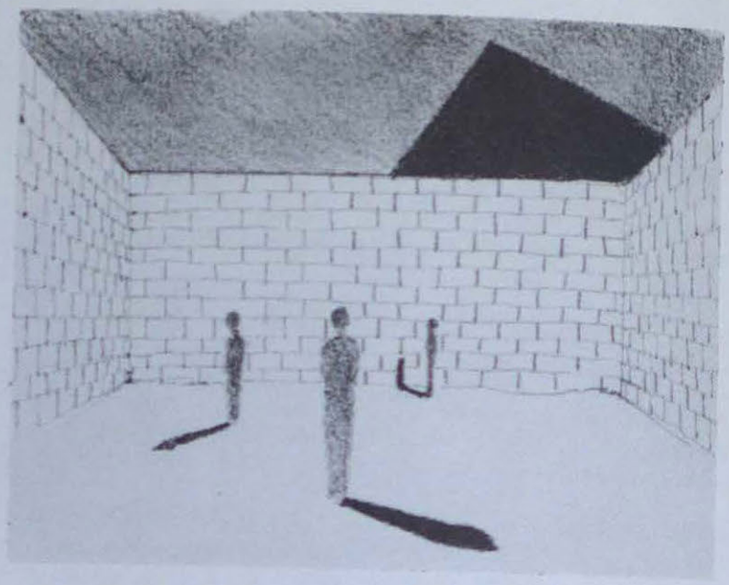
Lewis Mumford,
Roots of Contemporary American Architecture

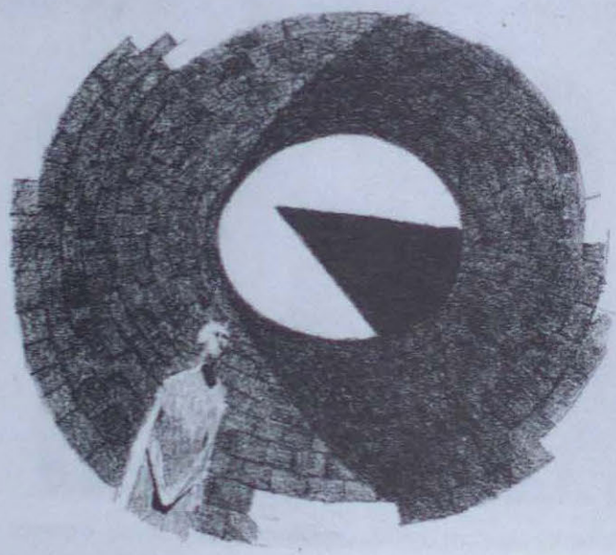
That, of course, does not affect thoughts inside the shadow, because here we are imagining a space that we are speaking within. We can sepak of our dreams here, we can project our images here, without fear, because we are above all that. You see?

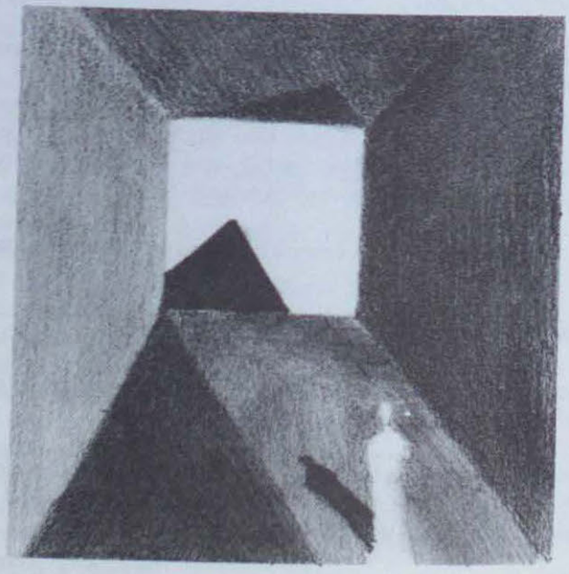
The true architectural art, that art toward which I would lead you, rests not upon scholarship, but upon ***human powers****; and therefore, it is to be tested, not by the fruits of scholarship, but by the touchstone of humanity. Taste is one of the weaker words in our language. It means a little less than something, a little more than nothing; certainly it conveys no suggestions of potency. It savours of accomplishment, in the fashionable sense, not of power to accomplish in the creative sense. It expresses a familiarity with what it* au courant *among persons of so-called culture, of so-called good form. It is essentially a second-hand word...*

Louis Sullivan,
"A Roman Temple (2),
Kindergarten Chats

The shadow's meaning now becomes a little clearer. We can see the space lightening up from it's earlier very darkness, although there is still no detail recognisable. The space itself has a fantastic quality, as though, in a way, it were alive. It seems to be an emo-

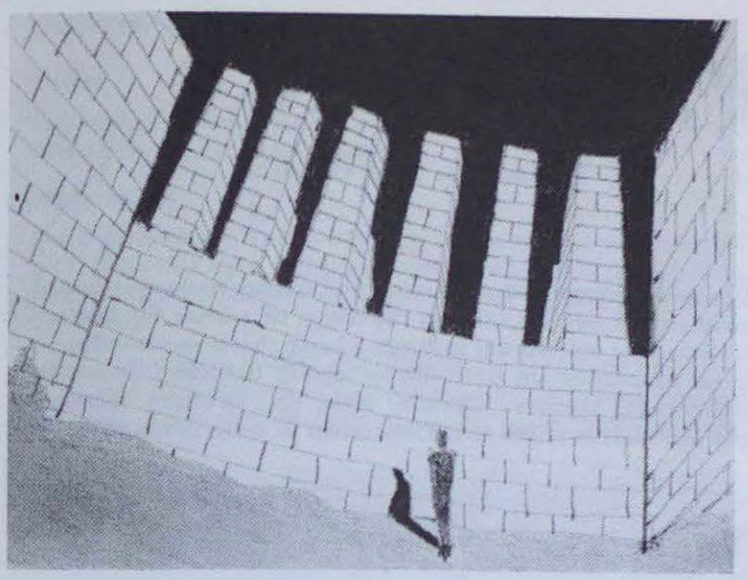


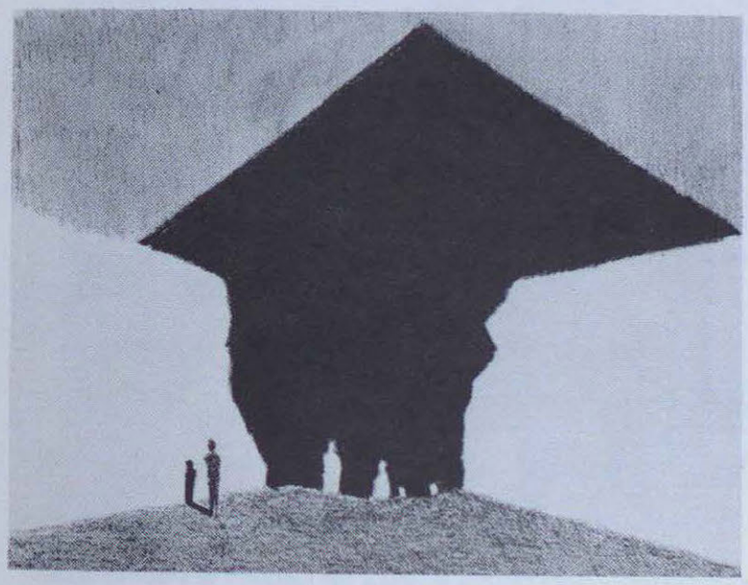


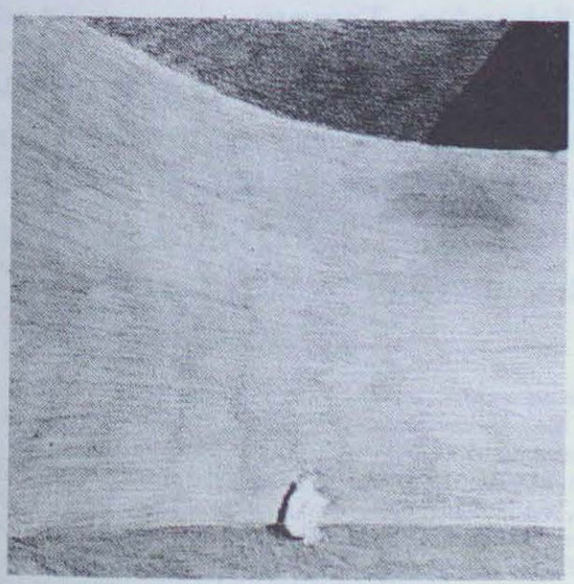


Randy Cohen is a graduate of the School of Architecture at McGill University currently living in Montreal.

Layout: Randy Cohen and Howard Davies







Howard Davies is a recent graduate of the School of Architecture at McGill University and is currently working in Montreal.

tionally charged space, and, hence, it exorcises or drains from one, their own inner creative forces. Doesn't it?

> *So he asked the man how the architect made the outside of the temples and the man said: "Why, he made it out of his head; and he had books besides." The 'books besides' repelled Louis: anybody could do that; but the 'made it out of his head' fascinated him.*
>
> *Louis Sullivan,*
> The Autobiography of an Idea

But you see, what is happening to the shadow is that, as time goes on, as one becomes older, wiser, more conservative in one's ways, the notion of the many images disappears. There is no need for the space; all has been decided, all is lost. Death looms behind — hopefully, far behind — impending retirement. We accept rules, don't we?

> *And he was told that these 'Orders' were 'Classic', which implied an arrival at the goal of Platonic perfection of idea. But Louis by nature was not given to that kind of faith. His faith ever lay in the oft-seen creative power and glory of man. His faith lay indeed in freedom.* The song of spring *was the song in his heart.*
>
> *Louis Sullivan*
> The Autobiography of an Idea

The shadow knows no such faith, either. The depth is full; it is dense but it is open. It suffers through only a lack of input, as it is voracious in feeding. As signals weaken, the shadow struggles to retain its identity. It is an all-too-common struggle, as the space we have come to know vanishes; a kind of dematerialisation or vegetablisation has taken place. Hasn't it?

> *We believe firmly and fully that they can teach us; but let us* ***learn principles****, not shapes; let us imitate them like men, and not ape them like monkeys.*
>
> *Horatio Greenough,*
> American Architecture, Form and Function

When one has understood which forces are timeless, which never fluctuate, then what they call 'reality', the more suitably described ruthless, gutless mercenary world, can be overcome. This is a great potential. The source, the shadow, from within which the strength of idea may come.

> *As a Christian preacher may give weight to truth, and add persuasion to proof, by studying the models of pagan writers, so the American builder by a truly philosophic investigation of ancient art will learn of the Greeks to be American.*
>
> *Horatio Greenough,*
> American Architecture, Form and Function

As the cycle begins to reach full circle, as if to say one were returning from whence one came, and bearing in mind the lessons learned, it will be from within the shadow that one must seek the unknown, one will cast aside preconceptions, and from within, will come forth the next architecture, always from within.

> *Is the art I advocate to be built upon the sands of books, upon the shoals of tastse and scholarship, or is it to be* ***founded*** *upon the rock of character?*
>
> *Louis Sullivan,*
> *"A Roman Temple (2),*
> Kindergarten Chats

Lurk in the shadow.

> *He is great who is what he is from nature, and how never reminds of us others.*
>
> *Ralph Waldo Emerson,*
> *"Uses of Great Men",*
> Representative Men, Volume IV

Drawings by Howard Davies

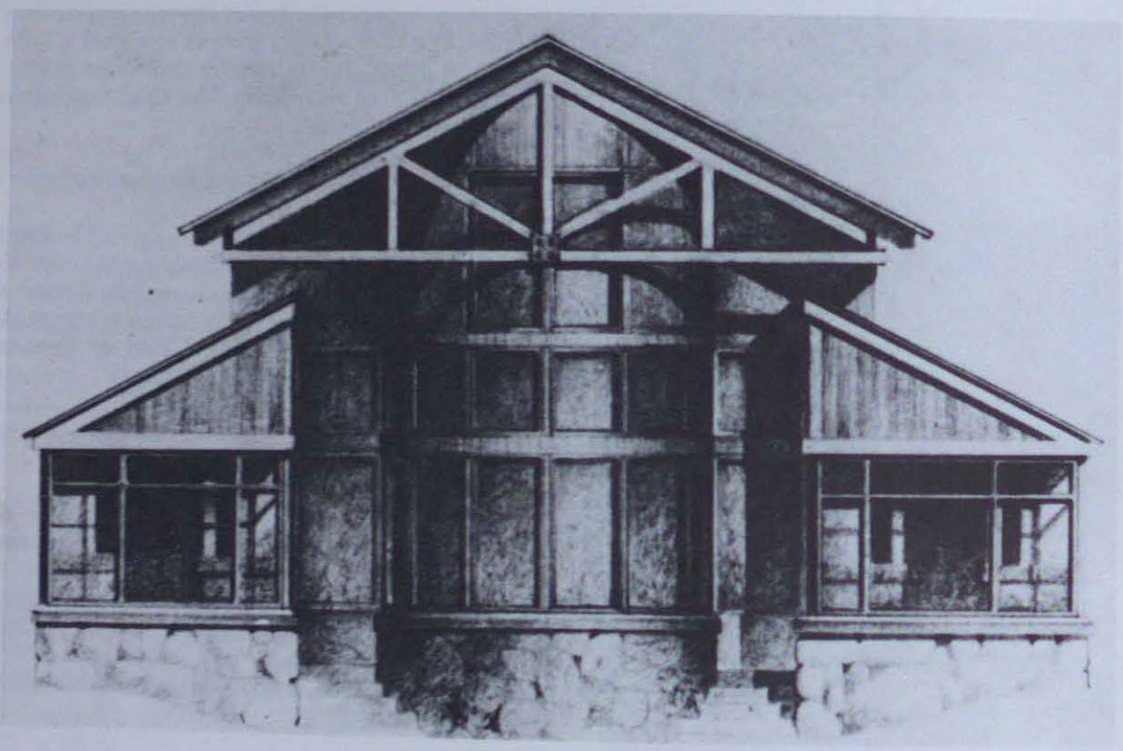
RAIC STUDENT COMPETITION

Sponsored by Faber Castell

Program

Last May, winners were announced for the 1983 CSA/RAIC Student Competition. The subject of the competition was 'A House of Architectural Memory'. Jury members for the competition included A.J. Diamond, Edward Jones, Anne Schrecker, all of Toronto, and Peter Rose, of Montreal.

The competition asked each competitor to address the question of architectural memory through the design of a house for four occupants. The aim was not to design a house that is an embodiment of the memory of any particular occupant, but which deals with architectural memory. Function, scale, site, structure, location, and materials were left to the descretion of each contestant.



A.J. Diamond, Toronto

The first place design had many remarkable qualities: clear notion of a holiday house, deliberately placed in the landscape, sensitive distinction between approach to and views from the house, consistent and mutually reinforcing design notions at the overall and detail scales and a convincing presentation providing real evidence of architectural competence.

Edward Jones, Toronto

"...the majority (of the entries) seemed to be suffering from an advanced state of architectural amnesia."

The essential craft of drawings with its representational endeavours have been trivialized. In the face of such disinterest, the premiated schemes in this competition can be seen as strangely heroic. They proffer the correct assumption that themes concerning the generic idea of house, the relationship between house and garden, the architectural promenade and the distinction between architecture and building are nothing new. The position that they represent poses a new set of conditions and dilemmas for contemporary architecture caught between the memory of a not-forgotten past and an indifferent present that promises nothing for the future.

Anne Schrecker, Toronto

"...among the entries taken in their entirety, there was preponderence of formalism limited as to time and place of inspiration...and too much infused with the spirit imitation."

The winners exhibit a wide range of conceptual sources. But among the entries taken in their entirety, there was a preponderance of formalism limited as to time and place of inspiration, not too well assimilated to the statement of the design problem, too intellectually constricted in its interpretation of both 'house' and 'memory', and too much infused with the spirit of imitation. Surely as we approach the twenty-first century there are a few new things under the sun? And new ways of looking at old things? One hopes for more spirit of adventure from the young. Ah, well, next year.

First Place
Brigitte Shim and Howard Sutcliffe
University of Waterloo

Project

This modest summer cottage is to be built on a small lake in the Haliburton area of Central Ontario.

Organization

The organization of spaces and their relationship to the landscape refer to the villa type. A dependence on site is established through panorama and framed views; solid and void, implied axis and actual route.

Two central spaces, garden and living room, are clearly defined as public and as extensions of the landscape by the enclosure of the side wings. The cruxiform columns and the corner conditions imply an openness and extention of these central spaces.

Progression

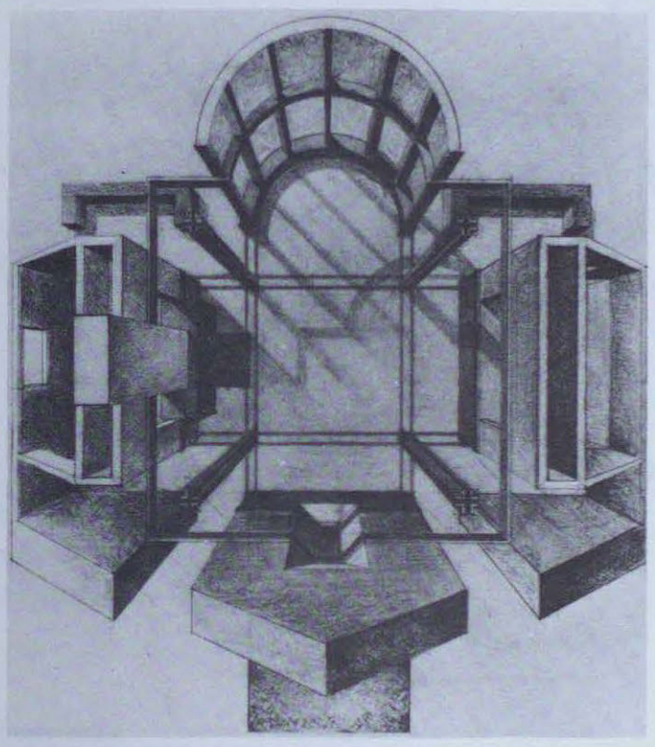
The house unfolds itself as one progresses through it from either the lake or the road. By clearly articulating distinct layers and spaces, and through the repetition of structural elements and spatial relationships memory is evoked within the house itself.

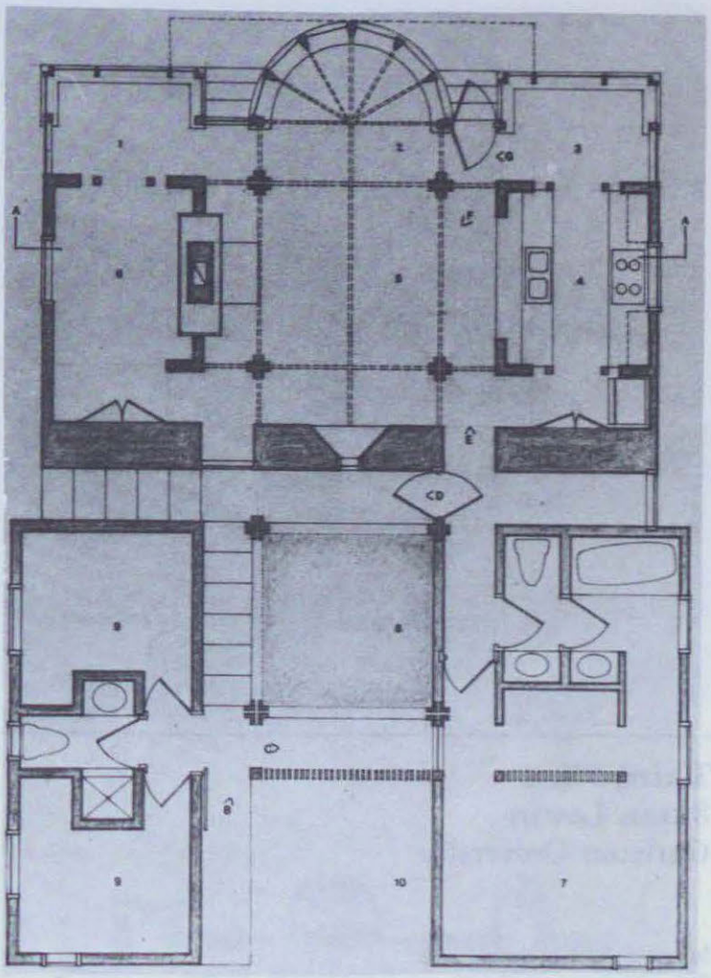
Character

Through the articulartion of structural elements, porches and finishes, the house accepts the collective notion of summer cottage. The formal front facade addresses the lake and indicates organization and construction.

Memory

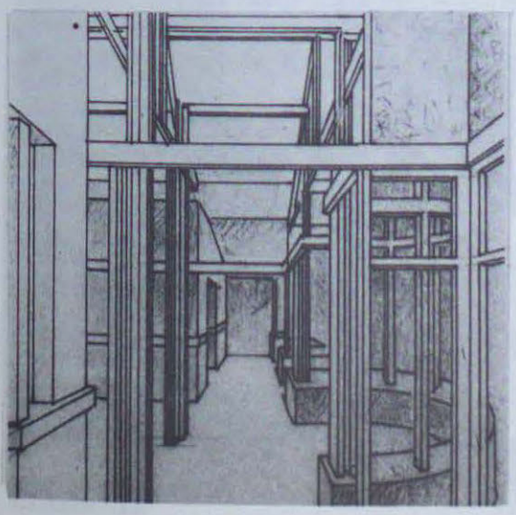
The house is a memory of the villa type through its organization; a memory of itself through repetition of elements; a memory of summer cottage through its character.

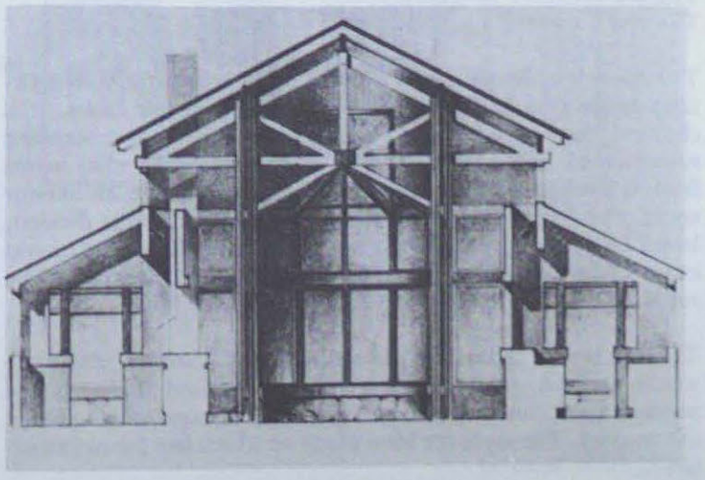




Clockwise from left:

Main living area
Floor plan
Section A-A
Perspective G





Layout: Charles-Henri Brunet

Second Place
Yves Rouleau, Gille Prud'homme et Alain Archambault
Université de Montréal

La mémoire de l'architecture est soutenue par la forme architecturale.

L'interprétation de la signification des formes et l'histoire de l'architecture sont les références propres de notre discipline. Elles doivent jouer un rôle important dans le processus projectuel.

D'où la nécessité d'un retour historique et critique sur la discipline, le projet et la culture architecturale.

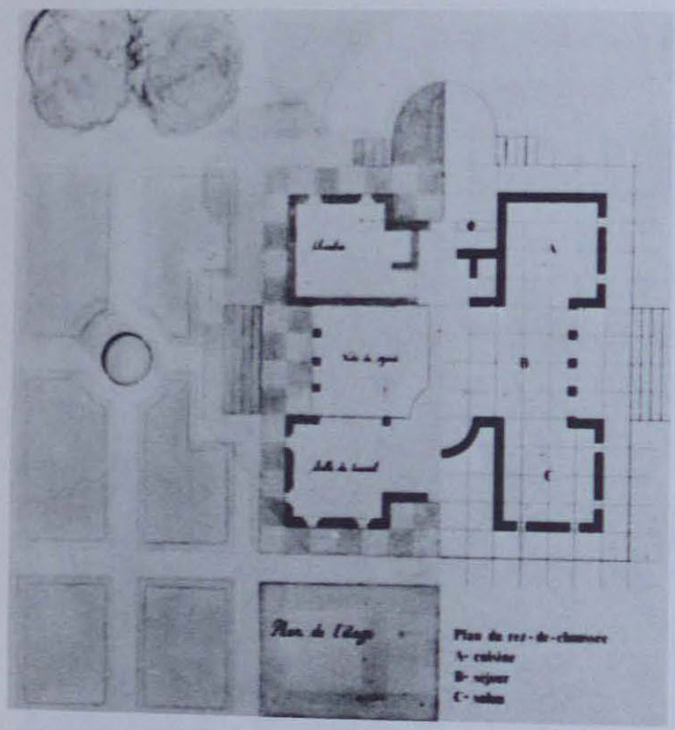
S'engager dans ce savoir, se fera ici suivant des modèles historiques.

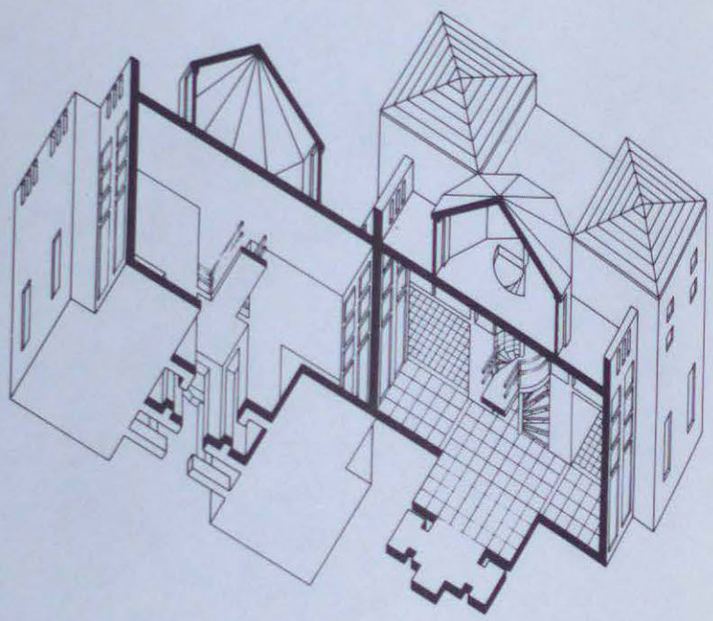
Les epoques de la 'rupture' dans l'histoire 'moderne' de l'architecture sont marquées par quatre principaux modes de représentation:

Perspective — Renaissance
Composition — Ecole des Beaux Arts
Tracés regulateurs — Durand
Axonométrie — Mouvement Moderne

Dans ce contexte, il devient possible d'élaborer un project architecturaal à travers les caractéristiques spécifiques des modes de représentation qui, suivant leurs expressions particulières, traduisent les conditions et les possibilités d'émergence de nouveaux outils conceptuels, des transformations formelles et stylistiques qu'ils permettent d'opérer.

Cette résidence pour quatre occupants ne renvoie pas à une période précise, elle s'appuie plutôt sur des accentuations singulières d'une typologie issue de ces différentes périodes.





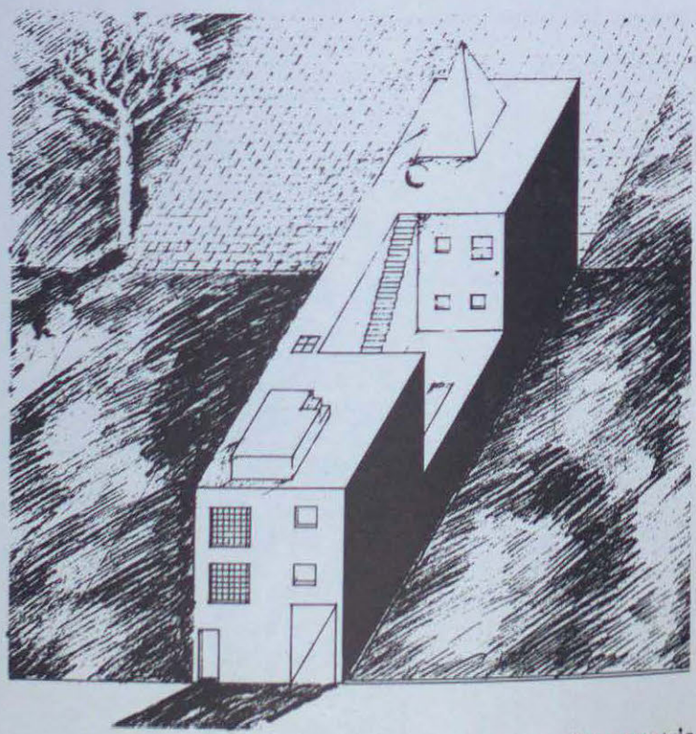
Axonometric

Third Place
Susan Lewin
Carleton University

Memory frames the present
The house type is the structure
The present is the program
The city is the site

The house is in Ottawa, near a major commercial artery. The Ottawa house type is rewritten and dominated in this house. It is changed from a single-family to a multi-unit, from free-standing suburban to infill urban. The house tranforms the alley across from it into a pedestrian throughfare connecting it to an interior court. The Ottawa house type is retained in the tripartite division, based on the living/dining/kitchen progression. Thus, the central court of the house is derived from the previous formal dining room.

The city is seen as layered and sedimentary; a section of the city would contain ground/houses/sky. The ground is for public passage, the house is the centre, the hearth around which private life revolves. The sky is the ideal plane on which free forms can exist.

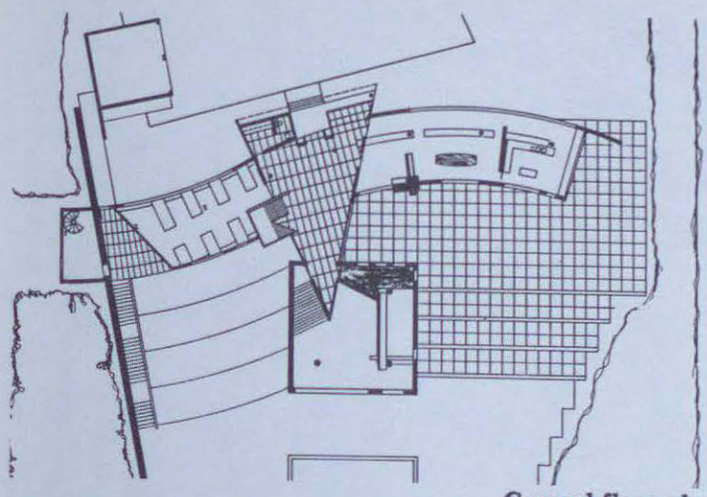


Axonometric

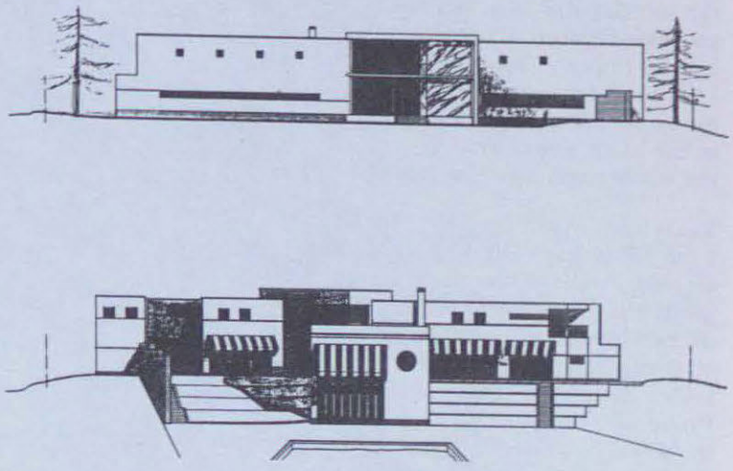
Honourable Mention
Rick Wong
University of Toronto

The house is for four people: myself, Kathryn, and two guests. It is located in the suburban Bridlepath area on the corner of High Point Road and Lawrence Avenue. The site is 50 metres by 146 metres. The house faces east. A triangular hall divides the drawing studio from the kitchen and dining room on the ground floor. A study above divides the two bedrooms. Edging on the swimming pool grotto is the four-columned living room. Terminating its view is a meditation tower that in turn has a view of the city centre.

Architectural meaning and memory are explored by critiquing the relationship of 'house model' against the principles of the classical villa. Typologically, this house is conventional. The timeless architectural essentials, however, are transfigured and expressed in a Modern neo-platonic vocabulary. By this synthesis, Modern production and architectural meaning can achieve a three-dimensional reconciliation which a two-dimensional appliqué never could. By such a synthesis the two may finally become fruitfully united.



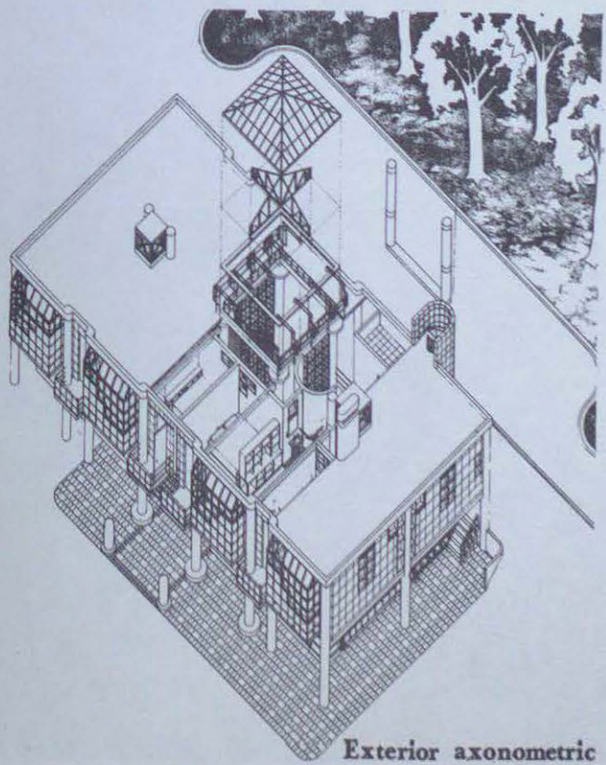
Ground floor plan



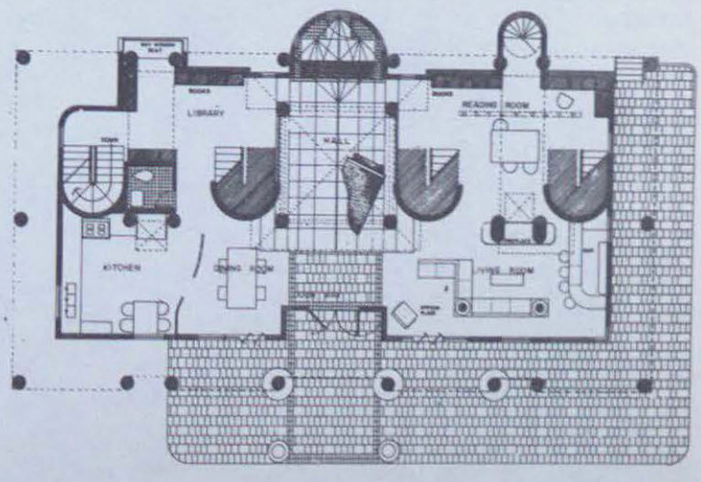
Street and garden elevations

Honourable Mention
Deo M. Paquette
University of Toronto

The open door expresses the architectural memory of the house by connecting past to present, and house to landscape; it is the architectural element that gives form to both context and memory.



Exterior axonometric



Ground floor plan

ARCHIVES

Grain Elevator No. 1 — Eulogy

I am made, an empty shell
still born of simple wooden forms
mass and surface; more concrete
than this town has ever seen
rising upon these shores
behind the market where
they beached their boats.
I am a machine made whole.

you feed me with the harvest of
a hundred summers — I smell
the sweet Prairie sun, the earth, the rain
I am full and my thighs ache
huges legs of concrete, pressing into
the soft clay soil — in late fall
you have finished with me and
I stand empty — conveyors stilled.
I am procedure made manifest
my skin thick and tough creaks
in the harsh winter wind
the whole river, my veins locked in ice.

Years later
I am full of huge and well fed rats
dizzying clouds of pigeons swirling
glints and scampering inside of me
overwhelming my weight and the
terrifying echo of a few fallen bits of concrete
falling down deep through me.
Proud my giant scale chills at
the sound of a wrecker's ball — born of reason
the horror of your misplaced rationale.

"But we must have the view, the view
If the river's too far
We'll bring it right up to you."

"He who seeks truth shall find beauty.
"He who seeks beauty shall find vanity.

"He who seeks order shall find gratification.
"He who seeks gratification shall be disappointed.

"He who considers himself the servant of his fellow beings
shall find the joy of self expression.
"He who seeks self expression shall fall into the pit
of arrogance.
Arrogance is incompatible with nature.
(Arrogance is incompatible with nature
Arrogance is incompatible with nature)

Through nature, the nature of the universe and
the nature of man, we shall seek truth.
If we seek truth we shall find beauty.
(If we seek truth we shall find beauty
If we seek truth we shall find beauty)

I am truth
I am order
I am arrogance
and I am nature
I am beauty
I am gratification
and most of all I am disappointed
Sometimes you are so far away
you are so far away — sometimes
sometimes you are

Mark Poddubiuk

Grain Elevator No. 1 — 1904-1988

THE FIFTH COLUMN

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