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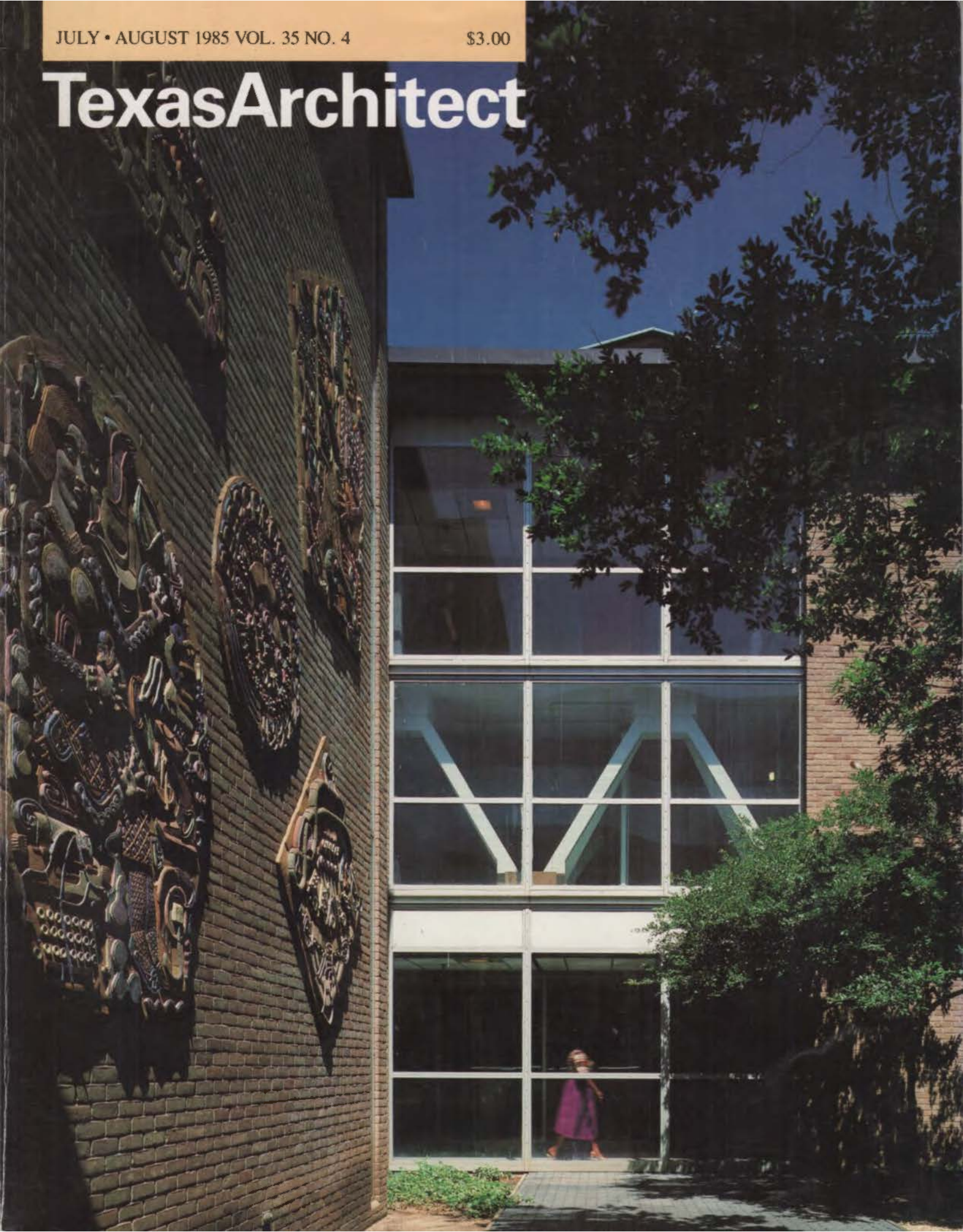

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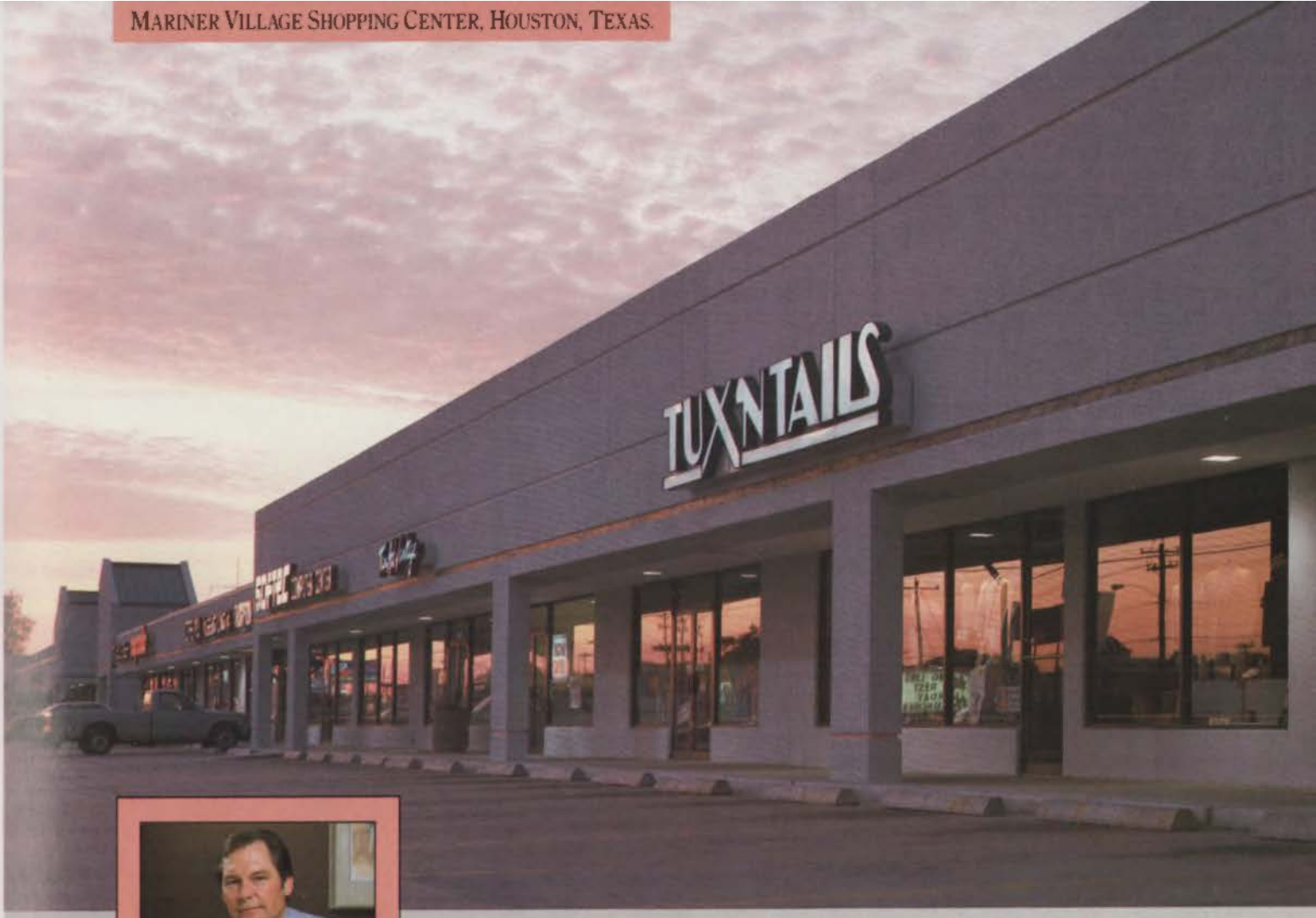

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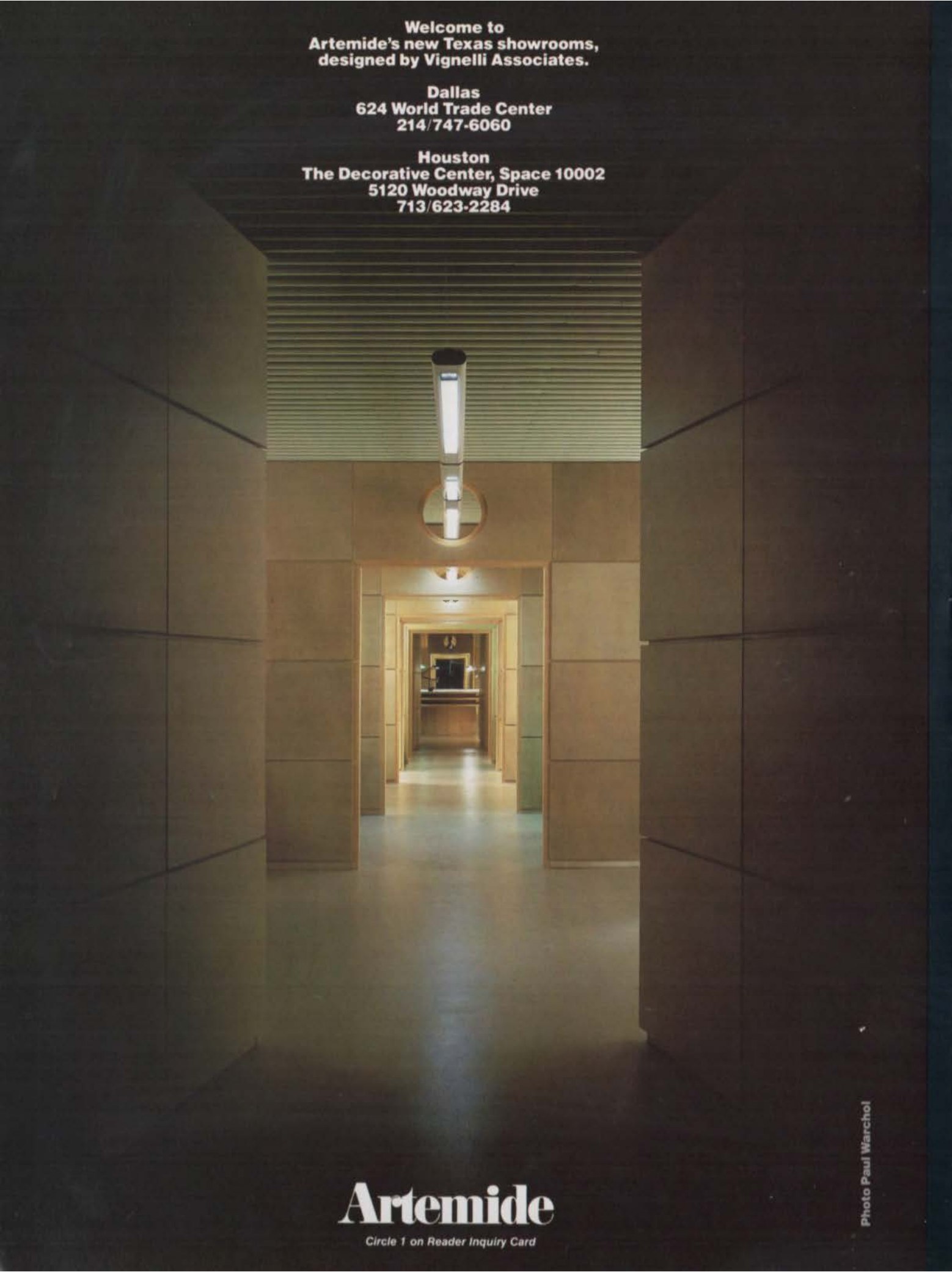

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THE '50s IN TEXAS

COMING UP: *The September/October issue of* Texas Architect *will examine the state of architectural education in Texas, focusing on sometimes contradictory efforts to strengthen ties with the world of architectural practice and to develop new directions in architectural design.*

ON THE COVER: Inventive '50s Modernism shows in the Texas Instruments Semiconductor Building in Dallas. Photograph by Robt. Ames Cook.

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LETTERS

EDITOR: Congratulations! From the excellent cover, through "About This Issue" by Joel Barna, to Dave Braden's "Musings" and all the fine material in between, I believe this May/June '85 issue on Emerging Austin to be one of the best I can remember. It should have the widest circulation possible.
Philip D. Creer, FAIA
Austin

EDITOR: Your May/June issue of *Texas Architect* was superb—An outstanding achievement in light of the added pressure of "the first issue" for a new editor. You've set a firm foundation in place; now build on it.
Bob LeMond
LeMond Associates Architects
Fort Worth

EDITOR: Thanks so much for the great May/June issue on Austin! Beautiful in all ways! Well planned, well written, well photographed!
Sue Brandt McBee
Austin

EDITOR: We were pleased to read about the San Jacinto Center Hotel Office Complex at Town Lake project, which we designed, in the March/April 1985 *Texas Architect*.

We appreciate the receptiveness of Michael McCullar and his reference to the fact that the design alluded to the grand hotels of the past, Italian Villas, and the Spanish Renaissance style of the University of Texas campus. We intended to design buildings that relate to their context.

While we appreciate also that one of the possibilities for landscaping the project was in the manner of the Italian Gardens of Tuscany, we nevertheless felt that, since Town Lake is one of the major assets of Austin, the design should be subservient to it and a part of it.
Chung Lee, AIA
WZMH GROUP INC.
Dallas

CORRECTION:
In our May/June issue, the Texas Sesquicentennial Committee was incorrectly called the sponsor of the North Congress Avenue Approach. The project was conceived and is being developed by the Facilities Construction and Space Management Division of the State Purchasing and General Services Commission.

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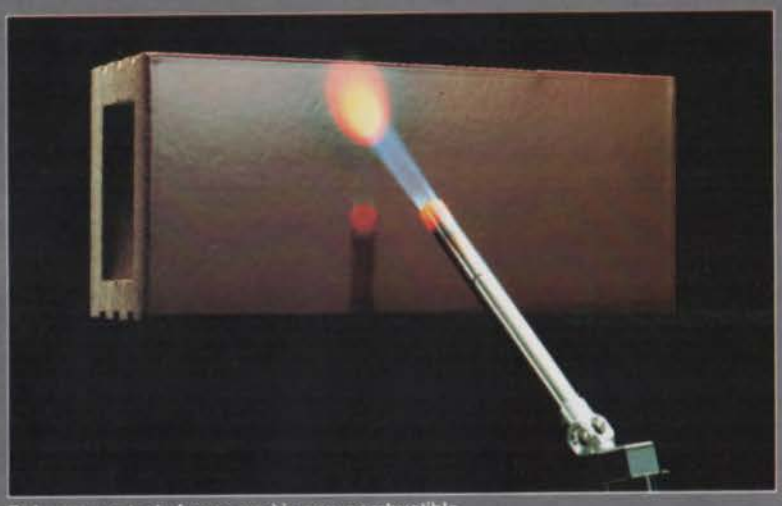

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Masonry Design Profiles

The San Antonio architecture firm Ford Powell & Carson has roots that go back to 1939, when the late and legendary O'Neil Ford began his Alamo City practice. Since Ford's death in 1982, the firm has continued to embrace the same philosophy that has shaped their work from the very beginning–an attitude of respect for building materials, for human scale, for technology, and for the region. Theirs is an architecture based on the value of permanence, of enduring appeal, of ongoing suitability for human use. And it is an architecture that has always relied heavily upon the use of masonry construction as an appropriate form of building.

In fact, O'Neil Ford used to talk a lot about bricks–how he hung around the brickyards as a kid, sorted the bricks, stacked them, and lugged them around for the masons. He liked the texture of bricks, their visual warmth and tactile quality. And he liked the sense of scale they impart to buildings. After all, you could hold one in your hand.

So it is that the firm has been both adept and prolific in employing brick, as well as stone and other indigenous masonry materials. A long-term collaboration with architect Bartlett Cocke (now Jones and Kell) produced one of the firm's most notable works–Trinity University in San Antonio. The "Miracle of Trinity Hill" consists of more than 40 buildings forming a kind of hilltown on a site reclaimed from an abandoned limestone quarry. Trinity is known for its cohesive geniality, human scale and warmth–attributes due largely to the consistent yet versatile use of a light pink-orange variegated brick throughout the campus.

▲ St. Paul Square, c. 1905-1980
San Antonio, Texas

◀ Center for Transportation and Commer
Shearn Moody Plaza, c. 1982
Galveston, Texas

▶ Trinity University Library, c. 1979
San Antonio, Texas

▼ Frank Murchison Memorial Tower, c. 1
San Antonio, Texas

▲ The Fort Worth Art Museum, c. 1974
Fort Worth, Texas

▲ The Crockett Hotel, c. 1909-1983
San Antonio, Texas

▶ Moody Medical Library
University of Texas
Medical Branch at Galveston, c. 1972

In other projects, the desired effect has been coolness–as in the pristine white addition to the Fort Worth Museum of Art. Or contextual harmony–as in the renovation of San Antonio's CrockettHotel. Or the lasting appeal of classical form–as in the brick bovedo vaults that have become a trademark of the firm.

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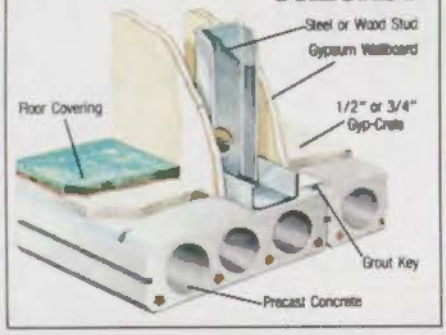

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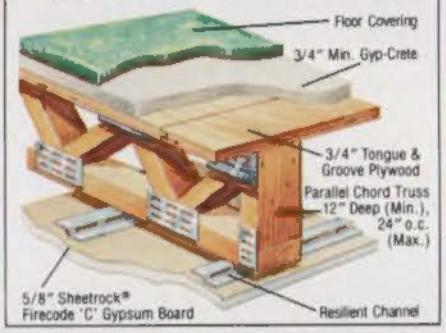

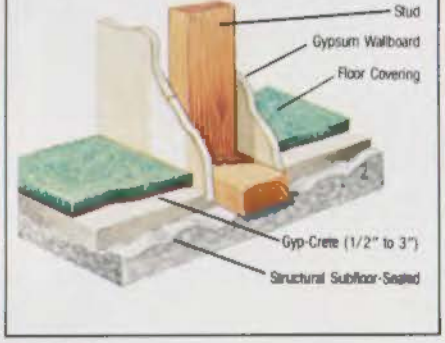

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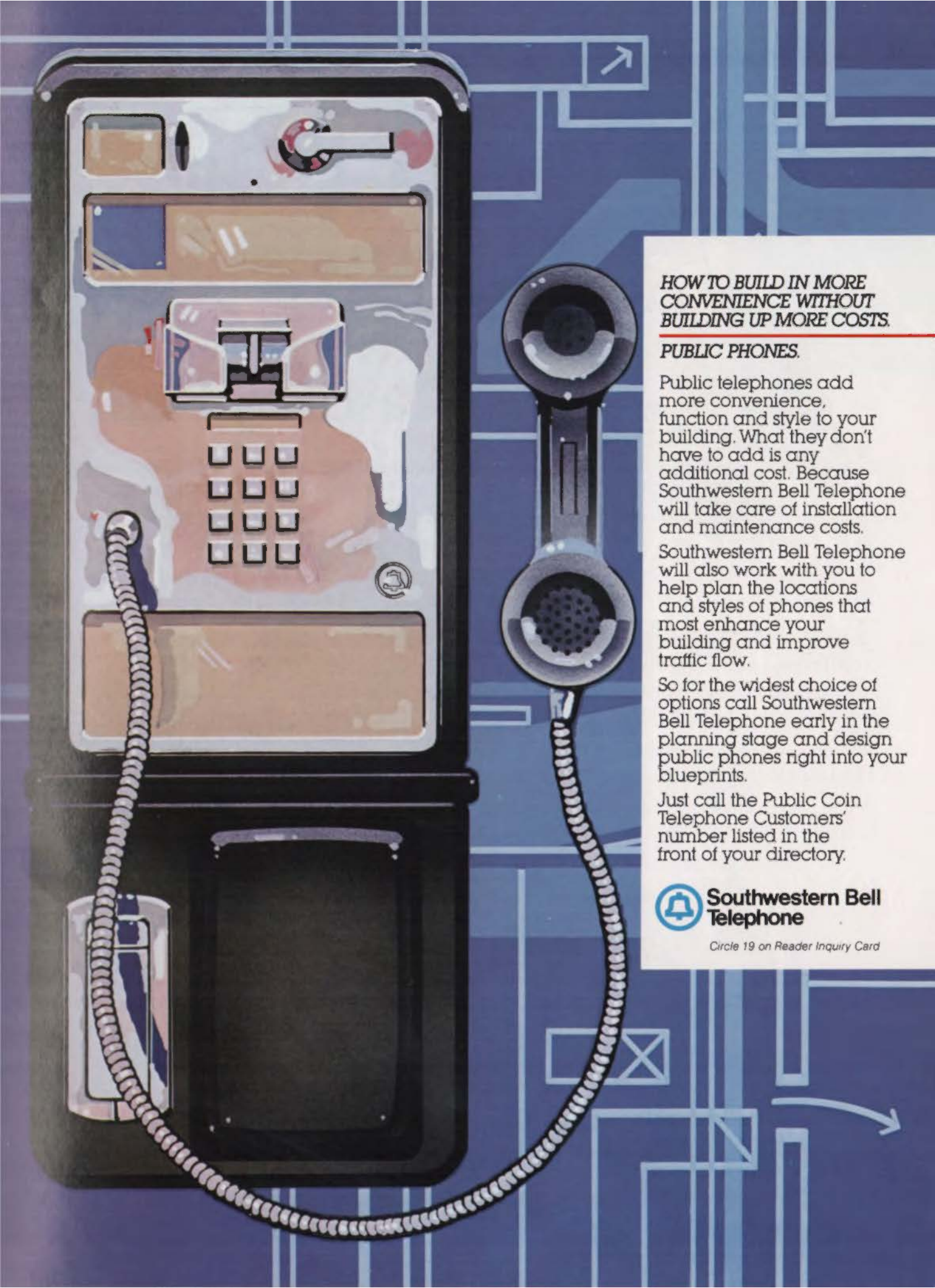

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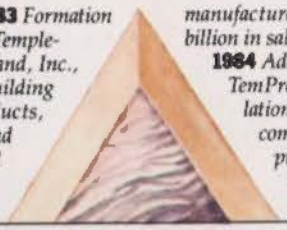

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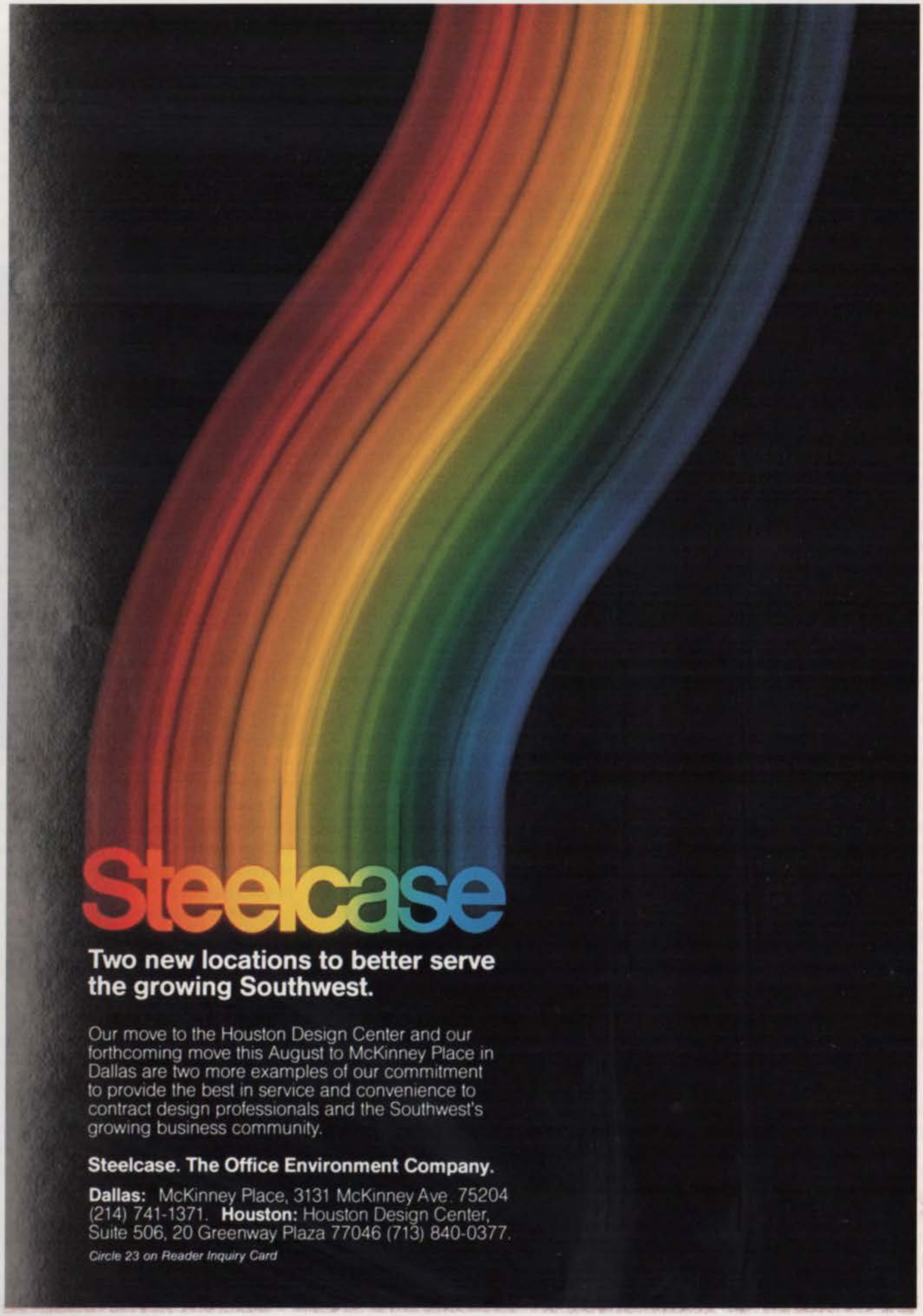

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Edited by Ray Ydoyaga

GROUNDBREAKING PLANNED FOR CONTROVERSIAL HISTORIC VILLAGE

Steven Pumphrey

Texas Embassy wants to purchase the Blanco Courthouse.

Despite a recent rebuff from the city of Austin and continued opposition from state and national preservation groups, a non-profit organization headed by actor Guich Koock is proceeding with plans to re-create a 19th-century Texas town, using historic buildings moved from other places around the state. Koock has likened the project, which will feature local people in period costumes, to Historic Williamsburg and says the $35-million, 10-year project will preserve Texas heritage along with several endangered architectural landmarks. Preservationists say the project is misguided and will do more harm than good.

The project, called the Texas Embassy Living Museum, has been searching for a site since the early 1980s. According to a spokeswoman for the Texas Embassy, the recent purchase of 1,300 acres south of Lockhart means "We have a home for the Texas Embassy."

Linda McKee, executive director of the Texas Embassy, says that groundbreaking for the project could start as early as summer 1985, and that the Texas Embassy could open by late 1986. However, several important aspects of the project remain to be completed.

Three Austin investors—banker Jack Anderson, his wife, Jesse Anderson, and Len Dure—reportedly offered a rancher living in Mexico City a 60-day $100,000 earnest-money contract to buy a 1,330-acre tract for $4,500 per acre, for a total of $5.9 million. According to press reports, if the contract is accepted, the investors have agreed to offer a group of Caldwell County investors 640 acres for $1.6 million, or $2,000 per acre. If everything goes as planned, this will allow Anderson and the Austin investors to take a $1.9 million tax write off, press accounts say; the rest of the property would be available for later development. The 640-acre parcel would be donated to the Texas Embassy by the Caldwell County investors; they are reportedly seeking funding for the purchase, including a $30 million contribution from the Bass brothers of Fort Worth.

The city government and Chamber of Commerce of Lockhart (population 9,000) have been working to lure the Texas Embassy for almost a year. Cecil Massey, city manager of the town 30 miles south of Austin, says that city officials were attracted by Texas Embassy estimates that within a decade the project would provide hundreds of jobs and attract more than 1.8 million visitors each year. Massey says that if the fundraising efforts of the Texas Embassy are successful, the city plans to apply for a $12-million Urban Development Action Grant from the federal government to use in developing streets and utilities for the area around the project.

Despite such blandishments, in late 1984 it looked as if the project would locate not in Lockhart but in Austin: former Austin Mayor Ron Mullen announced in November that he favored turning over a city-owned park to the Texas Embassy. Opposition from preservationists led Austin officials to abandon the proposal, however.

Major opposition to the Texas Embassy has come from the Texas Historical Commission; in 1983 the THC magazine devoted an issue to condemning the "building collection" trend. According to THC officials, projects like the Texas Embassy, however well-intentioned, are travesties of historic preservation and harm the com-

munities from which the buildings are removed. THC officials also said such projects are almost always economic failures, and they questioned the validity of the Texas Embassy's projections of the number of annual visitors.

The THC was joined in opposition by several other groups and individuals in late 1984, including the national Society of Architectural Historians, the Council of Texas Archeologists, the Austin Landmark Commission, and the Texas Society of Architects, which in December adopted a resolution condemning "efforts to remove architectural landmarks from their original location for reassemblage in a pseudo-historical setting."

In November 1984, while Austin's participation in the project was still pending, representatives of the Texas Embassy met with THC officials to try to work out a compromise. THC officials demanded that before any further preparations were made a master plan be drawn up for THC approval, that the Texas Embassy agree to move only structures "in danger of imminent destruction," that the THC approve in advance any structure to be moved, and determine in advance the need for archeological and other work to be done. In February 1985 Texas Embassy Executive Director Linda McKee wrote to THC Director Curtis Tunnell agreeing to the demand for a master plan for the project and promising to abide by nationally recognized standards for all restoration work, but promising only "consultation" with the Commission on other points.

Unmoved by this response, THC officials continue to oppose the project, and they have added an additional "concern": moved structures might not be eligible for tax deductions under the code governing National Register designation.

Linda McKee disputes this assertion and says that 50 separate groups are interested in sponsoring the relocation of structures at the Lockhart site. The Texas Embassy master plan is being prepared by Houston architect Jack Stehling, who says that the project has been unfairly treated:

"If more people can come and see structures in this type of situation, maybe we can save more buildings than we could otherwise," says Stehling. He adds that the now-abandoned Blanco County Courthouse is first on the list to be moved.

—Joel Warren Barna

HEALTH FACILITIES COMMISSION ABOLISHED

Despite last minute efforts by supporters in the Texas Senate, the embattled Texas Health Facilities Commission will be abolished September 1, 1985.

Created as part of a national program in 1975, the THFC regulated building and expansion of hospitals, nursing homes, and other health-care facilities in the state. Congress mandated the program to contain rapidly rising Medicaid and Medicare costs. Higher costs were caused, it was thought, by overbuilding in the health-care sector, which was in turn stimulated by government reimbursal programs. The Reagan administration has worked for repeal since 1980 but the program retains support in Congress and among large employers.

All hospitals, nursing homes, surgical centers, and other health facilities investing more than $600,000 in capital or purchasing medical equipment worth $400,000 or more are required under Texas law to get permission from the THFC before proceeding. The three THFC commissioners can grant a "certificate of need" only after an applicant proves that new services are required due to population growth or other factors.

Outside the Legislature, the THFC had a number of supporters, including members of the Texas Hospital Association and coalitions of employers around the state who are concerned with holding down health-care insurance costs. Supporters argued that government health-care subsidies distorted the self-regulating interplay of supply and demand, making governmental control of health-care investment necessary. THFC proponents argued that without the agency there would be a wasteful building spree that would end up costing consumers and government more for unnecessary facilities and services.

Opponents of the agency rejected that argument and said that market forces should decide where and when hospitals and other facilities were built. Besides philosophical differences, there were other sources of opposition to the THFC. Commission rules allowed other parties, including competing hospitals and nursing homes, to contest applications. Opponents and even some supporters of the THFC said that this favored existing facilities over potentially more efficient new ones and caused lengthy delays—in effect adding to costs instead of controlling them. Rep. Bruce Gibson of Cleburne, sponsor of the unsuccessful bill that would have reauthorized the agency, said the THFC was "guilty of overregulation." Gibson warned, however, that Texas could be penalized up to $250 million in federal health-care funding if the THFC was discontinued.

Other legislators were harsher in their criticism. Rep. Brad Wright of Houston, who led the battle against the THFC, said the agency had been "worthless at controlling costs" and called it "a corrupt, evil agency" that decided applications unfairly. (Under angry questioning from Wright at a legislative hearing in February, THFC staff members admitted that they had considered suing Wright for libel because of his charges, but had decided against it.) Wright and other opponents of the THFC pointed out that several other states had been out of compliance with federal certificate-of-need requirements for years and had not been penalized by the federal government.

Many architects favored abolition of the THFC, citing as particularly burdensome commission requirements governing architectural work. Steve Souter, chairman of the Texas Society of Architects Committee on Architecture for Health said that, while TSA had taken no official position on the THFC, he thought that free-market forces would act more effectively to hold down health-care costs than the commission had done.

Organized opposition from the Texas Medical Association, however, was reportedly the most important factor influencing the Legislature.

The fate of the agency tilted back and forth, with the House of Representatives working to abolish the agency and the Senate working to reauthorize it, and was not decided until the final minutes of the legislative session. In April the House Appropriations Committee voted to wipe out the THFC's budget for the upcoming biennium. On May 9, the Senate voted 24-7 to continue the agency and preserve most of its powers. On May 23, four days before the close of the legislative session, the House voted 98-49 to kill the agency.

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Texas Department of Health was still pending in the Senate. Sen. Craig Washington of Houston attached an amendment continuing the THFC to the health department's bill. This was approved, along with an amendment by Sen. Ted Lyon of Mesquite to impose inspection, licensing, and reporting requirements on hospitals and clinics that perform abortions. Supporters of the THFC hoped that pairing continuation of the agency with abortion regulation would sway conservatives in the House. The tactic failed, however: with six hours left in the legislative session, conferees from both houses agreed to abolish the agency but to allow the governor to reinstate a state certificate-of-need program if federal officials threatened to withhold funds.

Regulations governing architectural standards for health facilities under the Texas Hospital Licensing Act and federal Medicare rules will remain in effect. But, according to one THFC staffer, the demise of the agency could mean a boom for Texas architects. "In Arizona construction applications for more than 130 additional hospital beds were filed the week after the certificate-of-need law was repealed," the staffer says. Whether the same thing will happen in Texas remains to be seen.

—Dan Kelly

LANDMARK STAUB HOUSE DEMOLISHED DESPITE PROTESTS

One of the late Houston architect John Staub's landmark houses was demolished in May less than a week after angry neighbors and area preservationists protested plans to level the historic structure.

Built in 1935 for Victoria ranching and oil heiress Delores Welder Crabb Mitchell, the house marked the only time Staub worked in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. According to Stephen Fox, a member of Houston's Archeology and Historical Commission, Mitchell asked Staub to build her house in 1935 and to pattern it after one she had seen in Taxco, Mexico. Staub formulated the design of the stair window while on a trip to Taxco, and based other details on buildings he admired from a trip to Ravello, Italy, in 1929. Mitchell furnished the house with antiques acquired on a trip to Spain and Italy in 1934. The Crabb gardens, designed by Lambert Landscape of Dallas, were a regular feature of the annual Azalea Trail garden tours from the '30s to the '70s. The house was last published in *Texas Homes* in 1979. When Mitchell died in 1983, the house was left in trust and sold to Kenneth Schnitzer, Jr. and his brother Douglas, sons of Greenway Plaza developer Kenneth Schnitzer, Sr. Rumors began circulating that the brothers planned to demolish the house, which was once listed on the market for $2.5 million, and build two new homes on its double lot. Kenneth Schnitzer, Jr. owned the half of the double lot on which the Crabb house stood; he decided not to retain it. Douglas Schnitzer owns the other half of the lot, which contains only a greenhouse. Minette Boesel, a board member of the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance, led a writing effort by her organization urging the Schnitzer brothers not to demolish the house. Socialite Carolyn Farb, a River Oaks resident, organized a march of two dozen protestors in front of the house. "We don't have to erase every bit of our history," said Farb. "It's a fixture that no one wants see leave." Farb added that the house "sets the flavor for

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Paul Yeager

Crabb House prior to demolition

the neighborhood." Between 1921 and 1968, Staub designed nearly four dozen houses in River Oaks. His work is chronicled in a memorable book by Howard Barnstone. Architectural historian Stephen Fox says the Crabb house is "among Staub's best work."

A&M ROWLETT LECTURES PUT MODERNISM IN PLACE

The fall examination given by a senior faculty member at an ivy-league college contained but a single question—the same one each year. Asked why, the professor said, "That's the one the students answer, no matter what I ask." There is a corollary to this story in architectural education: no matter what the theme of a lecture or symposium program, the participants will always present chapters from their newest books, reports on their latest research, or slides of their most recent buildings.

The fifth annual Rowlett Lectures at Texas A&M University, somewhat ironically titled "Putting Modernism in Place," provided a case in point—and proved that the situation is not necessarily a bad thing. While the program didn't manage to fulfill all the expectations posed by the theme, the near-capacity crowd at Rudder Theater was treated to a first-rate series of lectures.

A&M Professor Malcolm Quantrill introduced the featured speaker, Reima Pietila of Finland, who is the subject of Quantrill's last book. Quantrill also presented a lecture on "The Organic Integration of Modernism," based on a chapter from his next book, *The Environmental Memory*, which is due out next year. Using examples from the work of Alvar Aalto, Quantrill showed how the Finnish architect imbued his Modernist work with a cultural memory by reworking traditional environmental fragments and patterns in terms of a Modernist vision. Quantrill contrasted Aalto's work with modern functionalist design, which successfully reinterpreted such architectural elements as the stair, but failed to create an architecture of place.

Quantrill's lecture provided a good introduction to the work of Reima Pietila, the leading Finnish architect of the post-Aalto generation. Pietila showed slides of four recent projects, including his design for the official president's residence in Helsinki, a commission he won in a design competition last year. Pietila's work, although little known in this country, is highly original. He describes his design process as "form following approach." It seeks poetic inspiration in the genius loci combined with a Modernist attitude toward the potential of contemporary materials and methods of construction. His work presents a difficult springboard for a symposium on Modernism, since it seems to lack a clear polemic. But, as pointed out during the symposium, this

may make Pietila *more* authentically Modernist, since, instead of trying to work through some preconceived architectural idea, he is continually seeking an original encounter with the problem at hand.

While the morning session seemed to hang together around Finnish Modernism, the afternoon session got off on a different track. Juan Bonta presented his research work on "architects and texts." Bonta, a professor at the University of Maryland, led his audience on a tour through the last two generations in American architecture, guided by his computer analysis of indices from selected contemporary books on architecture. Bonta maintained that we can gain insight in the architectural ideas of a given period by comparing the number of times the names of certain architects are mentioned—an exercise in modern scholarship akin in style to John Naisbitt's *Megatrends*.

Stanford Anderson, professor of architectural theory and history at MIT, followed with a lecture on "The Fiction of Function," which explored Modernism as a pluralistic movement and restated the difficulties in finding for it a simple definition. While Anderson's lecture seemed to stick closest and to dig deepest into the topic, it also made the symposium's problem of putting Modernism in place seem largely irrelevant.

Following the four presentations, the speakers were joined by Fort Worth architect Martin Price for a panel discussion and audience-participation session, which eventually settled into a fairly routine assault on Post-Modernism; Martin Price characterized the movement as "Boy George" architecture.

Perhaps it could be said that the Rowlett Lectures seemed to do a better job of putting the idea of place into Modernism than of putting Modernism in place. In doing so, the lectures moved closer to the philosophy of Post-Modernism than to that of historical Modernism. One always has the feeling at such gatherings that labels only get in the way. They force us to dichotomize positions—usually with one side of the argument going unrepresented. Certainly the kind of Modernism presented at the Rowlett Lectures this year no longer has a polemical axe to grind; instead of attempting to mold the world to its own stiff strictures, Modernism seems to be seeking to enlarge upon itself, to become more inclusive, in ways that the old pioneers of the movement would probably have excoriated as revisionist.

The sponsors of the Rowlett program—The Texas Architectural Foundation, CRS-Sirrine, Mrs. Virginia Rowlett, and the Texas A&M College of Architecture—should be congratulated for bringing a challenging, high quality program to the students, faculty, and guests at College Station. The program, along with the earlier "Modernism Reconsidered" program at the University of Houston, has provided Texas audiences with an opportunity for new insights into the meaning of Modern architecture.

—Bruce Webb and Peter Wood

AUSTIN SYMPOSIUM EXPLORES CLASSICISM

A two-day symposium sponsored in April by the Center for the Study of American Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin made a genuine effort at living up to its lofty title: "Ah, Mediterranean! 20th-Century Classicism in America."

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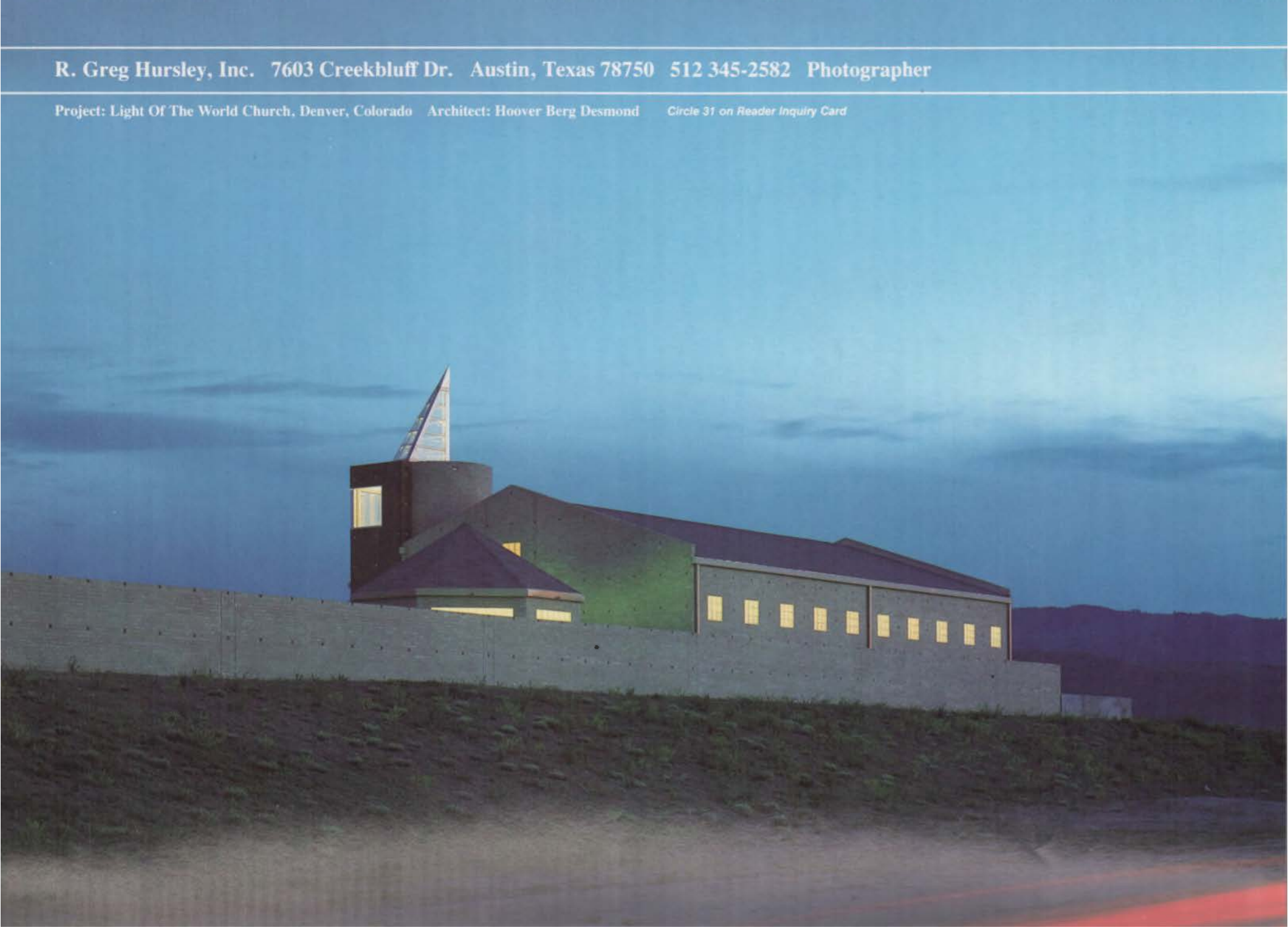

The conference featured an impressive panel of architectural historians, authors, and practitioners, most of whom were fluent on the topic of Classicism. From the introduction by Charles Jencks to the summary by Charles Moore, the symposium was held largely to its original agenda and the digressions that marred last year's symposium were avoided. There were philosophical confrontations and several moments of surprise but these contributed to the main business of the gathering: a better understanding of 20th-century Classicism in Ameriea.

Charles Jencks opened the first session by defining and stating "four new rules" of "freestyle" Classicism: "Urbane urbanism," or contextualism; "Disharmonious Harmony;" "Veiled Personification," or anthropomorphism; and "Inclusive Symbolism."

Martin Filler, architecture editor of *House and Garden* magazine, established another underlying theme for the symposium when he lamented the general low quality of classical architecture today. Filler wondered how architecture could go back to Classicism until more architects learned the classical language. "Perhaps we have been too long at the Modernist fair," he said.

Historian David Gebhard explored the notion of Mediterranean Classicism in discussing several works by Bertram Goodhue and George Washington Smith. The Mediterranean tradition, Gebhard said, was essentially anti-urban, involving a "laid-back" approach to functional problems. According to Gebhard, this facet of Classicism could be either openly classical or openly picturesque.

California architect Andrew Batey expressed his interest in an implicit Classicism, which, he said, involves materials that age gracefully. "Classicism as primitivism is a reaction to the boring excesses of modern architecture," Batey said.

Kansas City architect Richard Farnan drew a distinction between Classicism, which he said invites a theory of imitation, and freestyle Classicism, which invites a theory of invention.

Following a slide show of recent projects by Thomas Beeby, UT Professor Larry Speck defined Classicism generically as "that which stays the same or endures." Speck went on to offer three illustrations of 20th-century Classicism in the Southwest that approach his concept of timelessness: UT's Battle Hall, by Cass Gilbert; the Marshall Steves House in San Antonio, by O'Neil Ford; and the Kimbell Museum in Fort Worth, by Louis Kahn.

Speck's final example became the source of the conference's first surprise and controversy, when Charles Moore pronounced the Kimbell "the Building of the Century." Charles Jencks attacked the idea of ascribing greatness to a building that possesses "no iconographic program." In the Kimbell, "Kahn did not use the full spectrum of his architectural means," Jencks said. "The Kimbell shows typical Modern evasionism." Larry Speck defended his description of the Kimbell as a Classical building: "We have not had enough of seeking or of hoping for the best. This is what Kahn was all about, and what therefore made him a Classical architect." Speck later speculated that "Classical architecture is itself iconography."

The final session of the symposium opened with a discussion by Stanford University historian Paul Turner on the influence of Classicism on the planning of American college campuses. The *parti* established by Thomas Jefferson at the University of Virginia became a distinctive American contribution to Beaux Arts planning, Turner said. Author Wayne Attoe called discipline and passion the primary elements of Classical architecture and decried 20th-century Classicism as having a lack or excess of either or both. "Twentieth-century Classicism," he said, "strays too far from the disciplines of precedent." Attoe further explained that Classicism is most successful when it is filtered through other, more potent issues, such as Regionalism and technology, and that this filtering leads to the realm of invention. Attoe also raised the question of a Classical theory of function: "There are a number of standard Classical building types that are loose enough to cover a variety of needs," he said. Paul Turner and other panelists echoed Attoe's notion of function. "Modern programs are more complex than those of previous centuries," Turner said. "Perhaps that is why Classicism has come back to give an appropriate method for solving these new programs."

The symposium was brought to a "high-minded" conclusion by several remarks by Larry Speck and Charles

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Moore. Justifying the use of Classicism in the 20th century, Speck said: "We need more romance in our society. It is a very important issue and very present in our time." Moore best described Classicism, however, when he said, "It is much more important as the stuff of dreams that gives shape to our buildings."
—*Willis Winters*

DALLAS CHAPTER DESIGN AWARD WINNERS

The Dallas Chapter has honored ten projects from a field of 68 entries for their design excellence as part of its 1985 Design Awards program. Jurors for the competition were Paul Kennon, FAIA, president of the architecture division of CRS Sirrine; Warren Cox, FAIA, partner in the Washington, D.C. firm Hartman-Cox Architects; and Robert S. Harris, FAIA, dean of the School of Architecture, USC, Los Angeles.

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Charles B. Key Cataract Surgery Center; The Oglesby Group.
Private Residence; Woo James Harwick Peck.
Merit Awards:
Pella Commercial Design Center; David A. Dillard.
Geraro's Tropical; Murphy-Murphy Architects.
Addition to Highland Park Residence; Howard Glazbrook III Architects.
Citations:
Addison Market, Addison; Urban Architecture/Dallas.
Cafe Pacific, Highland Park Village; Selzer Associates.
Lovers West; Good, Haas & Fulton.
Scott Dye Architects Office; Scott Dye Architects.

The jurors noted that the winners were all in the range of inexpensive to medium-priced projects. "Not to say that there were not some very expensive buildings and interiors entered," Cox said, "but if the old adage that a building is not necessarily good because it is cheap is true, then the converse also applies. One cannot make a building good simply by throwing expensive materials, shiny


Block 42 West


Key Cataract Center


R. Greg Hursley
Pella Commercial Center


Balthazar Korab
Private Residence


Blackmon and Winters
Geraro's Tropical


Addition to Highland Park Residence

NEWS, *continued on page 72*

REGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE

It seems there couldn't be a worse time than now to produce an issue praising the good points of '50s Modernism in Texas. The *keynote* speaker for this year's national convention of the American Institute of Architects was journalist Tom Wolfe, skilled flogger of architectural Modernism. He was not alone: revivalist architect Allan Greenberg charged in another well-received lecture that Modernism failed because of its inherently totalitarian nature. If the events of such a convention do not exactly prove the triumph of Post-Modernism, they certainly seem to mark the nadir of Modernism.

But, as Lawrence Speck writes in *The Inventive '50s: Ford Had a Better Idea*, ideas have their ups and downs. As in other disciplines given to dogmatic swings, the cycle runs something like this: In the process of each generation's maturation, the children condemn the parents for not living up to the ideals of the grandparents. Thus in the 1950s young architects rebelled against their eclectic forebears for not learning from the pioneers of the International style.

Modernism in the '50s was not one school but many, as Stephen Fox points out in *Googies, Mies, and The Mainstream*. But, even in its most austere forms, '50s Modernism became a very different beast from the first International Style. Architecture for the European urban proletariat became the dominant symbolic expression of American corporate power.

It is on this last point that Tom Wolfe—and other critics who make political hay out of Modernism—go wrong, it seems to me. To show Modernist criminality Wolfe scornfully cites Florence Knoll's interiors for Saarinen's CBS Building—so sterile that workers brought in plants, Wolfe said, and CBS set up a squad of "design police" who each night cut the plants down at the roots. An ugly story, to be sure, but I don't think it supports the point Wolfe intended. There may be grounds to criticize Florence Knoll or Saarinen, but it was CBS, the supposedly ebullient, individualistic, democratic American corporation, that invented the design police. Modernism should not be blamed for the brassy hearts of the business leaders and bureaucrats who used it to subjugate the landscape. If there is totalitarianism here, its source is not exclusively architectural.

It's important to remember that the current rebellion dates at least to 1966—the pinnacle of Modernism's supremacy—with the publication of Venturi's *Complexity And Contradiction In Architecture*. Venturi pined for the things missing from Modernism. Thus, with our celebration of '50s inventiveness and the work of such designers as Harwell Hamilton Harris and Milton Ryan, we present—on a modest scale—a backward look at some of the things missing from today's orthodoxy.

While we were working on this issue, Dallas photographer Carolyn Brown called to say that Edward Durrell Stone's 1956 Graf House in Dallas—the one with the dining room over a pool—was going to be torn down. Not so: the people who wanted to tear down the mansion reportedly didn't get financing. The people who did buy the house, while planning to alter it in part to fit their young family, will preserve most of the structure's highly unusual features as Stone designed them. Stone, although in eclipse now, was among the most successful architects of his generation—a troubling fact, given muddled quality of most of his work. The '50s will come back, and tomorrow's children will blame us for not living up to the decade's standards. The question is: Will the next generation excoriate us for not living up to the work of Harris or Ryan, or will it be the example of Edward Durrell Stone?

—Joel Warren Barna

THE INVENTIVE '50s: FORD HAD A BETTER IDEA

by Lawrence Speck

The much-maligned decade was in reality a period of intense creativity, typified by O'Neil Ford's highly innovative design for the Texas Instruments Semiconductor Building in Dallas.

Ideas reach an awkward adolescence, a point at which they are too young to be judged lasting truths but no longer have the freshness of youth. Familiarity breeds contempt, and with the hoopla surrounding any new development in our media age, we seem to get bored with ideas just about the time they are maturing sufficiently to make a real contribution. Simply because they are close to us in time, we can lose sight of the cogency and usefulness of recent developments.

As part of cultural renewal and growth, this process is natural and unavoidable—the intellectual landscape from architecture to zoology is littered with once-dominant ideas that fell to today's or yesterday's revisionists. And, as has been remarked before, there is a generational trough; we tend to regard as least valid ideas most closely associated with the views of the 20 to 30 years previous. But renewal on such terms has its costs, particularly in architecture. By blinkering our vision of recent decades we lose the experience of designers who have more in common with us, in terms of technology and social needs, than designers of any other era. By rejecting the recent past we neglect continuity in architectural development from which we could build maturity, stability, and confidence. The ideas behind architectural design from the 1950s fell into the trough in the mid-1970s. Some of those ideas are ripe for reassessment.

It is important, from the outset of such a reassessment, to be critical. If architecture is to evolve in a positive way, it must practice "survival of the fittest," selecting for the strengths of the previous era and rejecting its weaknesses. We must not limit ourselves to a shallow copying of forms from the past, like kids rummaging through daddy's old ties. We also need a comprehension of the generative forces behind the forms—daddy's wisdom, as well as his old ties. Digging shows that the decade of the 1950s was an era of spirited creativity in architecture.

PERSPECTIVE

It takes some effort in 1985 to place oneself accurately in the context of the '50s. There is a tendency to measure an era by yardsticks developed after the fact, and to recall aspects selectively. In the current '50s nostalgia, for example, the decade is idealized as a frivolous and carefree backdrop to the traumas of the 1960s. Cruising to the drive in, cheerleader skirts, flat tops, and Joe Kool shades symbolize, in retrospect, a last innocent fling before the assassinations, protests, and national introspection of the next decade. But this is, of course, a thoroughly laundered view of the era. The 1950s not only preceded the 1960s, but inherited the aftershocks of the 1930s and 1940s. And it was a watershed decade, the time of beginning for the new society.

Returning veterans were picking up the pieces, generating the demographic bulge that would be called the baby boom. Whole industries were reconstituting themselves after almost 20 years spent either shut down or absorbed in the war effort. New technologies, often spun off from military research, were finding widespread civilian applications. After two decades of interruption, the economic, industrial, and political life of society—as well as the private lives of many citizens—were making a new start.

Perhaps for this reason, in the 1950s the good old days were rejected. Traditions—particularly European traditions—had been reduced to rubble by the Great Depression and the Second World War. Americans, with their native optimism, concluded that they could invent superior social and architectural modes of expression. Anything new and innovative seemed better than the familiar.

FULLER AND SAARINEN

In this context, an attitude developed in architecture in the 1950s that placed a premium on invention. With the rejection of tradition and an enthusiasm for newness came a new vision of the role of the architect—the architect as scientist, almost, assessing the new social situation, hypothesizing solutions, experimenting and test-

ing, and finally, in success, inventing a new solution with a broad applicability. In this view, the architect was neither the sophisticated arbiter of taste, nor the erudite master of form, history, or style, but a tinkerer, a solver of problems.

No one embodied the new architect better than Buckminster Fuller, who came into his own in the 1950s. Half architect, half philosopher, he hardly built anything, but he redefined the role of the architect—well beyond the definition shaped by the early Modernists in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s.

Buckminster Fuller represents an extreme case, but many of the leading lights of the architectural profession in the 1950s also directly partook of the role of inventor. Eero Saarinen, perhaps the most admired American architect of the decade, was widely admired for his inventiveness. Along with Charles Eames, Saarinen redefined that timeless instrument for sitting, the chair. Saarinen used the newly abundant technology of plastics and fiberglass to create fluid forms that conformed to the lines of the human body. He rejected the classic four-leg support in favor of a shapely pedestal. Saarinen's chairs were astonishingly new in shape and material, even in "feel," but they were also very practical, designed with great care to reflect their purpose as well as the technique of their manufacture.

The same attitude toward design informed many of Saarinen's mature building projects. His idiosyncratic chapel and auditorium of 1955 for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology broke all the rules for both building types. The auditorium was placed under a bulbous three-sided thin-shell concrete dome. Its engineering was highly experimental, trying to achieve the maximum span with the minimum use of reinforced concrete. The materials were unconventional too. The roof was surfaced in a newly developed acrylic plastic that was supposed to give long-time pliability and accommodate movement within the structure over the seasons.

Saarinen's MIT chapel was less inventive in technology than in light and form. Its magical interior character was created by the dynamic play of warped brick surfaces modeled by light coming, not from the side or top, but from below. Dappled sunlight dances on the interior walls, reflected up from a moat-like pool and through windows occupying the space between the exterior cylindrical skin and the (acoustically superior) irregular interior skin. The whole wall system is fresh and clever, the product of an inventive mind working at full tilt.

Saarinen's Bell Laboratories facility in Holmdel, New Jersey, begun in 1957, is simi-

Americans, with their native optimism, concluded that they could invent superior social and architectural modes of expression. Anything new and innovative seemed better than the familiar.

Lawrence Speck

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TOP LEFT: Saarinen's pedestal chair; MIDDLE: MIT Auditorium; LEFT: MIT Chapel; ABOVE: Chapel Interior

TWA Building

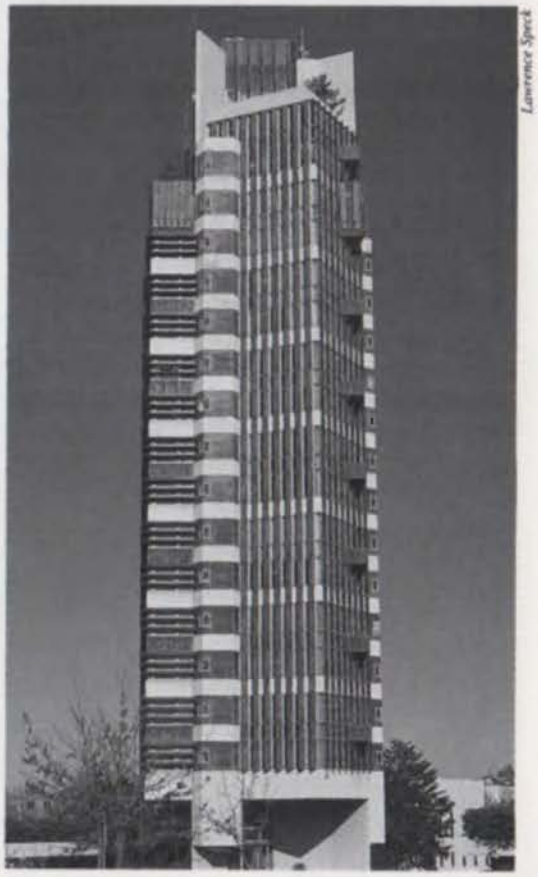
Lawrence Speck

Dulles Airport

Lawrence Speck

Yale Hockey Rink

Lawrence Speck



Lawrence Speck

ABOVE: Price House; RIGHT: Price Tower

larly full of fresh problem-solving devices. Mirrored glass was used here for one of the first times. Mirrored glass, later to become a stylistic symbol, made a lot of sense in its application at Bell Labs. It not only solved the problem of how to consistently sheath opaque and transparent portions of wall and reduce heat gain, but it gave visual security, a primary programmatic consideration. The building's perimeter and corridor and cruciform atrium were also aimed at the requirements of a high-security research laboratory, where wall space for equipment was at a premium, but where visual relief and open sociability were desired.

In his short career Saarinen demonstrated an extraordinary flair for new conceptions. At the the Yale Hockey Rink he experimented with a hanging structure for a long span, rejecting conventional from-below support. He virtually reinvented the airport terminal in his projects at Kennedy and Dulles airports, reconfiguring the modes of passenger transport along with the architectural expression of the type. He even developed a new technique for combining stone and concrete to make that most ancient of structural components—the masonry load-bearing wall—feasible for taller construction.

GOFF'S DOWN HOME INVENTIVENESS

Saarinen's attitude reflected a national and even international interest in architectural invention in the 1950s. It was, however, in the rapidly developing southern and western parts of the U.S. that the penchant for inventiveness had its greatest impact. In the Texas region there was an impressive open-mindedness, a willingness to take chances on new approaches to architectural problems. H.C. Price of Oklahoma exemplifies the 1950s breed of client, taking the risks to build the visionary projects of their architects. Frank Lloyd Wright's 1953 Price Tower in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, embodied ideas Wright had nurtured, but been unable to build, for many years. The Price Tower broke new ground with its rich mix of uses, its tap-root structural system, its hexagonal geometrical base, and its highly textured cladding. It was a blockbuster invention.

When Price's son tapped Bruce Goff to do a bachelor's pad in Bartlesville in 1957, he got, on a smaller scale, the same sort of energetic free thinking. The Price house's geometry was fresh and particularly suited to the panoramic views from the site. Its one-room plan fit the habits of its occupant like a leopard-skin glove. The large focal space, in which Goff replaced conventional furniture with a pillow-lined "conversation pit," created a new twist on everyday life in the

American home.

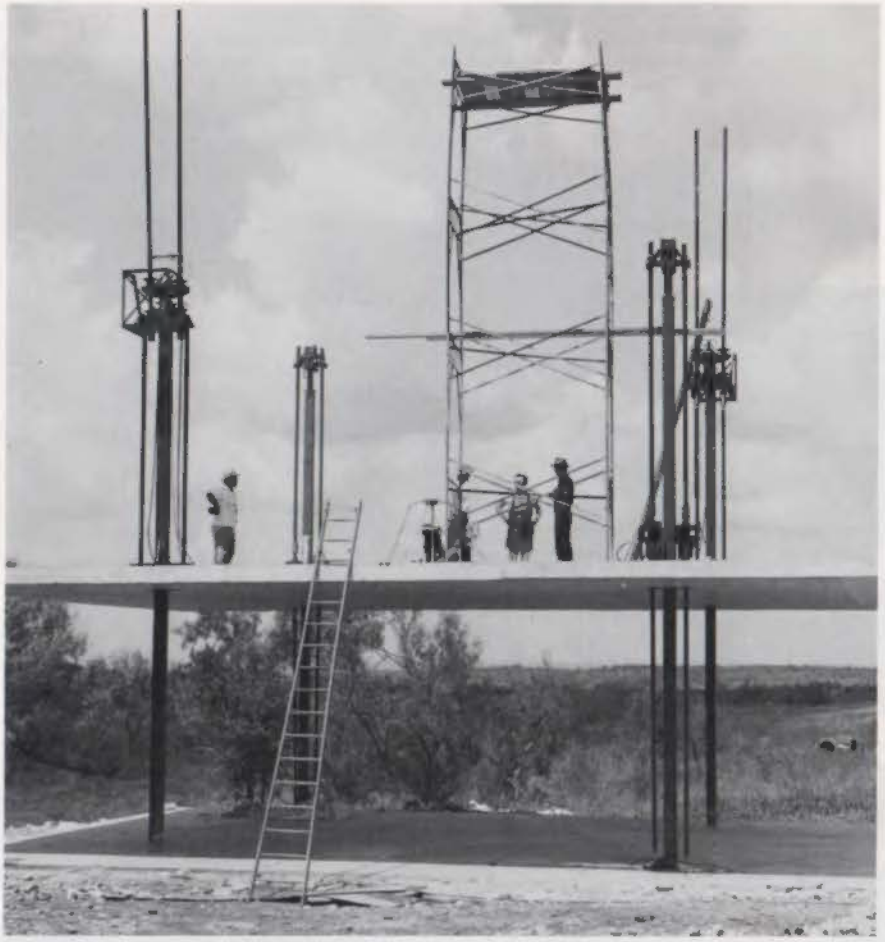
But it was in Goff's use of materials that the architect's open-minded approach truly shone. Like Saarinen, Goff searched for ways to apply commonly available—if unconventional—materials to building. On the exterior of the Price House he made rugged masonry walls from crystalline blobs that were rejects from an industrial process. On the house's interior Goff ran carpet everywhere, using it as wallpaper as well as a floor covering. For the peak of the living-room ceiling Goff sought a material that would almost dematerialize the surface, making it more like a cloud than a roof. He ended up using goose feathers glued to the surface—an echo of Saarinen brought down home.

FORD'S DARING EMPIRICISM

O'Neil Ford, like Saarinen, Wright, and Goff, fervently pursued invention in the 1950s. The lift slabs—slab floors poured in place one on top of the other and lifted into position with specially designed jacks—he used at Trinity University show, as do few other techniques, the daring of empirical design. Using them, Ford took real chances with the goal of inventing a more economical and potentially revolutionary construction process. Ford was continually tinkering with structure in the 1950s. He admired the bicycle-wheel roof which Edward D. Stone had used in the U.S. Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair, and he later used it himself in the La Villita Assembly Hall in San Antonio. He also watched with interest the work of Felix Candela and others in Mexico who were experimenting with thin-shell concrete and the use of advanced structural shapes, such as hyperbolic paraboloids. Ford used the Mexicans as consultants, making limited applications of their inventive work.

But Ford's *tour de force* of 1950s inventiveness was the Texas Instruments Semiconductor Building in Dallas of 1956-1958, built in response to a truly new set of requirements presented by an emerging industry. Here Ford, working with Richard Colley, Sam Zisman, and Arch Swank, produced his single most original building. At virtually every point in the building, conventions were re-examined to create a pure response to the problem. Like the innovation-oriented engineers who were his clients, Ford took risks and broke new ground.

The Texas Instruments Semiconductor Building marked Ford's most extensive use of hyperbolic-paraboloid roof shapes. With a minimum of structural depth, the long-span system provided 63-foot square bays, while at the same time giving a modular identity to individual places within the vast structure.



Ulric Meisel

TOP: O'Neil Ford's pioneering use of lift slab began with tests conducted at Trinity University's Esser Ranch facility in 1949. A reinforced concrete slab was poured in place and then lifted hydraulicly to a desired level on permanent structural steel piers. ABOVE: Ford, Powell & Carson went on to use the system extensively in Texas throughout the 1950s.

N. Bleecker Green

N. Bleecker Green

Nearly all of the Semiconductor Building's architectural components were innovative. TOP RIGHT: Concrete tetrapod truss system being mounted on the interstitial floor preceded a similar use by Kahn at the Salk Institute. TOP LEFT: Top floor is roofed with concrete hyperbolic paraboloids that permit long-spanning 63-foot-square bays. ABOVE: By 1958 the building's form began to take shape. In order to give the Semiconductor Building soaring spaces for assembling computer components, Ford reversed the traditional order of floors and placed offices and laboratories on ground level, with the manufacturing plant on the top floor above the trussed service spaces; RIGHT: Pearl Grey Georgia Marble is attached with a then-new x-shaped hanger.

Courtesy, Georgia Marble

Even more inventive than the roof system was the spanning system for the interstitial floors—larger-than-normal service spaces between levels—used at TI. A nine-foot-high space frame, made of precast concrete tetrapods, separated the lower floor, with its offices and laboratories, from the soaring spaces on the upper floor, which housed manufacturing operations. The deep three-dimensional truss provided a floor between floors for the complicated servicing and mechanical equipment that TI required. Several years prior to Louis Kahn's more celebrated application of the same interstitial-space notion at Salk Institute, Ford and his colleagues had invented a fresh prototype for organizing the intricate new demands of an unprecedented research and manufacturing facility.

The inventiveness in the Semiconductor Building did not stop with the organizational diagram, the structural system, or the mechanical servicing. In detail the building is inventive as well. Its marble cladding is attached by an elegant new x-shaped hanger at the corner of each slab instead of the more conventional concealed connectors. The lighting in the upper floor spaces was an early application of high-intensity mercury-vapor lamps; light from these was bounced off the interior's warped paraboloid surfaces to provide an even high-footcandle light distribution—perfect for intricate high-tech manufacturing.

CAUDILL AND HARRIS

Ford was in good company in Texas as an inventive architect. William Caudill and his colleagues at Caudill Rowlett Scott, working in Bryan before their move to Houston, spent the early part of the 1950s reinventing the American schoolhouse. The impetus behind their innovations in school design was most often economic—educating all the little baby boomers threatened to swamp the state's ill-equipped school districts. CRS's flat, bare-bones, efficient schools met a need for low initial cost and economical operation that previous prototypes could not.

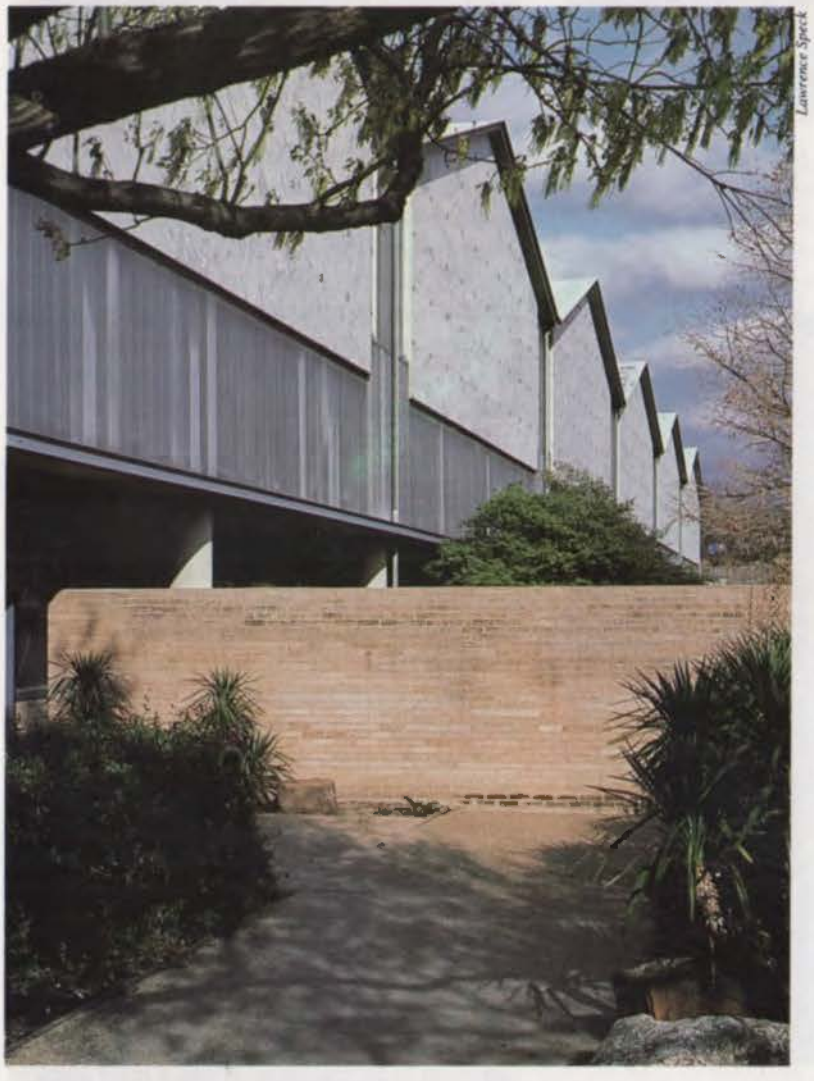
Other architects in Texas were rethinking building forms for a state in which suburbs were rapidly gobbling up a rural way of life. Harwell Hamilton Harris, building on the redefinition of the American house he had begun in California, developed a new prototype for the harsh West Texas climate in his 1958 Treanor House in Abilene—an inward-focused plan centered on a "garden room"—an indoor air-conditioned court that was open and airy like an outdoor space. Shortly after the Treanor House was built, Harris applied the same principle, on a much

Rick Gardner

LEFT AND BELOW: The interstitial spaces, which are invisible from the exterior, are revealed through clear glass curtain walls in the garden courts. MIDDLE RIGHT: Lighting for the top floor spaces incorporates one of the first uses of high intensity mercury vapor lamps. BOTTOM LEFT AND RIGHT: The industrial-shed profile of the Semiconductor Building from the entrance.

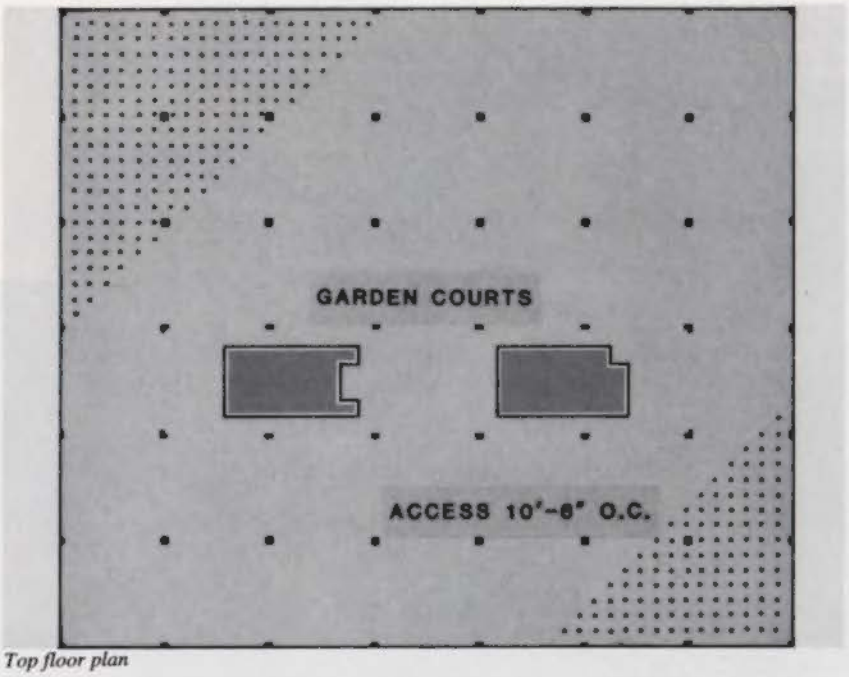
Rick Gardner

Richard Payne

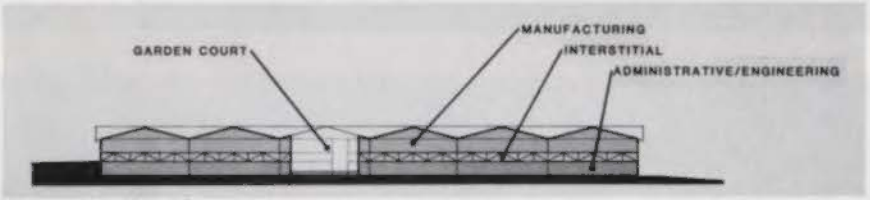


Lawrence Speck

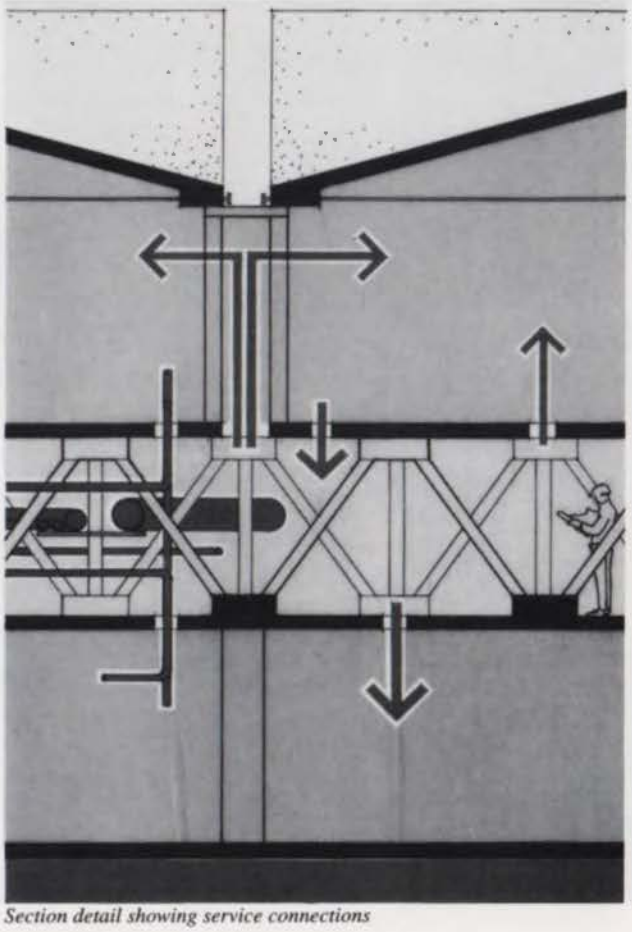
Courtesy, Georgia Marble



Top floor plan



Section through garden court


Section detail showing service connections

larger scale, in the Trade Mart Court in Dallas, creating the first "atrium" space in a commercial building.

ASSESSMENT

We are still being served well by the inventiveness of architects in the 1950s. They left us a legacy of good creative ideas. But the urge for inventiveness in the era was not without its pitfalls. The flipside of successful experimentation is failure; the 1950s left us a substantial legacy of failure also, even in the work of some of the decade's best architects, even though they researched and tested their ideas carefully. In Saarinen's MIT auditorium the structure unexpectedly slumped and had to be shored up with supplemental steel at the perimeter. The plastic roof leaked from the very beginning and had to be replaced with a conventional lead one.

Besides dubious applications, the urge to invent resulted in an inefficient duplication of effort. Longstanding solutions to timeless needs were ignored in favor of a frenetic drive for originality. Many futile efforts to reinvent the wheel were made, often resulting in silly buildings: inventiveness turned into a manneristic stylistic infatuation with the new. Hyperbolic paraboloids became motel lobby pavilions, which hardly merited such long span capabilities. "Experimental" single-family houses were hung and cantilevered and distorted almost beyond habitability. Metal and plastic facades were hung on noble older buildings, to give them at least the appearance of being "with it."

Many architects who admired and sought to emulate Saarinen, Wright, Ford, and Harris, failed to observe that these architects, at their best, exercised great restraint. They were conservative, even traditional in many ways. Saarinen's chapel at MIT uses conventional motifs of moat, arches and spire. Wright's Price Tower is made of copper aged to a rich patina. Ford's Semiconductor Building is clad in marble—that most ancient of fine building materials. And Harris's innovative houses reveled in the beauty of natural wood. These architects knew when and how to blend innovation with tradition.

Many architects of the era were also simply less capable of invention than were these leading lights. Some architects are strongest not at inventiveness but in sophistication and elaboration. In the 1950s, such skills counted for little. Architects like John Staub, a consummate refiner, felt an unfortunate pressure to break new ground. Some architects capable of mature traditional buildings failed to produce them because they were concentrating on largely unsuccessful attempts to be inventive. It was a cruel irony of

the 1950s that originality was enforced so broadly as a conventional criterion of architectural worth.

Disappointing in retrospect as well is the lack of long-term or widespread applicability of so many of the promising inventions of the 1950s. Lift slabs, it turned out, were subjected to much more stress in positioning than they were in use—meaning that they made structurally inefficient floors. Thin shell concrete roofs, not to mention feathered ceilings, never really caught on. This illustrates that the inertia of the architectural discipline is probably appropriate. Real and substantial change comes in small steps, by evolution. Architecture does not need and cannot really absorb revolution.

N. Bleecker Green

AND NOW?

There are lessons to be learned from all this, and we would be well advised to take a hard look at the role of 1950s innovation in relation to design today. As has often been the case with architecture in the 20th century, we have overreacted to the missionary zeal for inventiveness from that decade by retrenching into an unfortunate conservatism in the 1970s and 1980s. We are now so infatuated with typology and precedent, prototype and illusion, that it seldom occurs to us that a really fresh approach might be appropriate. We have stifled the free thinkers among us and the free thinkers within us, to the point that fundamental innovation is now rare. New shapes, new allusions, new collages—our recent preoccupation—don't qualify.

I would not advocate a return to the compulsive inventiveness of our predecessors, but I would suggest that we have a number of new environmental and architectural problems that are resting in limbo, unlikely to be resolved simply by a reworking of conventional devices.

Is there not, for example, some way, other than through the current developer-initiated process, to lay out streets in newly developing areas that will produce more comprehensible, orderly communities, with fewer traffic bottlenecks and less confusion? Isn't there something we can do about the ground-level treatment of rapidly sprouting loop-land commercial developments, like Houston's Galleria area? Historical pedestrian-oriented models are clearly not analogous here, but must these areas be wastelands? And isn't it time for a reinvestigation of residential prototypes? With the substantial demographic changes in recent years—a great increase in singles, single-parent families, and families with two working parents—are the same housing patterns still appropriate? The office environment also needs a fresh look. The impact of machines has substantially changed work routines and social relationships, as well as requirements for space, lighting, and servicing. Are the same old open-plan, nine-by-twelve cubicles still the answer? Is the central-core, uniform-lease-depth model still appropriate?

All of these are questions the architects of the 1950s would have thrived on. They would have challenged conventions, opened up issues, done research, and "engineered" some new solutions. Sometimes they would have fallen flat, but sometimes they would have made profound, long-lived contributions to the discipline. It is time to learn both from the successes and failures of the 1950s generation—to gather up the nerve and carefully and selectively readdress ourselves to appropriate invention as a means to architectural progress. ▬

Prize-winning Austin architect Lawrence W. Speck is R. G. Roessner Professor of Architecture and Director of the Center for the Study of American Architecture at the University of Texas School of Architecture.

GOOGIES, MIES, AND MAINSTREAM: '50s TENDENCIES

by Stephen Fox

The well-known Texas architectural historian explores the various incarnations of Modernism as practiced by leading designers of the day.

BELOW: Although out of step with the Modernist vogue, the 1951 Neo-Gothic Church of the Heavenly Rest in Abilene is again admired for its historicist architecture. BOTTOM: Interior of the Church of the Heavenly Rest.

S. Batnam, Abilene

S. Batnam, Abilene

During the 1950s, architecture in Texas for the first time achieved national prominence. Texas architects by 1959 had claimed a disproportionately large share of national AIA design awards; Texas schools of architecture emerged as centers of modern architectural culture; three Texas buildings were among the 43 included by Henry-Russell Hitchcock in the Museum of Modern Art's second "Built in the USA" exhibit of 1952. One of these, Donald Barthelme's West Columbia Elementary School in West Columbia, won first prize at the S o Paolo Biennale of 1954 and was included as one of the "Ten Buildings in America's Future" in the AIA's 1957 centennial exhibition, "One Hundred Years of Architecture in America."

By the end of the decade, it was possible for *Fortune* magazine to conclude (with, perhaps, just a touch of hyperbole): "If the quality of what men build on the face of the earth is an index to their civilization, then Texans are fast becoming the most civilized people in the U.S., for the new architecture of Texas is one of the most remarkable features in a great, statewide renaissance."

The architecture touted by *Fortune* was uncompromisingly Modernist, but this represented only a part of the architectural spectrum in Texas. The decade-long statewide construction boom produced notable buildings from a range of tendencies that vied for attention—and commissions—throughout the 1950s. Examples of those architectural styles, ranging from the retrograde to the outre, are the legacy of the decade.

ECLECTIC SURVIVAL

Modern architecture's rise to ascendancy in Texas was not without incident and its appearance often provoked controversy. The historical eclecticism that flourished in the U.S. between 1910 and 1940 could still command major building projects during the 1950s. The coldly serene Armstrong-Browning Library by New York architects Eggers and Higgins, built in 1951 at Baylor University in Waco, and the neo-Gothic Church of the Heavenly Rest in Abilene, designed in 1952 by Philip Hubert Frohman, architect of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., were exceptional examples of historical eclecticism in Texas by out-of-state architects. Established eclectic architects in Texas, like Mark Lemmon of Dallas, maintained a steady practice designing large Georgian and Mediterranean-style university buildings and neo-Georgian churches. As late as 1959, Trammell Crow built the 14-story Hartford Fire Insurance Company Building in downtown Dallas, designed by Harold A. Berry in a neo-Colonial style.

OUT OF PHASE

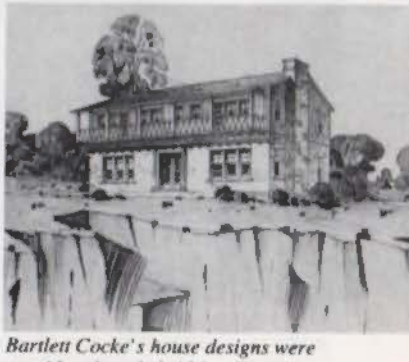
As a conservative alternative to Modernist architecture, however, public or commercial buildings were more likely to be designed in a manner that Houston architect Howard Barnstone has called "Out of Phase." Meant to bridge the gap between Modernism and Academicism, buildings in this style were characterized by blocky massing, exaggerated juxtapositions of scale, and the use of bold, atectonic patterns created with framing devices and mixtures of facing materials. At first an extension of the architecture of the 1940s, Out of Phase by the mid-1950s had developed into a distinct hybrid modern style—one thoroughly despised by its Modernist competitors. This was the house style of all the big established offices in the state: Wyatt C. Hedrick and Preston M. Geren in Fort Worth; George L. Dahl in Dallas; Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres and Bartlett C. Cocke in San Antonio; David S. Castle in Abilene; and Alfred C. Finn and Kenneth Franzheim in Houston.

There were exceptions. By relying on young designers of talent—first Merle A. Simpson, then James Ingraham Clark—the veteran Weslaco architect R. Newell Waters produced such thoroughly up-to-date buildings as the Hidalgo County Courthouse, built in Edinburg in 1954. By contrast, however, almost all the county courthouses built in Texas in the 1950s were Out of Phase—as were most of the tall buildings. Midland, for instance, acquired an entire Out of

Baylor University

Baylor's Armstrong-Browning Library shows very spare historical allusion that foreshadows the reign of Modernism in the following two decades.

Donald Barthelme's West Columbia Elementary School was one of the most celebrated Texas buildings of the '50s.



Bartlett Cocke's house designs were considered too hybrid for the purists of Modernism.

Virginia Hoynie, Pan American U.

Newell Waters produced a rare truly Modern courthouse for Hidalgo County in 1954.

Wayne Wright

Paul Hester

TOP: Exaggerated juxtaposition of scale and bold atectonic patterns makes the 1956 First National Bank of Corsicana, by Preston Geren and Associates, typical of the Out of Phase style bridging Modernism and Academicism. ABOVE: Peter Blake called the Penguin Arms Apartments, designed by Arthur Moss, the essence of the Googie style.

Phase skyline during the decade. Even the most conspicuously modern tall buildings—Harrison and Abramowitz's 36-story Republic National Bank Building, built in Dallas in 1954, or the 15-story Carlton Hotel in Tyler of 1955, by Design Inc. of St. Louis—hovered precariously on the brink of Out of Phase.

GOOGIE

Modern in style, yet still suspect, were a number of uninhibited buildings designed by California architects to fulfill the Hollywood glamor fantasies of Texas millionaires. Recurring features in these buildings included dramatically flaired profiles, boomerangs and other Surrealist-influenced "free" forms, highly-contrasting materials, changing floor levels, interior planting troughs, and concealed lighting fixtures. And, of course, there was the essential kidney-shaped swimming pool. Stellar representatives of the genre included the 1950 Bradford House in Midland and the Ridglea Country Club of 1955 in Fort Worth, both by Burton A. Schutt of Los Angeles; the 1950 Maceo House in Galveston, designed by Williams, Williams, and Williams of Palm Springs; the vast, flamboyant McGaha House, built in 1950 in Wichita Falls, and the 1952 Herzog House in Houston, by Paul Laszlo of Beverly Hills.

A locally produced example, indebted in a rather perverse way to Harwell Hamilton Harris's Havens House in Berkeley, was the Penguin Arms Apartments in Houston, designed by Arthur Moss and built in 1951. The spectacular inverted triangular trusses of the Havens House are exaggerated and echoed in the facade, but not the structure, of the Penguin Arms, resulting in one of the city's oddest buildings. The project was singled out by architecture critic Peter Blake in a 1952 essay (signed by a pseudonymous Professor Thrugg) as prize piece of what he labeled "Googie" architecture.

DOING MORE WITH LESS

What conscientious Modernist architects objected to in these buildings was not only the residual monumentality of Out of Phase, or the excesses of *modernismus boomerangicus*, but the fact that architecture—modern architecture—was being treated as mere style.

For committed Modernists, the appearance of a building was not unimportant, but it was supposed to result from a rational integration of programmatic and constructional requirements and a considered response to situation and climate. This conviction, shared by most Modernists, defined an approach generally termed "organic." It implied that the task of modern architecture was to resolve—ingeniously,

economically, lyrically—the problems of modern life, not just to serve as a medium for compositional exercise.

Such a Modernist credo was reflected in a statement published in 1955 by the Harlingen architect John G. York: "My design philosophy [stems] from the idea of expressing structure, simplifying details, omitting unessentials and striving for economy with stability by avoiding the use of too much 'architecture.' I am not at all in accord with monumentality [or] stylized period work for any reason whatsoever."

Apart from enthusiasm and optimism, it was the importance accorded structure and materials that was the outstanding trait of Modernist architecture in Texas in the 1950s. This lent itself to a number of tendencies. Of these, the most readily identifiable centered on the acknowledged masters of modern architecture in the U.S.—Frank Lloyd Wright and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

WRIGHT AND MIES

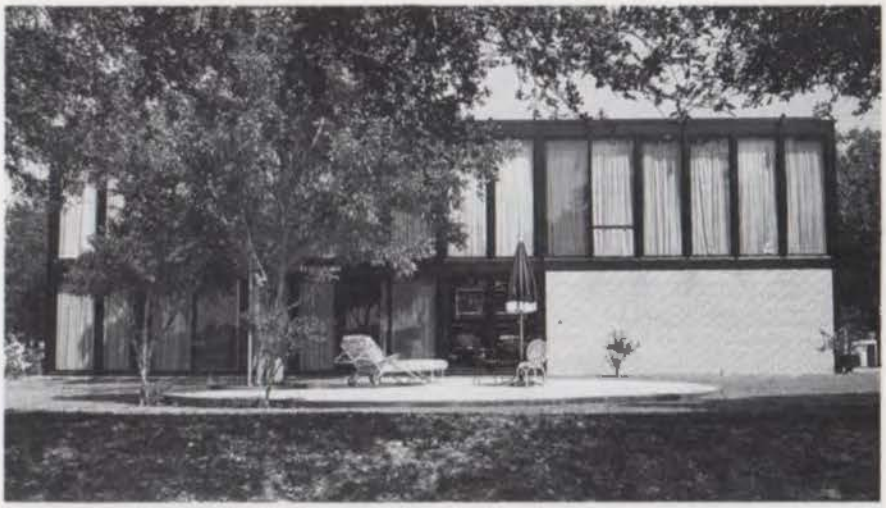
Over the course of his long career, Wright designed a number of buildings for Texas clients, but it was only in the 1950s that he at last had any of his Texas designs built: the Dallas Theater Center of 1959 and houses in Houston, Amarillo, and Dallas. At the peak of his popularity during the late 1940s and early 1950s, Wright inspired several Texas architects to follow his example. Much of Harwell Hamilton Harris's Texas work, the buildings of David George and Reagan George in Dallas, those of John S. Chase (who in 1954 became the first black architect to be registered in Texas) and—filtered through the precepts of Bruce Goff—those of Herb Greene in Houston, were derived from Wright.

The most consistently Wrightian architects in Texas were Frederick J. MacKie and Karl Kamrath of Houston. MacKie and Kamrath assimilated Wright's Usonian manner with skill and understanding; they produced such major projects as M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute, built in Houston in 1954, suburban office buildings in Houston, Freeport, and Fort Worth, and multi-story bank buildings in McAllen and Pasadena.

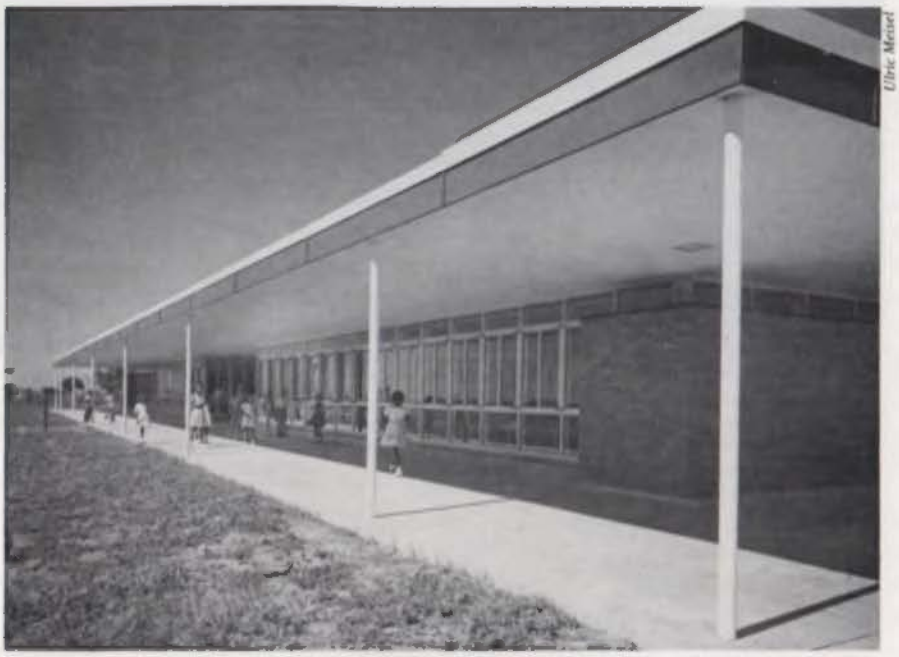
As with Wright, the effect of Mies van der Rohe on architectural production in Texas was most visible in Houston. There, in 1954, Mies prepared a master plan for the Museum of Fine Arts, resulting in the addition, in 1958, of Cullinan Hall, and in 1973 of the Brown Pavilion. But Mies's way in Houston had been prepared by Philip Johnson, who, in 1949, designed a large house there for Dominique and John de Menil. Completed in 1950, the Menil House introduced young Houston architects to the formal authority

Hedrich-Blessing

TOP: MacKie and Kamrath's 1954 Usonian style M.D. Anderson Hospital, Houston, before numerous additions obliterated the simple massing; BOTTOM: Mies' arrival in Texas in 1954 and his design for Houston's Museum of Fine Arts' Cullinan Hall created an entire school of architects who adopted the International Style. A later Mies-designed addition to the Museum, the Brown Pavilion, now completely obscures the Cullinan facade.



Hedrich-Blessing



Ulric Meisel

TOP: In his 1957 design for the Hosen House, Howard Barnstone demonstrated that he was at the forefront of Miesian practioners. MIDDLE: Miesian influence was mostly confined to the Houston area, but the McAllen State Bank by Cowell and Neuhaus, with Associate architect David Haid, was a notable exception. BOTTOM: CRS's Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School of 1952 bridged the gap between the Modernists and the Regionalists in a style described as Stick Building.

of Miesian architecture, and converted, in quick succession, Hugo V. Neuhaus, Jr., Howard Barnstone, Burdette W. Keeland, Jr., Harwood Taylor, William R. Jenkins, and Kenneth Bentsen to the discipline of the rectilinear exposed-steel frame, in-filled with panels of brick and glass. Johnson's campus plan and buildings for the University of St. Thomas, built between 1956 and 1959, confirmed this trend.

Miesian austerity did not exert as strong an appeal in the rest of Texas as it did in Houston, despite such exceptions as the 1959 Fire Station Number Four in Odessa, by Odessa architects Peters and Fields, and the General Telephone Company of the Southwest Building in San Angelo, built in 1952 and designed by Mies's sometime collaborators, PACE and Associates of Chicago.

TEXAS MAINSTREAM

The mainstream of modern architecture in Texas in the 1950s derived from two different sources that had welled up in American architecture in the 1930s: German Modernism and American Regionalism. By the early 1940s, Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer and the earliest graduates of the Harvard Graduate School of Design had reconciled these two tendencies in buildings that combined advanced structural technique with "functional" planning and natural, "native" materials. Simultaneously, two influential California architects, the Modernist Richard J. Neutra of Los Angeles and the Regionalist William W. Wurster of San Francisco, began to admit in their buildings the mutuality of the Modernist and Regionalist trends.

The confluence of these tendencies exerted a strong appeal in Texas. In almost all cases, the Texas buildings that resulted were small-scaled, compact, and visually unassertive. Module, grid, and frame—the hallmarks of structural rationalism—constituted this architecture. Planarity, horizontality, and lightness were its attributes. Differences in construction techniques did impose a formal distinction in these buildings. The use of light steel framing lent itself to a more exuberant display than did framing in reinforced concrete, just as modular wall systems of asbestos-cement panels were more explicitly industrial than wall planes of brick, stone, or wood siding. Only after the middle of the decade did thin-shell concrete vaulting come into its own, endowing reinforced concrete construction with a new, volumetrically assertive character.

Most clearly identified with what Merle A. Simpson has described as the "stick building" of this period, with its typical Lally columns and exposed bar joists, were Donald Barthelme, whose West Columbia school was its icon;

Caudill, Rowlett and Scott of Bryan; Milton A. Ryan of San Antonio; and John G. York of Harlingen. The reinforced concrete rib-and-slab and thin-shell alternatives were best represented by the work of O'Neil Ford of San Antonio; Howard R. Meyer and J. Hershel Fisher of Dallas; Richard S. Colley of Corpus Christi; and Alan Y. Taniguchi of Harlingen. The buildings of Fehr and Granger of Austin and Thomas M. Price of Galveston sometimes fell within each of these categories.

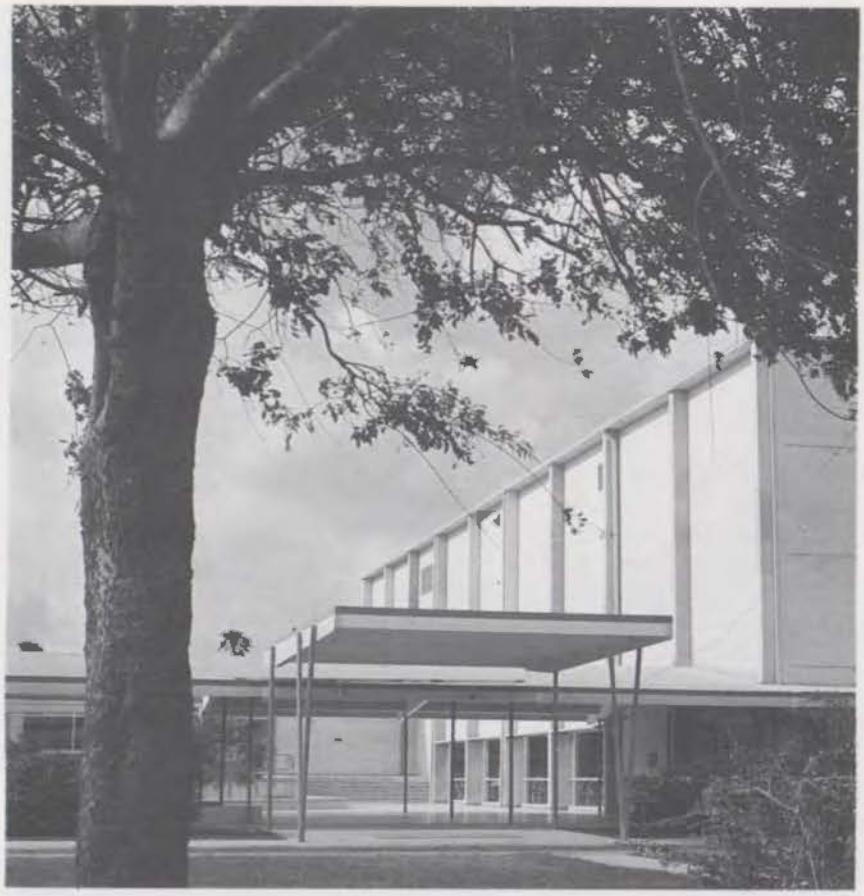
The mainstream of Texas Modernism spread out to encompass a range of building types—small office and retail buildings, clinics, motels, and clubhouses. The two most common were single-family houses and schools. Caudill Rowlett and Scott rose to national prominence specializing in school design, as had Donald Barthelme. Despite the state's general cultural conservativism, religious buildings and, on occasion, public buildings also presented opportunities for mainstream Modernist design, as Caudill, Rowlett and Scott's 1956 Immaculate Conception Church in Corsicana and Wiltshire and Fisher's 1954 Fort Brown Memorial Center in Brownsville demonstrate. Within the mainstream, one project stands out as a rare, executed tall-building commission: Howard R. Meyer's 22-story 3525 Turtle Creek Boulevard, built in Dallas in 1957.

PLANNING IN THE 1950S

Modern architecture in the 1950s belonged to the suburban frontier, both by inclination and by force of circumstances—all the action was happening the newly developing periphery. "Planned" development reflected this disposition, from the scale of John York's Laurel Park subdivision in Harlingen, to the extraordinary, exaggerated vision of Horizon City, a 167-square-mile new town planned in 1959 by Brazilian architect Lucio Costa on the outskirts of El Paso.

The most famous American plan of the decade was that prepared in 1956 by Victor Gruen and Edgardo Contini for downtown Fort Worth. Like the 1950 project by Gruen (in collaboration with Irving R. Klein) for the Montclair Shopping Center in Houston—the first air-conditioned shopping mall ever proposed—the Plan for a Greater Fort Worth Tomorrow remained unexecuted. The small Mayer and Schmidt specialty store in Tyler was Gruen's only Texas building.

Planning enjoyed its greatest prestige in Dallas, which, in the 1950s, was still the state's cultural capital. Welton Becket and Associates' 25-year development plan for Southland Center, proposed in 1955, and Lane, Gamble and Associates' 120-acre Exchange Park plan of



TOP: The 1954 Fort Brown Memorial Center in Brownsville by Wiltshire and Fisher displays a regionalist Modernist style typified by reinforced concrete frame-and-fill construction; ABOVE: Ford, Colley and Tamminaga's 1957 Texas Instruments Laboratory and Plant, Houston, is typical of Mainstream Modernism.

Jack Corgan: Theater and Drive-In Pioneer

If the drive-in theater is the quintessential '50s structure, Jack Corgan, who brought drive-ins to Texas, may be the decade's typifying architect.

As the demand for movie theaters grew after World War II, Corgan was appointed to the Dallas Building Codes Committee. During his tenure, Corgan developed the code requirements for theaters widely used before adoption of the Uniform Building Code. Early on, Corgan tinkered with the problems of theater design and invented a crucial fire-safety apparatus—previously projectionists were in constant danger from fire.

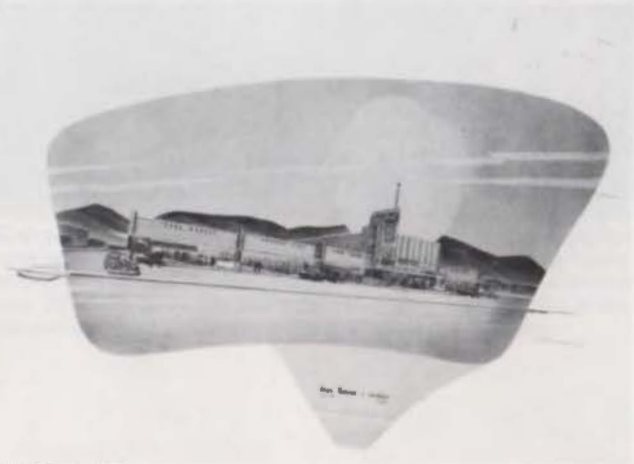
After designing hundreds of indoor theaters, Corgan went to work on a way to combine the car craze with the movie business—theaters where customers would sit in their cars to watch the show. Although some investors were interested, Corgan could not convince contractors to bid on the sitework because of the then-unusual layout. Rather than abandon the concept, he arranged to do the sitework himself, starting a regional explosion of drive-in building.

Corgan retired from Corgan and Associates in 1980 after designing some 70 drive-in theaters and some 375 indoor theaters. He was made an AIA Fellow this year.

The Circle Drive In, Waco

Hornbeck Theater, Shawnee, Ok.

The Don Theater



The Central Theater

The Will Rogers Theater, Tulsa, Ok.

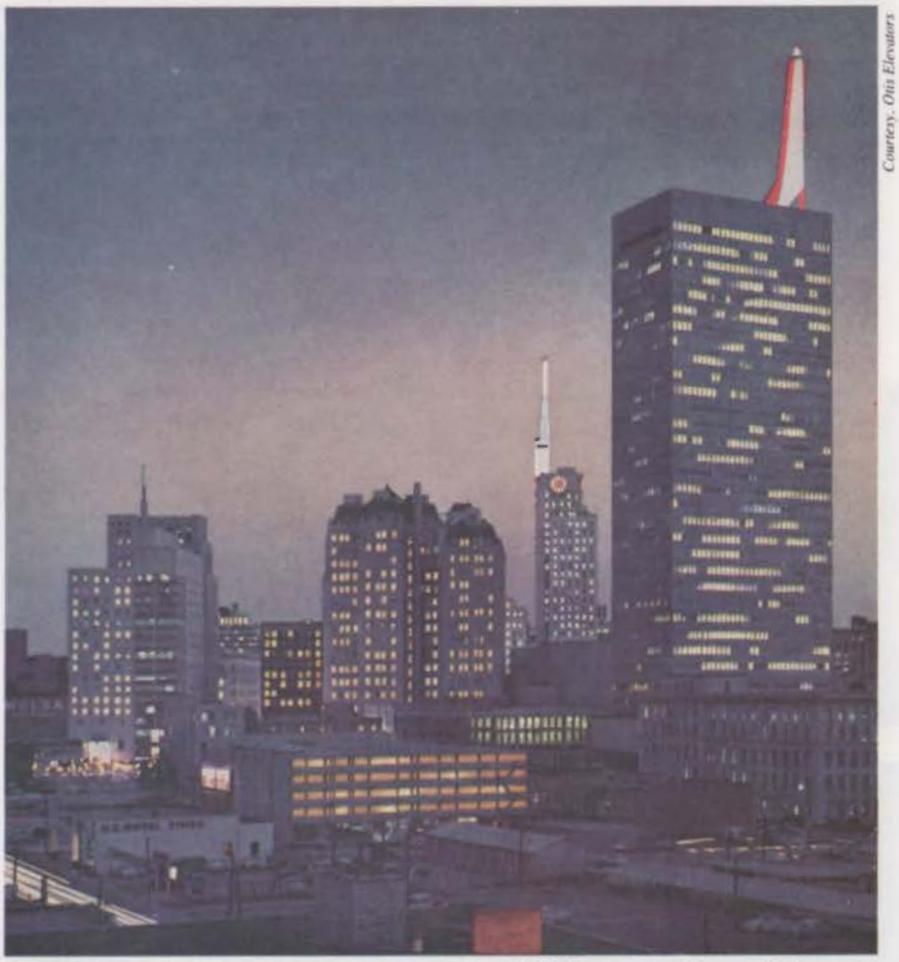
1955, across from Love Field, were the earliest projects to achieve even partial realization. The 1,200-acre Brookhollow Industrial District, planned in 1954, and the 5,000-acre Great Southwest Industrial District, planned in 1956 by S. B. Zisman, were models of their kind.

ELEGY

It was the shift from small to large scale which these planning projects portended, as well as renewed interest in architectural form and decoration, monumentality and urbanity, and historical awareness—all rare in the Modernist work of the 1950s—that began to divert the course of modern architecture in Texas at the end of the decade, just as the same factors were changing architecture elsewhere. Symptomatic of this transition was Philip Johnson's Amon Carter Museum of Western Art in Fort Worth, built in 1961. Conceived as a civic monument, it stands in pointed contrast to Herbert Bayer's adjacent "mainstream" modern Fort Worth Art Center, built in 1954.

The conceptual clarity that, in historical perspective, distinguished the practice of modern architecture in the 1950s—the eagerness and intensity with which all things were made new—did not survive translation to these new interests.

In Texas the era of heroic Modernism officially commenced when Frank Lloyd Wright came to Houston to receive the AIA Gold Medal in 1949. The era concluded when the AIA next met in Texas, in Dallas in 1962. The architectural guidebook that Hal Box, James Wiley, and James Reece Pratt produced for the convention, *The Prairie's Yield: Forces Shaping Dallas Architecture from 1940 to 1962*, documented with unerring precision the predilections and values of the modern architectural mainstream in Texas—even as that mainstream was being diverted. Poignantly, the volume proved to be the movement's elegy. ▬▬



Courtesy, Otis Elevators

Like Houston in the mid-1970s, downtown Dallas in the mid-1950s was one of the nation's foremost architectural laboratories. This photograph advertising Otis Elevators extolled the virtues of Dallas architecture—"Today, the entire nation can salute this foresighted Texas city . . ."—and ran in seven national magazines. The tall tower on the far right is Harrison and Abramowitz's Republic Bank Building of 1955.

Stephen Fox is a Fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas. *For assistance in the preparation of this article he gratefully acknowledges David Ashcroft, Howard Barnstone, FAIA, Mrs. Richard S. Colley, Mark A. Hewitt, John Kaliski, Peter C. Papademetriou, John Pastier, Thomas M. Price, Paul W. Schieffer, Merle A. Simpson, Alan Y. Taniguchi, FAIA, and Mrs. John G. York.*

REDISCOVERING MILTON RYAN

by Melanie Young

Milton Ryan

Milton Ryan

Milton Ryan built Colonial-style houses in San Antonio suburbs until he tired of "caves" and converted irrevocably to a minimalist Modernism in the late 1940s. TOP: The Gorman House of 1933 was Ryan's first Colonial house. ABOVE: The Curry House of 1947 was one of the last.

San Antonio architect Milton A. Ryan is a Texas original. A self-taught '50s Modernist, he produced a body of still-fresh architectural work by matching his home-grown flair for building with the International Style that swept into the forefront of American taste at the end of the second World War.

At a time when G.I.'s, returning to San Antonio armed with government-backed financing, were demanding traditional-style houses in the rapidly developing suburbs, Ryan was the first to break out of the mold. Ryan designed the first modern residences the conservative Alamo City had ever seen. His quartet of low-slung, streamlined houses on Elizabeth Road, constructed between 1948 and 1950, so amazed San Antonians, according to one resident, that "on Sunday afternoons you'd see a long line of cars driving slowly down Elizabeth while people stared." And his 1959 exterior renovation of the downtown First Federal Savings Building, covering the facade with blue-black porcelain and plate glass set in an aluminum grid, was the first curtain wall seen in the city.

Ryan was born in Rockdale, Texas, in 1904 and became a registered architect in 1938. As a child, Ryan says, he amused himself by making two-story houses—with basements—out of wooden crates. At 16 he went to work for a contractor building rental houses for his father. "He showed me how California bungalows went together," says Ryan. "I learned the fundamentals of building from him."

Ryan took a job in the late 1920s designing tract houses for the Harlandale Building Company in San Antonio. By the 1930s he specialized in designing and building Colonial-style houses. After becoming a registered architect—his studies for the examination were the only formal architectural training he had—he designed houses built by the A.B. Spencer Lumber Company in Terrell Hills, then a relatively undeveloped subdivision adjacent to the older Alamo Heights residential area.

Milton Ryan's traditional practice came to a halt one day in the late 1940s, however. According to his wife, Elizabeth Ryan, he surveyed their Colonial-style house, with its small, heavily curtained windows, and said: "I'm tired of living in a cave. I'm going Modern."

Ryan says he was led to his conversion by realizing the error of "building that kind of house in this kind of climate." Moreover, buildings by International Style pioneers Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Richard Neutra, and others were widely published after the war. Ryan stayed in San Antonio and while he did not decide to emulate any other architect's designs, he says, "The International Style was in the air." At the time he was not aware of any other architects in Texas working in the idiom. Nor, at the time, did he think of his work as fitting the International Style. "I just wanted to build something more open, more economical, and as simple as possible," Ryan says.

Modernism gave Ryan an appropriate expression for the qualities he valued: economy, simplicity, a pragmatic and investigative approach, and a high regard for open, uncluttered space. At the same time, in Ryan the Modernist penchant for highlighting structure with both natural and industrial materials found a responsive and talented practitioner.

That Ryan was the first to try this idiom in San Antonio residential architecture speaks of his quiet determination to work his own way. He designed and built houses for speculative sale, even though the practice was not sanctioned by the architectural establishment. Only by overseeing the entire process and working with his own carefully trained crew could he achieve the results he wanted.

No less remarkable than Ryan's unconventional approach was the speed with which he mastered the Modernist style, expanding his practice from houses to public buildings. He designed the First Church of Christ Scientist in Victoria in 1952. The church earned him considerable recognition, including the AIA National Honor Merit Award for 1954 and the TSA Honor Award for 1953. His training as a builder contributed to the speed with which his designs were completed. In the Victoria church, constructed in four months, Ryan produced one of the high

Ulric Meisel

Ulric Meisel

Dewey G. Mears

The Modernist penchant for highlighting structure found in Ryan a talented practitioner. TOP: The ethereal Lucy Dunwoody House, which Architectural Forum *called "almost a diagrammatic expression of stresses." LEFT: the Sacks House was built in 1952. ABOVE: The Lohse House, 1948–1950, combines natural and industrial materials.*

Dewey G. Mears

Milton Ryan

Milton Ryan

Melanie Young

Ryan "wanted something more open." He matched an investigative, pragmatic approach to economical materials and respect for the demands of climate. TOP: The Embleton House, in Austin, shows the quality of detailing achieved by overseeing construction. CENTER LEFT: The Revere Copper House's innovative roof-cooling pond; CENTER RIGHT: Dunwoody House interior; ABOVE: The low-maintenance Seagle House, interior courtyard; OPPOSITE PAGE: Scherr House, courtyard.

points of Texas Modernism. In it he blends a simplicity and elegance of form that recalls the work of Neutra, a Miesian structural geometry of glass, steel, and brick, and three-inch steel columns with wood beams reminiscent of the wood joinery favored by California Regionalist architects Warren Callister and William Wurster.

Ryan's rapid development of a successful Modernist style suggests that his particular combination of experience, talent, and interest primed him to respond to its aesthetic demands. His lack of formal training, for example, may have made him more willing to experiment with new ideas. Certainly, his thorough grounding in construction techniques made it natural for him to adopt a style that reduced structure to its conspicuous essentials and that valued pragmatic exploration in building techniques and materials. At any rate, Ryan took up the "constructivist icons" of Modernism in the tradition of the Charles Eames house—steel Lally columns, exposed bar joists, modular panels of industrial materials—as easily as if they were his native vocabulary.

His house for Lucy Dunwoody, built in 1951, which Ryan calls "my pipe dream," is one of the finest example of his exploratory use of industrial materials to create an economical and lightweight structure. Floating above a base of steel stilts anchored in a concrete footing, its plywood and glass walls are hung on a welded two-story frame of hollow inch-and-a-half steel pipes; *Architectural Forum* praised the structural pattern as "almost a diagrammatic expression of stresses." The brackets holding up the flat overhanging roof are hidden, making it the closest Ryan came to the floating roof favored by Mies and Neutra. The lightweight steel frame also exemplifies Ryan's minimalism—his practice of using no more material than necessary.

Ryan extended the pipe-dream motif to the railing of the front porch terrace, itself a jaunty trapezoid extruding, like something about to take flight, from the house's overlapping rectangular forms. Even the porch ramp, which bridges the "air moat" surrounding the house, reinforces the illusion that the glass prism might cast off its thin moorings and float up into the blue. In the Dunwoody House, Ryan's transformation of mundane materials into something startlingly ethereal is complete.

His thorough grasp of construction technology, at a time when architects and the public were searching for more efficiency in building, also made it logical for Ryan to experiment with inexpensive cooling and heating systems, as he did in the Revere House, built in 1949 as part of

Dewey G. Mears

Ulric Meisel

a project sponsored by the Southwest Research Institute's Quality House Program and the Revere Copper and Brass Company. To provide low-cost cooling in those days before the widespread use of air conditioning, Ryan designed a "roof pond," shallow trays in which a continuous flow of water spilled over the roof. This reduced the temperature inside the house by as much as 15 degrees. In the winter, the Revere House was warmed by a radiant heating system Ryan designed that circulated hot water through serpentine copper tubing in the cement-slab floor.

Ryan's respect for economy led him to experiment with inexpensive materials such as cement-ashestos board—sometimes used in modular four-by-eight units to order his design —translucent plastic panels, plywood, and structural wall tile, which he applied to floors for the first time in Texas. He also followed the International Style line on materials and techniques not essential to structure, eliminating molding around doors and windows, as well as interior walls where posts or partitions would do, and painting where wood stains could be used.
John Seagle, owner of a house built in 1958 with mahogany-plywood walls and floors of structural tile, says, "I bet we haven't spent more than $50 on upkeep since we bought the house."

Ryan showed special strength in the geometrical patterning of materials to produce both tonal harmony and unified effects that focus attention on a single material. The interior of Ryan's 1954 University Presbyterian Church in San Antonio demonstrates the latter; its simple form highlights the beauty of the wood. San Antonio architect Allison Peery says, "He used materials honestly to protect their integrity rather than cover them up."

Ryan valued openness and flexible planning as well, qualities also derived from Modernist aesthetics. His houses usually featured a large living-dining-kitchen area, divided only minimally by partitions, movable screens, and furniture. To open the structure to the outdoors, providing the interpenetration of interior and exterior spaces so valued in the Modernist style, Ryan designed most of his L- and U-shaped houses with large expanses of glass framing landscaped courtyards.

Ryan's pioneering residential design work in San Antonio and his use of materials made him an important influence on younger architects in the city. "His example gave younger architects the confidence to try the Modern style," says Allison Peery. Emmit Tuggle, another architect influenced by Ryan, says that the older designer was looked on as a daring leader in "a revolution—young people sought him out."

Tuggle says that Ryan's work became strongly identified with San Antonio, and that it was also immediately identifiable within the community: "No one in San Antonio had any doubt of what was a Ryan house." Whether he was building a modest home in Terrell Hills or a church in Victoria, Ryan forged economy, simplicity, openness, and innovation into lean, graceful structures that will endure as masterpieces of Texas Modernism. ▬▬

OPPOSITE PAGE: Ryan's First Church of Christ Scientist in Victoria won statewide and national recognition. ABOVE: University Presbyterian Church in San Antonio, exterior and interior; simple forms and geometric patterning highlight the beauty of the wood.

San Antonio writer Melanie Young holds a doctorate from Rice University in Houston. She is a former executive director of the Rice Design Alliance.

OF MALLS, GARAGES, AND THE FERTILITY OF FREEWAYS

by Douglas Pegues Harvey

At the dawn of the '50s, some wanted to "pigeon hole" cars, so that they could share the world with other, tamer forms of transportation. Some dreamed of a new state—the Interstate.

It was July 1952, and the U.S. would soon explode the first hydrogen bomb. In Houston, the Texas Highway Department was testing a bomb of its own: the Gulf Freeway, the first freeway in the state, connecting Houston and Galveston.

Freeways had an irresistible appeal in Texas. Compared to the thrill of the open road, mass transit looked bland, but crossbreeding the highway with city travel promised even city dwellers the room to roam that Texans took as their prer ogative. Imagine—smack in the middle of town, by God—a wide-open highway! Planning for the Gulf Freeway had begun even during World War II, and soon after the war freeway engineering programs began in Dallas, San Antonio, and Fort Worth. Planners, state and federal highway officials, and higbway contractors quickly climbed on the bandwagon, promoting freeways and their siblings, turnpikes and parkways, as the solution to a host of problems facing the postwar world. The first justification offered for a nationwide network of freeways was military: the legislation authorizing the national freeway program created the *Defense Interstate Highway System* for military transportation. But freeways promised solutions to other problems: recessed roadways and adjoining greenbelts cut through urban areas were touted as civil defense measures—firebreaks that would stop the spread of a firestorm after a nuclear attack, and provide evacuation routes for city dwellers. For cities faced with the burden of slums near high-priced downtown real estate, freeways also offered a rationale for urban renewal by bulldozer.

These were side effects, however. Freeways were directed primarily at solving the problem of commuter transportation—they would end traffic jams caused by right-of-way crossings at grade. The new roadways would thus, it was expected, perfect the social contract between suburban residence and downtown employment center. The freeways would be good for sales and tax revenues, a fact that businessmen near tbe Gulf Freeway and politicians all over the state recognized early.

Additionally, at the dawning of the 1950s, freeways were imbued with the glamor and romance of the modern, and they were declared to be true-blue, unimpeachably American. They were proof that a city had arrived, just as belching smokestacks had once advertised urban potency. At the Gulf Freeway dedication ceremony former Governor William P. Hobby declared: "We not only believe in free speech, a free press, and free enterprise, but we also believe in freeways." No self-respecting city could be left behind.

By 1956, however, only four years after Hobby's proclamation of faith, the romance was beginning to wear thin. That year, Los Angeles architect Victor Gruen submitted a proposed master redevelopment plan for downtown Fort Worth. The plan provided for a central district free of cars and trucks, with underground truck routes and delivery facilities, and perimeter parking garages served by electric shuttles along an inner-belt freeway. Instead of welcoming the cars that brought suburban commuters to the central business district, the plan called for walling them out. What had happened in four years to provoke this jaundiced view of automobile traffic?

What happened is that freeways were too successful. When the first leg of the Gulf Freeway opened in 1948, Houston Mayor Oscar Holcombe predicted that it would handle 30,000 cars per day. But by November, 1950, the Freeway was carrying more than 66,000 cars each day. In Dallas the Central Expressway was similarly swamped long before it was completed.

Freeways had such unexpected effects because they were an entirely new species unleashed into an environment ripe for exploitation. The community of experts that conceived, promoted, and built freeways understood them simply as technical improvements—gargantuan, but still ameliorative—which would permit society to be more effective at what it already was. The confidence derived from organizing for the war effort, mated with engineering and political bravado, created in the freeway system

the largest public-works project in history, for the direct and personal benefit of the man behind the wheel.

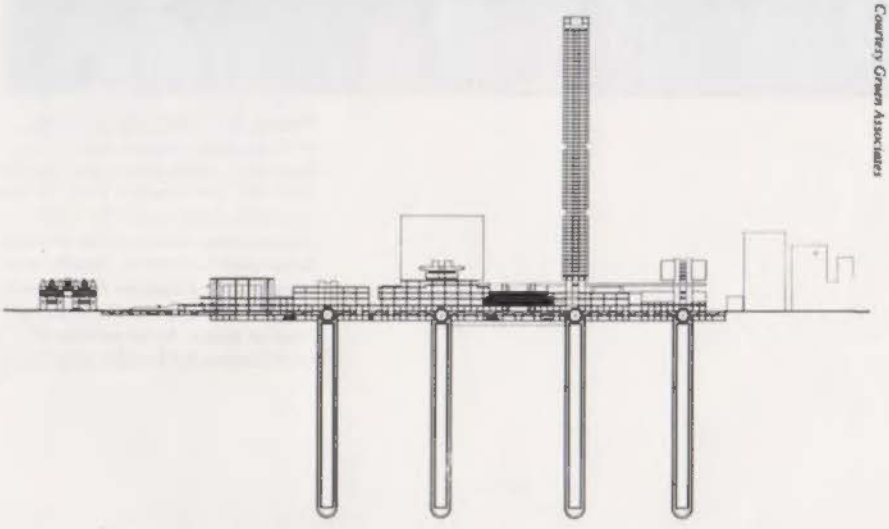
The significance of the freeway system was not technical, however, but social and economic. Freeways did not exert just a curative force, but a creative one. Nineteenth-century forms of transportation created the industrial city around a central peak of density and variety of land use. As Victor Gruen, one of the first shopping mall planners pointed out, freeways massaged the city until it more nearly fit the "random access" movement encouraged by the automobile. Accomplishing that transformation required sacrificing much of what had been built before. Freeways came to Texas not with peace but the sword.

The city street had survived unrivaled from ancient Rome up to the 20th century. Intended for pedestrians and horse-drawn traffic, city streets could accomodate trolleys. But automobiles, because of their speed and the erratic behavior of their drivers, were never really at home with pedestrians or intersections. To come into their own, cars required a segregated, specialized right-of-way, and the freeway provided it for the first time, changing episodic automobile traffic into a constantly flowing (so it was thought) transportation system for endlessly variable independent inputs.

Once automobile traffic was made a structural part of urban life, it became vital to sustaining that life; and having made it vital, freeways made it inevitable wherever the city grew. They delivered cars in unprecedented numbers far more reliably than surface streets could. Modulated by freeways, drivers and passengers then gained economic meaning. As a predictable commodity, they comprised a vast new market. The merchandising opportunity thus created by freeways raised both the scale and the stakes of real-estate development.

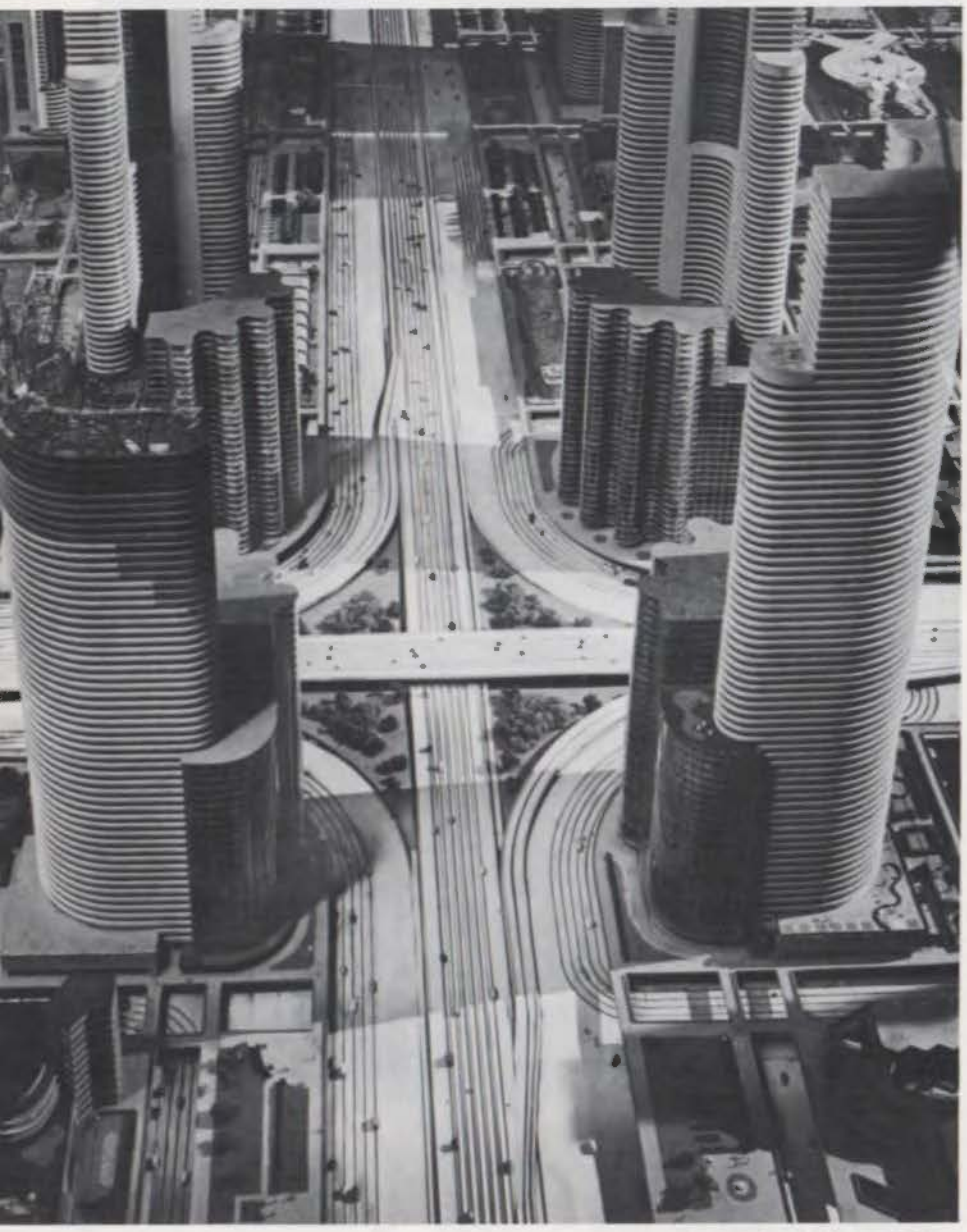
Freeways were intended, at first, to serve their poles—downtown and the suburbs. The earliest freeways in the state radiated from city centers, and the hub-and-spokes configuration has remained the standard. But today it is obvious that freeways didn't most effect their ends, but their middles. The key, of course, was access to a variety of destinations from a given point, and the most accessible part of a transportation corridor is its midpoint. Because of inertia, economic politics, and collective expression we have continued to build downtowns, but once freeways were in place they began generating a new domain in the middle ground of the city, between the old downtown and the prosperous suburbs—the fifty-first state, the Interstate.

Courtesy Grayson Gill, Inc.



Courtesy Gruen Associates

The technological fix. TOP: The MediPark Garage in Dallas is the last operating automated parking garage in Texas. ABOVE: Columbia University's architectural faculty proposed building 50-story-deep automated garages under downtown Dallas.



Norman Bel Geddes designed this eerily accurate view of cities to be formed by "magic motorways" for the 1939 New York World's Fair. He got everything right except the traffic. (Photograph courtesy of the Norman Bel Geddes Collection, Theatre Arts Library, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, by permission of Edith Lutyens Bel Geddes, executrix.)

Victor Gruen's plan for Fort Worth was designed to prevent an assault from the off ramps from paralyzing of the central business district. But while his concern about the impact of automobiles was well-founded, Gruen misjudged the point of attack. Growth in downtown traffic has been moderated since the arrival of freeways, as hotels, theaters, and merchants moved out and transportation functions shrank. The transplantation of these functions outside downtown gave Texas a functionally mixed landscape. It was a version of Le Corbusier's "Ville Radieuse," but in the transformation of the vision, reality added a twist in the form of traffic density. Instead of the tower in the park, the new landscape was the tower in the parking lot.

The freeway city was not unanticipated. At the 1939 New York World's Fair the General Motors "Futurama" exhibit was seen by millions. Its designer, Norman Bel Geddes, offered an eerily accurate prediction of the American "city of the future," set in 1960, when "magic motorways" would have reshaped the city into the motorist's ideal.

Cynics may see in Bel Geddes a cheerleader for the corporate and government forces getting set to sell us cars and gasoline and hamburgers. Realization of his vision came not from the planners, however—the community of experts focused instead on using freeways to cure problems—but from the invisible, if messy, hand of the market.

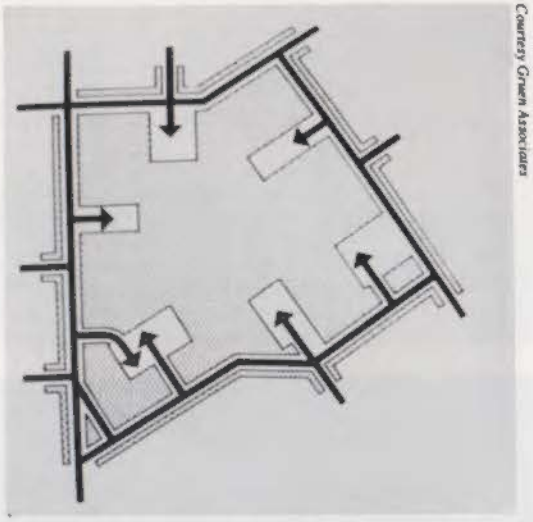
That the visionary was almost completely right, however, and the experts were almost completely wrong, shows in the contrasting fates of two building types that came into existence in the early 1950s: automated parking garages, which represented the technological, ameliorative attitude toward urban architecture and the nature of automobiles, and regional shopping malls, which directly resulted from the freeway's effect on the urban pattern.

In a 1954 story, *Business Week* cited four "types" of solutions developed to handle the parking crisis facing most downtown areas. Of these, one was the ramp-type garage in general use today. The other three— *Business Week* showed examples from downtown Houston— were all automated parking garages, some with attendants, some totally remote controlled, using mechanized elevators and carriers to convey cars vertically and horizontally and put them in "pigeon holes" for later retrieval. Mechanized garages, it was thought, offered the ultimate solution to the parking crisis: If engineering could increase the flood of cars into downtown, engineers could perfect a method for tucking the cars away.

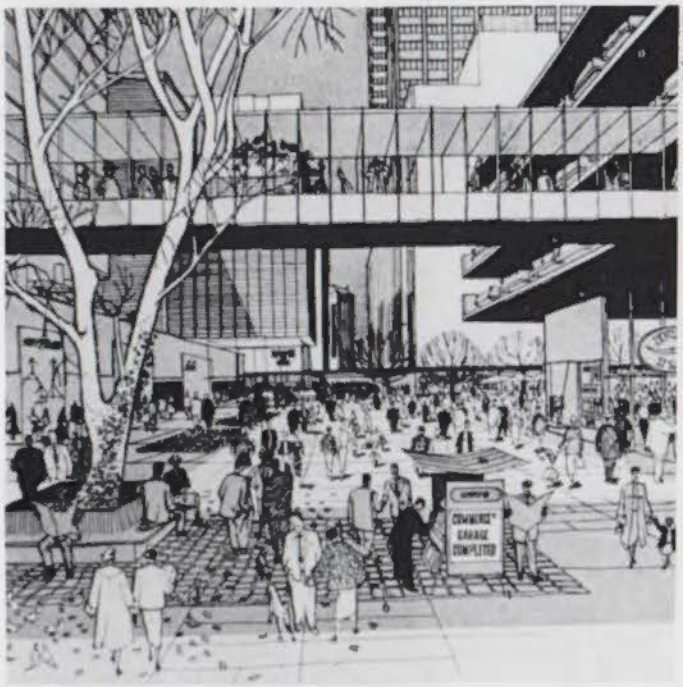
The first automated garage in Texas, the Mac-Scott Garage, designed by architect John Lynn Scott, opened in Austin in 1953. Soon after, automated garages opened in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Beaumont, and Wichita Falls. Automated garages appeared only in downtown areas, where land prices and density made their multi-story nature and their adaptability to small sites most valuable. They were seductive from an engineering standpoint—perfect functionalist reductionism. But there were problems from the start. Their machinery sometimes damaged cars. They were not for people in a hurry. In some systems, the cars themselves dripped on each other. And, most important, they lived and died by their engineering: a power failure or a broken part would cripple them. Once manufacturers started leaving the business, parts became scarce. The Medi-Park Garage in Dallas, based on Bowser System machinery, is the last operating automated parking garage in the state. It survives only because spare parts were salvaged from an identical system in a Wichita Falls garage that went out of business.

Meanwhile, out on the radial freeways, the shopping strips that had developed along the old highways were beginning their metamorphosis into regional shopping malls. Gulfgate, built in 1953 on the Gulf Freeway, was the first transitional example, a center with an open-air central plaza and department stores as "anchors." It was later roofed and air conditioned. Victor Gruen's 1954 proposal for the Montclair Center in Houston, which would have been the first fully air-conditioned center in the country, was not built. But by the end of the decade Big Town in Dallas and North Star Mall in San Antonio had been built from scratch as enclosed, air-conditioned centers.

Retailers found the huge sites and traffic flow created by freeways to be most compelling, and responded by developing a new look in merchandising and advertising. A freeway-side site big enough for department stores and their parking lots was too big for an old-style strip center: it rendered conventional store identification all but useless. But with major stores and their enormous "brand-name" signs to attract customers, smaller retailers could enjoy a steady stream of shoppers without relying on individual exposure. Thus, all the stores could face inward, to shorten walking distances, reduce freeway noise, and concentrate storefront displays on the promenade. Furthermore, the focusing of a shopping "experience" reinforced the mall identity: "Northpark," "Wonderland," and "Sharpstown" became not addresses but destinations. The evolution to today's enclosed, air-conditioned, multi-level, multi-use centers was



Courtesy Gruen Associates



Courtesy Gruen Associates

TOP and ABOVE: Victor Gruen's redevelopment plan for downtown Fort Worth featured perimeter parking and an all-pedestrian core.

Joe V. Maldonado

The transforming power of freeways made the progression from modest beginnings to today's multi-level multi-use malls all but inevitable. LEFT and FAR LEFT: Wonderland in San Antonio; BELOW: The Galleria in Houston

Janet Barfield, Houston

Joe V. Maldonado

made inevitable by the freeways that fed customers into the middle kingdom.

Shopping malls were anything but pure function and refined form. Their purpose invited, even demanded, frequent alteration. They depended on advertising, fantasy, and illusion—it was form following fiction. But unlike automated garages, which were ill-conceived and soon abandoned, the malls created in the 1950s have undergone repeated expansion—strong evidence of their continuing vitality.

Automated parking garages failed partly for technical reasons—depending on too naive a faith in Walter Gropius' dream of industrialized architecture—and because of the narrowness of their function. Automated parking garages could offer neither technical adequacy nor a foothold for cultural embellishment. Their developers and architects failed also to see what the creators of regional malls had understood—that freeways made the automobile a way of life and tranformed mere people into auto-centaurs.

Today the success of the shopping mall is even more evident. Victor Gruen's proposed solution for downtown Fort Worth—an intensive multiuse zone, with underground services, pedestrians in the center, and automobiles at the perimeter—has been most nearly realized in Houston's Galleria, a product of the middle landscape.

The important lesson for architects from the diverging destinies of these two '50s-spawned building types concerns the relationship of technology and architecture. Freeways and automated garages were both sold as technical devices. In the case of garages this was true; when the technology proved inadequate they died out. Freeways were actually much more like the shopping malls they generated, enduring because they were culturally and economically creative. Proposed to solve the mobility problems of commuters, they failed. Instead they elevated the car to the status of the primary symbol of personal identity. ▬▬

Architect Douglas Harvey, a graduate of Rice University, currently practices in Houston.

H. H. HARRIS IN TEXAS

by Lisa Germany

Fred Dupprich/UT Architectural Drawings Collection

Fellowship Park House, Harris's Los Angeles home, was built in 1935 in the style of a Japanese pavilion hidden on a hillside.

Many architecture students today have developed a resistance to Modernism. They believe that the movement had a tyrannical hold over the imaginations of a generation of architects and they object to the tired, monotonous buildings sometimes begotten in the movement's name. At the University of Texas at Austin, however, one of the most celebrated Modernists to work in the state is being reevaluated. He is H. H. Harris, director of the UT School of Architecture from 1951 to 1961. His quiet and poetic houses, so different from the machine-like schemes of his contemporaries, have been the subject of a recent gallery exhibition at the school that may soften the resistance to Modernism, that may likely have an influence.

In 1951, when Harris came to head the School of Architecture, he was one of the best-published architects in the country. There was hardly an issue of *Architectural Forum, California Arts and Architecture*, or *Progressive Architecture* that did not make mention of one of the houses Harris had designed in California. The same was true of popular magazines, such as *House Beautiful, House and Garden*, the *New Yorker*, and even *Mademoiselle*. For fashionable publishers in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Harris's imagery—a blend of Modernist geometry with Humanist aspirations and warmly familiar materials—was all but irresistible. How could one help but be excited by a soaring Harris roof that, with breathtaking daring, freely extends its lines over the Berkeley Hills and San Francisco Bay? The way Harris articulated light through the use of skylights, outdoor pergolas, and dropped panels of sandblasted glass was innovative. His reputation was bolstered also by the interiors he designed, with furniture lines kept intimately low, carefully selected and combined colors, and a sheltering presence invoked by the use of protecting eaves and mossy sylvan courtyards. Indeed, Harris's details made his rooms feel cool and shady during the day and elegant and sexy at night.

Harris's architecture was a composite of those elements, certainly, but it was also, and more fundamentally, a vision of an intensely private world. One either understood this vision, felt it strike some personal chord, or one simply missed the point. In the '50s, just as Harris was moving to Texas at what is considered the peak of his career as a designer, the nationwide focus on home and family allowed an extraordinarily wide audience to make that connection.

For Harris the seminal years had come in the 1920s and '30s, when he a handful of other California architects—Richard Neutra, Rudolph Schindler and Gregory Ain among them—planted the seeds of a fully American Modernism. By the 1950s, Harris's thought and design were reaching maturity and it showed in the work he did in Texas.

Born in Redlands, California in 1903, Harris worked for and studied with Neutra and Schindler in the late 1920s. Harris had deep connections with what he called the soil of California, a claim that his talented Austrian-expatriate mentors could not make. These connections showed in his handling of materials. To Harris, nature was the ultimate reference point for architecture, to be respected and enhanced instead of tamed and formalized. Harris believed that wood, grass, cork, and other natural materials, because they were warm and familiar, were superior to steel and white-painted stucco. He believed that the form of a house, the way its interior plan unfolded, must always take precedence over its outward sculptural presence in the landscape. Harris was comfortable, as his more International Style peers seem not to have been, with the architecture of California's past, particularly the work of Greene and Greene.

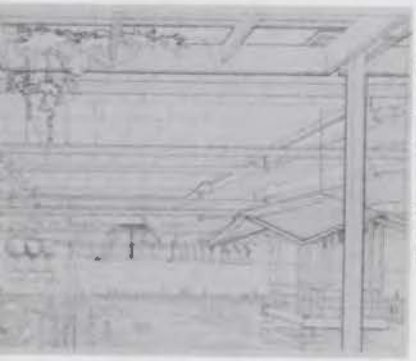
Many of Harris's houses from the 1940s paid outspoken homage to the Brothers Greene. The Ralph Johnson House, built in 1947 in Los Angeles, provides the clearest example with its extended open rafters and river-rock landscaping. Like the Greenes, Harris used integral gutters and celebrated the intersection of wood joints as opportunities to create ingeniously craftsmanlike details. Like them, Harris had a fondness for sleeping porches. Harris believed

Maynard Parker/UT Architectural Drawings Collection

Harwell H. Harris/UT Architectural Drawings Collection

Man Ray/UT Architectural Drawings Collection

ABOVE AND FAR LEFT: Monumentality and ponderous spaces in the First Unitarian Church, Dallas, seemed a departure from gentle touches that had been the hallmarks of Harris's California work. LEFT: The inverted gables of the Havens House in Berkeley appear inside as ceilings that angle out from low interior walls to high balcony eaves.



UT Architectural Drawings Collection

TOP: The J. Lee Johnson house, Fort Worth, offered a retreat from the material world, rather than a consciously showy reflection of it. ABOVE: Gestures showing Harris's characteristic interest in human-scaled architecture appear in the floor of the Dallas Trade Mart court.

that at the heart of his similarities to the Greenes was a simple response to the Californian environment. In describing some of his houses for a later exhibition, Harris wrote:

"The soil in which these houses are rooted is the same soil that led to the flowering of California architecture almost 50 years ago. It is a combination of abundance, free minds, love of nature, and unspoiled countryside. Simple as such a combination seems, it has happened but seldom in the world's history. The eventual reward for its cultivation is a spontaneous architecture in tune with democratic aspirations."

Response to place and a respect for some of his forebears may have influenced the appearance of Harris's work, but its soul had a different source. His mention of democratic aspirations betrays Harris's debt to Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan, who frequently borrowed from Walt Whitman's democratic poetry. They tried to translate Whitman's concept of democracy into architecture by inventing new forms for the single-family house, and they drew on Whitman's naturalism, a primaeval response to the American landscape, for their ideas on organic form. For the young Harris, struggling to find himself in the Los Angeles of the 1920s, these ideas were decisive. After reading Sullivan's *Autobiography of an Idea* and seeing Wright's famous Barnsdall House in Los Angeles, Harris left his sculpture studies at the Otis Art Institute to become an architect. And even though he started by apprenticing himself to Neutra, Wright's ideas shaped his feeling on the need for a new generation of buildings in which form followed function.

Neutra taught Harris the modular system of design and an appreciation of 20th-century technology. Harris worked for Neutra from 1928 to 1933; part of this time was spent on the working drawings of Neutra's landmark Lovell Health House and his Ring Plan School. Neutra was a romantic and charismatic figure who thrilled Harris with his enthusiasm, but Harris, though still a fledgling architect, had an agenda of his own, which depended on the creation of an independent practice.

Harris's work on his own began in 1934, with the house for Pauline Lowe in Altadena. Its redwood boards and battens, its L-shaped plan and entrance courtyard, and its translucent sliding doors made it an immediate success. After the Lowe House, in quick succession, Harris designed the stuccoed beach house for Marion Clark and the very machine-like house for John Entenza, which was an anomaly in Harris's career. He also designed the Fellowship Park House, a kind of Japanese pavilion hidden on a hillside, where he went to live with his wife, Jean Murray Bangs. Harris soon became known throughout the country as a particularly skillful *California* designer, a reputation that has stayed with him, even after his move to Texas in 1951 and his 1961 move to North Carolina, where he now lives. If California was "the land of the golden dream," to borrow a line from Joan Didion, then Harris "had dreamed the dream and made it work." Who, after seeing the 1941 Havens House soaring above the Berkeley hills, the Wyle House of 1948 spreading its gabled wings across the vista of the Sierra Madre, or the 1937 Clark House dodging the Pacific waves on the beach at Carmel, could imagine Harris outside California? The state was, it seemed, his element.

Harris, however, was glad to move to Texas in 1951, even though uprooting himself and his practice presented problems: he believed that architecture like life, consisted of "the opportu-

nity to work with natural problems." Each new client, Harris told the UT graduation class of 1955, provided a chance "to escape from your routine self." By adjusting to make his designs responsive to the harsher climate of his new home state—gradually shifting from the use of wood to the use of masonry, and replacing sleeping porches in his houses with interior courtyards—Harris made an example of his own practice. These were subtle changes within the style that Harris had developed, but then he saw no reason to tamper with the forms at the core of his architecture. For example, the Eisenberg House in Dallas, built in 1958, though sheathed in brick, nevertheless unfolds slowly around a central partition between the living room and the entry gallery, just as the 1937 Granstedt House in Hollywood had done.

Harris made bigger, stronger statements in Texas. His house for Ruth Carter Johnson and J. Lee Johnson III in Fort Worth of 1956 was a Modern mansion, very much as Wright's Barnsdall House had been a Modern mansion. It offered Harris's wealthy clients a protective retreat from the material world, rather than a consciously showy reflection of it. Harris's Greenwood Mausoleum of the same year applied ideas from the Johnson House—the restraint, the heavy sculptural presence—to a public building. In two other Texas projects, the Unitarian Church and the Trade Mart Center in Dallas, monumentality and ponderous spaces seemed to swallow up the gentle touches that had been the hallmarks of Harris's California work. Those touches had not been forgotten, however: with a Japanese footbridge and a wooden pavilion on the floor of the Trade Mart and a handcrafted lectern in the church, Harris demonstated his characteristic interest in creating a human-scaled architecture.

Texas architects understood Harris, and his influence can be seen everywhere throughout the '50s. As the decade drew to a close, however, Harris's reputation declined until the current reappraisal of his importance began. Writing about Harris in 1980 (*Texas Architect*, March/April), Lawrence Speck and Paul Lamb said that by ignoring his work, "We are in danger of losing something that was, at the same time, both within the organic tradition and an expansion of it—both at odds with Modernism and a part of it."

Out of danger now, Harris's work is open for exploration by a new generation of architects and students, a generation which is also—perhaps in spite of itself—at odds with Modernism and a part of it. ▬▬

UT Architectural Drawings Collection

Harwell H. Harris/UT Architectural Drawings Collection

TOP: Greenwood Mausoleum, Fort Worth: a public building showing a restrained, yet heavy sculptural presence. ABOVE: Harris's move to Texas brought a gradual shift from the use of wood to masonry exteriors, as on the Eisenberg House, Dallas.

Austin writer Lisa Germany is the author of Harwell Hamilton Harris, *published earlier this year by the Center for the Study of American Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture.*

Alvar Alto: The Early Years
by Goran Schildt

By Mark A. Hewitt

Ask well-travelled American architects to name the five countries that figure most prominently in their European pilgrimages, and they will likely include Italy, France, Greece, England, and Finland. As recently as 25 years ago the first four countries would have been on a similar list, but the little Scandinavian country bordering the Soviet Union would hardly have been counted a significant repository of internationally recognized architecture.

That Finland occupies such an exalted place in the pantheon of late 20th-century architectural culture is due largely to the achievements of one man: Alvar Aalto.

Whether he was in Finland, France, or Oregon, Aalto's architecture always seemed to fit its cultural and social situation. At the same time he continued to push the limits of formal, spatial, and sculptural manipulation, and demonstrated extraordinary inventiveness in the use of materials and techniques of construction. Despite his popularity among architects over the past few decades—think of how many designers display an Aalto vase or a stacking stool in their homes—the Finnish master has remained an enigma to critics and historians. Siegfried Giedion and Henry-Russell Hitchcock first puzzled over his buildings in the 1930s and '40s, calling him "irrational" and "romantic" for lack of more precise descriptive terminology. Writing on Aalto has been surprisingly thin until recent years, primarily because his work failed to fit comfortably into prevailing historical schemas.

Goran Schildt's eagerly awaited *Alvar Aalto: The Early Years* is the first volume of a biography sanctioned by Aalto's heirs, who gave Schildt full access to Aalto's papers and drawings. A longtime friend of the architect, Schildt calls himself "a poor Boswell;" he presents Aalto and his work to the world with a surprisingly anecdotal nonchalance. This posture goes against the grain of traditional scholarship and criticism, but it may make the book more attractive to the non-academic reader. Structured in three distinct sections—a biographical essay, an essay presenting "themes" in Aalto's work, and a partial catalogue of projects before the "great leap" into Modernism of 1928—the book attempts to give us something of the spirit and personality of Aalto the man, quoting extensively from his writings and from dozens of remembrances and stories. The extensive illustrations, many in color, document a significant number of the architect's sketches, paintings, and early architectural drawings. Because Aalto's built work was relatively sparse before 1927, only a few buildings are presented in photographs. Although the drawings and photographs offer a revealing view of some of Aalto's early Neo-Classical work, the book does not purport to be a visual document, since most of the architect's important projects are included in the three-volume *Complete Works*, published after 1963 by Artemis Editions of Zurich.

Perhaps because of their friendship, Schildt's tone in describing Aalto tends to the cloying. This, his chatty tone, and the rather loose organization of subsections in the biographical essay do not provide a very clear picture of Aalto's development from childhood to young manhood. Most disappointing is Schildt's anecdotal and ultimately cursory treatment of Aalto's education at the Helsinki Institute of Technology and his early years in practice. Instead of following a clear line of exposition, Schildt frequently digresses or turns to Aalto's own writing, such as the story, "Benvenuto's Christmas Punch," written for the little art journal *Kerberos*. Although Schildt insists that Aalto's literary gifts were considerable, I have always found the architect's written output opaque and strangely prosaic. Aalto expressed himself best visually, and although he may have had a gift for storytelling, he was no theoretician. In combing Aalto's writings for the secrets to his design philosophy, Schildt may be barking up the wrong tree.

More interesting, though still weak in the area of formal architectural analysis, is the essay on Aalto's design influences and preoccupations. Schildt presents separate subsections on Aalto's attitudes toward and use of painting, history and precedent, religious edifices, the question of "nature" and landscapes, spatiality, multifunction buildings, and "anarchic" composition. "Between Darwin and Goethe," a discussion of Aalto's attitudes on invention, evolution, and nature, offers a penetrating interpretation of Aalto's complex aesthetic stance, which united building and landscape through mass, contour, materials, and flora. Here Schildt's close reading of Aalto's writing yields more fruit when combined with an analysis of the larger culture in which Aalto worked.

Alvar Aalto: The Early Years is an entertaining and sometimes revealing book which does help to bring us closer to the character of Aalto's buildings by bringing us a closer understanding of his psyche. ▬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NEWS, *continued from page 35*

Addison Market

Cafe Pacific

Lovers West

Scott Dye Architects Office

finishes, semi-precious metals, heroic voids, and meaningless solids at it."

Harris voiced concern over two recurring oversights in many of the losing entries: "First, many were more attentive to their building elements than to the development of site and its place in the city," he said. "Second, a number of projects emphasized the organization of the building and accommodations of necessary operations more than response to life, to the quality of human experience that is the purpose of architecture."

Kennon was encouraged by the quality and craft of many of the entries and added that in choosing winners he looked for "a strong underlying concept that permeates the entire fabric of the architecture; a vocabulary that grows out of the concept established; an execution of the aesthetic system that clearly shows the intention of the architect; a sense of materiality that is appropriate to the concept."

TWO TEXANS FINALISTS IN AIA NATIONAL PHOTO CONTEST

Forty-seven photographs out of more than 1200 entries have been named winners in the first annual national photo competition co-sponsored by the AIA and the St. Louis Chapter.

First place, which has a cash prize of $1000, went to Barry Brukoff of Sausalito, CA; second place with a $700 prize went to Gerald Moorhead of Houston for "Villa d'Este."

Two Merit Awards went to Texans: R. Michael Hawkins of Longview for "Spaceship Earth" and Gerald Moorhead for "Doge's Palace."

Villa d'Este

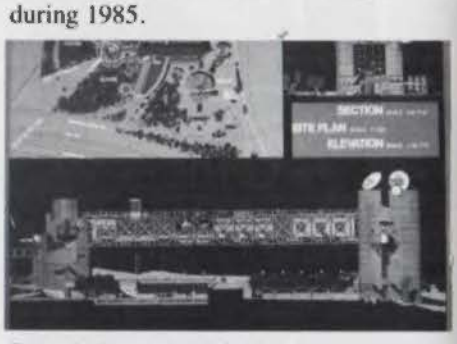
Spaceship Earth

Moorhead's "Villa d'Este" will be featured along with the other cash prize winners in a future issue of *Architecture* magazine. Judges for the competition were Sean Callahan, editor/associate publisher of *American Photographer*; Balthazar Korab, architectural photographer; and Charles P. Reay, graphic designer with Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, St. Louis.

Rio Grande Visitor Station

BIG BEND PARK STATION WINS NATIONAL AWARD

A project at Big Bend National Park designed by Austin architects Coffee, Crier & Schenck has received a Merit Award for Design in the National Park Service's Biennial Design competition. The competition honors the best work by architects designing projects for the National Park System. The Rio Grande Visitor Contact Station at Big Bend National Park will be in a traveling exhibit during 1985.



Center for Innovative Technology

AUSTIN ARCHITECT CITED IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

Mislav Sekik, of Phil Scott and Associates, Austin, was awarded an honorable mention in the National Design Competition for the Center for Innovative Technology of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Center is intended to function as

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The Sekik design uses a bridge as a metaphor of the linkage of various disciplines within the institution, and incorporates a linear space-frame structure, elevated 40 feet above grade. The project will be exhibited at the National Building Museum in Washington D.C. from May 27 to June 9.

MRW PROJECT RECEIVES NATIONAL SCHOOL AWARD

The Stafford Community Educational Complex designed by McKittrick Richardson Wallace, Houston, has received the Shirley Cooper Award, the highest honor given by the annual American Association of School Administrators. The Stafford school previously received the only citation of excellence in the nationwide Exhibiiton of School Architecture of Association of School Business Officials.

Stafford Community Educational Complex

Interior

The complex, sited in a suburb of Houston, offers educational facilities from kindergarten through grade 12 and recreational facilities for the community, and is designed to incorporate future municipal facilities. Built from concrete block with alternating bands of red glazed block, the complex centers around several double-height clerestoried pavilions in a shape that conjures up an updated form of the traditional "little red schoolhouse."

Textile Engineering Building

BOOK EXAMINES TEXAS TECH ARCHITECTURE

The former Dean of the Texas Tech Department of Architecture, Nolan Barrick, is the author of a new book, "Texas Tech . . . The Unobserved Heritage." The paperbound book examines the central campus where extensive planning and ornamentation was integrated into Spanish Renaissance building designs. Barrick says in the book, "Ornament and fine detailing, often heavily dependent on history and literature for motifs, endowed buildings with symbolic identity. In the case of Texas Tech, inspiring quotations, names of heroes, and busts of great statesmen were deemed appropriate images for buildings of learning."

Barrick's book is available in the Texas Tech bookstore or from the publisher, Texas Tech Press, Texas Tech University, Lubbock 79409. Cost is $5.

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IN PROGRESS

TRAVIS WALK, DALLAS, KOMATSU & ASSOC., FT. WORTH

McKinney Avenue and Knox Street have been pegged for the past few years as having the hottest real estate in the city. Although the hype has produced rampant upscale development, most construction seems to be taking shape in vast, mega-block projects: Southland Place, The Crescent.

Travis Walk offers a sharp and welcome contrast to the area's Galleriazation. Developed by the Roblee Company, the development will house a mixture of uses including four restaurants, 35 shops on street level and 50,000 square feet of office space. The development's unusual 50/50 retail/office mix is the suggestion of Halcyon, Ltd. the consulting planning firm based in Conneticticut.

Komatsu has combined Mediterranean-styled tile roofs with a painted brick exterior in taupe gray with accents of red, white, black and brass. Three courtyards will be surrounded by retail and restaurant spaces linked with open walkways to attract pedestrian traffic. The three-level development is scheduled to be completed by spring of '86.

Travis Walk, Dallas

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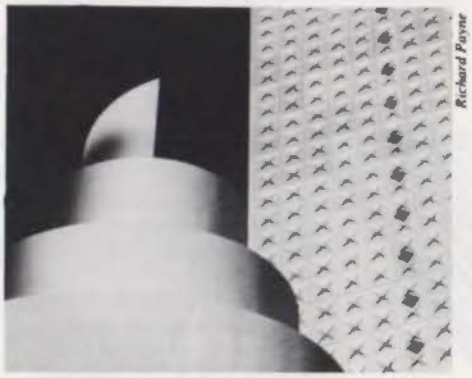
Houston's Chinatown Development Corporation and YSY Credit of Hong Kong are building a luxury hotel complex in Chinatown. To be located near the George Brown Convention Center now under-construction, the seven-story building will contain 200 rooms, two restaurants, 18,000 square feet of exhibition space, 17,000 square feet of office and conference areas, and 9,000 square feet of retail.

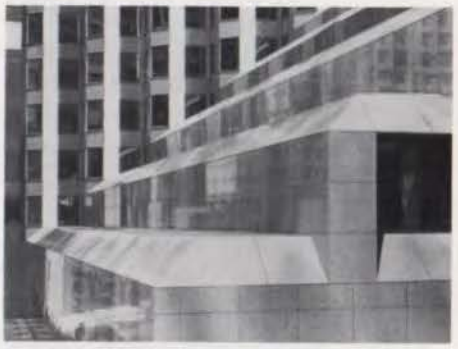
The hybrid design combines traditional Chinese motifs with western building materials. The facade is developed from the Chinese palace design of the Forbidden City in Peking, complete with pagoda-roof shapes and ornamental gates. The West breaks into the facade via a slick-skinned glass curtain wall. Furniture and decoration for the exotic interior will be imported from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The project is scheduled for groundbreaking in the summer of '86.

EVENTS



Richard Payne

June 7-August 16: *City and Spirit*, an exclusive exhibit of Richard Payne photographs showing the stark visual contrasts in Dallas' urban environment, will be open to the public on Fridays from 3-5 p.m. at Good, Haas & Fulton Architects, 300 LTV Center, 2001 Ross Ave., Dallas, (214) 979-0028.



Suspended Animation

Through September 2: *Suspended Animation: Photographs of Houston Architecture* continues on display at 1600 Smith in Cullen Center, Houston.

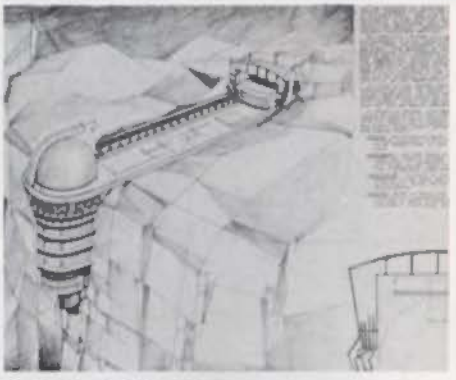
Through July 28: *Tradition and Innovation, Decorative Arts by Castle, Chihuly, Paley and Woodman*, continues at Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin.

SCHOOLS

Two Texas students have been named winners in the Bachelors Program of the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill Foundation Traveling Fellowships. Kit Krankel, **UT Austin,** and Guy Perry, **Rice University,** are first prize winners of $4,000 for three months of travel and study. John Neary, **Rice University,** was named first alternate in the Masters Program.

Tower of Four Seasons

A team of **University of Houston** students has won first prize in the Second Annual Wall Surface Competition sponsored by the Columbus Coated Fabrics division of Borden, Inc. Karen Braitmayer, George Hallowell, and Kenneth Roberts created the winning entry, "Tower to the Four Seasons," which was exhibited at the Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, in June.



Achterberg's Observatory

David A. Achterberg, **UT Austin,** has been named school winner of the annual Reynolds Aluminum Prize for Architec-

tural Students. He was awarded a $500 cash prize for his design of an observatory and astronomical research center. His design is now entered in national competition.

Dr. Malcolm Quantrill, **Texas A&M University,** has been appointed a Professor of Architecture. Quantrill, formerly director of the Architectural Association in London and Dean of the School of Environmental Design in the Polytechnic of North London, will teach modern architectural history and theory and architectural and urban design.

Two **Texas A&M** students have been cited for their work in the central region of the National Student Design Competition, sponsored by the Institute of Business Designers. Lyn Thomas was awarded second prize and Ben Adam received second honorable mention in this, the first part of a two-part competition. Thomas's entry advances to national competition. In the past three years the Texas A&M Department of Architecture has won eight of the thirteen awards presented by IBD in the central region.

UT Austin has prepared as note cards reproductions of five historically significant architectural drawings, featuring the works of Harwell Hamilton Harris, Atlee B. Ayres and Robert M. Ayres, Benjamin Marshall, Paul Philippe Cret, and James Riely Gordon. Persons who contribute $12.50 or more to the production of the guide to UT's Architectural Drawings Collection will receive a packet of 10 note cards.

FIRMS

Ronn Basquette has formed **Architecturama** at 700 West Tenth St., Suite 3, Austin 78701, (512) 477-2423.

John S. Crane has joined the **Falick Klein Partnership, Inc.,** Houston, as a principal.

LZT Associates, Inc. has relocated to The Courtyard, 5910 Courtyard Dr., Suite, 200, Austin.

Darrell Comeaux Architects has moved to 440 Louisiana, Suite 675, Houston 77002, (713) 227-2900.

Leland K. Turner has been named an associate of **Wm. T. Cannady & Associates, Inc.,** Houston.

John B. Danna, Jr., Architects-Planners has relocated to Glen Lakes Plaza, 5430 Glen Lakes Drive, Suite 114, Dallas 75231, (214) 691-1444.

Gregory L. Fowler has joined **Ralph C. Bender & Associates, Inc.,** San Antonio, as director of planning.

David M. Farrell has been promoted to partner of the Dallas firm **Good, Haas & Fulton.**

Richard Fitzgerald & Partners, Houston, has promoted William Handel, Dennis Losavio and David Roberts to senior associate. New associates are Elizabeth Axford, Scott Ballard, Michael Downs and Noel Gatliff.

Rehler Vaughn Beaty & Koone, Inc., San Antonio, has promoted Randy Matyear, Jorge Pena, Joe Nunley and John Hand to senior associate. New associates are Catherine Suttle, Don Seidel, Chris Kimm, Reynaldo Garcia and Sunil Sikka.

Arthur Weinman Architects has moved to 407 River Plaza Tower, 1701 River Run, Fort Worth 76107, (817) 870-1991.

Ramsay Architects and Archimatrix, Inc. Chas. E. Hodges have merged to form **Archimatrix, Inc., Ramsay & Hodges Architects,** with offices at 1101 Ridge Road, Suite 204, Rockwall 75087 (214) 722-1030 and at 2353 Santa Anna, Suite 20, Dallas 75218, (214) 321-7233.

Rawls-Welty, Inc. has relocated to Stanford Corporate Centre, 14001 Dallas Parkway, Suite 1100, Dallas 75240.

Benito Polendo, Jr. has been promoted to vice president of **JONESKELL,** San Antonio.

David Bradley has been promoted to associate of the Dan Antonio firm **Bradley/McChesney Architects.**

Atcheson, Cartwright & Associates has changed its name to **AC Associates,** 4010 Avenue R, Lubbock 79412, (806) 747-0168.

Sinclair Hui and Robert E. Bell have formed **Sinclair Hui/Robert Bell**

Architects, 2651 N. Harwood, Suite 250, Dallas 75201, (214) 871-7510.

Tom Dodds has been named executive director of marketing for **Pickle** + Thomas, Inc., Dallas.

David Green has joined the San Antonio firm **Milton Babbitt and Partners** as a partner.

Robert McKinney has joined the Houston firm **Watkins Carter Hamilton Architects, Inc.** as a partner.

Gunter W. Koetter, vice president of **Lockwood, Andrews & Newman, Inc.,** Houston, has been named to the board of the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

Gill Spencer Powell Architects has relocated to 850 S. Great Oaks Blvd, Suite 118, Round Rock, (512) 255-7852. The mailing address, PO Box 217, Round Rock 78680, remains unchanged.

Dudley, Bailey, Jezek & Rose, Inc. has relocated to 510 N. Valley Mills Dr., Suite 306, Waco. Their mailing address is PO Box 2007, Waco 76702, (817) 776-8380.

Roy Lewis of **Ford, Powell & Carson** has been awarded the James Harrison Steadman Fellowship, an annual award given to a recent architectural graduate.

Robert E. Carnes has relocated to 619 Chase Dr., Tyler 75701, (214) 581-7117.

James Falick, president of the **Falick/Klein Partnership, Inc.** has assumed the office of Chairman of the Visiting Nurse Association of Houston Board of Directors.

Marmon Barclay Souter Foster Hays has promoted Jerry Caldwell, Steve Huck, Richard A. Keeler, Sam Maldonado, Raul Marin, and Alan Roush to the position of associate.

HANDBOOK ERRATA:

Raymond Brogniez was incorrectly listed as a member of the Austin Chapter. He is, instead, a Member Emeritus and past president of the Hill Country Section of the San Antonio Chapter. Brogniez was recently cited by Midland College for his work in initiating a department of architecture in 1979 and for his recent efforts to establish and fund an architectural library for the community college.

PRODUCTS

Domus Italia has introduced Free System Management, a collection of furniture with either glass, laminate, or oak veneer, with solid oak bullnose desk tops. Distinctive in its unique hardware, Free System Management furniture features fine detailing and enclosed wire management. For more information, contact Domus Italia, 1583 Northern Blvd., Manhasset, NY 10030, (516) 365-4025.

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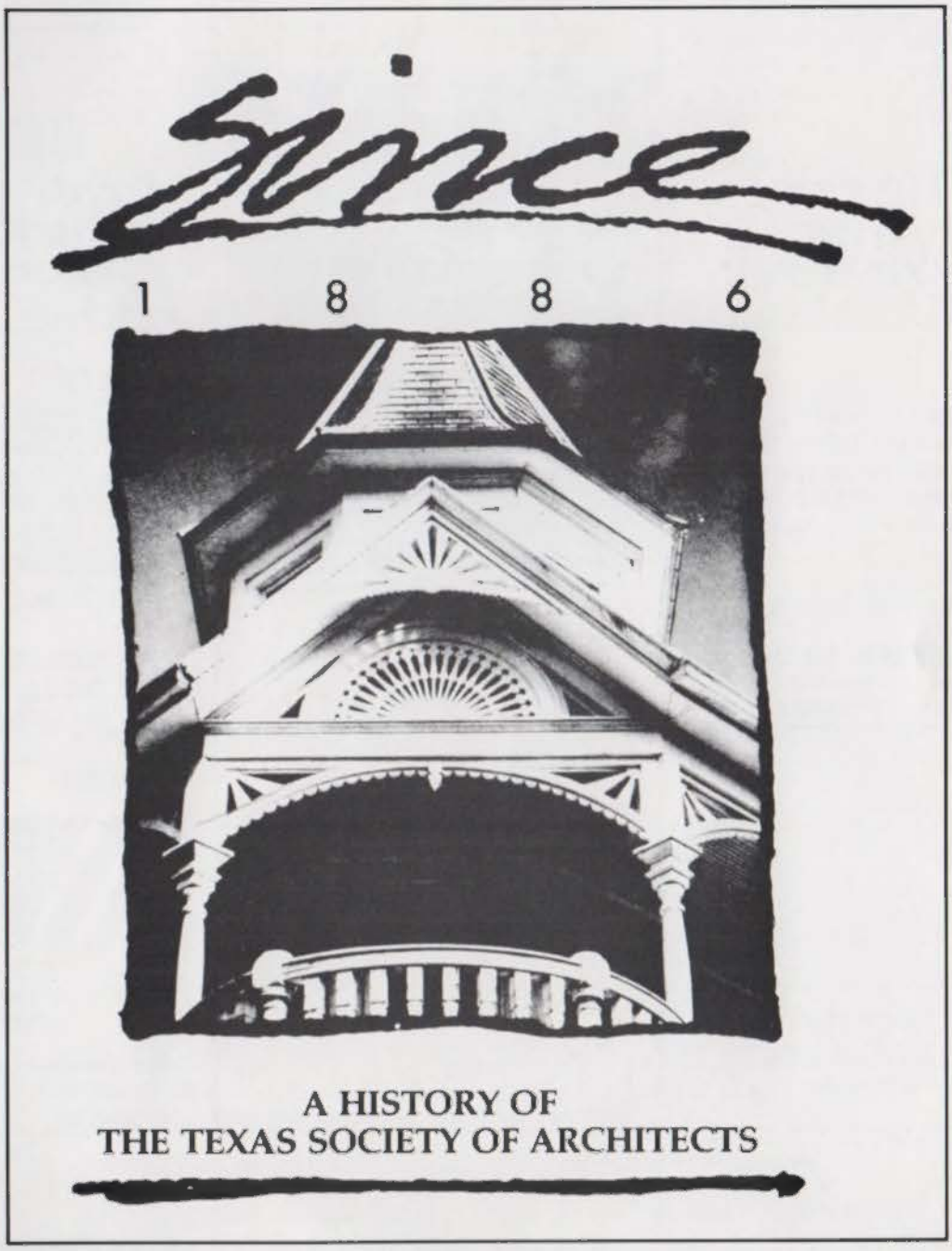

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Abodia has introduced Dia-Mind, a hand-held, portable photographic slide labeler that labels slides individually or in quantities from the Dia-Mind keyboard, or from 40 separate memories. For more information, contact Abodia, PO Box 3201, Charleston, WV 25332, (304) 344-2335.

A camera to help architects instantly visualize their models at human scale has been introduced by **The Charrette Corporation**. Researched and developed by Charrette under license from the Polaroid Corporation, the Charrette Scale Model Camera features a body shape that also allows photographs inside scale models. For more information, contact Charrette, 31 Olympia Ave., Woburn, MA 01888, (617) 935-6000.

Bink-Span adjustable spacers

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THE '50S HAVE A FUTURE

A wise old sage once said, "Predicting the future is for the idle. And as for history: It's just one damned thing after another."

Why *TA* has elected to explore the historical architecture of the '50s, I don't really know. As I recall, that was several geological eons ago, but then I remember the scene well, since I was groping around in the darkness at that time too.

To the best of my failing memory, it was about then that architectural schools all over the nation hatched the first bunch of eggs laid by dinosaurs named FLW, Mies, Gropius, Neutra, Corbusier, etc. They were the post-war modernists, which is to say they were *Modernists* as distinguisbed from Post-Modernists. It was an interesting time, as architecture blossomed in a technology-mad era, and a time of flourishing practices. A new generation of architects, fresh from three or four years of growing up in assorted barracks, foxholes, quonset huts, tents, and foc'sles, set out to build a new America!

Those who had studied the beauty of the orders in the '30s and '40s never forgot them, but the siren song of the dinosaurs led down new paths in the '50s. They struggled mightily to forget the profession's eclectic roots, and digested little architectural homilies like these:

1. "Less is more"—a fact disputed every month by your bank balance.
2. "The house is a machine for living." Most of us have yet to receive our first order for a machine. The job has always been to convince the client that there is a better way to go than the ranch burger.
3. "Architecture itself is the new ornament." Obviously, this statement needs further study in the '80s.
4. "Bring the outside inside." This would have been an okay idea if the entire nation could have moved to northern California.
5. "Flat roofs follow the long lines of the landscape." They also leak.
6. "Form follows function." Not any more it doesn't.
7. "Strip windows afford uninterrupted vistas." This is true but developers like the "punch look" better.
8. "Architecture should be organic in its origin." What was organic about curtain walls with blue porcelain-enamel panels?

It should not go unnoticed that the architecture of the '50s produced many cliches which are ripe for current-day transplant. This vast resource has gone relatively untapped while the skilled designers of today probe the fathomless depths of the Palladian arch, the round window, and the Art Deco truncated entablature. This is a shame: the nation should be more mindful of its '50s heritage.

Perhaps we should establish a national AIA cliche bank, to which volunteer architects of the '50s will send details for storage. The donors will agree to make their cliches available to architects of the '80s and '90s, and the AIA, ever grateful, will respond by forwarding a card of thanks and a small glass of tomato juice—to the get the creative juices of the donors flowing again. Constructed cliches, in danger of demolition, could be removed and hermetically sealed by a skilled AIA carpenter rushed to the site. Later they could be transplanted, intact, to a Post-Modernist structure.

There is no doubt: The '50s have a future!

Contributing editor Dave Braden is principal in the Dallas firm Dahl/Braden/PTM.

TEXAS ARCHITECTURE
THE PUBLIC'S PLACE

The Architect's place in Texas on October 31-November 2 will be in Fort Worth at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Texas Society of Architects. Activities will center at The Americana Hotel and the Tarrant County Convention Center.

Hear noted architectural critic Wolf Von Eckardt bring Texas his point of view gained by his highly regarded editorial accomplishments at the *Washington Post* and *Time Magazine*.

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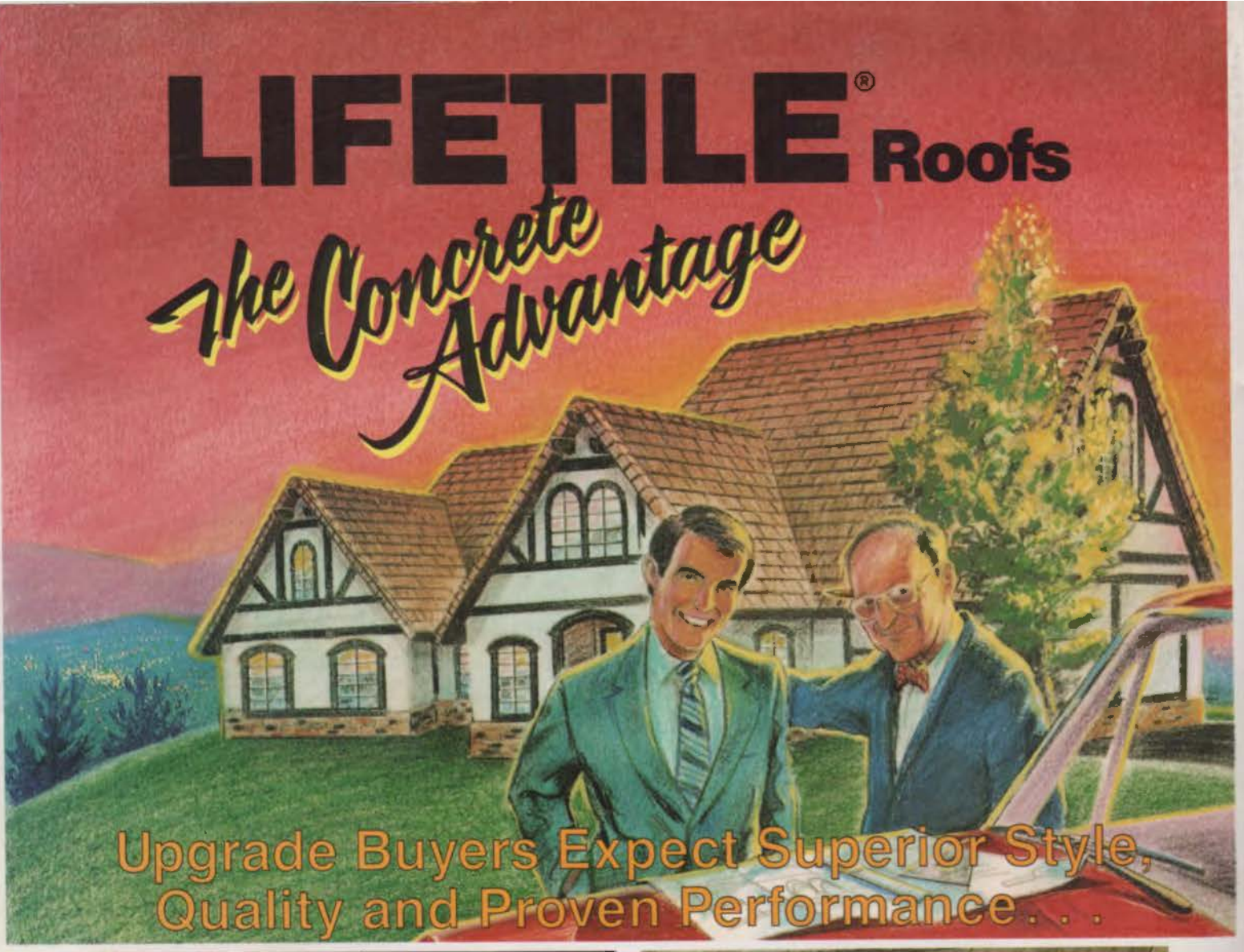

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