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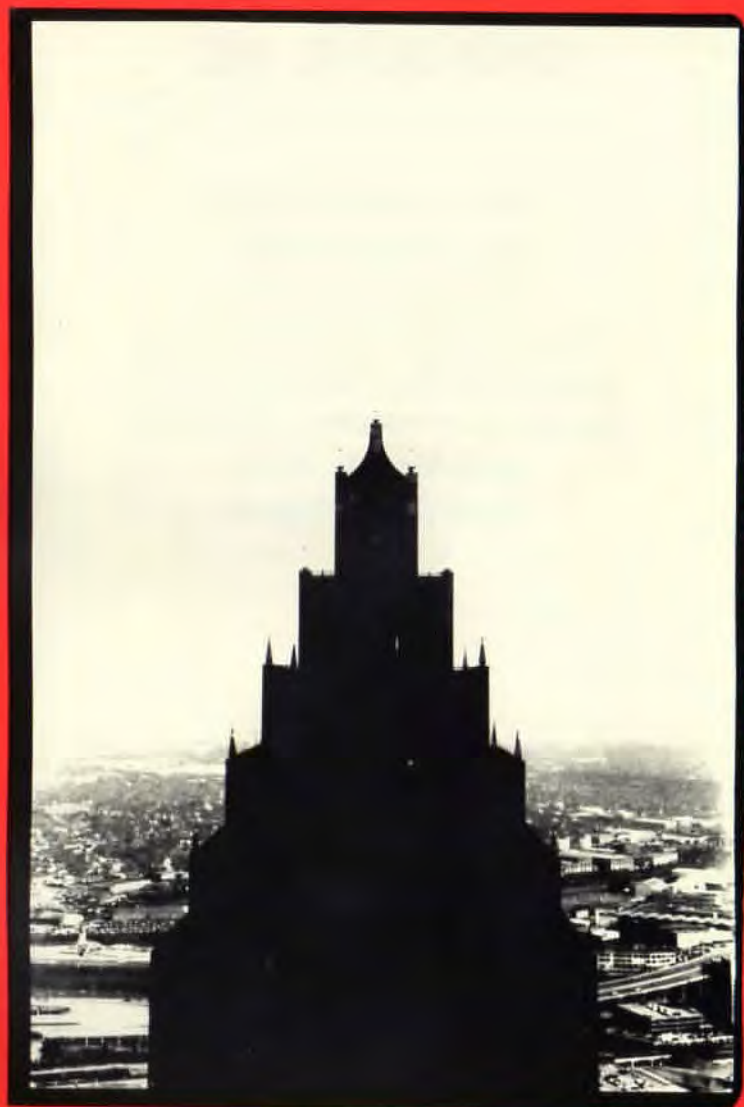
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## TEXAS ARCHITECT



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Bankers, developers, and architects combined to create a superb and terrible building boom over the last decade. The full telling presents architecture against its economic backdrop. *by Joel Warren Barna*

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Creation and destruction, boom and bust, good and evil were inextricable across the decade. In many cases, both extremes were found in the same project. *by Joel Warren Barna*

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Long neglected, the 1968 fairgrounds have gained a first step toward civic importance. *by Niko Letunic*

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## TEXAS ARCHITECT

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## Thoughts on a decade for second thoughts

ON JANUARY 24, I had the pleasure of moderating a panel discussion sponsored by the Rice Design Alliance in Houston. The theme was "Learning from the '80s,"—obviously connected to this issue of *Texas Architect*.

I began by citing some of the things presented in my feature story, which begins on page 26: the unintentional comedy of towers built to celebrate the financial foresight of institutions that would soon be dragged under by bad real estate loans, the cataclysmic displacement of hundreds of thousands of people from their homes during the decade, and so on.

Stephen L. Klineberg, a professor of sociology at Rice University, spoke of the decade's "transition from a resource economy fueled by cheap energy to the knowledge economy, where the key to wealth lies in the skills, organiza-

tionization, and creativity of people themselves." Klineberg also described the changes in attitudes revealed by his annual Houston Area Survey; since 1982, respondents have expressed a shift from an acceptance of unbridled free enterprise to an increasing interest in quality-of-life issues and a willingness to accept governmental intervention to address them.

Investor Clayton Stone, formerly vice president of Gerald D. Hines Interests, said that he left the development business in 1986 because he had come to realize that the incentives behind growth in the late 1970s and early 1980s were distortions that "caused us to build 30 years' worth of office space in seven years." Tax laws have been changed, however, and lenders won't soon overcommit to real estate as they did in the '80s, he said.

Vincent Hauser, architect with the Urban Main Street Program of the Texas Historical Commission, talked about the effects of government policies and economic and social change during the 1980s on older working-class neighborhoods in Texas cities. "The '80s, for many areas, were a disaster," Hauser said. "We lost control of our neighborhoods, of our schools. The federal government's withdrawal from urban policy in the '80s left a vacuum that private developers couldn't fill."

Richard Keating, FAIA, who formerly headed the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill office in Houston, followed Hauser's assessment by talking about the positive aspects of Houston compared with Southern California.

From there, the discussion meandered toward a loose consensus: that growth in the 1990s would be more cautious, more tied to quality in design and location; that preservation was important; that certain ideas from the 1980s (viable inner-city pedestrian-scaled middle-class housing, for example) might work in the 1990s; and that people wanted government to be more active, as shown by the move toward zoning and rail transit in Houston.

But, toward the end, sparks were struck when an audience member commented that the overbuilding of the 1980s had been caused by tax incentives and the regulations governing the savings-and-loan industry, and that therefore any new government intervention in the economy was a bad idea. As moderator, I got the panelists to respond, and commented, wrapping things up, that the 1980s had started with a widespread distrust of government and that such a distrust still was felt by many Texans as they contemplated dealing with the problems and opportunities of the 1990s.

Since then, I have been thinking about what was said, and it has troubled me. The problem with the evening was that it was a smug fest. I do not mean to demean the contributions of the panelists, who dealt clearly with important matters. But the fact remains that it was a lot of middle-class people talking about abstractions, and never questioning their own roles. What needed to be said, and I am sorry to say that I realized this only later, was that we—architects, developers, academics, journalists, consumers—were the problem that should have been under discussion.

The decade began with a political endorsement of the idea that America had gone astray by devoting too much of its resources to the needs of the irresponsible poor. The decade ended with a \$500-billion S&L hangover—never mind the \$3-trillion national debt—caused by the devotion of borrowed money on an unprecedented scale to the whims of the irresponsible middle class. That is the lesson of the 1980s.



Paul Hauser

**Heritage Plaza in Houston, a building that will remain for many years, although the conditions that created it are being reformed**

Joel Warren Barna

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## Project

1990 Corian Kitchen Competition  
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Texas Architect

## Winner

Tim Rice McClarty, AIA  
Abilene, Texas

## Entry

Kitchen in home McClarty designed for a young doctor and his family in Buffalo Gap, Texas.

## Concept

From the planning stage, the kitchen was designated as the hub of family activity with the utility room, exercise room, breakfast nook, pool and patio area, hobby room, garage, guest bedroom suite, dining room, living room and children's wing all emanating from it. Resulting design required two levels with the children's play and sleeping areas connected to the kitchen by a spiral staircase enveloped in an open atrium for visual and audible connections.

## Use of Corian®

McClarty's entry was judged for aesthetics, function and originality. Judges were impressed by the unusual edge treatment and the colors of Sierra Dusk (granite-like) and Cameo White on countertops and backsplashes with recessed strips alternating on the countertop edge and inside of the integral sinks.

## Award

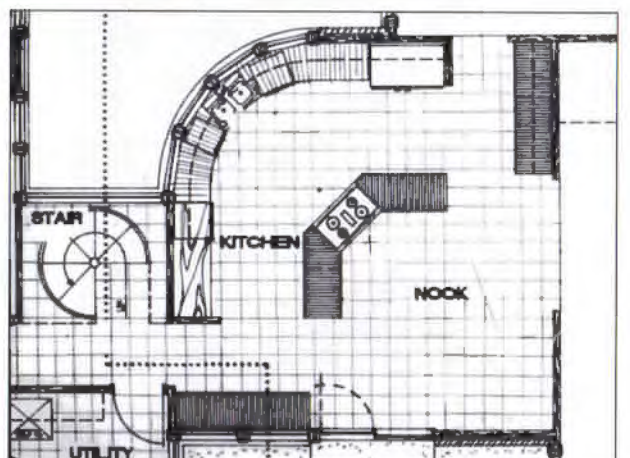
\$1,000. Cash and custom-designed Corian trophy presented at 1990 Texas Society of Architects Annual Meeting in Dallas.



*TOP: Peralite ceiling panels filter light behind them to add glow to the Sierra Dusk (gray) and stark Cameo White Corian®. Cabinets were finished with a white pickle to blend with the granite-like Corian.*

*ABOVE LEFT: Cameo White Corian was inlaid in the bullnose edge treatment.*

*ABOVE RIGHT: Corian's Cameo White bevel-mount sink was inlaid with a strip of Sierra Dusk to coordinate with the countertops.*



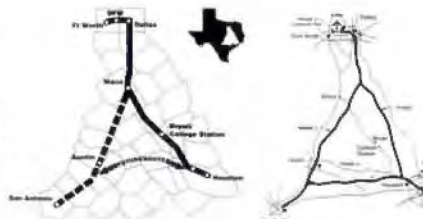
STATEWIDE

## Rail teams vie for franchise

IN MID-JANUARY, two groups each paid nonrefundable \$500,000 fees and filed applications with the Texas High-Speed Rail Authority, vying for the franchise to build a high-speed rail system in Texas that would take people from city to city at 200 miles per hour for fares a fourth lower than air fares.

A French-American consortium called Texas TGV proposed a \$5.7-billion system linking Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio; the Houston-Dallas phase would begin operation in 1998. TGV officials say they are studying the American Rice elevator site on Studemont for their downtown Houston location, along with an alternate at the MKT railroad yard near Interstate 10. For a suburban Houston station, they said they are considering a site near Highway 290 and the Sam Houston Tollway. The downtown Dallas site would be at Union Station. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of New York would provide TGV's architectural services.

Texas FasTrac, Inc., a German-American consortium, proposed a \$6.7-billion system linking the same four major cities, with a Houston-Dallas leg that would also open in 1998; later plans, in addition, would include Waco and College Station. Texas FasTrac is studying the same downtown station sites in Houston and Dallas, although for alternatives it is considering the Amtrak station on the east side of downtown Houston and a downtown Dallas site adjacent to the Dallas Convention Center. In downtown Fort Worth, the company is studying a station at City Centre, near the county courthouse, and an underground station next to the convention center. The consortium's application contained renderings of proposed station designs by Sikes, Jennings, Kelly &



Top: Texas FasTrac's proposed Houston CBD terminal; above: thumbnail looks at the Texas FasTrac (left) and Texas TGV (right) routes.

Brewer (Houston); Page Southerland Page (Austin, College Station, and Waco); HKS (Dallas); Corgan Associates (DFW Airport); Komatsu (Fort Worth); and Andrew Perez Associates (San Antonio).

Both groups say they would not need financial backing from the state (state law prohibits it anyway), but they would want contributions from mass-transit authorities in Houston and Dallas, as well as the ability to raise more than the current limit of 25 percent of the construction costs through tax-exempt bonds.

The day before the applications were filed, the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Texas at Austin released a report contending that "the economic viability of the project is highly doubtful," citing inflated ridership projections. The study was funded by Southwest Airlines.

The High-Speed Rail Authority plans hearings in March and April, and will award the franchise in May. *Joel Warren Barna*

### High-Speed Rail teams step forward 6

STATEWIDE Two consortiums have met the State's call for proposals and now will compete for the design-and-construction megaproject.

### Zoning enters Space City rethinking 6

HOUSTON What was only a year ago the hushed "Z-word" is now city mandate. How did chest-beating opposition to controls quiet so quickly?

### No small plans, no plans at all 7

AUSTIN A recent R/UDAT said the city is overplanned and needs a boost of focused vision and active promotion for downtown.

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The fruits of four chapters' competitions for outstanding recent architectural work are presented.

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Houston Chapter/AIA	22

In Houston, can the move toward zoning preserve or restore neighborhood integrity?



Garold Moorhead

HOUSTON

## The zoned future of Space City

AFTER DECADES OF BRAGGING to be the only major U.S. city without it, Houston has embraced zoning. On Jan. 9, the city council unanimously adopted an ordinance that set into motion a process to achieve comprehensive planning, zoning, and neighborhood protection. The historic vote responded to political pressure from a coalition of neighborhoods to protect residential areas from incompatible land uses.

The ordinance establishes a Planning and Zoning Commission (utilizing the existing Planning Commission) and initiates a comprehensive planning process. The commission is charged within three months to recommend a plan that "can materially support the maintenance of neighborhood integrity," and within six months to present a work plan for the comprehensive plan. By

January, the Commission must recommend zoning regulations. The comprehensive plan will include community goals; land use and demographics; urban growth policies; a transportation plan; an economic development policy; a plan to coordinate transportation, utilities, and infrastructure development; an environmental analysis; and implementation recommendations.

The ordinance thus launches an ambitious program within a short time schedule. It may be too much to hope that the understaffed commission, even after the hiring of former Austin planner Donna Kristaponis to head it, will be able to provide the needed thorough and creative attention.

Considerable education is also necessary before public participation can be expected to be informed, intelligent, and constructive. The media has persistently focused on the "Z-word," with its negative connotations of reduced property rights and control of land

"Zoning," continued on page 7 above



"Zoning," continued from page 6 below

values. The ordinance goes to some pains to guarantee property owners' rights and participation in the planning process. With the grandfathering of most existing land uses, it may be years before change is noticeable.

Opponents to the ordinance agree with the need for planning but warn against the hasty adoption of land use controls. The rush, they say, is politically motivated, and the momentum is being used to push through rules that will later be regretted.

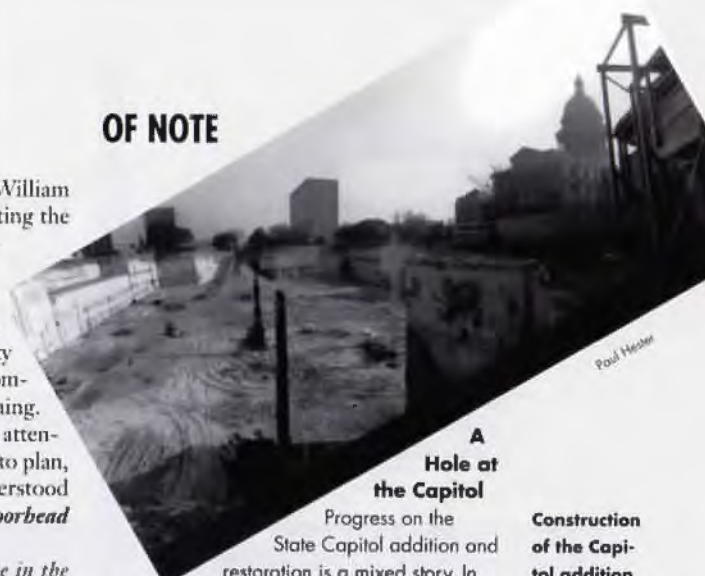
The Houston Chapter/AIA has been active in the proceedings. Members have participated on both Mayor Kathy Whitmire's Land Use Strategy Committee and Councilman Jim Greenwood's Ad Hoc Task Force in recent months. Past-President

Frank Kelly, FAIA, and President William Neuhaus were instrumental in drafting the ordinance. The Urban Design Committee has had ongoing interaction with the Planning Department and arranged for a R/UDAT in April 1990, largely funded by the City Council, which reinforced the recommendation for comprehensive planning.

In the busy times ahead, national attention will focus on Houston's efforts to plan, regulate, and improve this misunderstood modern American city. **Gerald Moorhead**

*Gerald Moorhead is a senior associate in the Houston firm Reid/Fejn and a regional correspondent for Architectural Record.*

## OF NOTE



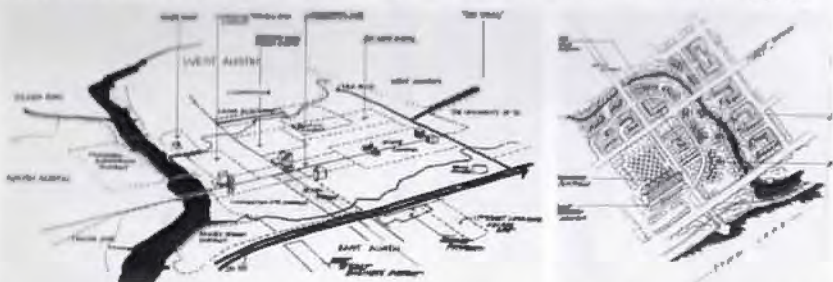
### A Hole at the Capitol

Progress on the State Capitol addition and restoration is a mixed story. In January, officials accepted a low bid from Charter Builders among a half dozen offered for the construction of the addition, but were left perplexed by a sole bid from Charter for the separate restoration project. At \$93 million, the restoration bid was a full 50 percent over budget. Contractors and Capitol Architect Allen McCree, FAIA, attributed the bulk of the difference to uncertainty about materials costs, in light of the Persian Gulf War and the four-year schedule for completing the project. Ford, Powell & Carson, Inc., subsequently made mostly minor changes to the construction drawings, the schedule was reexamined, and the project has been let for bids once more. Bids were to be opened shortly after this issue went to press. The minor setback was not seen as a threat to the Capitol project as a whole. Excavation is complete, and construction of the addition will begin soon.

**Construction of the Capitol addition will begin soon. Legislators, workers, and visitors have been treated to a seemingly perilous view of the statehouse on the brink of a 50-foot cliff created by excavation work.**



A R/UDAT team focused on the Convention Center (above) and on connecting downtown districts (left). It also said an aging power plant could become a museum/residential cluster (right).



## AUSTIN R/UDAT urges 'tunnel vision'

THE PLAN FOR AUSTIN, said an AIA Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team that visited the city in January, is to stop planning and act.

The team, led by Charles M. Davis, FAIA, of Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis of San Francisco, assembled its plan largely from existing piecemeal plans and said citizens must focus on follow-through. In particular, the R/UDAT cited improvements to the area around the Austin Convention Center, now under construction. "You need to have tunnel vision for the next 15 to 18 months" during the \$69-million center's construction said implementation specialist James Murray of Denver.

The key long-term goal, said the team, is to create a downtown organization with a strong manager to promote downtown interests. The organization should work to

attract people from bordering population centers (see diagram above). To get them there, however, the city must "make downtown a place for people, not cars," said Davis. Intentionally less-efficient two-way streets should replace the current coupled one-way grid to slow the traffic pace and make merchants more noticeable, he said.

In East Austin, the R/UDAT called for city-subsidized districts for a small-business corridor and for a "mercado." They said the planned "upper deck" expansion of Interstate 35 downtown would further cut off East Austin and should be halted.

UT Austin Vice President Lewis Wright chairs the R/UDAT's implementation committee. A downtown organization is critical, says Wright. "It can be a catalyst in an area where there has been no movement before."

"Movement" until lately has suggested unbridled growth. The challenge now is to unite both sides of the growth standoff toward a higher civic calling. **Ray Don Tilley**

### Texas Center: A little New York in Dallas

Opening to initial reactions of disbelief, a 68-story tower in downtown Dallas that would be capped by a replica of New York's Chrysler building top has been proposed by Westgroup Partners, according to a *Dallas Times Herald* article. The story says the Los Angeles-based investment group has contracted to buy the metal-skinned NCNB Center (formerly RepublicBank, its aluminum exterior a gridded pattern of the defunct bank's logo) from the FDIC. Westgroup plans to turn it into "Texas Center" with a \$175-million renovation designed by HKS Inc., Dallas, to double the floor area of one NCNB tower and raise it to 68 stories. HKS officials refused comment on the story.

### Meyerson wins AIA Honor Award

The Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, designed by I.M. Pei & Partners, New York, is one of 19 projects to win 1991 Honor Awards.

### Aubry returns to Houston

Gene Aubry, FAIA, former partner in Morris\* Aubry (now Morris\* Architects) and influential in Texas architecture of the early '80s, will return from a four-year hiatus in Sarasota, Fla., to join Houston-based Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville as director of design.

## CALENDAR

**Silent Shadows: Japanese Contemporary Architecture and the City**

Professor Botond Bogner of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign will open a series of lectures, Apr. 3. These architects will lecture in following weeks: Itsuko Hasegawa (Apr. 10), Toyo Ito (Apr. 17), Hiromi Fujii (Apr. 24), and Hajime Yatsuka (May 1). Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Rice Design Alliance (713/524-6297)

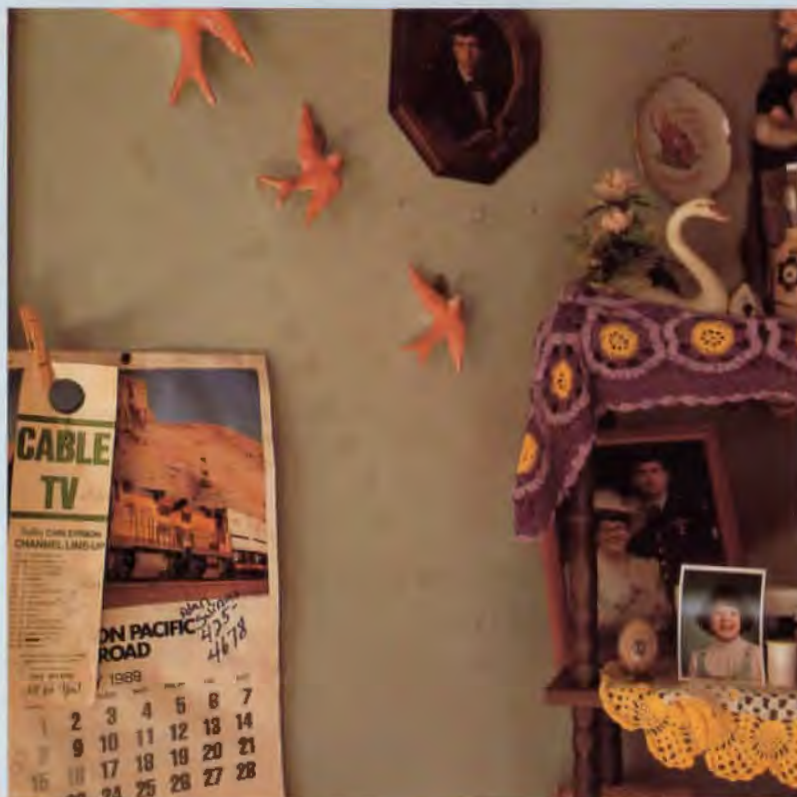
**1991 Health Care Architecture Exhibit**

An exhibit will introduce firms to health-care planners and decision-makers at the Texas Hospital Association's 1991 Convention, June 2-4, THA (512/465-1017), deadline: Apr. 15

**Where Sight Lines Meet**

Student contest for a U.S./Canada gateway. AIAS (202/626-7472), deadline: Mar. 29

"Calendar," continued on page 10



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"Calendar," continued from page 8

**1991 Issues: AIA National Convention**

Featured speakers this year in the nation's capital are Robert Venturi, FAIA, Rod Hackney, Hon. FAIA, Charles Correa, Hon. FAIA, Andres Duany, and Amary Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute. AIA, Washington, D.C. (202/626-7395), May 17-20

**AIA Professional Development Seminars**

"ConDoc: The New System for Formatting and Integration of Construction Documents": Dallas, Mar. 15, Houston, Mar. 18

"Project Administration": Austin, Apr. 12

"Marketing Your Architectural Services": Dallas, Apr. 9-11

"Optimizing the Small Firm": Houston, Mar. 25  
AIA, Washington, D.C. (202/626-7357)

**Redefining the Context**

The partners of Taft Architects will speak on creating architectural harmony in unique environments. Decorative Center of Houston (713/961-9292), Mar. 14

**PC Glassblock Design Awards**

Creative, unique uses of PC Glassblock® as a central design element are eligible. Top prize: \$6,000. Pittsburgh Corning Corp. (800/992-5769), entry deadline: Apr. 26

Right: Coates University Center;  
Center: Arsenal House;  
below: Arsenal House;  
bottom: The Crockett Block



SAN ANTONIO

**Jones & Kell wins top award**

JONES & KELL, INC., won the only Honor Award presented in the 1990 San Antonio Chapter/AIA Awards for Excellence in Architecture. Its winning project, the Frost Motor Bank & Plaza in San Antonio, had previously won a 1989 TSA Design Award (see *TA* Jan/Feb 1990).

Jones & Kell joined Ford Powell & Carson and Humberto Saldaña & Associates in winning one of the competition's five Merit Awards for the Bexar County Justice Center (see *TA* July/Aug 1990). Residences by Lake/Flato Architects won three Merits: Arsenal House in San Antonio, Canyon Lake House (see *TA* Jan/Feb 1990), and Adobe House in Santa Fe (see *TA* Nov/Dec 1990, Jan/Feb 1991). Chumney/Urrutia took the final Merit honor for Coates University Center at Trinity.

Saldaña's firm received an additional "Commendation for Restoration of Facade" for the Crockett Block in San Antonio.

Jurors were Cynthia Weese of Weese Langley Weese, Chicago; Hal Box, FAIA, dean of the UT Austin School of Architecture; and Norman Hoover of Hoover & Furr, Houston. Awards were announced in early October.

RDT

"News," continued on page 12

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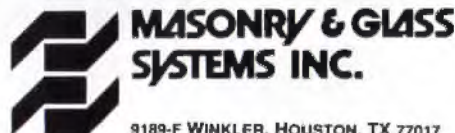
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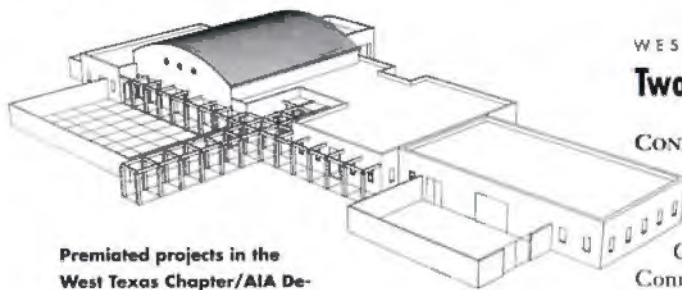


and want to build another one.



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Premiated projects in the West Texas Chapter/AIA Design Awards included the Junior League of Midland Headquarters (above), Leede Exploration Offices (above right), Racquet Club

Pool Renovation (middle right), and the Center for Energy and Economic Diversification (below right)

## WEST TEXAS

## Two firms split design awards

CONNOLLY & COMPANY ARCHITECTS and Rhotenberry Wellen Architects split evenly the six awards given among 22 projects in the West Texas Chapter/AIA Biennial Design Awards. Connolly & Company's trio of Midland buildings included the Fredda Turner Durham Children's Museum (see *TA* Sep/Oct 1989), the Hissom Pool House (see *TA* Nov/Dec 1989), and the unbuilt Junior League of Midland Headquarters. Rho-



Paul Heister



Paul Heister



Paul Heister

tenberry Wellen's winning projects were the Center for Energy and Economic Diversification and the Racquet Club Pool Renovation, both in Midland, and Leede Exploration Offices in Englewood, Colo.

Competition jurors were Carlos Jimenez, principal of Carlos Jimenez Architectural Design Studio, Houston, and a design critic at Rice University; Lawrence Speck, associate dean of the UT Austin School of Architecture and design architect for the Austin Convention Center, now under construction; and Willis Winters, project designer for F & S Partners, Dallas, a UT Arlington design critic, and chairman of the TSA Publications Committee, which advises *Texas Architect* and other publications.

In addition to the winning projects, the chapter presented its 25-year award to the San Angelo Independent School District Stadium, by Max D. Lovett, architect of record. When built in 1956, the stadium was one of the first examples of bermed, poured-on-grade seating for such a structure. In 1960, TSA gave it an award for "Architecture of Merit Over the Last Ten Years."

An awards banquet was held Dec. 5 in San Angelo.

RDT

"News," continued on page 14

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Watch for details on Wilsonart's upcoming design competition in the

March/April issue of *Texas Architect*.

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FORT WORTH

**Hahnfeld, Wintersole win twice**

EIGHT PROJECTS were honored in the 1990 Fort Worth/AIA Design Awards, which drew 45 entries. Jurors for the competition were Natalye Appel and Ben Brewer, FAIA, of Houston, and Ted Flato of San Antonio.

Kirk Voich Gist and Ward Bogard & Associates won Honor Awards for the Fort Worth Stockyards Arena, Barn, and Gazebos, and the Sinclair Building, respectively.

The first of two honors for Hahnfeld Associates was a Merit Award for the First United Methodist Mission. Other Merit Award projects were Park Hill Drive Bridge, by Wooten Burgess and Associates, Inc.; Springbok Barstool, by Richard Wintersole; and St. Vincent's Episcopal Church and School in Bedford, by Jim Bransford.



Clockwise, from far left: Fort Stockyards, Sinclair Building, Park Hill Drive Bridge, Blue Haze School, St. Vincent's Episcopal Church

Wintersole won a second award, a Citation for the Clark Residence in Mineral Wells. Hahnfeld's Blue Haze Elementary School also won a Citation.

RDT

"News," continued on page 22

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January 1, 1991

# TSA - Endorsed Workers' Compensation Program Now Available Through Local Texas Brokers

The TSA-endorsed Group Workers' Compensation Plan, governed by the Design Professionals Safety Association (DPSA), is now available through several brokers in the state of Texas.

The plan paid a dividend of 39.1% last year, and has averaged dividends of over 32% since DPSA's inception in 1982. Dividends are normally declared and paid when a participating group receives more in premium payment than it dispenses in claim settlements.

After administrative and operating costs are satisfied, the excess premium is then distributed to participating firms in the form of a dividend check.

Over 1,450 design professional firms across the nation participate in the DPSA program, with a Texas membership of over 240 firms. In addition to the Texas Society of Architects (TSA), the DPSA program is endorsed by the Texas Society of Professional Surveyors (TSPS).

Because workers'

compensation premiums are set by state rating bureaus, dividend paying plans like the DPSA program are becoming increasingly popular. With programs like DPSA, Texas architects can potentially receive a healthy percentage of their workers' compensation premium back from the insurance company.

The DPSA Board of Directors is comprised of individuals from various design professions, including James H. Wheeler, Jr., FIA, of Abilene.



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THIS CARD EXPIRES MAY 31, 1991. TEXAS ARCHITECT MARCH/APRIL 1991 ISSUE

## ENTRY FORM 3rd Annual Graphics Competition

Please type or print all information requested and sign the form in the space provided. This form (or a photocopy) is to be attached to each entry. One check for the total fees must be attached to one entry.

Entrant Name

Firm/School

Address

City/State/Zip

Position/Class

Telephone

This is entry number  of  entries.

Title of Entry

Category (check one)  Architectural Delineation  Working Drawings

Concept and Imagination  Sketch Books

Publication Graphics  Business Graphics

Summary of Entries (enter total no. of entries and total fees on each card):

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I certify that I am currently a member, associate, or professional affiliate of the Texas Society of Architects, or an architecture student currently enrolled at the University of Houston, Rice University, Texas A&M University, University of Texas at Arlington, University of Texas at Austin, or Texas Tech University. I executed the work being entered in this competition. I grant rights for one-time publication to *Texas Architect*, for which I will additionally reimburse *Texas Architect* \$75 per winning color entry to help defray color printing costs. I understand that if I have not complied with all competition rules my entry may be disqualified without notification or return of entry fee.

Entrant's Signature

Date

IMPORTANT: Please complete the back of this form as instructed.

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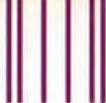
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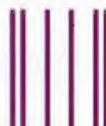
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Below, and on another sheet if necessary, briefly (no more than 100 words) describe the entry, including materials used and purpose. If the entry reflects an actual project, provide the project's name, location, client, and size; also explain the project's outcome.

Lined area for writing the entry description.

Please mail this form along with your entry to TEXAS ARCHITECT, 114 WEST SEVENTH, SUITE 1400, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701. If you have questions, call Ray Don Tilley, 512/478-7386. Entry deadline is May 31, 1991.



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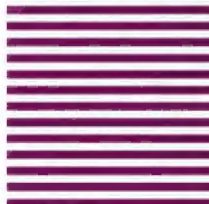
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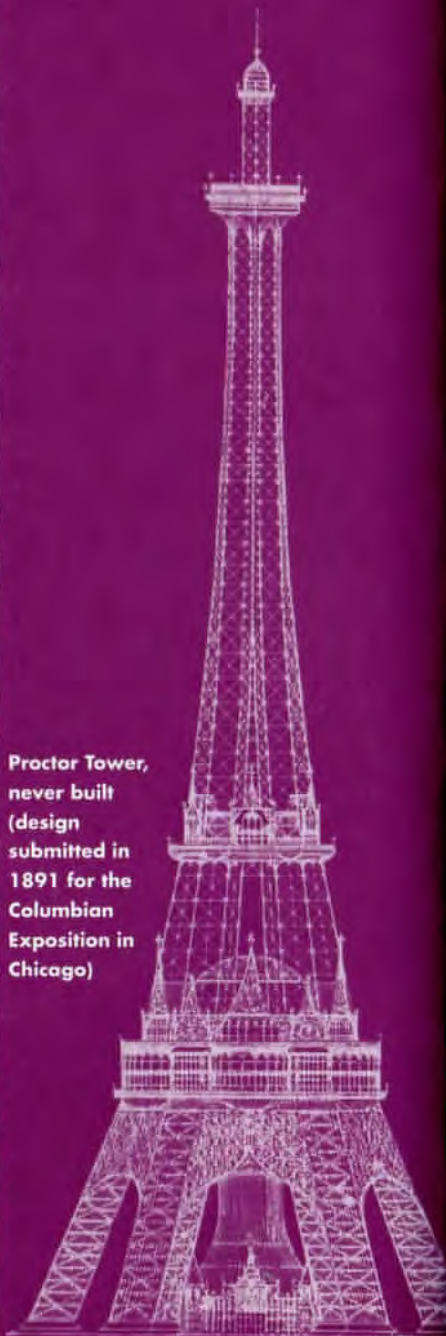
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Proctor Tower, never built (design submitted in 1891 for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago)



# 3rd Annual Graphics

## RULES

**ELIGIBILITY.** Eligible work must have been produced by a current member, associate, or professional affiliate of the Texas Society of Architects, or a currently enrolled architecture student at the University of Houston, Rice University, Texas A&M University, University of Texas at Arlington, University of Texas at Austin, or Texas Tech University.

**MATERIALS.** For *Architectural Delineation*, *Working Drawings*, *Concept and Imagination*, and *Sketch Books* categories, submit one slide for each entry. A description sheet containing the following textual information is required for each entry: Actual Size of Original and Materials Used. High-quality duplicate slides are acceptable. The original or a 4x5 transparency must be available for publication should the entry receive an award.

For *Publication Graphics* and *Business Graphics*, submit each entry mounted on no more than one 20x30-inch foam-core or rigid illustration board, leaving a two-inch margin on all sides for hanging. Do not use glass.

Any entry that does not follow all rules for submission will be disqualified. Entrants will not be notified of disqualifications, nor will entry fees be refunded.

**ENTRY FORM.** Complete one form for each entry and attach it to the back of the mounting surface or clip it to the slide sleeve. Use photocopies of the form if necessary. Complete the summary of entries on one of the entry forms and attach an envelope with one check for the total fees.

To preserve anonymity of entries, remove any firm name, logo, or renderer's name from the entry, except in cases such as letterhead and brochure work where the firm name or logo is integral to the presentation.

**ENTRY FEE.** A fee of \$45 for each entry by a TSA member, or \$30 for each student entry, must be included with your submission. After judging, an additional payment of \$75 will be required for each winning color entry to help offset the cost of four-color reproduction in *Texas Architect*.

**DEADLINE.** All entry materials must be received by *Texas Architect* no later than 5:00 p.m., May 31, 1991. Entries are to be mailed or delivered to: Texas Architect, 114 West Seventh Street, Suite 1400 (Norwood Tower, 14th Floor), Austin, Texas 78701.

## AWARDS

Given in each category to as many entries as the judges feel merit award. Each entry is judged on its own merits. The judges can choose not to name a winner in a category if they feel no entries merit award. Winning entries will receive the following:

- Certificate of award.
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## The Texas Architect

### Graphics Competition

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as exhibited in

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# Graphics

media. Entrants are judged on the quality, style, and effectiveness of graphic design and presentation, rather than on the merits of any projects or details presented.

## CATEGORIES

**ARCHITECTURAL DELINEATION.** Renderings and presentation drawings produced for an actual project, built or unbuilt.

**WORKING DRAWINGS.** Any drawing from construction documents for an actual project, built or unbuilt.

**CONCEPT AND IMAGINATION.** Conceptual sketches, schematic drawings and diagrams, and drawings of imaginary projects or places.

**SKETCH BOOKS.** Drawings and sketches of landscapes, cityscapes, and existing buildings, spaces, and building details. Sketches may be entered individually, as a group, or as a complete sketch book.

**PUBLICATION GRAPHICS.** Actual printed pieces of books, reports, studies, proposals, magazines, brochures, and similar printed media.

**BUSINESS GRAPHICS.** Actual printed pieces of corporate and personal stationery, logos, announcements, advertisements, cards, posters, and similar printed media.

Each entry must be submitted in only one category. *Texas Architect* reserves the right to reclassify inappropriately labeled entries.

## JUDGES



Clockwise from top left: **Deborah K. Dietsch**, editor of *Architecture*, Washington, D.C.  
**Carl Lehmann-Haupt**, art director of *Metropolis*, New York, N.Y.  
**Rand Elliott**, president of Elliott + Associates Architects, Oklahoma City, Okla.

**Entry deadline:**  
**May 31, 1991**

# Graphics Competition

HOUSTON

## CRSS, houses pace winners



WINNERS among over 100 entries in the 1990 Houston/AIA Design Awards included 15 projects. Jurors were Rudolfo Machado of Boston, William Pedersen of New York, and Cathy Simon of San Francisco.

Architecture Honor Awards went to McCurdy Lodge near Bastrop, by Carrie Glassman Shoemake; Olson House in the West Indies, by Taft Architects; Private Residence, by Kenneth Bentsen, FAIA; and Highway House in Galveston, by Natalye Appel.

Citation winners were Miller Judson Ford Graphic Design Studio, by William F. Stern and Associates; Cummins E/MI Laboratory in Columbus, Ind., by CRSS; Finnell Residence, by the Wittenberg Partnership; Obolensky House in Wimberley, by Val



Houston/AIA winners:  
McCurdy Lodge (far left);  
Finnell Residence (middle  
left); Art Storage and Prepara-  
tion Areas, The Museum of  
Fine Arts, Houston (left);  
Miller Judson Ford Graphic  
Design Studio (below left);  
Obolensky House (below);  
Baker & Botts (bottom)



Glitsch; and Rancho Ramillete in Concan, by Taft Architects.

Winning interiors were Baker & Botts in Dallas, by Gensler and Associates; Museum of Fine Arts Art Storage, by Albert Pope and William Sherman, Architects; and Joiner Rowland Serio Koepfel and the Standing Showroom, both in Dallas by CRSS.

In Urban Design, CRSS won a fourth time, for IBM Austin. Jay Baker won for Light Spikes at the Economic Summit. **RDT**

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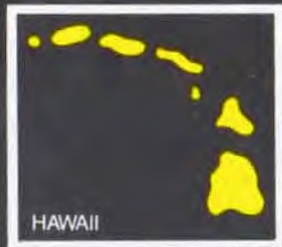
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Roy Don Tilley

# THE 1980s

Forget the unbuilt Southwest Center in Houston and the unrealized new wings on the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, and all the other '80s projects that stayed on the drawing boards. Plenty of lasting and influential projects *did* get built in the 1980s—several decades' worth in a few short years. While some '80s events continue to unfold, it's wise to pause and consider the impact of the decade on buildings and of building on the decade.

# Money & BUILDING IN THE 1980s

By Joel Warren Barna

THE YEARS from 1980 to 1989 were superb and terrible ones in Texas architecture. The decade included a spell of almost incredible growth and prosperity for many Texas architectural firms, as well as a period of free-falling decline, when thousands of practitioners (like tens of thousands of people in other lines of work) were forced to leave the state in search of employment. It was a decade of superlatives: higher buildings, more space, more houses, more cars, more people, and more money made, spent, and lost.

The decade was punctuated by landmarks of change. Among the most important of these was the death in 1982 of O'Neil Ford, who throughout a long career combined an intellectual interest in construction techniques with a visceral attachment to the materials and historic crafts of South Texas; Ford's legacy still exerts a powerful, if controversial, influence throughout the state. Perhaps the only Texas architect to exceed Ford in influence was William Caudill, who was awarded the AIA Gold Medal after his death in 1984. With his colleagues at Caudill Rowlett Scott, he invented an enormously influential style of practice, "team design," and a new way bringing clients into the design process, "squatters"; both team design and squatters combined a streak of populism with a means for perfecting the self-expression of an increasingly successful American technocracy. In his projects and his practice, one can see Caudill's love of the human capacity to solve problems by thought.

Throughout the 1980s, stylistic and professional trends analogous to the worlds of Ford and Caudill appeared again and again throughout Texas. CRS, Morris\* Aubry, Harwood K. Smith & Partners, Dahl Braden Chapman, Ford, Powell & Carson, 3D/International, and the Houston office of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill—firms large

enough to compete with out-of-state stars such as Johnson and Pei for major commissions—built skyscrapers that explored the odd new shapes made possible by '70s structural theories; in experiments that echoed Caudill, they were "breaking out of the box" in an earnest attempt to find a late-modern language (replacing the worn-out language of Mies and Corbusier) for American business in the age of Ronald "It's morning in America" Reagan. At the same time, several "boutique" firms took up postmodernism, looking to traditional cities and forms for inspiration, connecting (if tangentially) with the tradition that embraced Ford. To them, all modernism was exhausted, yet history was unreconstructible except through irony and pastiche. (Among these firms, Taft Architects already had an international reputation as the 1980s began.) Corporate postmodernism, stripped of its antiestablishment trappings and appearing in antitraditional, antiurban interventions, grew to rival late modernism for big commissions by the middle of the decade; designers in each camp fired salvos at each other across the skylines of the state. The green prism of the Allied Bank Tower at Fountain Place in Dallas (1986) and the stepped RepublicBank Tower (1983), with its red-granite curtain wall, form stylistic bookends for this period. The style wars were just heating up when the bottom fell out.

## The Psychology of Economics

TO TALK ABOUT '80s architecture in Texas, one has to discuss the economic context provided by real estate and the decade's sweeping cataclysmic boom and bust.

The story of that cycle has national roots that reach



back several generations, in the two economic principles that have tried to rule the consciousness of the American public since at least the 1920s. The first of these is based in classical economics, with its emphasis on savings and productivity, on living within one's means, on deferring gratification, and, most of all, on avoiding debt. The second principle is Keynesian, which treats demand as the ultimate economic force; Keynes said that a country can "save itself poor," by choking off capital when it is needed to stimulate demand, and "spend itself rich" by stimulating overall growth in the economy.

Something like a vernacular Keynesianism fueled the public participation in the stock market speculation of the 1920s, while the government's actions were dictated by a classical economic stance. Governmental and public positions changed after the stock market crash of 1929, when the Roosevelt administration began using deficit spending to create jobs and stimulate economic growth; the public, scared by the crash, bank panics, and widespread unemployment, reembraced classical principles. This attitude was continued by the wartime austerity required of the public during the 1940s.

After the war, however, the government greatly expanded its stimulative policies (embraced by the Republicans under Eisenhower), creating tax breaks and government insurance programs aimed at increasing home ownership. In the 1950s, for the first time, both the business climate and public psychology came into alignment with these government policies; lenders, prodded by federal insurance and new regulations into lending up to 90 percent of a house's purchase price,

**A decade's**

**monuments to**

**private economic**

**power, created**

**from visions of**

**public cohesion**

Photographs by  
Paul Hester (Houston),  
BlackmonWinters-  
Kuhner (Dallas)



were matched by a growing population willing to take on debt at unprecedented rates, not just for new suburban houses but for cars, appliances, clothes, and education. The 1950 census was the first in which more than 50 percent of the households were owner-occupied. (The ratio climbed to 61 percent in 1960 and 62 percent in 1970 and leveled off at 74 percent in 1980, falling back two percent later in the decade.)

And the vast experiment worked: the new suburban America spent itself rich, becoming an economic force that led the global economy into recovery.

This represented a momentous psychological change. For the head of the typical American family of the 1930s, debt had looked like a noose; to the middle-class and even working-class paterfamilias of the 1950s, debt had lost its terror, and had become the road to home ownership, which is to say, to full first-class citizenship. The change went even deeper, into the underlying expectations about life cycles and relationships between the generations. Parents, whose authority was tied up with helping their children learn to defer gratification and to educate themselves to take places in adult society, adopted spending patterns that must have seemed, before the novelty turned into necessity, both liberating and threateningly infantile.

By the beginning of the 1960s, as sociologist Barbara Ehrenreich writes in *Fear of Falling: The Experience of the American Middle Class*, classical economics was the province of a few reactionaries; like polio and poverty, it seemed on the verge of being eradicated. All that remained, theorists said, was to remove the non-economic

barriers that kept certain groups out of the mainstream, and society could be engineered into economic, social, and cultural parity. Ehrenreich says that the pundits stopped theorizing about federal Great Society programs before they were enacted, and turned to worrying that America would lack incentives for excellence.

The combination of expensive social programs with a war in Vietnam, however, not only splintered the consensus for governmental activism aimed at benefiting the "lower" classes; it also stimulated inflation that wove itself into the country's economic structure, particularly after the first Arab oil embargo, when energy prices jumped a thousand percent and higher costs fanned out through practically all goods and services.

The steep climb in U.S. real estate prices arose from and fed off this inflationary climate; real estate prices continued to climb faster than general inflation through the 1970s. It seems that a psychological corner was turned sometime during the Nixon administration, when real estate prices shot through a critical barrier: It was no longer possible to pay for a typical middle-class house on a single middle-class income. American women had been entering the job marketplace in large numbers since the '60s. Now, for most families, having a working wife was not an option but a necessity; a family that didn't have two breadwinners was in danger of slipping out of the middle class, of having its full-fledged citizenship revoked. It was at this point that the liberal consensus of the country, already strained during the 1960s, snapped. Middle-class families, struggling to keep their heads above water, Ehrenreich says, lost in-

**Above: RepublicBank (now NCNB) Tower in Houston (1983), by John Burgee Architects with Philip Johnson, is one of the 1980s' best monuments to miscalculation. Here it is seen from SOM's One Shell Plaza. To the right are Johnson/Burgee's Pennzoil Place (1976) and I.M. Pei and Partners' Texas Commerce Tower (1982), with Morris' Architects' Wortham Theater Centre (1987), left, at ground level.**

terest in other people's problems, and the mood of the country became increasingly conservative.

The middle class did not, however, want to give up its Keynesianism. President Reagan, swept into office on a tide of change, talked like a classical economist, denouncing the trillion-dollar national debt. Then, with the blessing of middle-class voters who elected Republican administrations and Democratic congresses, the federal government tripled that unimaginable number in a little over eight years. At the same time, corporate and private borrowing kept pace. Lots of that money went overseas for oil and manufactured goods, while some of it went into American manufacturing and research. Hundreds of billions of dollars went into speculation in real estate.

**The Economics of Psychology**

NOWHERE WAS THIS SEEN more explicitly than in Texas, heartland of the new America. In 1981 and '82, energy-price inflation that started in the 1970s helped Texas, even though it hurt the rest of the country; rising oil prices meant rising profits for Texas-based companies, siphoned off from the economies of less fortunate oil-consuming states, providing capital and jobs that drew immigrants and further investment.

Real estate also became an attractive place to store the flood of oil money, providing an inflation-derived return that matched or even surpassed oil profits. Gerald Hines, Trammell Crow, George Mitchell, Kenneth Schnitzer, and a small host of other developers became

**Below: Allied Bank (now First Interstate) Tower at Fountain Place in Dallas (1986), designed by I.M. Pei and Partners, stands in a sea of asphalt; the Dallas central business district is now 38 percent surface parking.**





national figures, whose deals made money for banks and other individuals. And the benefits spilled over into the rest of the real estate market. Families with in-town bungalows or a '50s-suburb ranch house found, once the boom started, that they could sell out and buy a bigger house or a ranch in the country, or that they could pay for a child's education or their own retirement, converting debt to capital the way that only the rich had been able to in previous generations.

By the mid-1980s, however, oil prices had fallen steadily. The cities most tied to oil production—Houston, Beaumont, Midland/Odessa—felt the blow first. The bust spread to Dallas and Austin later, as a hoped-for boom in electronics withered under Japanese competition. Still, building continued, because of hope that things would miraculously turn around, prior financial commitments, and a relaxation of savings-and-loan regulations that allowed an enormous and disastrous transfusion of capital into real estate just when it made the least sense. Then the real estate deflation started, and by the latter third of the decade, any real estate investment was not just risky but crazy.

New characters emerged as players in the story. There was J.R. McConnell, who had arrived in Houston in 1979 with 23 cents in his pocket and a beat-up Camaro. By 1985, he had amassed holdings in five states valued at \$500 million. In Galveston, he supported historic preservation on the Strand and hired Michael Graves to design the Grand Reef, a \$900-million, 440-acre mixed-used project combining golf courses, a retail center, and a crescent of squatty condominium towers linked by a roof-level bridge.

**Above: LTV (now Trammell Crow) Centre and Texas Commerce Tower in Dallas, both designed by the Houston office of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, were begun by developer Trammell Crow after the Houston real estate market collapsed. In the foreground is I.M. Pei's Meyerson Symphony Center (1989) and Edward Larrabee Barnes's Dallas Museum of Art (1983).**

**Michael Graves designed the Grand Reef, a \$900-million, 440-acre project on Galveston's East Beach combining golf courses, a retail center, and a crescent of condominiums linked by a roof-level bridge; if successful, it would have remolded the development patterns of Galveston Island. Graves's client was J.R. McConnell, who despite having arrived in Houston in 1979 with 23 cents in his pocket went on to amass \$500 million. McConnell filed for bankruptcy not long after the Grand Reef was announced. Later, he committed suicide in the Harris County Jail while awaiting trial on federal bank fraud charges.**

But in 1986, McConnell filed for personal bankruptcy. He promised that, given time, he would pay back the estimated \$200 million owed to financial institutions and limited partners that his assets would not cover. This would never happen, however. As the court-appointed bankruptcy trustees began selling off McConnell's properties to pay his debts, they discovered competing liens that amounted to what a series of lenders would call a \$100-million swindle. In 1987, following an FBI investigation, McConnell and five associates were charged in federal court with defrauding a bank and a savings and loan of some \$5.7 million, although federal officials said the total figure reaped by the group was closer to \$162 million, making it the largest case of its kind in U.S. history to date.

In the Harris County Jail on July 4, 1988, while awaiting trial, McConnell electrocuted himself. It was a horrifying end to a strange story, and it was just the beginning. Before the decade was out, Texans would learn that McConnell was just a drop in a \$500-billion bucket, and we would get to know Stanley Adams of Lamar Savings in Austin (whom federal regulators accuse of financial tricks that generated \$1 billion in losses), Danny Faulkner of Empire Savings, on trial for an alleged \$2-billion North Texas land-flipping spree, and a gallery of rogues who thrived in a rising market and a wide-open regulatory climate.

The bust hurt, but Texans would learn that some of the worst effects had been created by the boom: the two-income house, for example, which not only altered home-buying patterns but sent long-term shocks through the business world and the systems for providing child care and education.

Real estate in the 1980s also created losers by treating land as a bank. The effects can be seen in downtowns, such as Dallas's, where land became most valuable when stripped of the (taxable) historic buildings. In central Dallas, despite a nationally recognized preservation ordinance, almost half of the pre-Second World War buildings standing in 1980 had been torn down by the end of the decade; 38 percent of the downtown area was converted not to new buildings but to surface parking. Downtown Houston is now largely empty lots, and neighborhoods were razed in the Heights in Houston and around the CityPlace project in Dallas during the 1980s. The loser in such a situation is the community at large, which has its physical connection with a sense of time truncated, if not obliterated.

When time ran out on the speculative bubble, property values fell as much as 15 percent per year. By the mid-'80s, people were walking away from their houses in Houston's suburbs, and out-of-state companies were taking over the troubled assets of the Texas banks; meanwhile, Northeastern cities were "Houstonizing": sprouting speculative office towers and sprawling at their edges (until the bottom fell out there, as well).

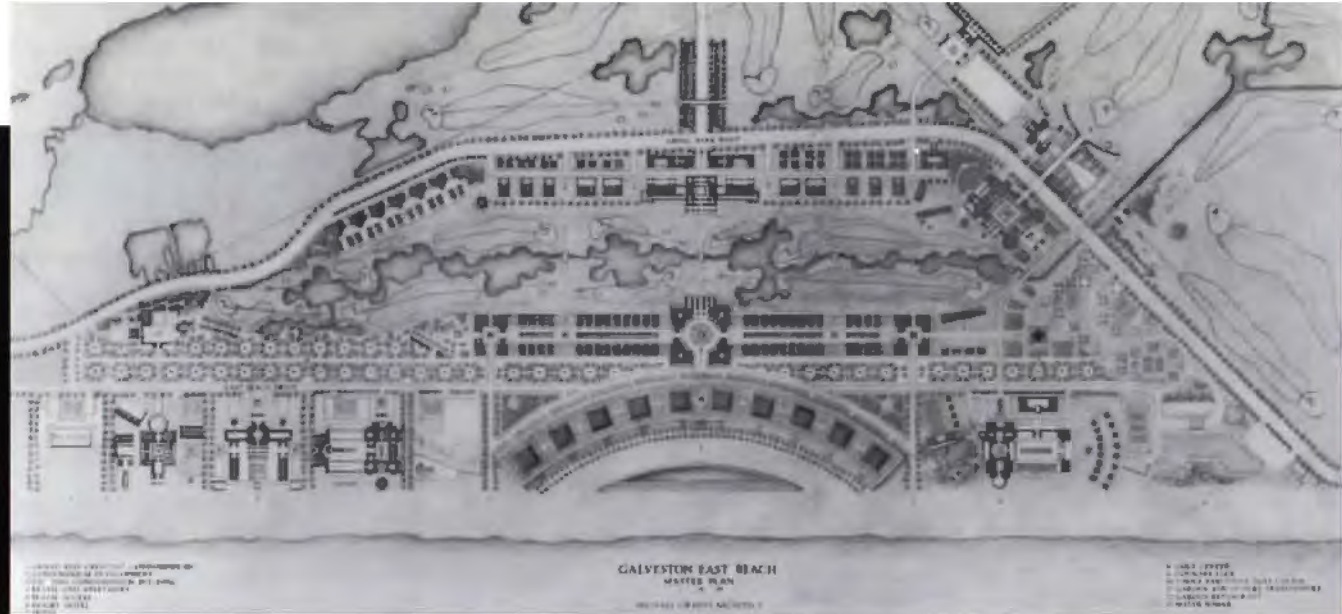
The collapse of the Texas real estate market in the late 1980s caused the closure of no fewer than 168 savings-and-loan institutions and 334 banks, and dozens more were left teetering on the brink. The amount of vacant commercial real estate, created in putative pursuit of the highest and best use of land, became a national scandal: At the bottom of the bust, there was



more unrented office space in the tenantless "see-through" towers of Houston than there was total office space in Denver and Atlanta combined. At the same time, the number of real estate properties foreclosed on in Texas rose astronomically: According to the Real Estate Institute at Texas A&M, in Dallas, Harris, Bexar, and Travis counties alone between 1985 and 1989, there were 213,964 property foreclosures, and over 90 percent of them involved single-family dwellings. Harris County by itself accounted for 121,072 foreclosures during this five-year period (foreclosures reportedly peaked in Harris County at 31,015 in 1987, compared with 1,386 in 1980). Behind these figures is the possibility that nearly 400,000 people in a single county lost their homes, along with their down payments and the 20 percent or more of their family incomes that had been paid toward housing costs. Extrapolating from available figures, real estate analysts say, it is possible to estimate that a million men, women, and children lost their homes in Texas in little more than half a decade.

Compared to the ruin visited on these people, the banks and savings and loans lost mere paper profits. But these losses have been translated again into real problems: The federal government's current bail-out plan for the thrift industry promises to convert as much as half a trillion tax dollars to cover the industry's losses; Congressional officials trace nearly a third of these to Texas real estate. The children and grandchildren of all U.S. citizens will be paying on this debt with taxes that might have been used otherwise, and the bailout will raise the cost of capital needed for productive industries





at a time when the U.S. is already struggling to deal with increased global competition. The 1980s real estate bust in Texas could help turn the U.S. into a second-rate economic power.

Seen in this context, the bank towers that arose on the skylines of the major Texas cities end up as monuments to a colossal social tragedy. The social and economic changes of the 1980s, centering on the real estate debacle, left Texas city centers punctuated by tall buildings, but these were set among empty lots on all-but-deserted streets and surrounded by an urban form in which pockets of affluence struggled to avoid the fate of other neighborhoods dragged into the decaying infrastructure. So much money had been gambled and lost in real estate that the decade left significant parts of the private realm and much of the public realm in Texas hollowed out; dozens of the state's colleges and school systems, its social services, its courts and hospitals and sewer systems, along with many neighborhoods, were left as see-through shells that a puff of additional economic trouble could bring down. It is a commonplace of architectural writing that societies create buildings to symbolize their underlying order. In the 1980s in Texas the process seemed to work in reverse; the empty spec buildings helped create a society in their own image.

There is also surely comedy in the fact that the managers of Texas financial institutions, looking down from their towers, accustomed to a social structure and a built environment (of their own making) that supported the sense that they were the region's best financial minds, and thus leaders by right, found themselves

victims of their own self-regard.

That self-regard has been shaken, along with the assurance that we can create a smooth-running science of finance, or that a technocracy of economic distribution, freed of government intrusion, will cure all our problems. The architectural dress of such a view, Caudill's strong, untroubled brand of late modernism, looks thin now. Thinner still are the tatters of postmodernism; attempts to resurrect tradition—even as loving as those of Ford—have left us in party clothes that only remind us of the hangover. Money is tight, and no amount of Keynesianism will wish that fact away, at least for the foreseeable future.

The final joke is that, as we approach a new millennium, the 1980s have left a residue that can't be ignored. Buildings and housing tracts thrown up with little regard for the future now stand there generating long-term consequences. Architects used to urge clients to think about connections and the fabric of the city; now clients want to listen. As the state recovers, there is enough of an urban structure to make it both necessary and profitable to think about filling in the blanks of our cities. Self interest is driving developers and city officials to embrace new land controls and expensive civic improvements, from rail-system plans to grand, in-town, middle-class housing projects. The ultimate legacy of the 1980s may be another chance, a decade late, to work on creating sustainable and sustaining cities. The key will be to start, as Caudill did, with education, and to see, as Ford did, the possibilities presented to us by our whole history.

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## Texas Commerce Tower

Structure was seldom the focus of expression in tall buildings of the 1980s; instead, many designers developed ever slicker skins. In Dallas, JPJ Architects' 75-story argon-edged Interfirst (1984, now NCNB) Plaza presents a good example. It also shows the common device of multiplying corner-office space, pioneered by Johnson and Burgee's IDS Center in Minneapolis. Others used applied decoration in the form of a dramatic top or a historicized entry element—the Romanesque masonry arch of Johnson/Burgee's Transco Tower in Houston (1983, with Morris'Aubry) looks glued on, while the masonry base of the same firm's 1987 Momentum (now Bank One) Place in Dallas is the most convincingly substantial of the decade.

The '80s tower that most broke with the pack was Texas Commerce Tower at 2200 Ross (1987), designed by the Houston office of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill for Trammell Crow. Texas Commerce Tower has a funny hat, but one that expresses a structural ploy of some daring: The keyhole reduces the wind load. This is making a big idea out of what is essentially a profit-enhancing

measure—lower wind load reduces the size and cost of the structural system (and the skylobby in the keyhole also reduces the number of lower-floor elevators). The top of Texas Commerce Tower is thus the farthest thing from the arbitrary artiness that such commentators as David Braden, FAIA, and Paul Goldberger saw in it at first. Instead, it gives a high-style expression to the tactics that speculative developers have always made central to their business—holding down "first-dollar costs" and maximizing leasable space.

## The Menil Collection

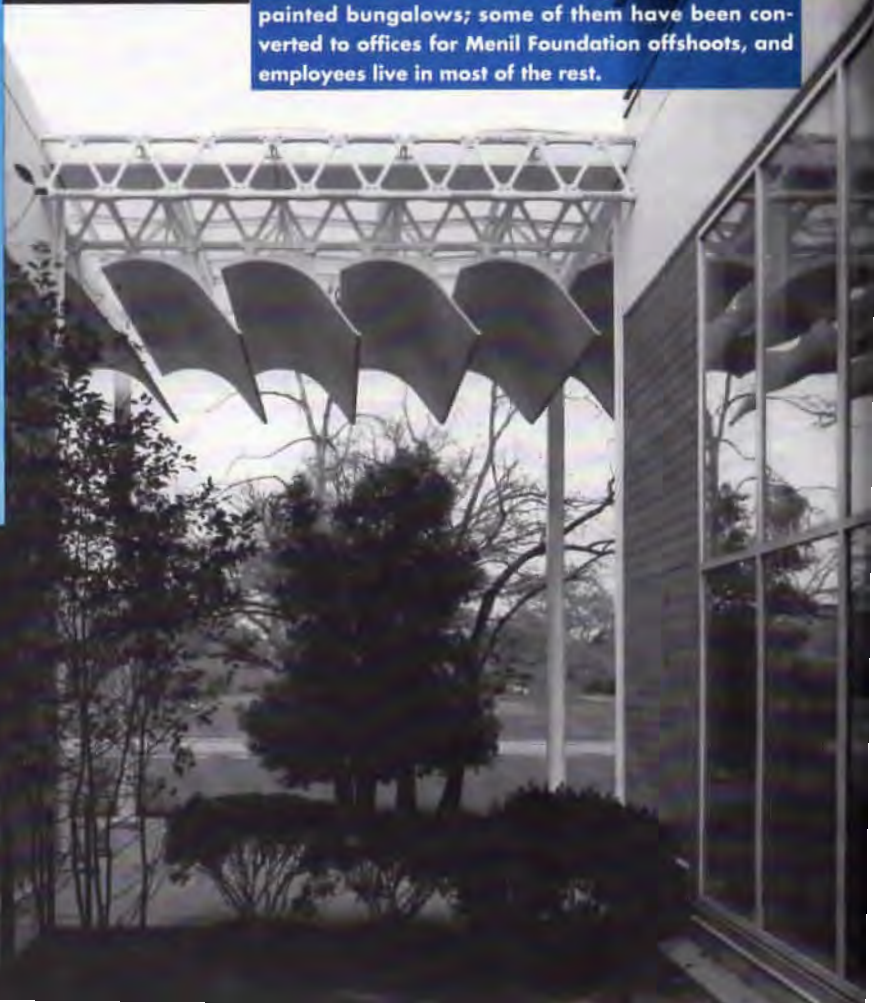
AFTER REJECTING EARLIER SCHEMES by Louis Kahn and Howard Barnstone, Houston art patron Dominique Schlumberger de Menil hired Renzo Piano to design a building for her personal art collection.

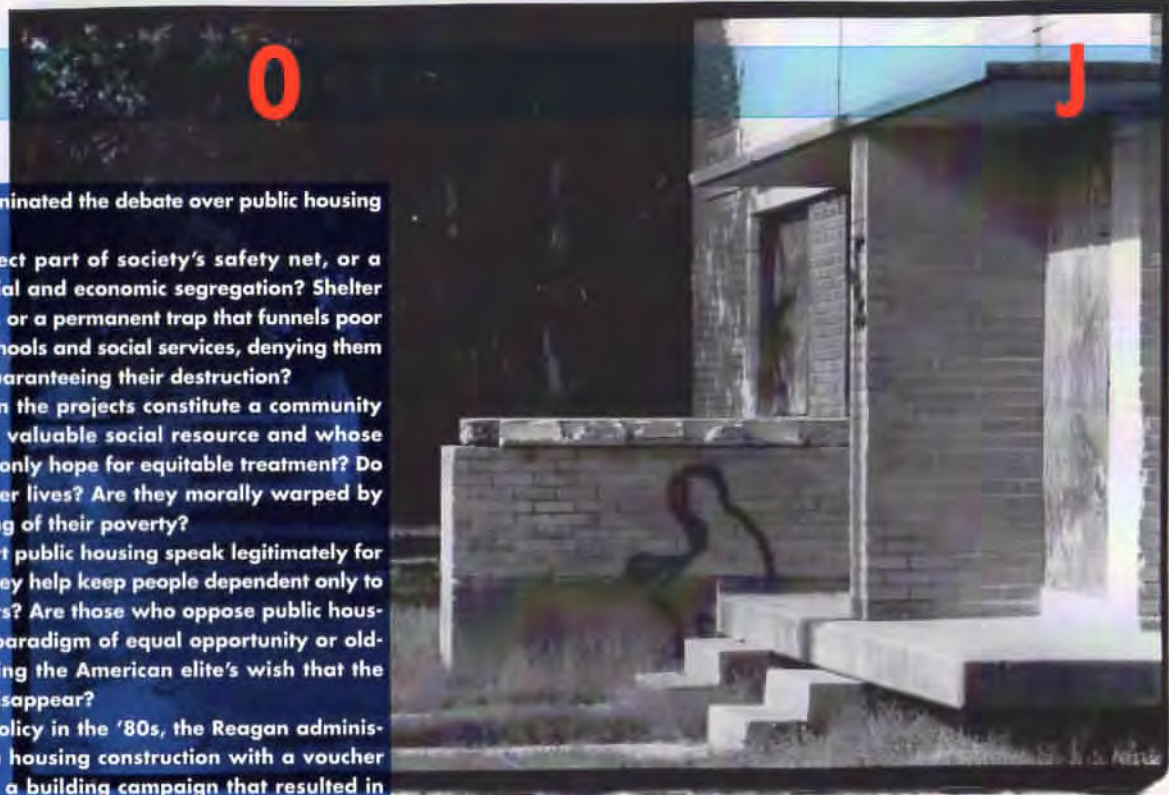
Mrs. de Menil's benefactions (with her husband, Jean, who died in 1973) have been central to the development of Houston from oil patch to international city; they have included hiring Philip Johnson in the 1950s to design the campus of St. Thomas University (and contributing to that institution until an acrimonious split in 1969), supporting the political career of the late Congressman Mickey Leland, founding the Rothko Chapel as an ecumenical religious center, and funding dozens of film series, concerts, lectures, and publications that informed the tastes of generations of Houstonians.

Her collection includes Mediterranean antiquities, contemporary painting and sculpture, surrealist works, and African, American, and Oceanic tribal arts, all united by a vision that gives new life to the aristocratic notion that connoisseurship is a path to spiritual growth.

Completed in 1987 (by Piano through his Building Workshop in Genoa, in joint venture with Richard Fitzgerald & Partners of Houston), the Menil Collection is both grand and residential, with bays of horizontal clapboards set in a frame of white-painted steel. (The late critic Reyner Banham said it looked like the world's largest UPS depot.) These are surmounted by a roof assembly of operatic complexity, in which curved ferrocement light reflectors hang from a space frame of short, bolted-together cast-iron members, under low-pitched skylights, with air-conditioning ducts and spotlights threading through them. The third-floor "treasurehouse" at the east end houses research.

Like a factory in a company town, the Menil Collection stands at the center of a neighborhood of gray-painted bungalows; some of them have been converted to offices for Menil Foundation offshoots, and employees live in most of the rest.





## Public Housing

Unanswerable questions dominated the debate over public housing in Texas in the 1980s.

Is a public housing project part of society's safety net, or a monument to persistent racial and economic segregation? Shelter for the temporarily destitute, or a permanent trap that funnels poor families into underfunded schools and social services, denying them access to jobs and all but guaranteeing their destruction?

Do the people who live in the projects constitute a community whose mutual support is a valuable social resource and whose political cohesion offers the only hope for equitable treatment? Do they want to escape to better lives? Are they morally warped by and thus somehow deserving of their poverty?

Do politicians who support public housing speak legitimately for the disenfranchised, or do they help keep people dependent only to perpetuate their own careers? Are those who oppose public housing the prophets of a new paradigm of equal opportunity or old-fashioned racists, articulating the American elite's wish that the urban poor would simply disappear?

At the level of national policy in the '80s, the Reagan administration first tried to replace housing construction with a voucher system, then embarked on a building campaign that resulted in widespread and costly corruption. In Texas, the debate over public housing focused on the West Dallas housing project in Dallas and Allen Parkway Village in Houston, both of which were the subjects of convoluted controversy.

At present, the West Dallas projects are under a federal court order requiring officials to demolish all but 1,200 of the complex's 3,500 units, to rehabilitate the rest, and to replace demolished units with new dwellings "in areas where minorities are not now concentrated."

Houston authorities have allowed Allen Parkway Village to become nearly derelict, and the project, along with the adjacent Fourth Ward (which includes the historic Freedmen's Town area), is in a parcel of land that a consortium of developers wants to convert to "Founders Park"—middle-class housing, retail, office space, and perhaps a station for a high-speed rail link to Dallas. The developers have promised Fourth Ward residents replacement housing elsewhere in the city. Lead architect for Founders Park is Sikes Jennings Kelly & Brewer of Houston.

If the experience of the 1980s is a guide, the success or failure of these plans will take at least another decade to work out, while different coalitions try to hammer out a consensus on the underlying questions.

## Strip Retail

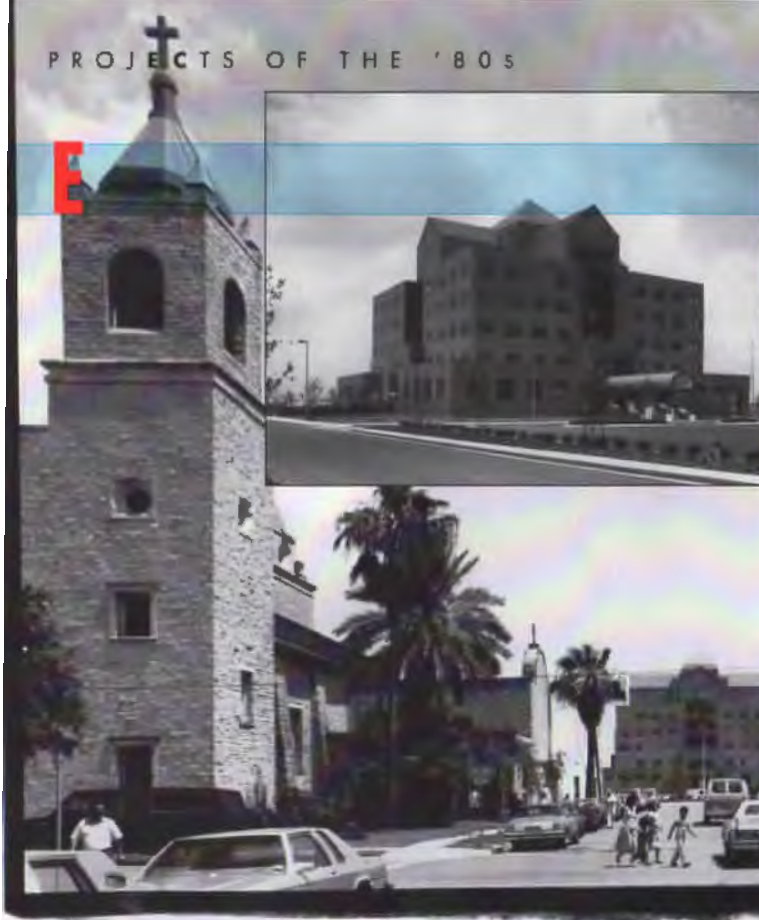
STRIP SHOPPING CENTERS have changed little since the form was born in the 1920s: each needs plenty of parking, a low-cost, flexible structure that maximizes frontage, and visually dominant signage.

In the 1980s, however, the strip-center form was developed to integrate increasingly more sophisticated architectural elements, chiefly by Good, Fulton & Farrell (formerly Good, Haas & Fulton) of Dallas.

Through the late 1970s, most strips were constructed with tiltwalls and stucco. Good, Haas & Fulton's Denton Town Center in Denton, finished in 1981, was the first in Texas to reintroduce brick, cast stone, and other materials with pre-war courthouse-square associations to the strip-center vocabulary. Their Dal-Ridge Village center, of 1981 has the first strip-center clock tower. The Woodlane Plaza center of 1986, on Lover's Lane in Dallas, is a crescent in plan; it combines street-level retail with second-story retail/office space, now a standard part of most middle-class-area strips.

The firm's work spread throughout the small world of retail-space development in Texas. Using three-dimensional architectural elements to play the eye-catching role previously taken by signs has become the norm in strip retail development, as exemplified by Shepherd Square in Houston (by Watkins Carter Hamilton of Houston) and the Pavilion Center in San Antonio (by Overland Partners of San Antonio), with its roof elements patterned after the cupolas of the Municipal Auditorium and San Antonio missions. (Pavilion Center, housing discount chain stores, also shows what critic Paul Fussell calls "prole drift," the process by which design styles slide from upscale to mass market.)





## Corpus Christi City Hall

In his *Discovering The Vernacular Landscape*, J.B. Jackson describes the crucial role of government buildings as American settlement moved west. He says their roles as monuments to local decision-making authority and as backdrops to the most important annual civic occasions made them places in which a populace was transformed into a citizenry.

One of the few city halls built in Texas in the 1980s to reflect such a tradition was completed in 1988 in Corpus Christi. It was the work of a joint venture of Taft Architects of Houston, and Kipp, Richter & Associates of Corpus Christi. Taft, the lead designer firm, had made a reputation by conferring monumental qualities on such pseudogovernmental buildings as the Woodlands Water Resources Building (1985).

City officials had said they wanted "a supermarket of services," which would seem to imply a horizontal, non-monumental building. What they got was a monumentally sited and massed exploded cube with a pyramidal top; it addressed the other goal of Corpus Christi city government in the late 1980s, reviving the downtown-bayside area. Such projects as the Texas State Aquarium (1990, by Phelps/Garza/Bomberger of San Antonio), and the Watergarden (1988, by Zion and Breen of New York, with Wiznia and Associates of Corpus Christi) and Dock One Marketplace (1990, by Bennett, Martin & Solka of Corpus Christi) were also intended to help with this goal. The problem with these projects is siting: Their dispersal creates spaces seemingly uncrissable except by car. Lamentably, the city hall ends up contributing to a sense of spatial dissolution that turns citizens into tourists.

## Dallas Arts District

IN TERMS OF CULTURAL PROJECTS, Dallas was the can-do city of the 1980s. San Antonio supported a symphony-hall renovation but couldn't pay its orchestra; Austin dithered the Laguna Gloria plan to death; Fort Worth voted down attempts to create a cohesive cultural district; Houston had a qualified success with the Wortham Theater Center on its badly compromised site. Only in Dallas could the city's oligarchy pull off a theme as grandiose as the Dallas Arts District.

As David Dillon has documented, the Arts District was originally proposed when the city's major arts organizations were all headquartered in Fair Park and when land between Ross Avenue and the Woodall Rogers Freeway was selling for under \$20 per square foot. The idea was to pair commercial development with a district in which the symphony, museum, and opera would be surrounded by galleries, restaurants, and an artists' quarter.asaki Associates's master plan limited building heights and controlled parking and office frontage along the central Flora Street to 50 feet or five stories, with heights rising toward the edges. By 1983, land in the area was selling for \$150 per square foot.

The first project built in the district (besides a high school renovated into an Arts Magnet School) was Edward Larrabee Barnes's Dallas Museum of Art (1984), a dignified structure with a lanky footprint terminating the eastern axis of the district. In 1985, the LTV (later Trammell Crow) Center by SOM Houston was completed, showcasing a startlingly opulent lobby by the standards of developer Trammell Crow, as well as a lavish outdoor display of bronze sculptures. I.M. Pei's coolly dynamic Meyerson Symphony Center, with its wood-toned, tunable concert hall, was completed in 1989. Lone Star Plaza, a pair of 48-story towers designed by Fujikawa Johnson of Chicago, was announced in 1990 but has yet to start.

It's a remarkable record of achievement for a recession-wracked decade. The only problem is that, as Dillon wrote in 1983, small arts groups, galleries, and artists seem to have been permanently priced out of the picture; the district has become "just another office park in which the arts provide a kind of exotic seasoning."



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Photographs—top to bottom: Leaning tower, Corpus Christi City Hall (Paul Heister), inset (Paul Woodall), Mexican Embassy Center (R. Greg Hurley, Inc.); Dallas Art District (Blackmon/Winter/Klein), view on Texas to DMA (Blackmon/Winter); this page: George R. Brown Convention Center, detail, view from east (Don Hazell); Sinclair Black's plan for downtown Austin; Laguna Gloria Art Museum; Municipal Office Complex; Austin Convention Center (R. Greg Hurley, Inc.)



S



## George R. Brown Convention Center

THE \$105-MILLION George R. Brown Convention Center (1987) covers six city blocks. The architecture is by Houston Convention Center Architects & Engineers, a joint venture firm composed of the following firms: Bernard Johnson, Inc.; 3D/International, Inc.; and Convention Center Architects (a joint venture within the joint venture, composed of Golemon & Rolfe Associates, Inc.; John S. Chase, FAIA, Inc.; Molina & Associates, Inc.; Haywood Jordan McCowan of Houston, Inc.; and Moseley Associates, Inc.).

The building is organized around 95-foot-tall tree columns welded to a steel truss system. Circulation is clear, and colors are simple and bright. Windows open the lobby to downtown.

Architect Mario Bolullo was the project's chief designer; a decade earlier, while he worked for Cadillac Fairview, developers of Texas Eastern's 32-block property on the east side of the central business district, he had planned a continuous spine of retail space, linked to office towers by skywalks, joining the complex to parking garages and recreational facilities abutting the I-59 elevated to the east. The 52-story Gulf (now Chevron) Tower (1982) by CRS, and The Park in Houston Center (1983) by Morris\* Aubry were built, but the rest of the parcel lay fallow until city officials approached Cadillac Fairview about the potential convention center. Bolullo, by then at Golemon & Rolfe, says he simply substituted the convention center for his earlier parking/recreation elements.

## Downtown Austin: Unrealized Visions

Of all the missed opportunities of the 1980s, downtown Austin may represent the greatest.

City officials and a significant number of developers, it seemed, had reached a consensus by the early '80s, supporting a vision of downtown as a low-rise, high-density zone of animated courtyard buildings and pleasant walkways.

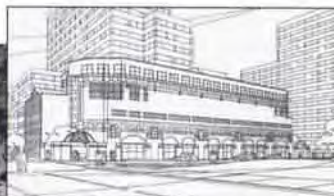
Architect and UT professor Sinclair Black, FAIA, of Austin had articulated this vision in considerable detail in a *Texas Architect* feature in 1981, focusing on the possibilities for controlled growth in the 60-square-block warehouse district between Fourth Street and the Colorado River.

Among Black's first suggestions was a complex of city offices, sited at First Street and Congress to emphasize its symbolic role. City officials adopted the idea, but they talked instead about city-owned land several blocks west. In 1984, after much political and economic maneuvering, the Watson-Casey Company was chosen to build a municipal office complex; a land swap was involved, and private development would be used to pay for some of the city's costs. Architect for the project was Black's firm, Black, Atkinson & Vernooy.

Hard times hit Austin in 1986, however, and when Watson-Casey defaulted on another project, city officials broke their contract with the company and dropped the idea of building the complex.

Watson-Casey, at the time, was involved in another deal with the city; the company was to donate land for a new downtown home, designed by Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown, for the private Laguna Gloria art museum; the city would pay for construction. The new museum, with Denise Scott Brown's carefully studied network of buildings and pedestrian spaces echoing Black's earlier proposals, would have been an amenity for the Watson-Casey Republic Square development (1988, Holt+Fatter). Watson-Casey went bankrupt and defaulted on the land to be donated, which ended up in the hands of NCNB. The bank would not agree to a change in the contract that city officials wanted, and the project died in 1990.

The one major civic project being built in the warehouse district is the new Austin Convention Center, by the Austin Collaborative Venture (Lawrence Speck is lead designer). Located in an area that Black had proposed for multifamily housing, the convention center nevertheless proposes to reorder downtown; it creates a triangle of civic nodes with the Capitol and the municipal office complex site. The rest of the development in the warehouse district during the decade took the form of suburban-type towers on Congress, such as Hilton-Dey's 300 Congress (now the Temple-Inland Building), HKS's 100 Congress (1987) and Taylor/Lundy/HKS's pyramidal 101 Congress (now Franklin Federal Savings); as in other Texas cities, private images filled the void left by public vision.



## Halsell Conservatory

THE LUCILLE HALSELL CONSERVATORY is a 90,000-square-foot sequence of half-buried buildings on the near northwest side of San Antonio, completed in 1987 at a cost of \$6.7 million; funding was pulled together by Gilbert Demme, head of two major supporting charities, the Ewing Halsell and Brackenridge foundations in San Antonio. The conservatory was the first executed work by Argentine-born architect Emilio Ambasz. Architect of record was Jones & Kell of San Antonio, which reworked the buildings to deal with the site's unstable soil.

When Ambasz first unveiled his model for the design, which showed the pyramidal and conical glass roofs of the conservatory, set on buried concrete walls around a central courtyard and rising from a vast green lawn (the actual context includes a Texas-ecology garden center and a street lined with rundown rental properties), he told donors that his source was the landscape described in Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*.

In fact, despite its '60s-modern concrete forms and racy spaceframes, Ambasz's semisubmerged plant museum recalls Lascaux more than Mars. One looks from the shadows at plants that are raised above eye level and bathed in light from above. Plants are treated not as *things* to be manipulated, but as *beings* with an independent claim to existence, simultaneously in the archaic past and the utopian technological future.



Photograph—top to bottom: Halsell Conservatory (Louis Chappman); Frito-Lay plant, night view (Wolfgang Hoyt [LSC], Canoco [Carroll Moorhead], 3M Austin [Balthazar Korab], Schlumberger Wells Services [Greg Hunley, Inc.]



## Offices: Parks and the Productivity Gap

The money committed to building and furnishing all the office space constructed in Texas during the 1980s may turn out to be the least productive spending of a decade of economic miscalculations.

During the 1980s, the ratio of Americans working in service industries rose from approximately 68 percent of the total industrial labor force to about 75 percent; in Texas, where manufacturing and mining jobs were scoured away by the oil-price collapse, the shift was probably even more dramatic.

The problem is that the productivity (work produced relative to cost) of the white-collar office workers who hold most service-sector jobs has been stagnant since the end of World War II, despite significant increases in manufacturing-sector productivity and despite the computer revolution of the 1980s. Individuals, it was found, could use computers to work faster, but these improvements typically did not pass through the layers of corporate bureaucracy to the company's bottom line.

In the late '80s, companies began to try to reduce the number of layers in their organizational structures, laying off and retiring middle-managers and closing whole divisions. This destratification was the explicit rationale behind the relocations that led to the design and construction of a wave of suburban office campuses. The best of these projects—Frito-Lay in Plano (1985, by the now-closed Dallas office of Lohan Associates), Canoco in Houston (1985, by Kevin Roche, John Dinkeloo & Associates), and Schlumberger Wells Services (1986, by Howard Barnstone Architects of Houston and Robert Jackson Architects of Austin) and 3M Austin Center (1988, by CRSS of Houston) in Austin—are powerful buildings with poetic relationships to their surrounding landscapes.

Each of these projects also embodies destratification as a planning principle: offices and circulation spaces are arranged to force workers from different divisions and layers into the chance meetings and conversations that spark ideas. The projects also reflect, with their views, ergonomic furniture, and fitness centers, an attention to the amenities that office workers want.

But these projects may be on the way out already. The telecommunications revolution of the last generation made the '80s wave of relocations possible: Companies could locate their offices anywhere their customers could reach them by phone or fax. But the logic of that revolution may imply a further change: Employees with access to distributed communications may not need to be in offices. And it is probably at this next phase, analysts say, that the revolution in office-worker productivity will take place. Today's office campuses may be tomorrow's dinosaurs.

# F

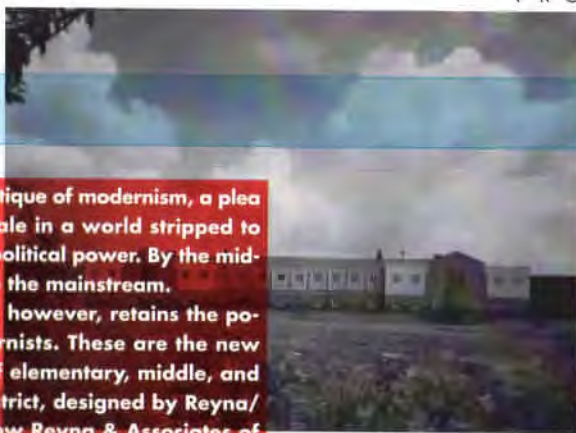
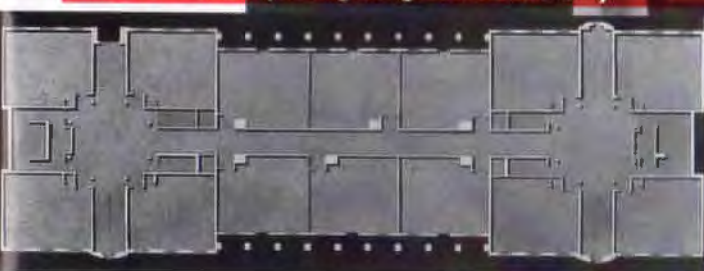
## Edgewood Schools

Postmodernism started as an outsider's critique of modernism, a plea for historical connections and human scale in a world stripped to abstractions by the forces of capital and political power. By the mid-1980s, postmodernism had itself become the mainstream.

One group of projects in San Antonio, however, retains the polemical stance of the earliest postmodernists. These are the new buildings, additions, and remodelings of elementary, middle, and high schools in the Edgewood School District, designed by Reyna/Caragonne Architects of San Antonio (now Reyna & Associates of San Antonio) and Alexander Caragonne, Architect, of Newport Beach, Calif.).

Edgewood ISD is one of the two poorest school districts in Texas, with no oil to tax, minimal industrial and commercial development, lots of land exempted from local taxation, and a population dependent on low-paying jobs and housed in low-quality dwellings. In the late 1970s, a coalition of Mexican-American activists gained control of the Edgewood school board and sought new ways to improve the schools (the first "no-pass, no-play" rule) and to increase funding (including a lawsuit that has resulted in two rulings that the state's school-funding mechanism is unconstitutional).

Using a palette of bright colors in painted steel, tile, stucco, and cement block, and a formal vocabulary accentuating axiality and symmetry (with entrances exploded into articulated fragments for emphasis), Reyna/Caragonne produced robust architectural landmarks for a citizenry taking charge of its own destiny.



## Lamar Tower

ONE OF THE BEST '80s stories concerns an unbuilt project, for a site at the corner of Sixth Street and Guadalupe in Austin, which was occupied until 1984 by the Alamo Hotel. The hotel, which had low rates, was often used by social-service agencies to provide shelter for the homeless families that were arriving in downtown Austin in growing numbers.

In 1984, the site was acquired by a subsidiary of Lamar Financial Corp., the holding company for Lamar Savings and other institutions. Plans were announced in July to tear the Alamo Hotel down and build the \$125-million Lamar Financial Plaza, which included a 27-story tower, designed by architect H.C. Hwang of Houston, and a new 15-story hotel. Lamar Financial would occupy a third of the tower.

The day the Alamo Hotel was to be torn down, however, the operator of a local mission showed up and poured a red liquid around the site, claiming the hotel "in God's name, for the poor to have a place in Austin," and cursing the land so that it would be unprofitable for any other use.

Subsequent events seemed to bear out the curse. The hotel fell, but the lot stood empty until February 1986, when Lamar Financial's chairman, Stanley Adams, announced that Kumagai Gumi, the Japanese construction company, would finance and build the project. (Not long afterward, Adams notified Texas regulators that he planned to open the first Savings & Loan on the Moon.) Kumagai Gumi was not mentioned in July 1986, when Adams's associates announced that a development company owned by architect Hwang had bought the property (along with a highrise trade center in Canton, China) from Lamar Financial, and would proceed with the project. Later that same month, Adams and other Lamar officials were sued by the FSLIC for alleged illegal real estate and stock transactions (Lamar's later collapse cost the FSLIC over \$1 billion). In 1989, Adams was indicted for bank fraud by federal prosecutors.

Defying what he said were false accusations, Adams filed to run in the 1990 Democratic gubernatorial primary, listing his occupation as "alleged white-collar criminal." Before the election, he retained Racehorse Haynes to defend him in the criminal case.

The Alamo Hotel site remains a parking lot.

## RepublicBank Houston

Developed by Gerald Hines Interests and designed by John Burgee Architects with Philip Johnson, RepublicBank (now NCNB) Houston has the rectangular floor plates of the mid-'80s tower, rising in a series of finial-capped gabled step-backs. The building's thin granite panels were quarried in Vermont, cut in Italy, shipped to Houston, and set in a frame that steps in and out to simulate the effect of solid masonry.

RepublicBank Houston is the most mountain-like American building of the 1980s, rising from the low commercial structures and theaters at the freeway's edge to mediate between them and the other office buildings farther south on Louisiana Street; it actually gains strength from this deference, while I.M. Pei's nearby Texas Commerce Tower (1982), the tallest building in Texas, sticks out like a naked twig. At ground level, however, RepublicBank crowds the sidewalk as ungenerously as Pennzoil Place, across the street.

The building works hardest at pressing historical imagery into the service of corporate identity; RepublicBank is styled like a Dutch guild hall, recalling both the early ascendancy of New York City, and the 16th-century when the Netherlands, led by middle-class merchants, became a world power. The image equates banking with democracy, conferring on the bank a defining civic role. Soon after the building opened, RepublicBank declared hundreds of millions in losses, and was absorbed by NCNB; the takeover was subsidized, like those of MCorp and First City Bank later, with taxes. A 1991 congressional report puts the public cost for the NCNB/RepublicBank deal at \$6.6 billion.



## T H

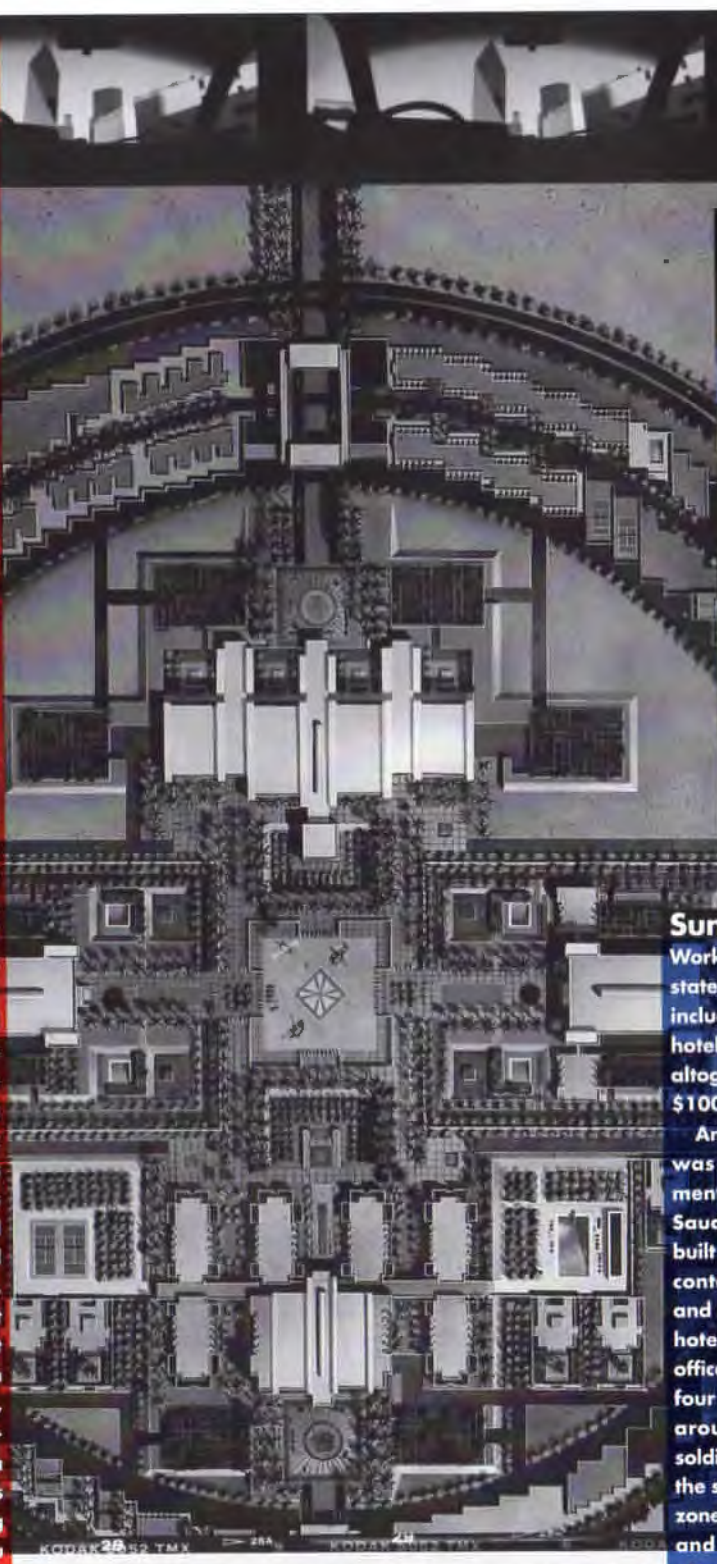
### Allied Bank Tower

Designed by Harry Cobb, FAIA, of I.M. Pei and Partners, Allied Bank (now First Interstate) Tower at Fountain Place in Dallas was completed in 1986. Pei's other significant Dallas projects, including Dallas City Hall (1978), the Dallas Centre building (1980), and Arco Tower (1983), show the firm's penchant for crisply detailed trapezoidal shapes, although by 1986 these were out of fashion, particularly with developers, who had found non-rectangular buildings hard to rent. Nevertheless, the refinement and dynamism of the design, along with the generous plantings and fountains by landscape architect Dan Kiley, were a critical success; the project won an AIA Honor Award in 1989.

The project was the Dallas headquarters of Houston-based Allied Bank, which, despite problems in Houston, was spreading into the still-hot North Texas market; state law, which previously prohibited "branch banking," had just been changed.

Historicists often complained that tall glass-skinned buildings brought neither human scale nor readable imagery to cities that need both. Allied Bank Tower at Fountain Place does lack scale, but it fairly sings with imagery. Banks, Allied Tower says, are not the rigid structures they once were, wrapped in stone columns that prop some people up and act like bars to keep others out; in the world of modern finance, money is water, dissolving social distinctions and forming a crystalline structure with its own internal logic, reflecting back to you whatever you bring to it.

Ironically, the developers went bankrupt and Allied Bank was consumed by California-based First Interstate.



### Sunrise City

Work by Texas architects in the Persian Gulf states between the 1960s and the late '80s included universities, government facilities, hotels, schools, and housing for thousands; altogether, the projects accounted for up to \$100 billion in construction costs.

Among the most opulent of these projects was 3D/International's Regional Government Complex for the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, code named "Sunrise City," built in 1981. This 160-acre circular mini-city contains a palace for the King in the east and one for the Crown Prince in the west, a hotel and guest villas in the south, and an office complex and mosque in the north. The four structures are arranged symmetrically around a heliport; housing for staff and soldiers is arranged in a double wall around the site. Except in this pleasantly scaled staff zone, the project seems ponderous, abstract, and ostentatious. Today, Texas architects often cite such projects to show the excess caused by too much money.

Most such projects are now built out, and the only work left, for now, involves military installations. The biggest of these, before the war with Iraq, were the multibillion-dollar Peace Shield facilities for AWACS aircraft, involving both CRSS and 3D/I.



**Rivercenter**

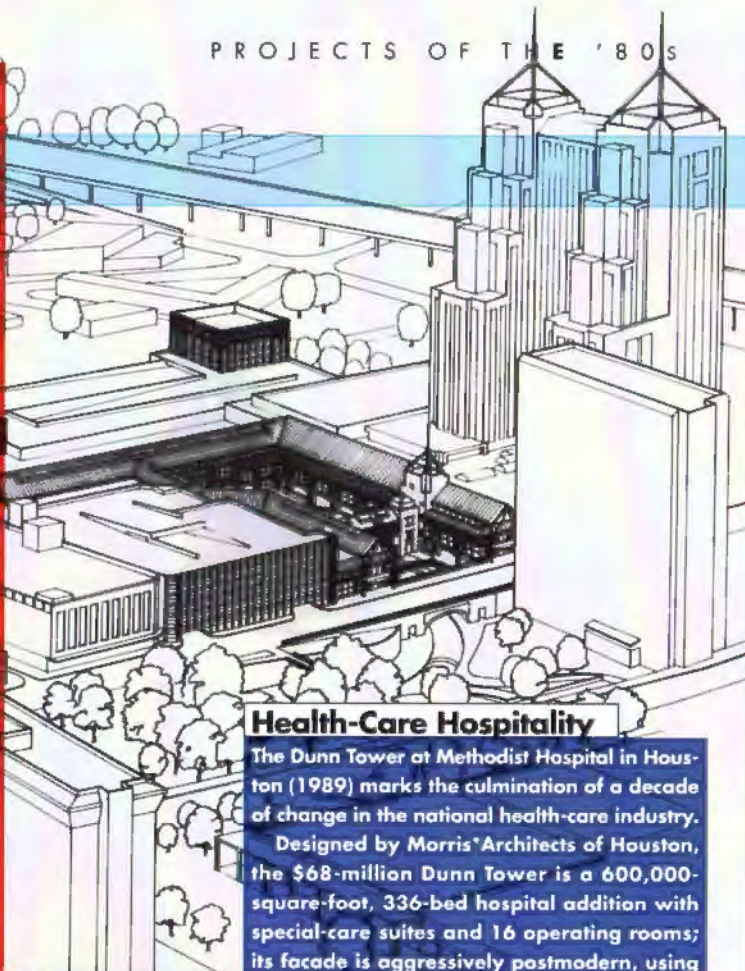
The 1980s were, by and large, disastrous for downtown retail in Texas. By 1990, Houston and Dallas had only one department store each downtown. The closing of the downtown Scarbroughs in Austin was followed by a rash of failures among the small Congress Avenue shops. Enclosed retail malls such as the Tandy Center in Fort Worth (1977, Growald Architects) and The Park in Houston Center (1983, Morris' Aubry) held on, but on the whole they hurt the street life that regular stores would have reinforced.

Rivercenter in San Antonio (1988), designed by the Urban Design Group of Tulsa, Okla., created hope for retail activity as a part of the downtown mix, however. Rivercenter is a three-level downtown shopping mall bracketed by new and existing hotels between Crockett Street (which borders Alamo Plaza) and the San Antonio Convention Center, and it incorporates Bartlett Cocke's historic Joske's (now Dillard's) store and an IMAX theater. The project's train-shed roofs and steel-framed glass walls are enlivened by exceptional environmental graphics, but an extension of the San Antonio Riverwalk (with bridges and a river-edge plaza), designed by Ford, Powell & Carson of San Antonio, is the project's greatest asset.

In Dallas, plans for a downtown mall were strengthened by Rivercenter's example. In 1989, city officials contracted with the developer Bramalea Texas to explore building a 3-million-square-foot mall extending along five blocks of Griffin Street downtown. The virtue of the design, also by the Urban Design Group, is its linearity, which connects with the downtown street grid instead of creating an isolated form. But fate has not smiled on the project: major retail chains have been going bankrupt in droves, and the needed anchor tenants have yet to be found.

Hope for downtown retail was also renewed in Houston. In 1988, city officials held a competition for the redevelopment of the 1967 CRS-designed Albert Thomas Convention Center, and chose a group that included both Los Angeles architect Jon Jerde and film maker George Lucas. Their plan would have combined retail space with an entertainment mall (these were enjoying a brief national vogue), but the project was dropped in 1990.

Rivercenter, it seems, may remain a fluke, until rail transit or some other new stimulus can be created to draw shoppers back downtown.

**Health-Care Hospitality**

The Dunn Tower at Methodist Hospital in Houston (1989) marks the culmination of a decade of change in the national health-care industry.

Designed by Morris' Architects of Houston, the \$68-million Dunn Tower is a 600,000-square-foot, 336-bed hospital addition with special-care suites and 16 operating rooms; its facade is aggressively postmodern, using symmetry and pedimental roof forms to separate it visually from its late-modern neighbors.

The ground-floor interiors, however, are more truly distinctive. Dunn Tower looks like a hotel. Besides the hotel-like furniture, there are tall potted bamboo trees, polished granite floors, a fountain with an old-fashioned nude-on-a-dolphin sculpture, a vaulted skylight, even mezzanine balconies like those found outside hotel ballrooms; staffmembers, in business attire, act like exceptionally solicitous hotel functionaries.

In the 1970s, health-care costs rose almost twice as fast as the general rate of inflation. Private insurers and federal agencies reacted by instituting an averaging system for medical payments, which was intended to hold costs down. As this system went into effect, hospitals were supposed to shrink, and patients were supposed to become more like consumers, shopping for services among competing providers.

The system failed to control costs: In 1990, for example, inflation rose less than 6 percent, but health-care costs went up over 17 percent. Costlier and more powerful medical technology became standard throughout the 1980s, and, instead of shrinking, hospitals were pushed into unprecedented expansion to stay competitive. In Houston alone, between 1985 and 1990, almost \$2 billion in medical construction was undertaken. Patients, dealing with the resulting maze of institutions, have little more effective choice than they had before, but they might be comforted that such new facilities as Dunn Tower are less alienating architecturally.



## Hated Buildings

EVERY ERA HAS NEW BUILDINGS that are hated by at least one segment of the architectural profession or the public. And a few, despite the best intentions of designers and clients, are despised by nearly everyone.

In the 1960s, for example, the U.S. Office Building and Court House in Houston (1962, by Staub, Rather & Howze; Rustay & Martin; and Harvin C. Moore) was reviled, as historian Stephen Fox says in his *Houston Architectural Guide*, from "its completion until its inadvertent rehabilitation as a precursor of postmodernism."

Ed E. Beran of Beran & Shelmire, writing in *Dallasights* (1978), described his firm's windowless, concrete-skinned World Trade Center (1974) as an "exciting" addition to Tammell Crow's Dallas Market Center. But those who in the '80s embraced "contextualism" and "human scale" as architectural virtues saw it as work produced under the thumb of a forceful but urbanistically illiterate client; David Dillon used such criticism in his influential *D* magazine story of 1980, "Why is Dallas architecture so bad?"

The most-abominated buildings of the 1980s, as a group, were projects that struck critics as having gone over the top in historical appropriation. Philip Johnson enraged Dallas practitioners by claiming that his Crescent mixed-use complex north of downtown Dallas (1986, by John Burgee Architects with Philip Johnson), with its mansards, its rustication, and its cast-iron frills, responded to a historical Dallas context. Frank Welch, FAIA, of Dallas said that it had "more in common with Frederick's of Hollywood than with Fredericksburg." Johnson's University of Houston Architecture Building (1986, Johnson/Burgee Architects and Morris/Aubry Architects) was denounced in *Cite* as "much Ledoux about nothing," a shallow, poorly planned rip-off of, not an homage to, Claude-Nicholas Ledoux's unbuilt House of Education at Chaux. Martin Growald of Fort Worth set half of the Dallas chapter's teeth on edge with his design for the Infomart (1985), a marketing center for electronics companies that copied the exterior expression of the 1851 Crystal Palace, with none of the prototype's grand interior transparency. Most abused of all was M. Nasr & Partners' Mayan-pyramid-crowned Heritage Plaza (1987), which *Newsweek* magazine cited as exemplary of everything wrong with postmodernism.

It is worth remembering, when contemplating these projects, that tastes change. The automotive doodads used on the Chrysler Building were denounced as vulgar by New York architects in the 1920s. And Lewis Mumford said Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum, now a consensus masterpiece, was an assault on the streetscape, its concrete the color of boiled milk.

## Rail Plans

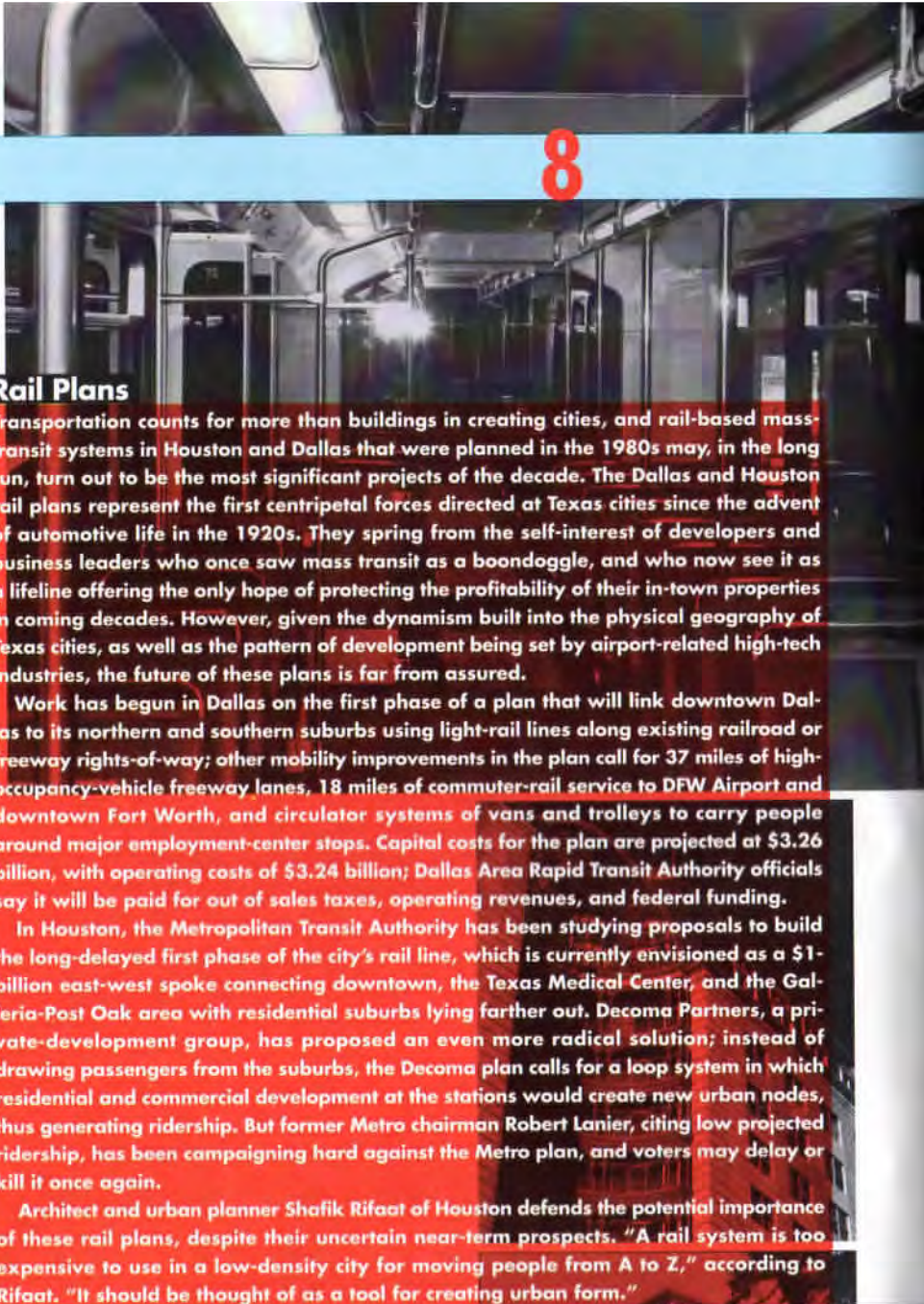
Transportation counts for more than buildings in creating cities, and rail-based mass-transit systems in Houston and Dallas that were planned in the 1980s may, in the long run, turn out to be the most significant projects of the decade. The Dallas and Houston rail plans represent the first centripetal forces directed at Texas cities since the advent of automotive life in the 1920s. They spring from the self-interest of developers and business leaders who once saw mass transit as a boondoggle, and who now see it as a lifeline offering the only hope of protecting the profitability of their in-town properties in coming decades. However, given the dynamism built into the physical geography of Texas cities, as well as the pattern of development being set by airport-related high-tech industries, the future of these plans is far from assured.

Work has begun in Dallas on the first phase of a plan that will link downtown Dallas to its northern and southern suburbs using light-rail lines along existing railroad or freeway rights-of-way; other mobility improvements in the plan call for 37 miles of high-occupancy-vehicle freeway lanes, 18 miles of commuter-rail service to DFW Airport and downtown Fort Worth, and circulator systems of vans and trolleys to carry people around major employment-center stops. Capital costs for the plan are projected at \$3.26 billion, with operating costs of \$3.24 billion; Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority officials say it will be paid for out of sales taxes, operating revenues, and federal funding.

In Houston, the Metropolitan Transit Authority has been studying proposals to build the long-delayed first phase of the city's rail line, which is currently envisioned as a \$1-billion east-west spoke connecting downtown, the Texas Medical Center, and the Galleria-Post Oak area with residential suburbs lying farther out. Decoma Partners, a private-development group, has proposed an even more radical solution; instead of drawing passengers from the suburbs, the Decoma plan calls for a loop system in which residential and commercial development at the stations would create new urban nodes, thus generating ridership. But former Metro chairman Robert Lanier, citing low projected ridership, has been campaigning hard against the Metro plan, and voters may delay or kill it once again.

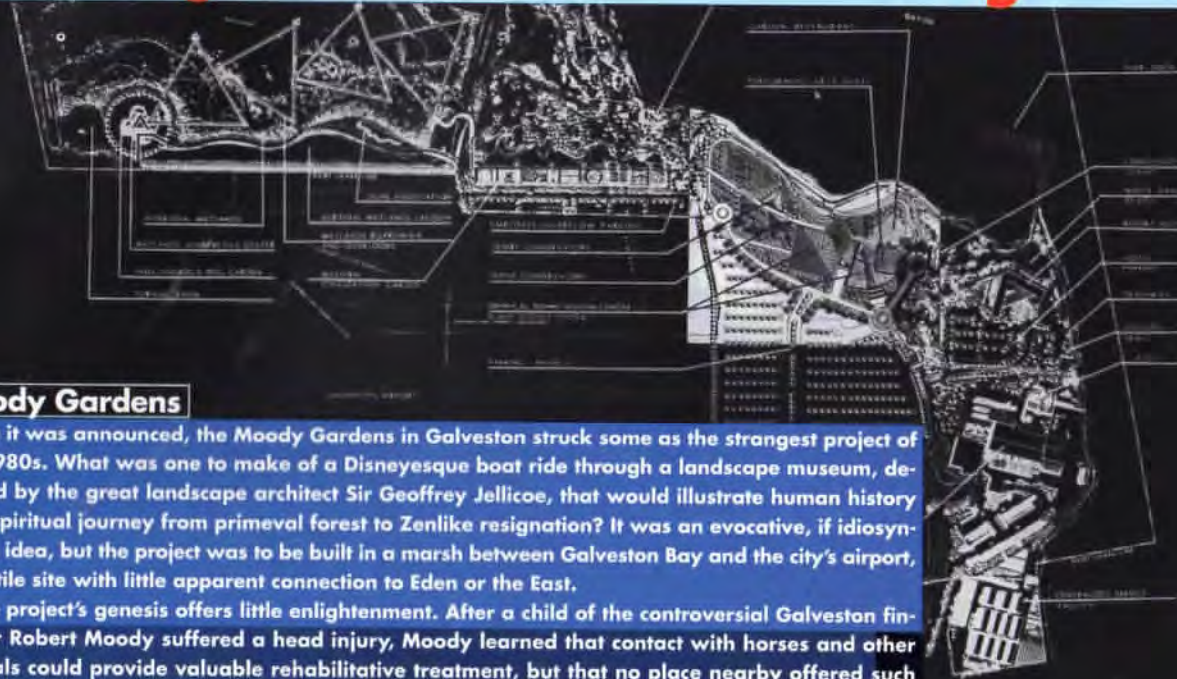
Architect and urban planner Shafik Rifaat of Houston defends the potential importance of these rail plans, despite their uncertain near-term prospects. "A rail system is too expensive to use in a low-density city for moving people from A to Z," according to Rifaat. "It should be thought of as a tool for creating urban form."

Photographs—top to bottom: Pittsburgh rail car; Crescent (Blackman/Winters); University of Houston Architecture Building (Paul Heaton); Infomart; Heritage Plaza (Paul Heaton)



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### Moody Gardens

When it was announced, the Moody Gardens in Galveston struck some as the strangest project of the 1980s. What was one to make of a Disneyesque boat ride through a landscape museum, designed by the great landscape architect Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe, that would illustrate human history as a spiritual journey from primeval forest to Zenlike resignation? It was an evocative, if idiosyncratic, idea, but the project was to be built in a marsh between Galveston Bay and the city's airport, a hostile site with little apparent connection to Eden or the East.

The project's genesis offers little enlightenment. After a child of the controversial Galveston financier Robert Moody suffered a head injury, Moody learned that contact with horses and other animals could provide valuable rehabilitative treatment, but that no place nearby offered such services. Moody founded Hope Arena, a treatment center; its modest buildings were designed by Morris\*Architects and the somewhat more ambitious landscape work was designed by Smith Locke Asakura (now SLA Land Studio) of Houston.

Onto this facility was grafted not one but two giant schemes. The first is a group of projects by Morris\*Architects, including rides, concessions, an IMAX theater, and three pyramidal "biomes" showcasing plants from different climates. These projects, it is hoped, will draw enough paying visitors to help defray costs for Jellicoe's historical garden plan, the second scheme, which is to be executed by SLA Land Studio sometime in the next 30 years, at a cost of around \$100 million.

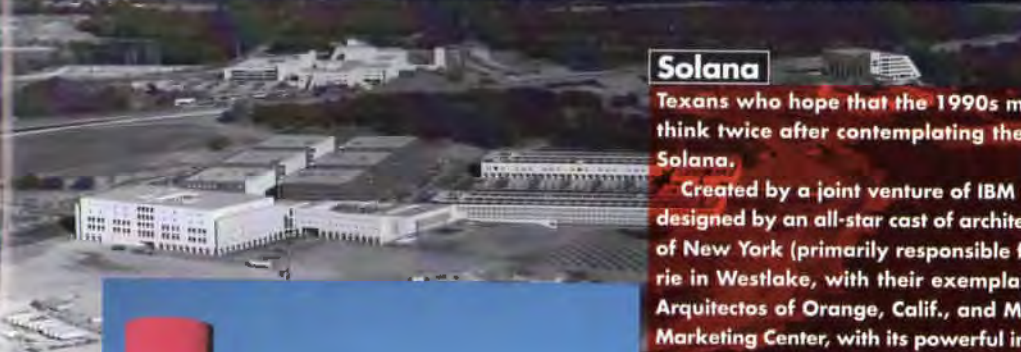
### Solana

Texans who hope that the 1990s may see increasing urban cohesion may think twice after contemplating the office park north of Fort Worth called Solana.

Created by a joint venture of IBM and Maguire/Thomas Partners Ltd., and designed by an all-star cast of architects including Mitchell/Giurgola Architects of New York (primarily responsible for the IBM Research Offices on the prairie in Westlake, with their exemplary parking garages); Ricardo Legorreta Arquitectos of Orange, Calif., and Mexico City (primarily responsible for the Marketing Center, with its powerful interior spaces, spread informally through the irregular clearings of Southlake); and Peter Walker/Martha Schwartz of San Francisco and New York (who created the linking plantings and water elements for the project), Solana is more than an architectural jewel. The project is based on a simple premise: The need of potential clients (from South and Central America) to be near DFW Airport makes almost all other indicators of urbanity irrelevant. If Solana and the Alliance Airport development in northern Tarrant County are true indicators, the 1990s will be a decade in which the urban fabric of Dallas and Fort Worth, and perhaps other cities, will be stretched ever wider by the job-creating power of airports.

Solana represents a commitment to land use that is drawing office workers not only from Dallas and Fort Worth but even from nearby Las Colinas into a rural infrastructure; it will require billions of dollars of roads and other public support. When Solana opened, there was no housing for its employees within 15 miles, but IBM and Maguire/Thomas have been joined in this rewiring of the regional landscape by Perot family interests, who have brought thousands of acres in the area and plan several housing developments.

Photographs—top to bottom: Moody Gardens long-term master plan [current phase highlighted near center]; Solana, aerial view of campus, buildings (James F. Wilson)



# AIA GOLD MEDAL: CHARLES MOORE



*In February, AIA awarded Charles Moore its 49th Gold Medal, the Institute's highest individual honor, and gave Sea Ranch Condominiums its 25-Year Award. Teaching at UT in Austin and practicing there now, Moore is building a Texas portfolio. Ray Don Tilley describes two of these projects.*



Ken Wolter

## UT Austin Alumni Center

The Doc and Gertrude Neuhaus Expansion to the Lila B. Etter Alumni Center at UT Austin was designed by Moore and architect Richard Dodge of the UT faculty as consultants to Jessen, Inc., the architect of record, to triple the size of the 14,000-square-foot ranchhouse-style 1965 original. It is an example of "fitting," says Moore, a building that acts as a "congenial partner" to its context: the original building and Waller Creek.

Discussion about the expansion by Texas Exes began 10 years ago. Exes needed a new grand ballroom and wanted ample indoor public space to handle post-game and other crowds. They described the space they desired as exciting, open, fun, and festive. The architectural response is "receptacle for human energy": a shell that gains its animation from the people who use it.

Three aedicular atriums connect the original center to the new ballroom. "The spaces are more or less square," says Moore, "which automatically suggests the Byzantine problem to make something special fit inside a box," with a dome above that is resolved through squinches or pendentives into a square base.

In its recast form, the alumni center lacks its old intimacy and carries a brash stereotypical Texan-ness, but at the same time it has taken on a more cheery, grand feeling, thanks to its new public spaces, that will enhance the camaraderie of meeting up with fellow Exes.



R. Greg Hurley, Inc.



R. Greg Hurley, Inc.

**ARCHITECTS** Jessen, Inc. (Fred Day, principal-in-charge; Sanford Newman, project architect), Austin; Charles Moore, EALA, and Richard Dodge (design architects)

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** UT Architectural/Engineering Services

**INTERIOR DESIGNER** Wilson & Associates, Dallas (furnishings,

finishes of old main lounge, offices, banquet hall)

**ENGINEERS** Jaster-Quintanilla & Associates (structural); Jack Evans & Associates (acoustical); Ham-Mer Consulting Engineers (mechanical, electrical, plumbing); Espey-Houston (civil)

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR** Morton-Bellows a Joint Venture

Chief among the alumni center's needs was a new grand ballroom (top), whose ceiling finish Richard Dodge stopped at a primer coat during an on-site visit.

Colorful, seemingly cascading atriums stretch double-height (above left) and connect all new spaces to the existing alumni center.

Donor tiles form a new front plaza (above). A new pergola, with stylized steel "longhorn" supports, screens the center from the street and Memorial Stadium.

# Fair Park Master Plan

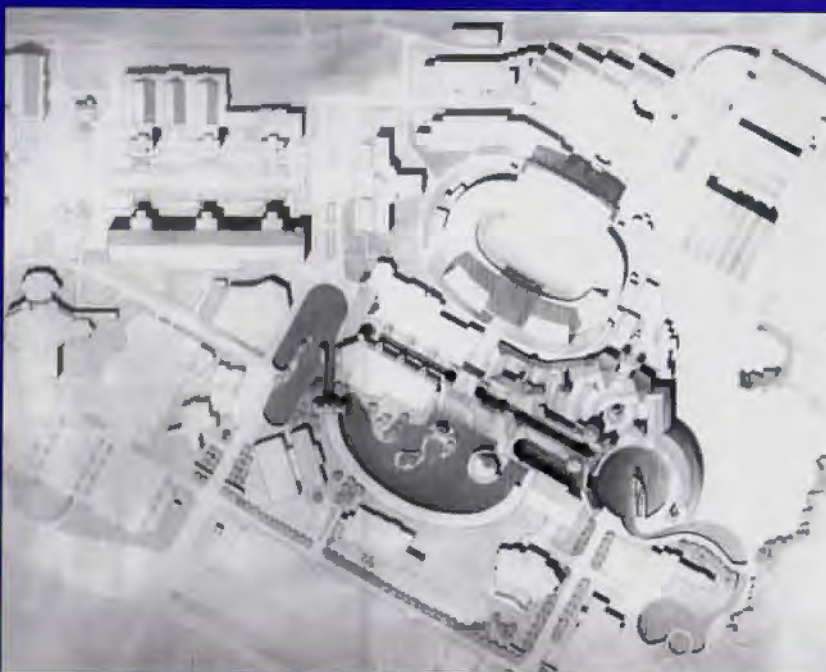
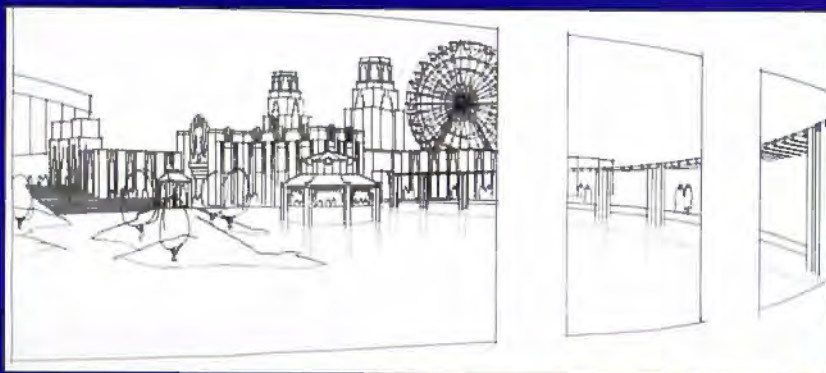
Although world's fairs and similar expositions, such as the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas, are billed as not just oversized carnivals but long-term economic generators, the pattern of history suggests that the derelict sites that are transformed into fairgrounds usually become newly derelict sites after the fair. To be sure, they create some buildings of lasting importance, among them convention centers in San Antonio and New Orleans. Schemes to rescue former fair parks have occupied starry-eyed developers and architects from time to time, but years go by with little improvement to show. An early-'80s plan would have added a 1,000-room hotel and science-and-technology museum to the HemisFair site in San Antonio, but the connective HemisFair Park (see next page) and a parking garage were all that got built, and now join the Tower of the Americas as orphans of the greater plans.

But Fair Park in Dallas was not created out of nothing; it has served as State Fair grounds since 1886, long before the 1936 fair and continuously since then. The park still shares some of the misfortune of other fair sites, however. Its individual buildings, such as the Music Hall, several museums, the Dallas Civic Garden Center, and the relatively new Starplex, serve as isolated but viable destinations, but the sense of community and connection is missing. The park is also seen by its neighbors as a somewhat hostile presence, providing little day-to-day enrichment but bringing heavy traffic and large crowds to the many events that are held there.

To address these problems, the Park and Recreation Board and Fair Park Development Board at the behest of the city council have jointly commissioned a master plan by Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Whitelaw of New York and Charles W. Moore, Architects, of Austin. Still awaiting final official consideration, the plan makes achievable suggestions for better integrating the park into its South Dallas neighborhood and for creating year-round activity.

While Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Whitelaw focused on connections to the neighborhood and on clarifying the districts that have evolved on the site, Moore's office developed a new locus for visitors. Conceived as Midway Gardens, in the area of the State Fair's Midway, the attraction would house "activity and entertainment" venues that would both feed from events occurring elsewhere on the grounds and serve as destinations in themselves. The architects say year-round activity will provide recreation and educational and employment opportunities for the park's neighbors and will increase park revenues to lessen current taxpayer subsidies.

Conceived as shopfronts and follies sitting in and around a new water feature, the buildings evoke the 1984 New Orleans World's Fair. The plan is not a radical proposal, although officials worry about introducing large amounts of water, but it could alter the character of the park and revitalize its neighborhood. But only time can tell whether this garden becomes a vital link or, like HemisFair, an odd, uninhabited oasis.



**Renderings (top, above) of the proposed Midway Gardens depict an assemblage of outdoor plazas and small shopfronts and follies that would be connected**

**by water features. The proposed site plan (bottom) shows Midway Gardens' central siting below the Cotton Bowl, among the various existing districts.**

**PROJECT** Fair Park Master Plan  
**ARCHITECTS** Charles W. Moore, FAIA, Stanton Eckstut, FAIA, principals-in-charge; Arthur W. Anderson, project designer; Susan R. Benz, Marty Borko, project managers; Steven Devarak, renderer; Janie Fu, designer

# A HUMANE STEP FOR HEMISFAIR

Photography by Bill Kennedy

By Niko Letunic



THE SITE OF HEMISFAIR, the 1968 world's fair in downtown San Antonio, was allowed to decay for 20 years. But following a \$10-million facelift, HemisFair Plaza has become HemisFair Park, 92 acres of prime real estate centering on the Tower of the Americas and a new water garden, a revitalized urban amenity, thanks to the vision of former mayor Henry Cisneros and the creativity of several local architecture firms.

Designed jointly by San Antonio's Rehler, Vaughn, Beaty and Koone architects and the landscaping firm of Meister & Lafoone, the 12-acre water garden is a sensuous oasis of rivulets, ponds, cascades, and fountains, a favorite destination for tourists and locals alike who seek a place for contemplation and recreation.

Approaching the garden by car on its southeast corner one stumbles out of the parking lot into the garden's centerpiece, a series of cascades and rapids that flow from a low stone cliff. Water streams, trickles, splashes, and ripples, creating a rich concert of visual and aural effects, flowing silently along *acequias*, waiting in still pools, and rushing down rapids and falls. A meandering ramp draws the pedestrian into the drama of the various water features through intimate cul-de-sacs and outlooks perched above the cascading water. Cut stone, used liberally in the design, has begun weathering to a smooth finish.



The most popular features are the beam fountains at the bottom on the western side, where four concrete colonnades—looking like highway supports—spray water, inviting the adventuresome to run through the liquid sheets. Nearby, a lawn with young trees provides an excellent vantage point of Roland Rodriguez's 1988 Target mural, on the side of HemisFair arena. Historic structures in the park are being renovated to serve as galleries, retail spaces, and studios.



**A recently added water garden (top, bottom), along with touch up to the Tower of the Americas (middle), have given new promise to the former fairgrounds.**

To coincide with the unveiling of the water garden, the Tower of the Americas underwent much-needed but minor repairs, the first for the still-sound structure. Ford, Powell & Carson, Inc., the original designer, was contracted for the \$1-million effort that included maintenance of the flaking concrete skin and leaking roof, as well as renovation of the observation level. The space, cluttered over the years by partitions and vending machines, was again opened up (some machines have since found their way back). With the help of signage consultants Fuller, Dyal & Stamper of Austin and the city's Parks and Recreation Department, an information system was installed that identifies distant landmarks. In an elegant and understated touch, interior columns and elevator doors were clad in matching golden brass. To complete the project, RVBK was asked to install an insulated-glass canopy around the base to create a climate-controlled enclosure for people waiting to ride the elevators.

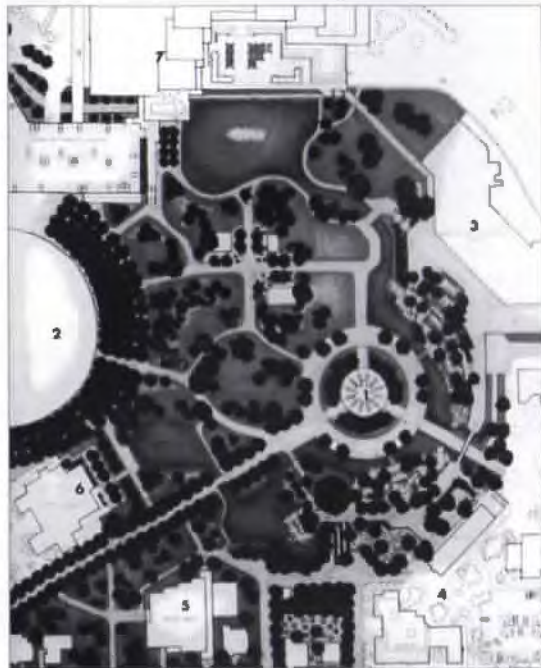
While the park is too removed from downtown to attract many lunchtime visitors, it is a magnet for tourists and locals on weekends and special occasions. Guests of the adjacent Convention Center also rent the park for functions. The park's popularity has caused officials a few headaches, since they must constantly remind visitors not to swim in the water (it has too much chlorine) or climb on the slippery rocks.

The garden is easily accessible from the two directions that serve most tourists, off Bowie Street on the east, and off South Alamo Street through an attractive allée of crepe myrtles, on the west. However, the other two directions, which could serve many locals, are planted with obstacles that deter casual visitors. On the south, people from the Victoria Courts and Lavaca neighborhoods are kept at bay by a maze of parking lots and government buildings, as well as the unregulated traffic on Durango Boulevard. On the north side, access from Rivercenter, downtown's biggest drawing card, is limited by the convention center and a parking garage.

The water garden was originally conceived as a grand front yard for a 1,000-room Sheraton Hotel, a large retail center, and a science museum, which were to have been

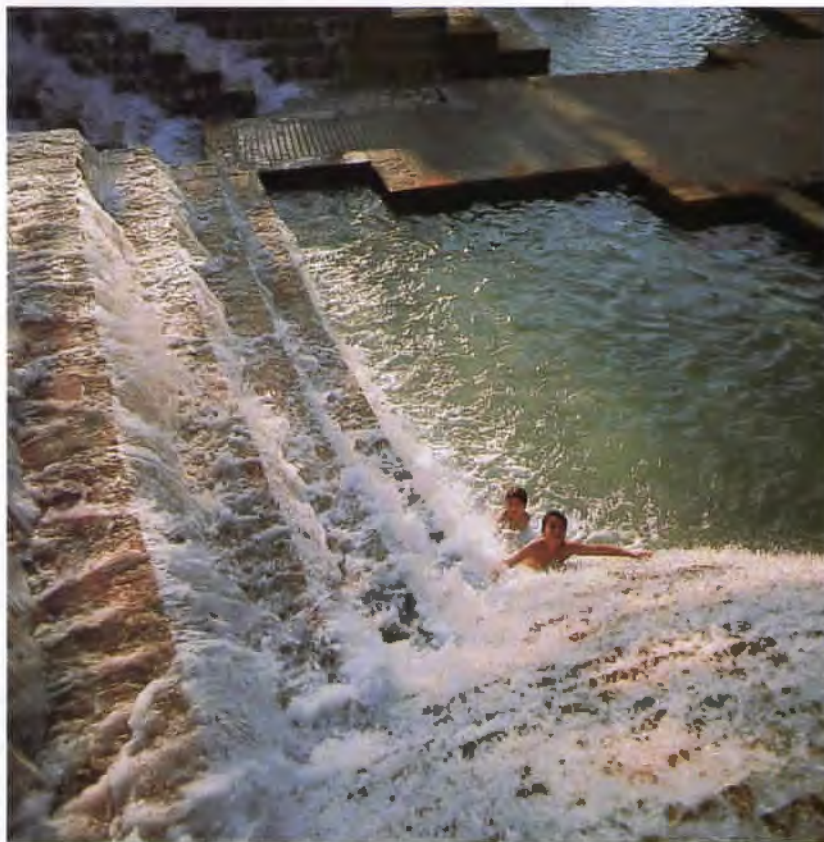
- KEY TO SITE PLAN**
- 1 TOWER OF THE AMERICAS
  - 2 ARENA
  - 3 UNEXECUTED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM
  - 4 UTSA BUILDINGS
  - 5 TEXAS A&M BUILDING
  - 6 MEXICAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY BUILDING
  - 7 UNBUILT SHERATON HOTEL

**Planned to complement the convention center, arena, and an unrealized Sheraton Hotel, the park may eventually become a prominent link to the new Alamodome.**



developed at the edge of HemisFair Park. The hotel was never built, the museum has been put on hold indefinitely, and the retail center was abandoned due to opposition from conservationists who feared damage to neighboring historic La Villita. The city did build a garage for the planned hotel, which now effectively cuts off the park from the downtown core. The city council, acting on then-Mayor Cisneros's vision that the area become a place for children and families, gave up trying to turn the site into a money-maker, and decided instead that the land would be best used as an urban park. The site, always known as HemisFair Plaza, was renamed HemisFair Park to reflect more properly the present and proposed uses of the area, such as the three-acre children's park, built with volunteer labor and materials, in the southwest corner.

City officials have confidently expressed the wish that the park should eventually become to San Antonio what Central Park is to New York. The problem is that currently it is not central to anything. When construction of the Alamodome is completed in 1993, however, HemisFair Park will be more strategically located. A pedestrian bridge, terminating somewhere in the park, is likely to be built over Interstate 37 to link the new stadium with the existing convention center. Before the city can pat itself on the back for its large investment, it needs to set aside a few more cents and draw up a comprehensive plan to resolve the scattering of parking lots, neighboring buildings, landscaping, and sidewalks into a coherent whole and treat the park as part of a larger urban context. **TA**



## Students shape urban stadium

### TSA Student Design Competition 46

**SCHOOLS** Architectural critic and ballpark-design researcher John Postier considers precedent and potential in a TSA-sponsored student project for a baseball stadium in downtown Dallas.

### Practice 47

Amarillo architect Robert Hucker looks at the costs that never show up on a balance sheet.

### Princeton Road Elementary School 48

**IN PROGRESS** Corgan Associates Architects of Dallas has developed an architectural design from the metaphor of educational growth.

### Women and back to basics 50

**BOOKS** Reviews of two pairs of books examine, in turn, the still-rare but significant presence of women architects and the need to return from time to time to the fundamentals of architecture.

### New Products and Literature 51

### Resurrecting Renaissance Method 52

**ON PAPER** A workshop at UT Austin exposes students to the craft of intaglio printmaking.

IN 1965, THE ASTRODOME radically changed the nature of field sports in the developed world. For better or worse, that self-proclaimed Eighth Wonder of the World inaugurated or reinforced such stadium trends as total enclosure and climate control, artificial playing surfaces, multipurpose venues, absolute symmetry, and circular form. Now, Texas is again pondering the nature of sports architecture, but this time many of the Astrodome's premises have been rejected.

Arlington's Texas Rangers will build a new stadium purely for baseball. In a locale so hot that even Sunday games are played at night, the club is committed to an open-air park. In Astroturf's home state, it has opted for grass. And in a culture that pragmatically welcomes the future, it hopes to build a truly old-fashioned ballpark.

Before the Rangers decided to stay in Arlington, there was an effort to interest them in a location near downtown Dallas. This site was used for TSA's 1990 Student Design Competition, sponsored by Herman Miller and other donors, and managed by Fred Caywer and Brett Boaz of HKS Inc., Dallas. The values expressed in this process have recently come to the forefront in ballpark design: baseball-only use, intimacy,

The site is the Farmer's Market district just southeast of the Dallas CBD, cradled by two freeways and their access ramps. Most of the land is underdeveloped, and I.M. Pei's City Hall is the only major building within a 10-minute walk. Thus, it was necessary to infer (and to a large extent, create) an urban pattern within this tattered remnant of city fabric. In an addendum to the program, HKS informed competitors of a proposed "riverwalk" in the district, a feature that seems to have become traditional for large development schemes in Texas.

The seven winners and honorable mentions (chosen from 18 finalists out of a field of 170 entries) embodied uncommon effort and imagination. They generally performed well contextually: this was the sphere in which the difficult competition conditions would best allow them to excel. Showing the value of understanding context, four of the seven come from the Dallas-Fort Worth area, a fifth makes his home not far away, and three of those, including the first-prize winner, study at UT Arlington.

In terms of actual stadium form and details, the five-week research, design, and presentation period was far too short to permit full success. Even year-long thesis



**Above, facing page top:** scheme by Joseph Darling, first-prize winner

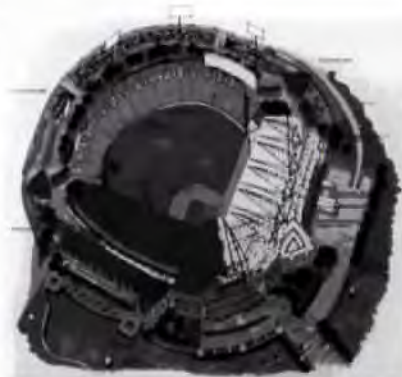
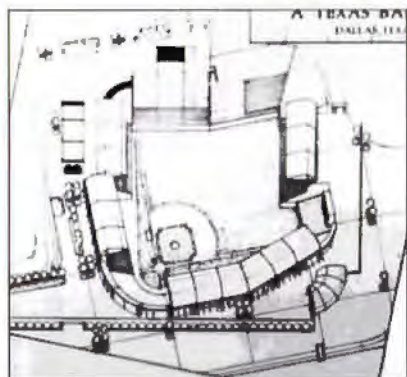
**Facing page:** axonometrics of the schemes by Muhammad Freeda Bin Ahmat (lower right) and by Don Rorschach (lower left)

character, concern for context, and a regard for pre-war design typologies and traditions.

The program for this 40,000-seat stadium was based on one prepared by Bechtel of San Francisco for the Commissioner of Baseball in 1985. There is some unintended irony here, since Bechtel's task was to create a generic park to fit any site, whether urban or suburban. The competition, in contrast, was highly context-specific.

projects cannot be expected to master all the complex relationships and often mutually exclusive goals inherent in a modern baseball stadium. Therefore, the following remarks will address accomplishments rather than shortcomings. Since most of the winners used the suggested extension of Marilla Street to create a long-distance axial relationship with the City Hall, this feature will be noted only when it is especially strong.





First-prize-winner Joseph Darling of UT Arlington (professor: Todd Hamilton) produced an impressively balanced and integrated scheme in which urban context and the stadium are both given full due. A large sculpture plaza serves as an entry forecourt as well as a symbol of the game, and a grandstand opening acknowledges the City Hall axis. The park's structural modules reflect infield dimensions, while rectilinear geometry and columns within the seating area define a strongly architectural space, recall the spirit of old ballparks, and put spectators close to the field.

In Texas Tech student Muhammad Freeda Bin Ahmat's second-place entry (professor: David A. Driskill), a standard seating layout is transfigured by evocative billowing roof forms, an intricate supporting structure, and an imaginative triangular ramp system. Water elements add to the festive feel. The space formed by the grandstands relates to the freeway's arc, while the main entrance addresses downtown.

Texas A&M student Kenneth Luker's stadium placement (professor: Julius M. Gribou) also responds to the sweep of the freeway. In this third-prize scheme, the foul-territory stands take a traditional angular shape while outfield stands assume a post-war curvature. The exterior is straightforward and architectonic, capturing the ballpark spirit without resorting to nostalgia.

Honorable mentions were awarded to Thomas Maxwell and Chayavut Jirathun of

UT Arlington (professor: Todd Hamilton) and Mac White of the University of Houston (professor: Tom Deihl). A fourth award went to Don Rohrsehach of Texas Tech (professor: David A. Driskill), who offered the most radical design response, and the one with the most potential for refinement. A fragmented, twisted, and shifted (yet not quite deconstructivist) plan celebrates the counterpoint of local street grids and evokes the incremental growth and eccentricities of older ballparks in an original way. This boldness leads to sight-line problems and a difficult outfield geometry, but both could be resolved within the spirit of the concept.

His parti is amplified by strong roof forms and an inventive structural system. Perhaps more than any other entry, it suggests how much architectural imagination can bring to a process that is often treated as a marriage of convenience between engineering formulas and architectural veneers. The competition as a whole also makes the point in a subtler way. It suggests that baseball stadiums are a building type that could well be treated not as a narrow specialty, but as public architecture worthy of the best design talent.

*John Pastier*

*John Pastier is a Los Angeles architecture critic who has been a stadium consultant to the Baltimore Orioles and San Francisco Giants. He holds a 1990-91 USA Fellowship for ballpark design research, awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts.*

## PRACTICE

### Economics: Two Cost Concepts

Most, but not all, architects are accustomed to calculating costs against fees for individual projects as well as against annual receipts. Two usually neglected concepts of cost, however, should be of importance to all architects: "opportunity" cost and "sunk" cost. Neither of these are "accounting" costs. Your accountant may recognize these costs, but he or she does not count them. You must consider them in making decisions without the benefit of profit and loss statements.

Opportunity cost is fundamental. It is simply the inclusion of the cost of foregoing an alternative in the other costs of an action or decision. A young architect, for example, decides to leave his or her present employment in order to open an office. He or she calculates the cost of the new office in terms of rent, furniture, supplies, telephone, a secretary, perhaps a draftsman or two, probably the cost of paying off a loan, and the other tangibles. Also included should be the salary left behind: the opportunity cost. If the new office cannot recover the tangibles and the opportunity cost and make a profit, the architect is economically better off not to risk opening the office. Ambition, pride, and confidence are foremost in the decision, but the economics of opportunity cost should be considered.

Sunk cost is useful to architects as a short-term concept. Now that you have a CAD system, for example, and it is paid for, it still occupies space in your office, continues to depreciate, and must be insured. Over the long haul, these costs must be covered, but say business is slow and your best client just filed Chapter 11. Your perspective on CAD costs changes.

Suddenly, you are invited to interview for a new project, one that you almost desperately want, particularly in view of the circumstances. You are selected. You enter fee negotiation, but are soon notified that your fee is too high, and that the prospective client has gone to the number-two architect. You lose the job to the other architect, the successful one, who considered the cost of CAD as a sunk cost, and did not include it in the cost analysis. The costs of owning the system continue whether or not it is used. He or she neglected those costs in arriving at a fee, and got the job. Bygones are bygones. Isn't it better to get an income to help balance the cost rather than bear the cost without any?

Is this all just common sense? Maybe, but it is often overlooked or disregarded. "Bygones are bygones" applies to poker and love, too. If the prospects of winning are very small, forget it and invest in something more promising.

**Robert E. Hucker**

Amarillo architect Robert E. Hucker holds a master's degree in economics.

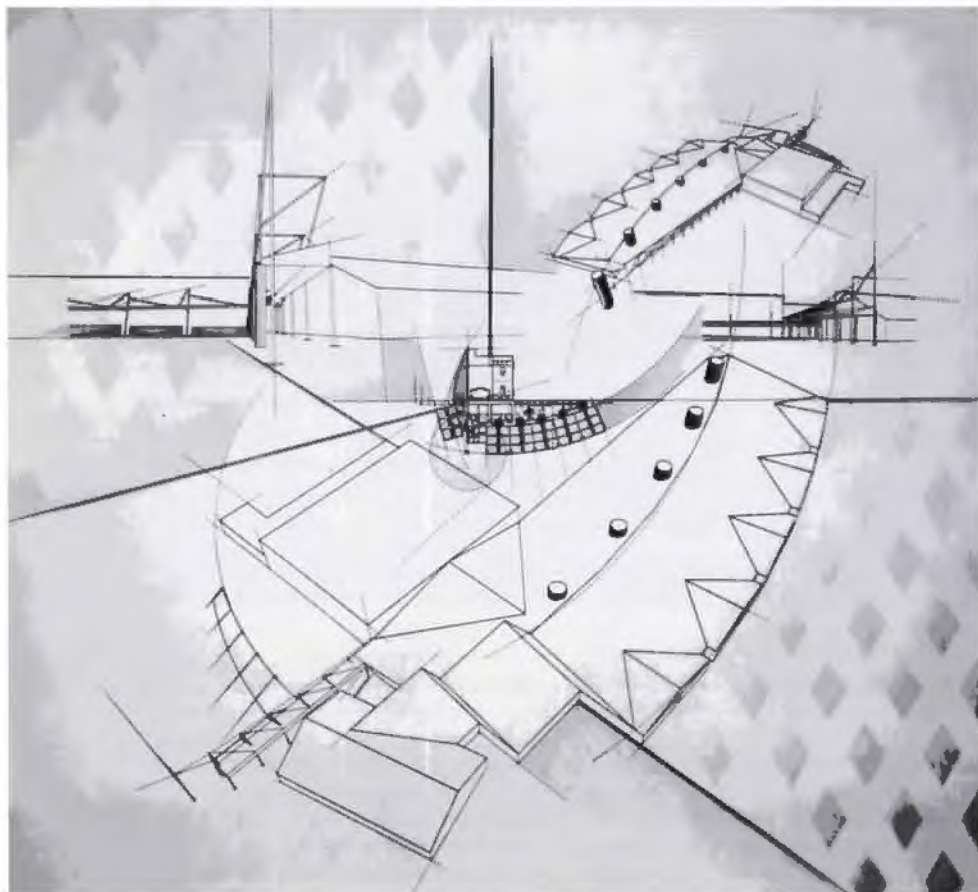
**Your accountant may never mention them, but the costs are there: in not just architecture, but poker and love.**

Model (right) shows interaction of "learning curve" and "spine"; the architects used conceptual illustrations (below) to explain its intentions to the Garland school board.



## KEY TO PLAN

- 1 KITCHEN
- 2 HARD-SURFACE PLAYGROUND
- 3 CAFETERIA/AUDITORIUM
- 4 GYMNASIUM
- 5 KIDS' ENTRANCE
- 6 SPECIAL EDUCATION
- 7 MUSIC
- 8 ADMINISTRATION
- 9 RESOURCE ROOM
- 10 COMPUTER ROOM
- 11 SPEECH
- 12 LIBRARY
- 13 CREATIVE ARTS
- 14 SOFT-SURFACE PLAYGROUND



IN PROGRESS

## Princeton Road Elementary

WHEN GARLAND I.S.D.'s Princeton Road Elementary School opens this fall in Rowlett, it will give a direct built representation of the early learning sequence. The physical and intellectual path that children everywhere face takes shape in the \$4.15-million, 65,250-square-foot school in a sequence of spaces that track the progression through the first six years of education.

Approach and vehicular drop-off focus on a tapering curvilinear canopy that extends from an archetypal "little red schoolhouse," which expresses the campus's purpose in honorable postmodern fashion. At the same time, the little building presents a warm image to the most public facade. Further, it signifies the first step in learning, housing kindergarten classes in a separate, deliberately transitional space, both literally and metaphorically.

From the kindergarten "house," which is located, as the narrative goes, closest to adult shelter as represented by adjacent administrative area, the classroom wing extends outward, with individual gabled structures for each of grades 1-5 strung along a "learning curve" corridor that terminates after several hundred feet at the fifth-grade pod. Six classrooms open off either side of a hall in each grade's structure. The intersection of each grade's hall with the main hall is emphasized to break up the corridor and punctuate progress in learning. Across the main hall are the library and other support spaces.

Beyond the wedge of support rooms is an unbroken walkway spine that proceeds from the main entry to the playground, animated along the way by a gently serpentine wall that flirts with and in some spots engages a rigorous colonnade. Once freed from the building the colonnade turns into free-standing columns, which degenerate further into a seemingly random group of play structures. Opposite the classrooms from the spine are the cafeteria and gymnasium.

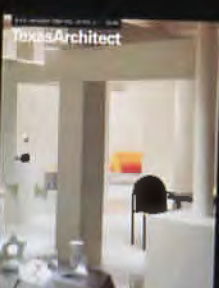
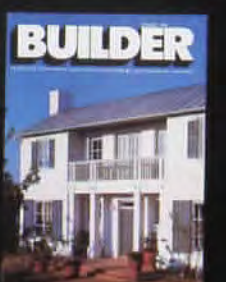
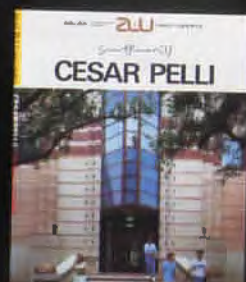
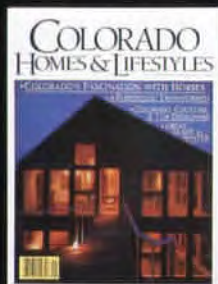
Corgan Associates' project team used a series of conceptual presentations to explain this ambitious design approach to the school board. Sufficiently persuaded, the board now appears soon to be rewarded with buildings that tell in plain terms the story of educational achievement. *Ray Don Tilley*

**PROJECT** Princeton Road Elementary School, Rowlett  
**CLIENT** Garland I.S.D.

**ARCHITECT** Corgan Associates Architects, Dallas (project team: Brent Byers, EALA, Lyle Burgin, Bonnie Wilkens, Richard Choate, Steve Hulsey, and Matt Norton)

**CONSULTANTS** L.A. Fuess and Partners (structural), Sam Toub and Associates, Inc. (mechanical, electrical, plumbing), Thomas M. Daniel (civil), Amtech Roof Consultants (roofing), Mulbauser/McCleary Associates, Inc. (kitchen)

"Survey," continued on page 50



R. Greg Hursley, Inc. 4003 Cloudy Ridge Rd. Austin, Texas 78734 512 266-1391 Photographer

BOOKS

Woman's place in architecture

"I have tried, out of curiosity, to find areas or categories of work in which women have not, as yet, contributed fully to architecture. After much research I can only report that I have not yet come across designs for a munitions factory."

— Clare Lorenz



**Women in Architecture** (Rizzoli International, 1990); by Clare Lorenz

**BRITISH ARCHITECT** and writer Lorenz's latest effort, *Women in Architecture*, is a compilation of the life and work of 55 notable architects from 20 countries and from every continent, each chosen for being highly respected in her country.

Lorenz's justification for focusing on women is that they, because of their different life experiences, have something unique to contribute to our still-predominantly man's world; women architects may well hold the plans to a more humane, user-responsive built environment. Additionally,

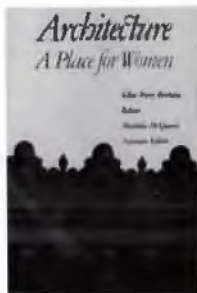
she cites examples showing that women still may not practice architecture without fear of discrimination. In these days of retrenchment, Lorenz's unapologetic feminist tone is refreshing.

American audiences, familiar with some featured architects such as Diana Agrest, Denise Scott Brown, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Laurinda Spear,

and Jane Thompson, are introduced to many more whose works have been recognized abroad such as Italian Gae Aulenti, Czech Eva Jiriena, and Canadian Patricia Patkau, among others. Their work is always presented within the cultural, social, economic, and natural framework of their respective countries, offering the reader valuable insight into practice abroad.

The architects, listed alphabetically from Agrest to Yanovshtchinsky, are each given two or four pages, all with large photos (many in color), illustrating their work. Particularly useful are sidebars that thoroughly detail biographical data on every architect's education, professional experience, selected works, and awards. Despite the book's noble focus, the text contains numerous typographical errors and typesetting oversights and irregularities that combine to create a slipshod result. These distractions do not, however, diminish the book's value as a much-needed showcase of architectural practice by women all around the world.

*A Place for Women* is a much more scholarly affair. Twenty-two original essays by established architects, professors, critics, and writers (all but two of whom are women)



**Architecture: A Place For Women** (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989) edited by Ellen Perry Berkeley; \$19.95 paper

reaffirm women's role in the profession by celebrating their accomplishments in the 100 years since Louise Blanchard Bethune became the first woman elected to the AIA. (Women still represent a disappointing 7.1 percent of AIA membership as of 1987.)

While the range of topics covered is extensive, the focus on women gives the book direction and cohesion through the discussion of otherwise unrelated topics: Mimi Lobell researches the architecture of prehistoric, female-centered cultures; Leslie Kanes Weisman recounts the successes and failures of the Women's School of Planning and Architecture, an alternative institution that flourished during the 1970s; Denise Scott Brown denounces architecture's star system that keeps sexism alive.

The book's associate editor, Matilda McQuaid, contributes an essay on the AIA's little-known Archive on Women in Architecture; Dorothy May Anderson writes nostalgically on the Cambridge School, a women's-only architecture school created when Harvard existed only for men; Anne Vytlačil examines subtler forms of sexism at today's schools; and Karen A. Franck and Rochelle Martin outline provocative proposals for a feminist approach to the practice and profession of architecture, respectively.

We are introduced to fascinating historical figures, such as Bethune, whose remaining handful of buildings, sadly, no one is trying to save; Mariana Van Rensselaer, a prolific late-19th-century architecture critic; Louisa Tuthill, author of the first history of architecture in the country (1848); and Susan Pringle Frost of Charleston, S.C., a pioneer in preservation and the person responsible for the survival of her city's historic structures, and, indirectly, those of thousands of neighborhoods.

The essays are nearly all meticulously researched and passionately written. For anyone interested in the changing status of women and of the profession in the U.S., this volume is an eye-opener. Those who wish to read further on the subject will find numerous references cited throughout (as well as an excellent reading list at the end of Clare Lorenz's book).

**Architecture: Fundamental Issues** (VNR, 1990); Forrest Wilson, with William Loerke, Ron Keenberg; \$18.95 cloth



**Poetics of Architecture: Theory of Design** (VNR, 1990); by Anthony C. Antoniadis; \$34.95 cloth

BOOKS

The fundamentals: Two views

**NEW BOOKS** with titles that include the words "fundamental" and "theory" are assured of at least a cursory thumb-through by most bookstore browsing architects. Readers who care to do more than browse will find that *Fundamental Issues* by Forrest

Wilson, with William Loerke and Ron Keenberg, and *Theory of Design* by Anthony C. Antoniadis, describe contrasting villains: *Fundamental Issues* faults style and function (narrowly conceived) while *Theory of Design* decries the excesses of post-modernism, particularly historicism. The heroic role—function in the broadest sense—is assigned to the "attitude" (of a building) by Wilson, Loerke, and Keenberg, and to "inclusivist architectural poetics" by Antoniadis.

The books develop their arguments in different ways and lead toward entirely different conclusions. *Fundamental Issues* uses case studies of 11 buildings designed by Keenberg's firm, IKOY Partnership; it emphasizes architecture as problem-solving, not style-setting. *Theory of Design*, by contrast, is a broad effort to develop "channels of creativity" both intangible (through metaphor, paradox, the obscure, the exotic) and tangible (through precedent, geometry, materials, nature). The architect is seen as searcher for his or her own truth, aided by varied design approaches.

*Fundamental Issues* will appeal particularly to the initiated architect. The authors draw a 9H line with a 6B lead. *Theory of Design* is aimed at architecture students; its charts, sketches, and photos are the stuff of excitement and exploration assembled by an architect and teacher who enjoys his work.

One might ask Wilson et al. how, in an otherwise excellent chapter, they can justify an 1800-percent cost overrun on the Sidney Opera House on the basis that media coverage generated tourism.

*Fundamental Issues* reminds us of origins and reassures us that the more things change, the more they stay the same. *Theory of Design* never demonstrates synthesis, but asks us to change vantage points to preserve unchanging principles.

Michael S. Adams

Michael S. Adams is an architect in Houston.

## New Products and Literature



Acme Brick's Pocket Guide to Quality Brick Construction is designed to be an invaluable on-site reference tool. *Circle 132 on reader inquiry card.*



This bypass door for the bath is part of the new Pipeline collection of frameless shower doors from Kohler Co. The doors are available also in a pivot design for showers.

*Circle 133 on reader inquiry card.*



Epro, Inc., remains somewhat anomalous in the highly competitive, and highly automated ceramic-tile industry. Its floor tiles are hand-made in Ohio, and as a result vary slightly in size, color, texture, and character from tile to tile.

*Circle 135 on reader inquiry card.*

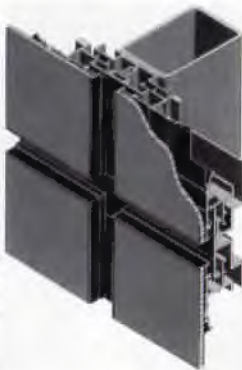


Featherlite Building Products supplies lightweight, efficient StoneWall units.

*Circle 136 on reader inquiry card.*

The Axiom 1 aluminum composite wall system from Robertson bonds a honeycomb core to a strong, flat face in standard widths up to 61 inches and lengths up to 20 feet.

*Circle 130 on the reader inquiry card.*



NUVO of Dallas and Austin offers mailboxes by Michael Graves (shown), Robert Venturi, Stanley Tigerman, and Clifford Selbert.

*Circle 131 on the reader inquiry card.*



Klober Plastics, Inc., has introduced acrylic roof tiles for skylight installations in tile roofs. The clear or UV-screen tiles fit with Monier, Marley, Westile, Lifetile, and a number of other tile manufacturers' products.

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### RESOURCES

*HemisFair Park, p. 42*  
 Signage: Interior Signage Systems; railings and bridges: Jackson Steel; fountain waterproofing: Ven-Chem Company, Inc.; walkway waterproofing: Mer-Kote Products, Inc.; fountain coating: Thoroal; precast concrete: Pyramid Stone; pole light fixtures: Spring City Electrical Manufacturing Co.; tree light fixtures: Greenlee Landscape Lighting Manufacturing; concrete pavers: Alamo Concrete Pavers, Inc.; brick pavers: D'Hanis Brick and Tile Company; benches: Kenneth Lynch.

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ON PAPER

## Retracing Renaissance Method

"NEAR ODESSA," by William Baker, constructs an ambiguous landscape from vicinity maps of the Texan and Soviet cities of the same name. Baker and three others studied intaglio printmaking in a graphics workshop taught by Sinclair Black, FAIA, at UT Austin last summer. Each produced an original etching by the semester's end. Work by fellow student Torry Keithley, in fact, won Best of Show in the recent Austin Chapter/AIA Graphics Competition.

The four etchings from the workshop have been printed in editions of 50 to 80 and are being sold for \$150 to fund scholarships. Readers interested in ordering prints may contact Sinclair Black, UT Austin School of Architecture, Austin 78712. *RDT*

Drive along beautiful **Ocean Drive**, a breathtaking view accompanied by palm trees and luxurious homes.

Visit **Padre Island National Seashore**, one of only eleven national seashores in the nation.

Experience fine dining in a **floating restaurant**, the Peoples Street T-Head in the marina.

See the **Bayshore Monument** at shoreline and Schatzel, erected to commemorate the building of the seawall.

Relax at **Cole Park**. There's always plenty of wind for kites and a playground for the kids.

Take an excursion on **Capt. Clark's Flagship**, a 400 passenger paddle wheeler modeled after 19th Century showboats.

Try an early morning jog along the **seawall**—the perfect way to keep fit and take in the scenery at the same time.

Visit the **Art Museum of South Texas**, featuring a program of changing exhibitions.

Go **jet skiing** and take in the action along the marina and the bayfront.

Visit **shrimpers** docked in the marina, and watch them unload the day's catch or buy some to take home.

Rent a **surrey**, a canopied buggie, and see the sights along the bayfront.

Visit the **Confederate Memorial Fountain** under the bluff at Peoples and Schatzel street. It was erected in 1915 as a memorial to Confederate soldiers.

Step back in time at **Heritage Park**, a neighborhood of restored vintage houses.

Visit the **Corpus Christ Museum** with its exhibit of shipwreck artifacts from a Spanish galleon which sank off Padre Island more than 400 years ago.

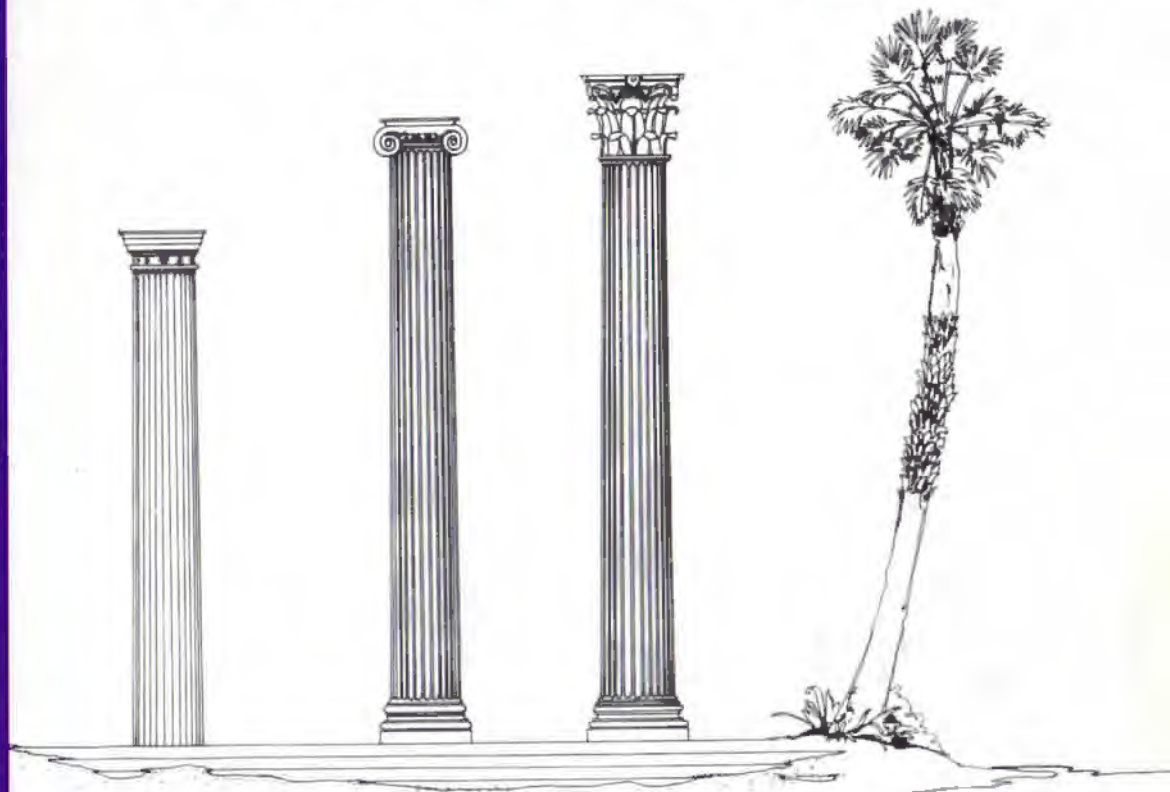
Try your hand at **windsurfing**, a popular activity any time of the year because of Corpus Christi's ever-present sea breeze.

Spend a Wednesday afternoon watching the **weekly sailboat regatta** along the bayfront.

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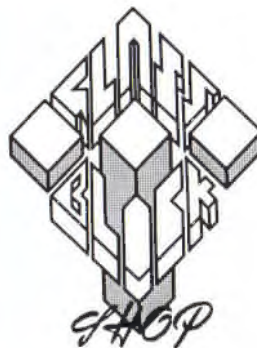
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