

TEXAS ARCHITECT



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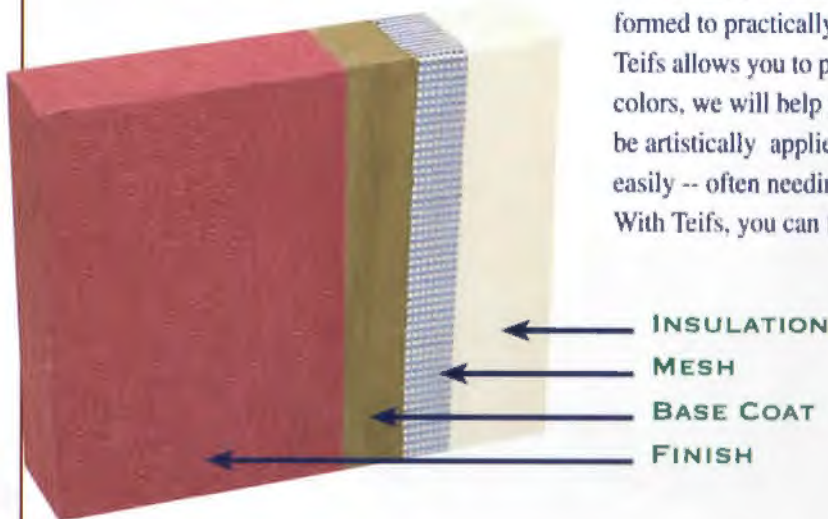


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1997 HONORS PROGRAM

Call for Nominations

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Each year since 1971 the Texas Society of Architects has recognized individuals and organizations outside the profession of architecture who share its commitment to the quality of life in Texas. Accomplishments by past honorees have included roadside beautification; wildlife conservation; open-space protection; passage of laws protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare; downtown revitalization; preservation of historic buildings and sites; public-school programs emphasizing environmental concerns; museum programs and exhibits about community architecture; and reporting, publications, and articles promoting the appreciation of the built and natural environment.

In addition, the TSA Honors Program recognizes TSA's exceptional members in several categories and distinguished Texas architectural educators and writers for leadership and achievement.

Award Categories

Honorary Membership

Awarded to an individual for long-term association with architects and architecture in providing a better quality of life in Texas.

Citation of Honor

Awarded to groups or organizations outside the profession whose activities make significant contributions to the goals of the architectural profession for improvement of the natural or built environment in Texas.

Llewelyn W. Pitts Award

Awarded to recognize a TSA member for a lifetime of distinguished leadership and dedication in architecture.

TSA's highest honor, awarded in memory of Llewelyn W. Pitts, FAIA, who served as TSA president in 1961 and was an influential and dedicated AIA leader, recognizes a distinguished member for lifetime leadership and achievement in the profession of architecture and the community. Although no formal nominations are accepted, suggestions may be directed to the Honors Committee Chair.

Edward J. Romieniec Award

Awarded to recognize an individual architectural educator for outstanding educational contributions.

Awarded in honor of Edward J. Romieniec, FAIA, a former professor and dean of architecture at Texas A&M University and the first recipient of this award. Nominee must be a current or former member of the faculty of one of the seven accredited Texas schools or colleges of architecture, living at the time of nomination, and a full-time educator for at least five years. Criteria for selection will include evidence of the following: teaching of great breadth; influencing a wide range of students; and the ability to maintain relevance through the years by directing students toward the future while drawing on the past.

John G. Flowers Award

Awarded to recognize an individual or organization for excellence in the promotion of architecture through the media.

Awarded in memory of TSA's first executive vice president.

William W. Caudill Award

Awarded to recognize a TSA member for professional achievement in leadership development during the early years of AIA membership.

Awarded in memory of William W. Caudill, FAIA, recipient of the 1985 AIA Gold Medal and a pioneer of architectural design, practice, and leadership and service to the organization and community. Must be an architect member in good standing and an active member of the local AIA chapter for a minimum of two years, not to exceed ten years (40 years of age is a recommended maximum for a nominee). The nominee should be a role model to the organization with these qualities: goes beyond the call of duty in service to the profession; influences improvement in the organization at the state level; encourages participation among fellow members and nonmembers; exemplifies qualities of leadership; and exemplifies qualities of professional practice.

Architecture Firm Award

Awarded to a TSA firm that has consistently produced distinguished architecture for a period of at least 10 years. This award is the highest honor the Society can bestow upon a firm.

Any TSA component may nominate one eligible firm. Firms practicing under the leadership of either a single principal or several principals are eligible for the award. In addition, firms that have been reorganized and whose name has been changed or modified are also eligible, as long as the firm has been in operation for a period of at least 10 years.

Nomination Procedures

Except for the Llewelyn W. Pitts Award, each nomination must be submitted through the local chapter and must be in an approved format. TSA will provide nomination forms and portfolio criteria to each local chapter. Additional copies may be obtained upon request.

Nominations for the Llewelyn W. Pitts Award may be made by any TSA member in the form of a letter addressed to the Chair of the TSA Honors Committee. No portfolio is to be submitted.

Selection and Notification

Recipients of all TSA Honors Awards are chosen by the members of the TSA Honors Committee in June of each year. Recipient names (with the exception of the Pitts Award) are ratified by a vote of the TSA Executive Committee at the summer meeting. Following the meeting, Honors Award recipients are notified of their selection and invited to the Awards Luncheon that takes place during TSA's Annual Meeting in the fall.

The names of Honors Award recipients are published in *Texas Architect*. Each local chapter is responsible for notifying local media; however, if a chapter needs assistance, the TSA staff will help prepare press releases.

Portfolios will be returned to the nominating chapters following the TSA summer board meeting.

Presentation

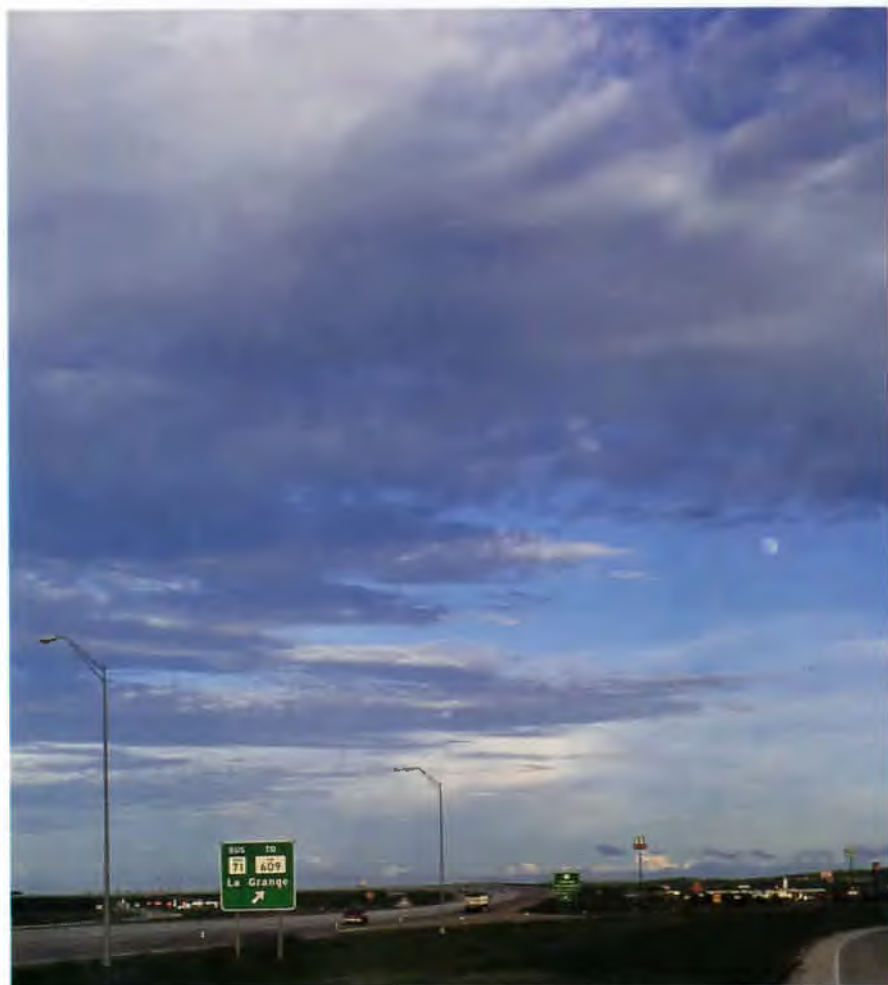
Awards will be presented during TSA's 58th Annual Meeting in Fort Worth, October 23-25, 1997.

Submission Deadline

All nominations must be received in the TSA office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 30, 1997. Please direct questions to Gay Patterson at TSA, 512/478-7386. Nominations shall be sent to:

TSA Honors Committee
c/o Texas Society of Architects
816 Congress Avenue, Suite 970
Austin, Texas 78701

TEXAS ARCHITECT



Above: West of LaGrange, Highway 71 bypasses the traditional downtown. Photograph by Paul Hester and Lisa Carol Hardaway.

On the cover: A Terry Ybanez mural on the rear wall of a laundromat in San Antonio celebrates labor organizer Emma Tenayuca. Photograph by Kevin Milstead.

Busque la sinopsis que se encuentra al principio de cada historia principal.

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November/December 1996 Volume 46, Number 6

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Building Blocks

WHEN THE KINGWOOD DEVELOPMENT was built north of Houston in the late 1960s, it was conceived of both literally and figuratively as science fiction: the first of many future satellite cities to orbit the Space City. A much simpler country life and a place of refuge was available for the price of an advertised 30-minute drive. Behind the wall of pines lining IH-45, another wall appeared: a white-painted wooden fence guarding and presenting the colonnaded ranch houses, chalet-inspired estates, and Tudor-executive homes. The familiar architectural icons were honored with bigger lots and a soft mat of pine needles for a front yard.

The fishing tanks southeast of Conroe would never be quite the same as the highway became a freeway, and the success of Kingwood ensured that Loop 610 would no longer contain the city. Historic demographic shifts and the resulting can't-lose real estate pro-formas guaranteed the success of Kingwood, Friendswood and all the rest. The only significant alternative to this pattern in Houston was presented by The Woodlands, perhaps the first true neo-traditional development, which envisions itself as a self-sufficient neighborhood.

The issues facing Kingwood today, as it negotiates annexation with the City of Houston, are no different from those faced by the Southtown neighborhood in San Antonio, Houston's Fourth Ward, and towns such as LaGrange. Identity as a community, economic viability, and a scramble to become organized to control their own futures have replaced strictly provincial concerns. For Kingwood, no longer isolated by pines and space from the city, the question is not whether or not to become part of the city, but how. While some parts of every city have been truly abandoned, many neighborhoods—the building blocks of the city—are re-forming themselves. An important part of every neighborhood story is the role of the residents themselves. Public and resident participation in this work, and its absence or its exclusion from the decision-making process impacts the quality of the decision. It is in this environment that architects now find themselves, no longer called upon simply to design structures, but to respond to new client partnerships.

In this issue of *Texas Architect*, guest editor Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, presents a snapshot of Texas cities today, joined by a distinguished group of architects, writers, and photographers. With his introductory essay and commentary accompanying each feature article, Moorhead provides a historical and personal perspective and suggests new roles for the citizen-architect. It is an intentionally framed view, in order to focus on special parts of the city, some of the special places that bind the city together, and some of the things that break it. We hope to supplement this initial exploration in upcoming issues with presentations of neo-traditional developments, gated communities, and significant public-private joint ventures.

Among the many contributors to this issue of *Texas Architect*, I would like to note the particular contributions of Gerald Moorhead, FAIA and photographer Paul Hester; editors Susan Williamson and Kelly Roberson; publisher Canan Yetmen; and Jorge Cid of Dallas, who continues to provide our Spanish synopses. With this issue we also welcome Mike Greenberg of San Antonio as a Contributing Editor.

Vincent P. Hauser

UPCOMING ISSUES

We invite submissions to *Texas Architect* for our upcoming issues:

Mar/Apr '97 (deadline 6 Jan)
"Religious Architecture"

May/June '97 (deadline 14 Mar)
"Health Care Architecture"

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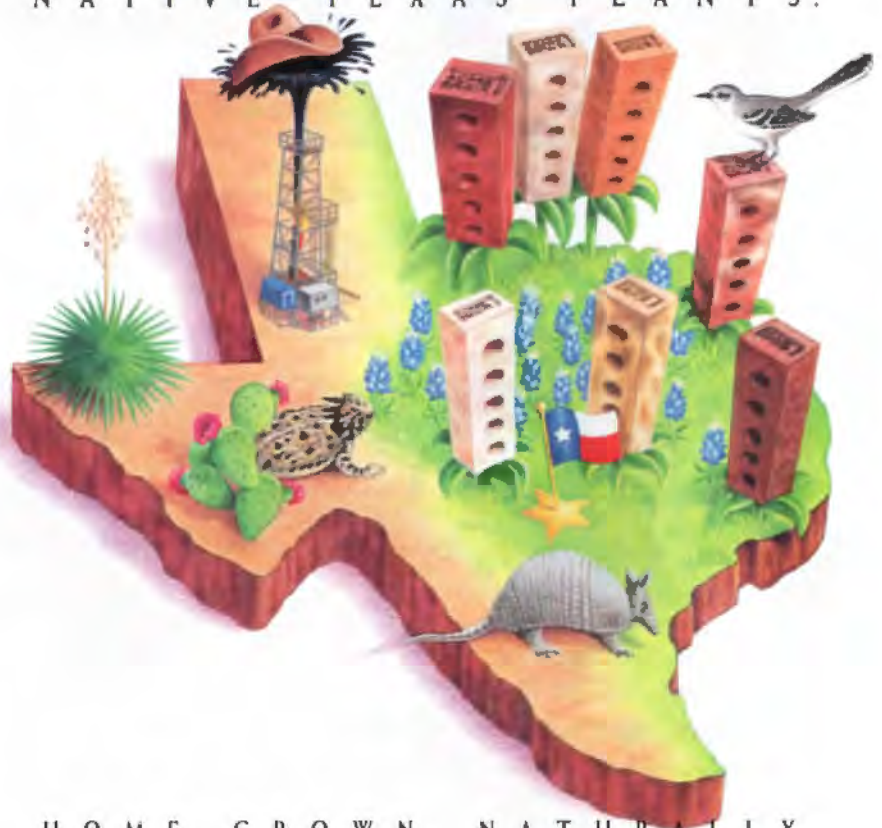
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Electronic-mail correspondence can be sent directly to individual staff members at the following addresses:

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CORRECTIONS

The name of the photographer in "Brewing It Up" (*TA*, September/October 1996, pp. 72-73) was misspelled. It is Gary Fenhahn.

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News

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SAN ANTONIO A five-year, \$187-million expansion of San Antonio's convention center is expected to quadruple the number of people visiting the River Walk.

Nine win from AIA Austin 12

AUSTIN Nine projects were recognized with AIA Austin design awards.

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RIO GRANDE CITY Historic resources inventories will help Texas border cities obtain National Register nominations.

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HOUSTON Efforts continue on the plan to revitalize the inner core of Houston.

Plaza integrates community 17

EL PASO A new Arts Festival Plaza will provide a downtown area for cultural activities and performances.

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Revisiting the River

SAN ANTONIO As the next millenium approaches, San Antonio is bracing for a \$187-million expansion and remodeling of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center; the project will more than double the building footprint and, city leaders hope, continue to expand the \$3.1-billion-a-year tourism industry. While meeting planners will benefit from a 2.21-to-1 ratio of exhibit-to-meeting space, designers are working to mitigate the ever-increasing stream of people that the expansion will bring to the continually crowded River Walk.

The project will be completed in two phases over five years. In phase one, from April 1997 to April 1999, the expansion—a completely separate structure—will be built; business will continue in the existing center. After the new portion opens, the old center will be closed and refurbished, to be re-opened and linked with the expansion by January 2001. The river itself, which is now a "dead end" at the foot of the con-

vention center, will be extended to HemisFair Park. Kell Muñoz Wigodsky, San Antonio, and Thompson, Stainback & Associates Inc., Atlanta, are the architects.

Currently, project participants are preparing construction documents and completing site demolition and preparation. One-third of the HemisFair Parking Garage has been demolished and three art pieces will be relocated, says Lisette Murray, special projects officer of the Convention Center Expansion Office. HemisFair Arena, constructed in 1968, was also recently demolished. John Kell of Kell Muñoz Wigodsky describes the current process as "very smooth."



Kell Muñoz Wigodsky

Nine win from AIA Austin

AUSTIN On September 10, AIA Austin recognized nine projects with 1996 Design Awards in a celebration at the Live Oak Theater at the State in Austin. A jury including Fred Clarke, FAIA, Val Glitsch, FAIA, and Judith Chafee, FAIA, reviewed 58 entries, selecting nine projects in three categories.

Two projects received honor awards: Luna Notte, a restaurant in San Antonio designed by Dick Clark Architecture, and Concrete House, designed by Lawrence W. Speck, FAIA. The jury designated three projects for citations of honor. The first went to Mail Kiosk and Entrance Gate by Gordon Bohmfalk and Troy Kennedy of QMET. The second project receiving a citation of honor was the Whole Foods Market and Corporate Headquarters (see *TA*, July/August 1995, pp. 50-53), designed by Tom Hatch Architects. Finally, Chow Ciao!, designed by McKinney Architects Inc., also received a citation of honor.



Greg Hursley



Lawrence Speck, FAIA



Tom Hatch Architects

OF NOTE

We had turbulence early on . . . which is typical of the scrutiny a public project goes through.”

The convention center sits between the eastward extension of the San Antonio River and HemisFair Park. The new design, says Kell, took its cues from both. “In form, the center didn’t communicate well with either. We are taking the river into the middle of the center, and making it a focus,” says Kell.

The expansion will increase the existing contiguous exhibition-hall space to 440,000 square feet and upgrade the meeting rooms. Convention-center staff will be able to dovetail four conventions with 250,000 square feet of

new exhibition space; also included are 83,000 square feet of new meeting-room space and a 43,000-square-foot ballroom overlooking HemisFair Park. New parking structures were recommended to the south, but none are currently planned, says Kell.

Planning for the center began with several feasibility studies, the last completed in September 1994. The studies, says Murray, found that a center double the current size would keep the city competitive with same-sized cities like New Orleans and Orlando, which are also expanding their convention centers. With the expansion, San Antonio looks to increase its marketability to larger groups that it currently cannot serve. “We had groups who wanted to come in but couldn’t because we were too small or we didn’t have the dates available,” says Murray. Studies also indicated the need for a 1,000-room hotel, says Murray, the site of which, adjacent to the center, has been allocated; a developer is currently being sought.

“Revisiting the River,” continued on page 18



Michael Antonora

- 1 The glass-walled arch will extend over the river, providing lobby and exhibit space.
- 2 The expansion’s barrel vaults recall images of San Antonio’s missions.



Troy Kennedy

Merit awards went to four projects. The Kendrick/Ralston Ranch, designed by Robert Jackson Architects, AIA, was the first recipient. The ranch also won a 1996 TSA Design Award (see *TA*, September/October 1996, pp. 50-51).

Sinclair Black and Andrew Vernooy, AIA, were honored for the Central Park/Central Market (see *TA*, July/August 1995, pp. 50-53) in Austin. The Deep Eddy Shotgun House, designed by Team LottHaas Architects, also received a merit award. Girard Kinney of Kinney & Associates received the final merit award for the design of 701 West Fifth Street, Austin.

Kelly Roberson



Kinney & Associates

Sinclair Black, FMA

- 1 Chow Ciaol, McKinney Architects
- 2 Concrete House, Lawrence Speck
- 3 Whole Foods Market/Corporate Headquarters, Tom Hatch Architects
- 4 Mail Kiosk and Entrance Gate, QMET
- 5 701 W. 5th St., Girard Kinney
- 6 Central Park/Central Market, Sinclair Black and Andrew Vernooy

NCARB institutes degree requirement
Beginning July 1, 2000, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) will require all U.S. applicants to have a degree in architecture from a NCARB-accredited program. Previously, architects who could demonstrate satisfaction of the NCARB education standard through extended professional practice were eligible for certification.

Downtown housing continues resurgence
The vacant Adam Hat Building, built in Dallas in 1914 as the Ford Motor Co., is being converted into 90 loft-style apartments, says the *Dallas Morning News*, continuing the upswing in the number of residents returning to downtown to live (see *TA*, March/April 1996, pp. 28-29, 32). The Westdale Asset Management Co., which also remodeled 2220 Canton Street in Dallas into 48 condominiums, will complete the project in December.

El Paso museum begins construction
The El Paso city council voted August 13 to hire an architect and begin work on a new downtown Museum of Art, according to the *El Paso Times*, five years after the move was originally planned. Urban Associates Inc. will convert the old Greyhound bus station into an 104,000-square-foot, \$6.5-million home for the museum’s collection of European art from the 1200s to 1700s and American painting from 1830 to 1930. The collection, much of which has been packed away due to space restrictions, also includes work by local artists.

Construction was scheduled to begin in October. The new building, which will open in summer 1997, will be next door to the outdoor Arts Festival Plaza (see p. 17); both are expected to increase tourism to the area.

Spinning the Web

The Built Environment Center, with a web site at <http://fcn.state.fl.us/fdi/bec/bec-home.htm>, is an electronic workplace forum for information and services regarding urban and community development, buildings, facilities, infrastructure, and open space. The Canadian non-profit organization Green Building Information Council has a web site at <http://greenbuilding.ca/> discussing information about energy and environmental issues. The page also has extensive links to other international organizations and pages.

If you pay for it . . .

HOUSTON Last spring, a small fraction of the Houston electorate turned out to defeat, by a handful of votes, a \$390-million bond issue to build more than a dozen new schools and to repair numerous others—one of which, missing its cue, collapsed a few months later, just before the opening of classes. Early this November, the voters of Houston and Harris County will be asked to approve the first phase of an estimated \$625 million in new sports-arena construction essential to reaffirm the body politic's commitment to major-league representation in baseball, football, and basketball. Preliminary polls leave little doubt that the lords of the diamond, gridiron, and parquet will be propitiated, though none of their places of business are in any imminent danger of collapse, or, with the exception of the championship-caliber Houston Rockets basketball team, inundation by fans.

If you build it and pay for it, the leagues and owners implore in a passion play enacted with unsettling frequency across America these days, we might come; if not, we'll take our clubs elsewhere. In the case of Bud Adams, the public relations-averse proprietor of the dysfunctional Houston (soon to be Nashville) Oilers, his was an offer the long-suffering fans and Mayor Bob Lanier couldn't refuse. But the task of making Houston safe for some prospective NFL expansion franchisee and of keeping the Astros fenced somewhere inside the 610 Loop rather than orbiting northern Virginia are matters of considerable complexity and expense.

The multi-purpose nature of the Astrodome, like most of the one-circle-fits-all stadiums of its generation, covered or not, is not ideal for any sport. Nevertheless, it was a price Houstonians were willing, and could afford, to pay for the amenity of watching baseball, first and foremost, in a mosquito-proof, non-semitropical environment. But the comfort zone for the autumnally cycled football exhibitions can be approximated without resort to such heroic measures.

Although the tradeoff between the greater capacity and intimacy of Rice Stadium as opposed to its lack of weatherproofing seemed a no-brainer, then-County Judge Roy Hofheinz's Barnumesque powers of persuasion lured the Oilers into the dome as co-charter tenants along with the Houston Rodeo and Livestock Show. Later, when the rent went up, the Oilers tried playing at Rice, but Bud soon pined for the creature and financial comforts of the

dome, especially the visually challenged liquidity of the private suites, advertised with rare candor as skyboxes. The Oilers and Rice explored the notion of a velarium and might have even engaged in suite-talk, but in the end the Oilers and their so-called roughneck mascot slunk back to the dome.

At this point, the strategy for world-classifying the city's baseball and football venues calls

and Cleveland. The county, however, pleading proprietary interests, would contribute far less to building a ballpark on a non-Astrodome related site. At press time, a referendum is slated for November, when the voters will be ambiguously asked to support a plan that uses no personal or property taxes for funding. Although a site is not on the ballot, downtown seems to be the dubious favorite.



Astrodome, circa 1973, Gerald Moonhead, FAIA

for a special-purpose baseball stadium with a retractable roof, 42,000 seats, and 80 luxury suites. As contemplated by County Judge Robert Eckels, this new construction will require a \$250-million minimum investment (probably \$350 million if the Arizona Diamondbacks new indoor-outdoor park is any guide) and would be built just west of Kirby Drive across from the Astrodome, the better to make use of the present parking lot and its revenue-producing monopoly on spaces. The Astrodome would then be converted (at a cost of \$200 million plus) to a permanent oval seating configuration, at once more faithful to its Flavian prototype and better suited to the spectacles of gridiron warfare and rodeo. The only dissent comes from those who favor a downtown site for the baseball stadium in the neo-traditional, centrifugally friendly mode of Baltimore, Denver,

The romance of a baseball field, even one with a retractable roof, is certainly not without its appeal, though the inevitable DMZ of parking that would most likely surround it, unless it were somehow buried under the stadium at greater expense, is anything but charming. The presumptive downtown site, which lies north of the convention center and some blocks east of such ornaments as the county jail and the soon-to-be-built federal detention center, has a well-entrenched skid-row ambiance that cannot easily be wished or developed away. But if the parking could be tucked under the stadium or otherwise finessed, the community-building aspect of such a stadium might be better conferred on a near-town site, such as the bluff recently vacated by the Blue Ribbon rice elevators on the north side of Buffalo Bayou at Montrose, or the Robinson warehouse on the south side of

A Rio Grande Inventory

RIO GRANDE CITY Inventories of historic resources are nearing completion for Mission and Rio Grande City in the South Texas border region. Mission, founded in 1908 as a result of intensive agricultural development in the area, includes 62 properties of high integrity, many reflecting Anglo-American building influences.

Rio Grande City, founded in the 18th century as a ranch for the south bank city of Camargo, Tamaulipas, includes a dense and varied historic fabric with 120 properties of high integrity. Resources range from the Silverio de la Peña building (1886), the most complex of the molded brick designs by Heinrich Portscheller, to the rehabilitated La Borde House Hotel (1897), to numerous examples of 20th-century commercial architecture and board-and-batten cottages. Completed by the research firm Hardy Heck Moore of Austin, the inventories will lead to National Register historic district nominations and local ordinances to protect the historic resources.

In San Ygnacio, the Texas Historical Commission (THC), as part of Los Caminos del Rio

Heritage Project, is updating the National Register historic district nomination of 1973. A National Historic Landmark nomination—the highest historical designation in the U.S.—is being completed for the Jesús Treviño Fort (1830-1871), a ranching outpost for the south bank colonial city of Guerrero Viejo. Based on the binational heritage of the sites, THC is coordinating designation of the fort with a landmark designation for Guerrero Viejo being completed by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), Mexico's agency for historic preservation. This process follows complementary designations by the agencies of the Roma-Miguel Alemán International Suspension Bridge. Toward the Gulf, in Matamoros, INAH has completed a nomination to create a historic district in the city center.

Designations in the U.S. and Mexico offer historic buildings limited protection from demolition and alterations. Equally important, they raise awareness and educate the public as to the importance of their cultural resources.

Mario L. Sánchez

Mario L. Sánchez is an architect and historian at the Texas Historical Commission (THC).

1 Jesús Treviño Fort (1830-1871), San Ygnacio

2 Rio Theater (1912), Mission, originally a performing arts center

3 Yturria Bank, built in the late 19th century, in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, recently underwent a partial rehabilitation.



1



2



3

all photos by Mario L. Sánchez

the bayou at Montrose (with parking in the American General complex), or somewhere near the old West End Ballpark, even closer to downtown and the Allen and Cullen Center garages. Each offers a breathtaking view of downtown and a reasonable expectation that a kind of Wrigley-ville charm could be adduced.

No less breathtaking than the views of downtown that a neartown site might offer are the savings possible through a mostly non-structural way out of the stadium dilemma, particularly since Barton Smith, an economist and member of the Houston and Harris County Sports Facility Public Advisory Committee appointed by the mayor and the county judge, estimates that "based on the economic benefits of having sports teams, Houston should invest no more than \$200 million in public funds" toward arena devel-

opment. If the going price of the Astros franchise is \$160 million, as owner Drayton McLane maintains, and the county proposes to sink as much as \$172.5 million in a new stadium (up from an initial \$150 million) with the city guaranteeing the marketing of \$15 million in permanent seat licenses, logic would suggest it is more economical for the city to buy the franchise than replace the dome for \$250 million. The lower level of the Astrodome, from third to first base, offers as much prime seating as any traditional ballpark and the whole thing is certainly capable of holding the fair weather crowds that materialize once every divisional pennant.

Admittedly, sports math has a logic all its own, capable of causing otherwise hard-nosed wheeler dealers to take leave of their senses on the flimsiest of pretexts. Public-till

mindere are usually no exception: According to the report of the Houston-Harris County Sports Facility Public Advisory Committee, the average amount of public funding committed for the five most recent baseball park projects for which figures were available was 83 percent; for the eight most recent football stadiums, 78 percent; for the nine most recent basketball arenas, 33 percent. But even paying the full asking price for the Astros (\$160 million) and setting aside \$75 million as the city's share of a new basketball arena leaves \$390 million to squander on schools, without having to sell so much as a single permanent desk license.

Drexel Turner

Drexel Turner is a city planner and assistant to the dean at the College of Architecture at the University of Houston.

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Planning, Part Two

HOUSTON Since the last report in *TA* ("Testing the market," May/June 1996, pp. 29-30, 32, and "A New Downtown," November/December 1995, p. 27), planning in downtown Houston continues to show signs of life, especially due to the tremendous efforts of AIA Houston and its members.

Upon completion of the final draft of the Downtown Development Plan, the basis for a revitalization of the central business district, and its public presentation by Mayor Bob Lanier in late 1994, the Downtown District requested reactions and comments from the general public. AIA Houston offered the talents of its membership to prepare a comprehensive response to the plan for the 13 central-city districts.

The results, *Designing for Change*, were exhibited in October 1995 during Urban Design Month in Houston. Offering substantial refinement, seductive designs, and planning alternatives for the Downtown Development Plan, the exhibited ideas generated welcome publicity, positive reaction, and much discussion among Houstonians about the possibilities for renewed development in downtown. All but a few of the area proposals included housing and parks as features to create a neighborhood identity.

Impressed with the quality of the proposals and the public dialogue generated, the Downtown District committed to involving the volunteers in final preparation of the development plan. After submitting its overall conclusions to the mayor and the Downtown District, the AIA Houston has been involved in a series of meetings among City of Houston planners, AIA members, and the Downtown District on a number of topics raised in both planning documents.

The district will incorporate the conclusions from these meetings, review the resulting plan with relevant public agencies to coordinate specific proposals with other planning efforts, and publish the refined Downtown Development Plan in early 1997. *Designing for Change* will also be recognized during the honors-award presentations of the 1996 Texas Society of Architects Annual Meeting with a special President's Citation.

Guy Hagstette

Guy Hagstette is Director of Capital Projects and Planning for the Houston Downtown District.

Plaza integrates community

EL PASO Two short streets in downtown El Paso will be closed to form the space for the Arts Festival Plaza, designed by local firm Perspectiva. The \$1.5 million, 71,706-square-foot project is bounded by the Museum of Art on the west (see "Of Note," pg. 13), the historic Hotel Camino Real on the south, and the Plaza Theater on the east. The plaza will provide space for civic activities and a pedestrian link between the Civic Center and San Jacinto Plaza.

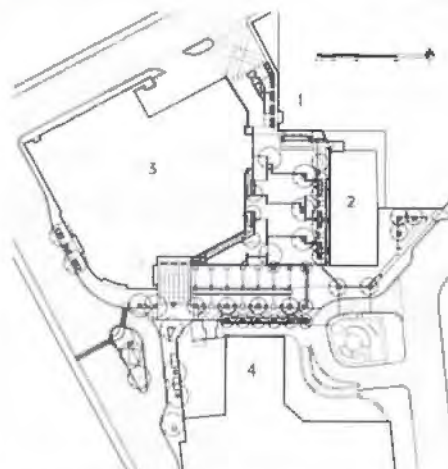
The plaza will be like a garden for the display of art and will accommodate dance, music, theatrical performances, and festivals. The history of El Paso will be recalled in images cast in tile pavers and the cast-stone columns of the shade structure, carrying the story of the area's Indian tribes. A row of columns will support a colorful canopy over a water pool edged with a sitting ledge. At the rear, a waterwall will provide a sound barrier from traffic and increase the humidity to lower the temperature. Although a pedestrian zone, the plaza design allows access for emergency vehicles; the downtown trolley will also pass through. New trees and plenty of seating will make it a welcome spot for both visitors and downtown workers.

Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, is an architect in Houston.



Perspectiva



1 Space for community activities and festivals is a major part of the plaza.

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"Revisiting the River" continued from page 13

One of the first steps was a financing plan. The city initiated a two-percent hotel-occupancy tax—which will pay the service on the debt—on January 1, 1994. Ten million dollars in cash on hand was supplemented by a March 1996 \$156-million sale of bonds, says Murray.

The final building will, Kell hopes, be identifiable with the city that surrounds it. "Our general design philosophy was that we needed to start from a base of architecture that was undeniably San Antonio," he says.

The architects established an up-close-and-personal feeling in volumes and lighting, inspired by San Antonio's historic missions. The doors, for example, have substance, weight, and character, and the concourse, says Kell, is derived from the Mission Concepcion. These mission references are played against references to San Antonio's burgeoning technological industries, says Kell. "We don't want people to think of San Antonio as a sleepy little town on the Mexican border."

The designers hope to take advantage of the proximity of HemisFair Park by bringing the river through the center literally and figuratively. One of the unique features of the new portion will be a glass-walled lobby extension arching over the river. The bridge will connect the existing hall to the expansion while providing prime exhibit space. Barrel vaults and interior walkways are reminiscent of the downtown steel bridges. The river is also recalled in the blue sculptural wave of the east elevation that winds to and across the river, and becomes the back wall of the refurbished arcade.

The exterior is a stone facade with stucco infill, limestone, and metal. The interior axminster carpet enables the creation of intricate, beautiful patterns. Other interior finishes include antique pine, cherry wood, limestone, a rough-textured stucco, and a slick-finish plaster.

Work has begun on the public art portion of the project, totaling one-percent of the budget. Together with the design team, the city, two artists (Jodi Pinto from New York City and Celia Munoz from Texas), and an art consultant decided what art projects there would be and how much would be spent on each. Pinto will design the art in the lobby service bridge, and Munoz is patterning the carpet. Other projects, for which artists will be selected by a jury, include nine grottos in HemisFair Park, "yard art" on the lawn, and a major project, estimated at \$500,000, signifying the Market Street entry.

Finally, there is the river expansion, which will extend the route under Market Street, down a landscaped area, and underneath the lobby, where it will feed a boat turnaround, refreshing the stagnant end. "We took a different attitude with the river extension than the attitude prevalent in some past extensions. It comes through the middle, but is soft, landscaped, and irregular," says John Kell.

Continued hotel and retail expansion is anticipated, but not without side effects—the number of people visiting the river is expected to quadruple. "The new center will vastly increase the number of people on the east side of the river," says Kell. A park in the middle and a concourse open to the south will hopefully mitigate that by changing the human traffic patterns for both river and convention center. **KR**

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CALENDAR

"Japan's Golden Age: Momoyama"

The Dallas Museum of Art will be the only venue in the world to present a major exhibition of the feudal arts of Japan. Objects in a variety of media, including painting, textiles, armor, and ceramics, will be featured. More than one-third of the exhibited pieces are registered with the Japanese government, and many are important cultural properties and national treasures. Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas (214/922-1200), THROUGH DECEMBER 1

"Lari Pittman"

A mid-career survey of Lari Pittman, a Los Angeles-based painter, will bring together for the first time 25 paintings, including his largest and most ambitious work to date. Pittman's work, through which he addresses political, sexual, and identity issues, is known for its exuberant energy, rich color, and dynamic lines. The largest work in the exhibition, *Like You*, is a 26-foot-long painting. Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (713/526-0773), THROUGH DECEMBER 31

An Enduring Collection

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, will exhibit 70 objects from one of the finest collections of Asian art in the country through the exhibition *An Enduring Legacy: Masterpieces from the Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller III Collection of Asian Art*. Paintings, sculptures, and ceramics from 13 different Asian nations, including India, Cambodia, Indonesia, China, Korea, and Japan, will be presented. The show marks the first time the collection, with objects dating from the 11th century B.C. to the 18th century, has gone on tour. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (713/639-7300), THROUGH JANUARY 19, 1997

"Michelangelo and His Influence"

In one of three U.S. stops, the Kimbell Museum will present 18 major drawings by Michelangelo Buonarroti, drawn from a nucleus of supreme examples of his draftsmanship. The drawings, complemented by 55 works by his contemporaries and followers, were selected from the British Royal Collection. Michelangelo, whose masterpieces include the ceiling and altar of the Sistine Chapel and *David*, was a painter, sculptor, architect, and poet; he worked throughout his life in Rome and Florence. Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth (817/332-8451), JANUARY 19-MARCH 30, 1997

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NEW PRODUCTS AND INFORMATION

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Environmentally sound wall coverings are manufactured by **Koroseal**. These vinyl-coverings are entirely cadmium free, imprinted exclusively with water-based ink.

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CraftCore, a low-density, wood-fiber door core manufactured by Masonite, offers an interior that is 50-percent lighter and is 15-percent recycled material.



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Energy efficiency is of the utmost importance in today's commercial, residential, and retail designs. For a unique energy-saving trim, designed

to eliminate air leakage in standard, recessed light fixtures, check out the newest product developed by **Cooper Lighting**.

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The ICD-2000 allows mid- and multi-story building residents to comply with current recycling regulations. It eliminates expensive floor-to-floor collection and labor. This fully integrated trash chute door by **Hi-Rise Recycling Systems, Inc.**, is cost-effective and compact.



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Agriboard Industries has developed panelized building systems utilizing compressed agricultural fiber by-products as the core material.



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Meta Luce by **Dornbracht** combines its colorful lucite surface and matted polypropylene chrome handles and faucets for lively and recyclable bath fixtures. They are available in Ice-White, Magma, Lemon, Caribbean, and Sky.

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Lighting Services Inc. has added an energy conservative OS-10 occupancy motion detector to its product line. The sensor has a user-adjustable time delay from 15 seconds to 30 minutes and a 360-degree field of view, with 44' by 20' capabilities. It also has a user-adjustable four-setting sensitivity switch.



Circle 187 on reader inquiry card



The **Environmental Home Database**, created by the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), provides a set of five diskettes with an operator manual for online access and entry of "green building" products, recyclers, materials, and manufacturers. It was created specifically to help make appropriate choices for environmentally friendly building design.

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Free Literature

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USG Interiors' 20-page color brochure features several new products, including 3-D reinforced gypsum and robotic wire-welded and open-cell ceiling systems. Circle 189 on reader inquiry card

Innovative skylight designs and **Naturalite/Sweet's** EPI product contributions from 1959 to 1995, are the focus of the latest custom brochure. Circle 190 on reader inquiry card



Freudenberg Building Systems introduces a new 46-page catalog with fold-out color grids, highlighting its line of environmentally sound Nora rubber flooring. Circle 191 on reader inquiry card

Frameless glass tub and shower enclosures are illustrated in **Dushqueen's** 16-page full-color brochure. Circle 192 on reader inquiry card



CRSI issues its third free six-page, four-color brochure in its Reinforcing Design series, showcasing Syracuse University. Circle 193 on reader inquiry card

Q

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It's Good to be Green

I HAVE REALIZED ONLY RECENTLY that the approach I have applied to create and craft spaces for work and play since I began my professional practice has a label. It is what is now referred to as sustainability. Oddly enough, the same label could also be applied to the work of many prominent artisans that have preceded us. There is conceptually scant difference between Wright's organic method and sustainability, except for concern for resource reduction and the need to relieve the impact construction activity has on the planet. Twenty-two years ago, Buckminster Fuller asked me after a lecture, "How much do your buildings weigh?" It seemed like a strange question because it didn't seem to make any difference. In retrospect, he was acutely aware of the amount of material he used in his unique structures, never using more than necessary to engineer and create magnificent interior spaces. Mies always attempted to do more with less.

Goff was often scoffed at when he used raw, unrefined natural materials to fashion wonderful buildings with fabulous spaces and fantastic surface effects.

To many architects, "sustainability" is a relatively new concept. When it is presented to clients, the subject generally illicit a blank stare, soon followed with the stern response, "If it impacts the bottom line, forget it!" So what does it really mean to design sustainable architecture? Is this

some new fad like destructivism or post-modernism? Do sustainable buildings look or function differently than ordinary buildings? Are sustainable buildings more expensive or more difficult to construct?

Sustainability is not a quantifiable formula or an ordering system that can be uniformly applied to the process of creating structures. The successes are often small and may even go unnoticed. But even meager results are not inconsequential. The foundation of sustainability begins with a global perspective. It requires a fundamental change in our application of the craft of architecture. The basic premise of sustainability recognizes that all things are connected by the web of life and that every action ultimately effects an environmental response.

Native American culture regards all things taken from the earth with extreme reverence; every resource is treated as a gift of life from the creator and should be taken only if needed to sustain life. To the contrary, Western civilization has taken a mountainman's approach to the collection and use of natural resources to support our cultural development—trapping and hunting



GREEN BUILDING

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wildlife to extinction, cutting down the largest and oldest trees in virgin stands, and polluting waterways through mining, logging, and human habitation.

Today we still act the same way. We fill and build over flood plains; aquifers are "mined" faster than they can be recharged; mineral and fossil fuel resources are plundered; suburbs spread over open space, encroaching wild areas and prime irreplaceable farmland at a frantic pace. The total area of impermeable surfaces exceeds the area of green open space in our built communities, while construction in the U.S. continues to consume the majority of all raw materials harvested from the globe. Our contemporary lifestyle relies increasingly on the use of chemicals and chemically treated or manufactured products. Every day, our pursuit of prosperity increases our exposure to a polluted environment. The propensity to create indoor environments for human comfort is done so with a dubious over-dependence on technology, and little concern for disrupting "natural" processes.

Perhaps we can begin to control the adverse effects of human habitation on remaining wild areas by practicing architecture in a sustainable manner. The premise behind sustainability is simple: Think environmentally and build with a caretaker's or gardener's touch; nurture rather than exploit. Sustainable principles can be applied to conventional design and construction practices in small ways with a variety of design solutions.

Harold W. Nix & Associates, Daingerfield

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE OF SUSTAINABILITY is to recycle existing buildings. In Daingerfield, a historic cotton warehouse and the adjacent bank, built circa 1880, presented a restoration challenge. The owner was encouraged and eventually convinced that the building could be restored and rehabilitated to serve the needs of the client's law practice rather than building a new facility on the edge of town. The restoration removed years of abuse. The exterior brick walls were salvaged and repaired and the existing rough-sawn wood frame structure was reinforced and retained. The thick exterior shell walls were furred out and insulated. The windows were essentially rotten carcasses and were replaced with 1/2" insulated glazed wooden replications of the original units. Energy-efficient kalwall skylights were installed to provide natural daylighting directly into the open public spaces and indirectly into the adjacent offices. The roof was detailed with a vented thermal radiant barrier and the replacement roof membrane was specified as a white EPDM.

The resulting energy performance of the building envelope has treated the owner to incredibly low utility expenses. The building normally operates close to equilibrium where the thermal mass and

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the occupants often contribute most of the heating and cooling benefits.

Most of the interior finishes are natural materials such as natural fiber carpets, oak flooring, and wall paneling fabricated from local mill stock. Gypsum wall board and plaster clad the balance of the wall surfaces.

The site was completely paved with weeds sprouting along the edges and between the cracks. After construction, impermeable paving around the building was removed and replaced with planting beds and permeable pavers.

Shelby County Jail, Center

THIS HISTORIC COUNTY JAIL FACILITY, built circa 1880, sat in a dilapidated condition on Center's historic Courthouse Square. The restoration, currently in progress, will remove years of abuse and multiple additions. As with any restoration project, the exterior brick walls were salvaged and repaired. The existing rough-sawn wood frame structure was intact and retained. The windows were gone or in tatters and were replaced with 1/2" insulated glazed wooden replicas of the original units with security bars. The original slate roof was repaired and the parapet flashings replaced with new copper sections. All existing interior finishes were natural; therefore restoration efforts are focused on clean-up and stabilization. The new finishes are primarily pine wainscoting, flooring, and paneled doors. Courthouse Square is also in the process of receiving new landscaping to add trees and indigenous shrubbery. The restored facility will serve as the Chamber of Commerce's Tourist Information Center.



Mall Del Norte Expansion, Laredo

FIRST APPEARANCES WOULD SUGGEST that this large regional shopping center is no different from any other center built in the U.S., except for its regional aesthetic influences. When looking

deeper, sustainable concepts soon become evident. The large skylight was built of long-lasting polycarbonite. While glass might be the logical material, the extruded honeycomb polycarbonite panels are more lightweight, offer a shading coefficient, and demonstrate thermal performance unmatched by glass glazing systems. The skylight system contributed to lower heat gain, improved natural daylighting, created smaller structural sections, and allowed the introduction of live plants that clean and filter the indoor air.

The common area and exterior shell walls were detailed with more insulation, and the roof membrane was specified as a white EPDM. Although these efforts represented an increased capital cost for the developer, the improved energy performance of the building envelope allowed the engineers to reduce the size of the HVAC units sufficiently to offset the additional cost of the insulation and the upgraded roof membrane. The floor was clad in Mexican marble, readily available in the region, and natural, durable, and relatively inexpensive. Decorative features were fabricated from plaster or glass reinforced gypsum.



Varsity Sports Grill, Adelaide Hall, Fort Smith, Arkansas

THIS DOWNTOWN HISTORIC FACILITY was also built circa 1880. The restoration process included cleaning, stabilizing and reinforcing the original materials, structures and finishes. Insulation, energy efficient replacement windows, state-of-the-art roofing membranes, and natural materials were employed to rehabilitate the building to a usable and lasting condition. The restaurant was finished with oak and quarry tile floors while millwork and trims were fabricated from oak with flourishes of stainless steel. Efficient mechanical systems were integrated into the facility to support the new restaurant and banquet hall use. The urban site was enhanced with new permeable and non-permeable paving, landscape beds, and deciduous shade trees placed in wells. New building signage was created in a historic style and constructed of steel and neon to complement the prominent restoration.

Features common to all of these projects were simple manipulations of traditional technologies. In fact, sustainable solutions often employ low-tech methods or are as simple as using a normal amount of glazing, but concentrating its placement strategically. Openings were used to accentuate the introduction of natural sunlight and heat deep into the interior spaces, and operable glazing systems were installed to allow increased natural ventilation. Historic structures nearly in ruins were salvaged and recycled rather than



razed. More insulation than standard was installed and used in concert with radiant thermal membranes, thereby reducing energy consumption. Natural materials were selected over synthetic. System components were scrutinized to realize lighter and stronger building envelopes. High-tech roofing systems, flashings, and sealants were used responsibly to ensure that the facility will stand the test of time and the denigrating effects of weather.

Did these features cost more? Not really. The challenge is to reorganize the same functions, systems, materials, and components in ways that maximize the overall performance and efficiency of the composite construction product. Sustainable structures can and have cost an average five percent more than conventionally designed and detailed buildings. However, value engineering exercises

often display a relatively short payback time in terms of energy efficiency and the durability of finishes and building components. Sustainable buildings can also cost substantially less than traditional facilities with similar uses. Certainly, structures built totally of recycled materials like bottles, rammed earth, straw bales, or truck tires can realize considerable savings, but these represent extremes that have limited appeal and diminuous cultural acceptance.

Architecture is concerned with the enhancement of human life. A sustainable approach to architecture does not limit creativity or individual aesthetic expression. It does expand our focus holistically; it mandates that we begin to think about how a project, irrespective of its size, may impact conditions elsewhere on the globe or future generations. A sustainable approach to our profession broadens our commitment to society because we must begin to take responsibility for our actions. We must provide shelter that has firmness, function and beauty with a caretaker's attitude, using only what is absolutely necessary, selecting what we use with considerable care, crafting these materials into a structure of lasting beauty, and realizing that ultimately, natural processes will take their toll and the resources utilized will have to be recovered or returned to the earth.

Gary Gene Olp

Gary Gene Olp is principal of GGO Architects in Dallas.

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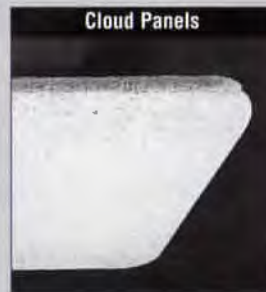
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Resources

Mall Del Norte Expansion

Client: Enterprise Development Associates
Architect: Gary Gene Olp, Architects, Dallas
Contractor: The Lee Corporation
Consultants: SDG, Inc. (structural engineering);
Carter & Burgess, Inc. (civil & MEP)
Photographer: Gary Gene Olp

*EIFS: Dryvit; brick: Acme; skylights: Danpaloni/
CPI, Inc.; doors: Vistawall; exterior paving:
Paveston; ceiling surfacing: USG, Celotex; insu-
lation: Owens Corning; paint: Devoe & Raynolds
(ICI Paint); panic exit: Vistawall, Sargent; exte-
rior lighting: Sterver; heating system: Trane,
Carrier; environmental control systems:
Westinghouse*

Shelby County Jail

Client: Shelby County Chamber of Commerce
Architect: Gary Gene Olp Architects, Dallas
Contractor: East Texas Poultry Center
Photographer: Gary Gene Olp

*Exterior paving: Pavestone; insulation: Owens
Corning; paint: Benjamin Moore; hardware:
Stanley Hardware; heating A/C system: Lennox;
environmental control systems: Honeywell*

Harold W. Nix & Associates - Law Offices

Client: Harold W. Nix
Architect: Gary Gene Olp Architects, Dallas
Consultants: Carter & Burgess, Inc.
Photographer: Gary Gene Olp

*GWB: USG; windows: Marvin; skylights:
Kalwall; exterior paving: Pavestone; ceiling sur-
facing: USG; roofing: Carlise; radiant barrier:
Parsec; insulation: Owens Corning, Dow; paint:
Devoe & Raynolds (ICI Paint), Zolatone; hard-
ware: Schlage Lock; elevators: ESCO; lighting:
Halo, Staff, Prescolite; plumbing: Kohler; environ-
mental control systems: Westinghouse*

Varsity Sports Grill

Client: VEGI, Inc.
Architect: Gary Gene Olp, Architects, Dallas
Contractor: Richard Griffin Construction
Consultants: Richard Hummington Architects
(local architect); Burrows & Yates (MEP)
Photographer: Gary Gene Olp

*GWB: USG; interior doors: Simpson; interior
floors: Dal-Tile, American Olean; ceiling surfac-
ing: USG, Celotex; roofing: Goodyear; insulation:
Owens Corning; paint: Benjamin Moore; hinges:
Sargent; weather seals: National Guard Products;
plumbing: American Standard; heating, A/C sys-
tem: Lennox; environmental control systems:
Honeywell; carpets: Bigelow*

The Sustainable Basics



- 1 Always attempt to renovate or add on to an existing structure before consid-
ering new construction.
- 2 Return to basic design principles:
 - Site buildings to achieve maximum
passive solar performance and re-
duce dependence on mechanical
systems.
 - Orient spaces to capture and direct
prevailing winds for natural venti-
lation.
 - Use natural daylighting techniques.
 - Minimize the impact of the con-
struction process.
 - Masterplan campuses, cities and
communities to encourage walking,
bicycling and mass transit, reduc-
ing the need for extensive road-
ways and heavy means of transpor-
tation.
- 3 Design and specify natural materials
such as stone, glass, metals, wood,
brick, ceramic tile, gypsum board,
miniboard, etc. in lieu of synthetic,
chemically-laden materials.
- 4 Consider using:
 - Regionally available materials.
 - "Green" building products.
 - Materials made with a high re-
cycled content.
 - Engineered components that use
efficient sections with minimal
material.
- 5 Specify low VOC-containing materials.
- 6 Provide sufficient fresh air changes to
create a high quality of indoor air.
- 7 Design high performance building en-
velopes:
 - Super-insulate buildings and use radiant
thermal barriers to reduce energy con-
sumption to a minimum.
 - Use high-performance glazing systems
and shading techniques.
 - Factor in wind pressures and facade ex-
posures.
 - Detail component assemblies that are
durable with long-term performance
characteristics, e.g. sealants and
flashings.
- 8 Reduce hard impermeable paving sur-
faces, design permeable walks, drives,
and parking areas.
- 9 Respect existing stands of trees, or es-
tablished dense vegetation; replant
the site with a contextual palate and
attempt to create wildlife corridors
through large sites or adjacent to
green belts.
- 10 Plant indigenous plant materials and
affect xeriscape landscapes.
- 11 Devise ways to collect and use storm
water and graywater.
- 12 Specify and mandate that the bulk of
construction waste and debris be re-
cycled.
- 13 Begin to think about buildings at the
end of their performance life cycle.
What will happen to the resources
within the components of the struc-
ture? Detail recyclable construction,
e.g. composite panels, metal stud
framing, screw and bolt in lieu of nail-
ing or gluing, so that a building could
virtually be taken apart piece by piece.

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A House in the Hills

IN A REMOTE AREA of the Texas Hill Country, Barley + Pfeiffer Architects of Austin have created a simple home which successfully utilizes many "green" principles within a conventional design solution. This 2,200 square-foot residence utilizes both state-of-the-art, energy-efficient, and recycled materials, as well as time-honored design themes and materials specific to Texas and the Southwest.

The exterior of the house displays three distinct layers. The first floor is a stone base made of native Texas limestone. The second floor employs Hardiplank siding made of recycled wood chips, while the third level is clad in corrugated tin. The idea behind this solution was taken from the cabins of early Texas pioneers. The first layer serves as a thermal mass – the stone stores the cool night air in the first level of the house, which serves as the living areas during the day. The bedrooms are upstairs, where the lighter siding enables the heat of the day to escape more easily at night, allowing cooler air to enter the house.



The residence is entirely dependent on rainwater for its water supply. The architects constructed a 26,000 gallon cistern, which stores water collected from the metal roof through gutters and a series of underground pipes. The water is then pumped into the house and filtered through a particle filter and an ultra violet filter. The resulting water is four times cleaner than Austin tap water and 10 times less hard. In addition, a grey water recovery system is set up for landscape irrigation.

Inside, concrete floors contribute to the thermal mass and the galvanized tin motif continues in detailing over the fireplace and as accents throughout the living spaces. **Canan Yetmen**

Project Credits

Client: Wayne and Barbara Clark
Architect: Barley + Pfeiffer Architects, Austin
Contractor: Mach Construction, Dripping Springs
Consultants: Conrad Engineering (structural engineering)
Photographer: IMAGIZ

Resources

Wall surfacing: Hardiplank; **windows:** Better-Bilt; **doors:** Masonite; **floor surfacing:** EPMAR Corp.; **roofing:** Wheeling Pittsburg Corrugating Co.; **waterproofing/sealants:** Dupont Tyvek (distributed by Housewrap Distributors); **paint & stain:** Benjamin Moore; **lighting:** Halo, Rangair; **plumbing hardware:** Delta; **air-conditioning system:** Bryant, Payne; **environmental control systems:** White Rogers; **rain water filtration system:** G.P. Equipment



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Safe Haven

A CLIENT WITH HIGH chemical sensitivities called upon Barley + Pfeiffer Architects to design a bedroom and study addition to her 1950s style ranch house in Austin. The 900-square-foot addition had a special requirement: It needed an air-lock connection to the existing house, and the careful selection of materials and electrical wiring methods which would not aggravate her chemical sensitivities.

The architects focused on these special problems in selecting materials, as well the more conventional design issues of creating an addition which fits into the context of the existing structure. This two-fold effort resulted in an addition which forms an L-shape with the original house, and creates an enclosed courtyard in the rear of the house shielded from street noise.

The addition began with the replacement of the existing tar and gravel roof, which during the heat of the day emits hydrocarbons down into the living spaces. The new roofing materials were washed to remove a film of oil which is applied by the manufacturer, and installed over an aluminum foil barrier with exhaust systems which forces any fumes up and out of the structure.



The architects worked with an environmental consultant and the help of the client to research and test materials which would address the specific needs of the client. The insulation and air conditioning systems were taken apart and cleaned of all residue before installation. All walls were lined with aluminum foil to prevent fumes from entering the space.

CY

Resources

Interior wall surfacing: USG Fire Code Drywall #1; **windows:** Better-Bilt; **ceiling surfacing:** USG Fire Code Drywall #1; **waterproofing/sealant:** Sonneborn, Dupont Tyvek (distributed by Housewrap Distributors); **insulation:** Johns-Manville; **paint & stain:** Benjamin Moore; **lighting:** Rangair, Hubbell; **plumbing & sanitary:** Universal Rundell, Eljer, Delta; **heating system:** Bryant, Payne; **air-conditioning system:** Trane, Bryant

Project Credits

Client: Lewis and Karen Gould
Architect: Barley + Pfeiffer Architects, Austin
Contractor: Edaco Construction, Austin
Consultants: Conrad Engineering (structural engineering); Mary Oetzel (environmental)
Photographer: IMAGIZ

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Do you know where your construction waste is?

Ask a contractor, "What do you do with your construction waste?"

Answer: "Place it in a dumpster which is hauled to a landfill."

Question: "Are there costs involved?"

Answer: "Yes. I pay a hauler to take the waste to the landfill and pay the landfill tipping fee."

Question: "Who gets the bill for this?"

Answer: "The owner."

THIS IS THE TYPICAL RESPONSE of probably 95percent of contractors who approach the trash and waste issue as a job-cost necessity. The expression "just throw it away" expresses an uninformed and unconserving attitude toward waste and what to do with it. However, owners are tired of paying for their materials twice. They pay the purchase price, then, they pay again for the waste. One cost is enough. If I told you that the waste price could be eliminated through proper waste management at little or no cost to the contractor, wouldn't the owner and contractor take notice? If I added to the equation the additional benefits of a cleaner and safer site, monetary returns on recycled materials, and environmental responsibility, would they also listen? Of course! This new waste management process is being successfully implemented on a handful of recent construction projects. One in particular is the newly relocated headquarters for Mary Kay Cosmetics in Dallas, renovated by H.C.B. Contractors. This project is an excellent example of construction waste management as well as a case study for implementing a construction recycling program. The program was created and implemented by Paula Thompson-Gray of HCB and demonstrated a total project savings of over \$20,000 for recycling construction waste. The results of this successful program stimulated interest from the Committee on Sustainable Architecture of the Dallas AIA to develop a construction waste management specification.

As architects are the purveyors of the contract documents from which the builders build, it seems only natural that architects create a tool for implementation of the construction waste management process through their specifications. This is especially true for architects who support and practice the "green" aspects of sustainability. The final product in the design process is construction, so why not make that process "green" as well?

The waste management specification provides an awareness of the benefits of managing construction waste. If you consider that a majority of the materials wasted on a job site can be recycled, you will soon realize that those same materials have monetary value for purchase or reuse, and they have monetary value to a recycler who typically picks up the waste at no charge. Once these two processes

are working, the amount of "real" trash remaining is significantly less. Small waste means small costs from reduced hauling and landfill tipping fees. To balance the equation, we would speculate that the income from the recyclables will more than offset the expenses incurred for hauling "real" trash. The owner saves the waste cost, the contractor saves hauling time and expenses, and has a safer and cleaner site. Both will have experienced environmental responsibility.

In Europe, landfills are scarce and extremely expensive, making recycling mandatory. When you cannot afford to take waste to a

landfill, you recycle. This is a natural evolution to resourcefulness which has not yet reached mainstream America. European manufacturers of household appliances, for example, are responsible for the life of the product they produce. When the product, say a television set, has reached the end of its productive and useful life, it is returned to the manufacturer for renovation, recycling, or other uses, not as waste. In Europe, recycling and resourcefulness are a way of

The final product in the design process is construction, so why not make that process "green" as well?

life, one which preserves our natural resources for future generations to enjoy and from which we can learn.

The waste management specification is easy to read and understand. The normally dry "boiler plate" rhetoric is replaced with straightforward, common-sense directions for creating and implementing a waste management program during the process of construction.

Construction waste management is one element in the vast spectrum of sustainability which respects, responds to, and works in concert with the natural environment and its related disciplines. It is the easiest of all the "green" applications and is an excellent starting point for sustainability novices. The impact of recycling is an environmental necessity. Consider that our landfills are becoming scarce and the tipping fees are increasing at an alarming rate. Recycling will help eliminate waste, reduce costs, and allow our land to be utilized for more productive and environmentally pleasing uses.

Jack M. Nottingham

Jack M. Nottingham is senior vice president of HKS Inc. in Dallas and chair of the Committee on Sustainable Architecture of Dallas AIA. The specification was co-written by Walter Scarborough, of HKS Inc. and Paula Thompson-Gray, project coordinator for HCB Contractors.

Following on page 36 is an abbreviated Specification Section 01035-Construction Waste Management.



Waste Management Specification

PART 1-GENERAL

A. Definitions

1. Construction Waste: Product or material that will be discarded, categorized as trash for disposal in a landfill, or, as waste materials for salvage for resale, salvage for reuse, or recycling.
2. Recycling: Product or material that can be recovered and remanufactured into a new product.
3. Recycling Facility: Business that specializes in collecting, handling, processing, distributing, or remanufacturing waste materials such as those generated by the [demolition and] new construction.
4. Recyclable Materials: Products and materials that can be recycled include, but are not limited to, the following: [List general and Project specific items]
5. Return: New and reusable product or material that can be returned for credit.
6. Salvage and Reuse: Existing usable product or material that can be reused in some manner on the project site. Materials that can be salvaged and reused must comply with the applicable technical specifications and include, but are not limited to, the following: [List general and Project specific items]
7. Salvage for Resale: Existing usable product or material that can be removed intact (as is) from the project site to another site for resale to others without remanufacturing.
8. Trash: Product or material unable to be salvaged for resale, salvaged and reused, returned, or recycled.
9. Waste Materials: Product or material that can be salvaged for resale, salvaged and reused, returned, or recycled.

B. Construction Waste Management

1. Owner is concerned with the polluting affect associated with the construction waste being sent to the local landfill, therefore, it is the intent of the Owner, to the greatest extent practical and economically feasible, that [all materials demolished from the existing structures and] all waste materials generated during new construction be [salvaged for resale], salvaged and reused, or appropriately recycled, rather than transported to the landfill.
2. Contractor shall take a pro-active, responsible role in management of construction waste, and shall require all subcontractors, vendors, and suppliers to participate in the effort.
3. Contractor is reminded that not only is there a cost to dispose of discarded new and original products and materials, including tipping fees, there was also an original purchase cost paid by the owner.

4. Contractor shall establish a construction waste management program that includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Salvage for resale
 - b. Salvage and reuse
 - c. Recycling
 - d. Disposal
5. Salvage and reuse is a better waste management method than recycling, therefore, a diligent effort shall be made to salvage and reuse products and materials.
6. Waste materials that cannot be salvaged and reused, and have value as being recyclable, shall be recycled.
7. Only trash shall be transported to landfill.
8. Contractor shall be responsible for implementation of [any special programs], [list specifics of the programs] involving tax credits or rebates or similar incentives related to recycling for this project. Revenues or other savings obtained for recycling or returns shall accrue to the owner.

C. Construction Waste Management Goals

1. Contractor shall perform a waste analysis to establish the types and quantity of construction waste anticipated, and options available.
2. Prior to submission of the first application for payment, contractor shall submit a draft of the program for review and approval by the owner, that includes the following:
 - a. Waste analysis.
 - b. Landfill name, tipping fee amount, projected cost of disposing of all trash and waste materials in the landfill as if there would be no salvage or recycling on this project.
 - c. Materials proposed to be salvaged for resale, salvaged and reused, or recycled.
 - d. Anticipated net cost savings determined by subtracting following from cost of separating and recycling:
 - 1) Sale of salvaged for resale products and materials revenue.
 - 2) Sale of the recycled products and materials revenue.
 - 3) Landfill tipping fees saved.
 - e. Proposed form for periodic documentation and monitoring of the program.
3. Upon approval of the draft by the owner, contractor shall submit, with the first application for payment, the final program that includes items in the draft and the following:
 - a. Description of the means by which waste materials selected for recycling will be protected from contamination, and a description of the means to be employed in recycling waste materials.
 - b. Description of the means of transportation of recyclable materials and the destination of the materials.

4. Revenues and fees earned by the recycling portion of the program shall [indicate arrangement for disposition of savings].
5. Owner shall have the right to receive and store, at the owner's expense, any existing or new, damaged or undamaged, used or unused, excess products or materials that are waste materials because they were not used. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: [List project specific items]

PART 2-PRODUCTS (Not Used)

PART 3-EXECUTION

A. Program Implementation: Contractor shall implement and maintain for the duration of the Project the construction waste management program approved by the owner. Contractor shall establish a method of documenting and monitoring the program, and shall submit a periodic report with each application for payment that includes the following:

1. Amount and type of material that is recycled, both volumetrically and by weight, including the means of transportation and the destination.
2. Amount and type of material disposed of in the landfill, both volumetrically and by weight.
3. Earned revenue and the tip fee savings.
4. Cost benefit to the Project and general effectiveness of the program.

B. Salvage and Reuse: Contractor shall encourage the practice of efficient waste management when using, sizing, cutting, and installing the products and materials required, and to reuse as many discarded original materials as possible that are within the limits of other specification requirements concerning material quality.

C. Separation of Recyclable Waste Materials:

1. Contractor shall provide the necessary containers and bins to facilitate the program that are clearly and appropriately marked. Contractor is responsible for preventing recyclable contamination from non-compatible products and materials.
2. Contractor shall separate construction waste by one of the following methods:
 - a. Source Separated Method: Waste products and materials that are recyclable are separated from trash and sorted into separate containers and then transported to the respective recycling facility for further processing. Trash is transported to the landfill.
 - b. Co-Mingled Method: All construction waste is placed into a single container and then transported to a recycling facility where the waste to the landfill and also pay the landfill tipping fee.
 - c. Other methods that are proposed by the Contractor and approved by the owner.

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Issue	Editorial Theme	Special Sections	Bonus Distribution
Jan/ Feb closes Nov.27	Schools & Daycare Centers: Demographic shifts and a tremendous surge of bond elections are generating school construction all over the state. This issue examines school design traditions, including historical planning.	1996 Exhibit of School Architecture: Featuring the winners of the 1996 Texas Association of School Boards Design Awards Competition.	Masonry & Concrete ☆Bonus space for ads in this section! Texas Association of School Business Officials San Antonio, Feb. 17-21 National Association of Elementary School Principals San Antonio, April 11
Mar/ Apr closes Jan. 23	Religious Architecture: How is the role of religious architecture within an increasingly complicated society changing the way architects design these structures? Changing liturgies, reforming congregations, and restoration will be the focus of this issue.	New Trends in Housing: How are architects responding to new lifestyles and shrinking budgets? See the latest innovations and ideas in the housing market.	Flooring ☆Bonus space for ads in this section! Texas Library Association Trade Show Fort Worth April 8-12
Practice Annual closes Mar. 5	Directory of Texas Architects and Guide to TSA: This invaluable directory contains names of all members of TSA and their firms, indexed and organized by chapter. Also included are TSA Bylaws, a guide to the Texas legislature, and profiles of TSA's three dozen committees.	Architects' Guide to Professional Consultants: For only \$255 each, professionals who provide services to architects will be featured in this valuable directory.	Buyers' Guide to Services and Products: Manufacturers and suppliers can reach Texas architects in this section. Buy space for \$255 or receive it free with a display ad in this issue. Clients, Owners, and Building Professionals This \$50 directory and resource guide reaches clients, government officials, and more — all year long.
May/ June closes April 11	Health Care Architecture: The two years since the last focus on this topic have brought many changes. New developments in managed-care and long-term care are creating changes in the function of hospitals and other health care facilities within the community.	Public Housing: This growing market challenges architects to find new solutions at less cost. How are Texas architects meeting this challenge in the 1990's?	Cladding & Exterior Finishes ☆Bonus space for ads in this section! Texas Hospital Association Houston, June 1-3 National Council of State Housing Agencies San Antonio, May 18-20
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special section

RENOVATION RESTORATION

Fair Park Restoration: A Case Study

EVEN AS TEXAS LEGENDS GO, the Fair Park story can only be described as bodacious. Sold with a flourish and built in a flash, it jump-started Dallas' post-Depression economy.

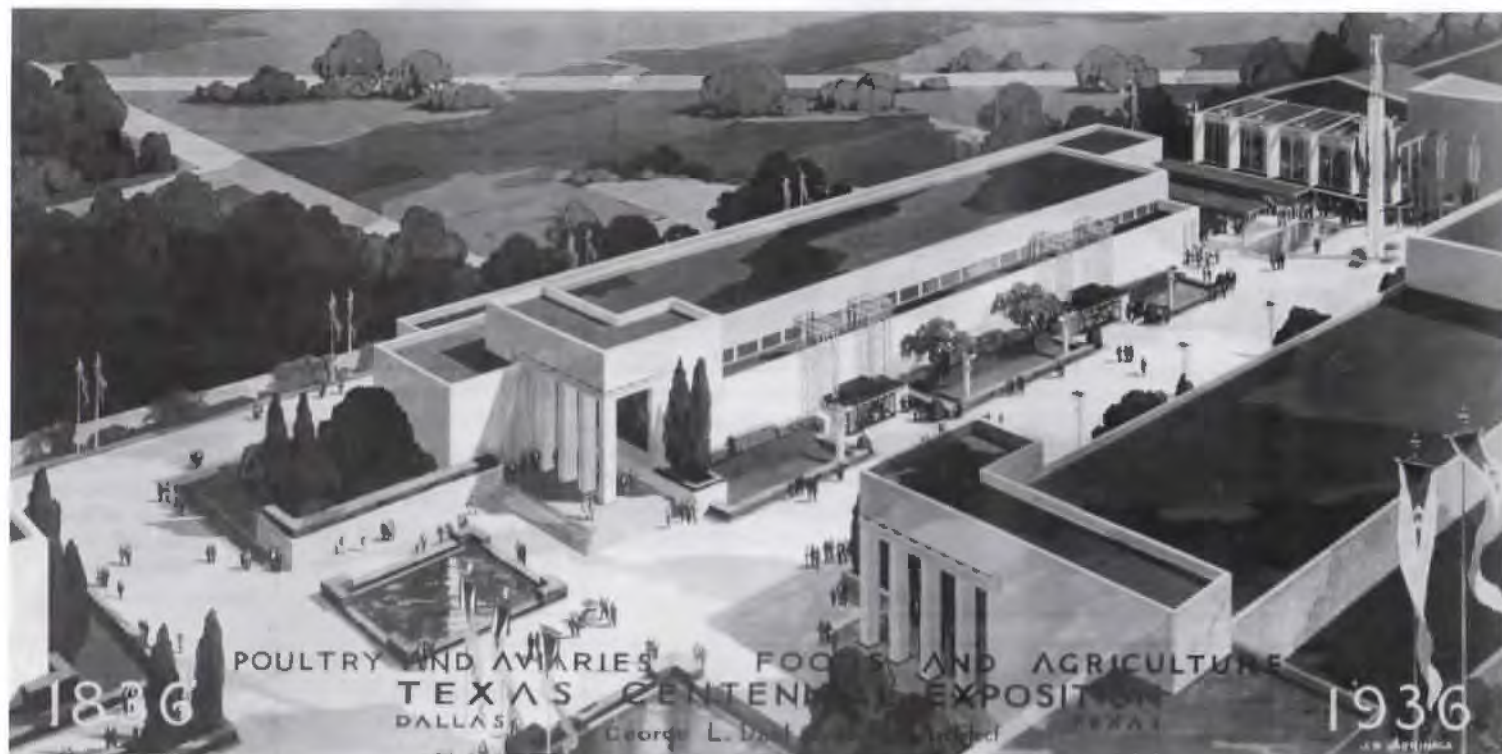
In 15 months architects, engineers, artisans and contractors built 26 major buildings. What could have easily been a slapdash effort survives today as the world's largest collection of public Art Deco buildings.

Surviving is not thriving however, and Fair Park's fortunes have changed considerably since the halcyon days of the Texas Centennial Exhibition. While several prominent institutions still call Fair Park their home, its once impressive infrastructure of roads, fountains, utilities, plazas and lagoons can be charitably described as aging and more accurately described as crumbling. A 1990 National Park Service inventory found that \$6.8 million would be required to repair and simply stabilize (not restore) the 12 most prominent structures. Those findings galvanized Fair Park's constituency which began a series of creative initiatives to reverse this decline.

The Food and Fiber Building is a case in point. In 1935, agriculture was the engine which drove Texas' economy and this exhibition building was intended to showcase the breadth, depth and variety of this industry. Designed by George Dahl, in his capacity as Executive Architect for the Texas Centennial, it occupied a prominent place at the gateway of the Agrarian District. Initially conceived simply as a poultry exhibit space, it was later renamed the Agriculture Building by Dahl to reflect a broader exhibit program. Construction was completed in 1936 at a final cost of \$130,000, and it is one of the few remaining unaltered Centennial buildings.

The hallmark of this building was a huge clerestory-lit exhibit hall. Its interior has been called the most refined of the 1936 exhibit halls and four large exterior murals celebrated agriculture themes. The largest of these was *The Reapers*, a 21' by 41' work, which depicted a band of determined wheat harvesters and overlooked the main portico.

Sixty years later, its defining features are quite different. Most of the year the building is not used, except by the Texas Department of Agriculture during the three-week State Fair. A leaky roof, boarded-up windows, structural damage best measured on a Richter scale, and past repair work which elevates the use of duct tape to an art form begins an extensive and sobering list of deficiencies. Most poignant are the murals which were painted over during World War II, reportedly to protect troops bivouacked on the park grounds, from the "corrupting influences" some saw in their content.



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While the case of renovation was clear, the means of funding it was not. Fortunately this changed in 1995 when the Friends of Fair Park and the City of Dallas (owner of the building) secured a \$900,000 grant for the Texas Department of Agriculture to stabilize the building. In early 1996, Good Fulton & Farrell was retained to assist in this effort and began by creating a comprehensive inven-

tory of significant building elements then detailing the scope of work necessary to restore them. This effort identified remedial work in 35 major categories totaling \$2,097,974. These were subsequently prioritized according to criticality and a Phase I work program was established.

Not surprisingly, the first order of business was to make the structure safe, restore the building envelope to a weather tight condition and make certain modifications which were important to the De-

partment of Agriculture. When the estimate for all such work was tabulated, it exceeded the initial grant and the City of Dallas provided supplemental funds to permit all of the most critical items to occur in Phase I. Ultimately, this allowed replacing the roof, related abatement of hazardous materials, stabilizing the structural frame, upgrading the building electrical system, and adding air conditioning to make the building a more desirable venue. This work is currently underway and will be completed in time for the 1997 State Fair of Texas.

Having stabilized the structure, the next priority will be to restore the remaining elements of the building to their former condition. Consistent with its designation on the National Register of Historical Places, all work will be completed in accordance with The Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Pending location of adequate funding, this phase will include restoration of the murals, opening and restoring the clerestory windows surrounding the main exhibition hall, rebuilding redwood aviaries on the south facade and reconfiguring the interior to remove restrooms and other service spaces which have crept into the main exhibition hall.

Duncan T. Fulton, FAIA

Duncan T. Fulton, FAIA is a principal in the Dallas firm Good Fulton & Farrell Architects. Scott Coldwell and Shan Davis contributed to this article.



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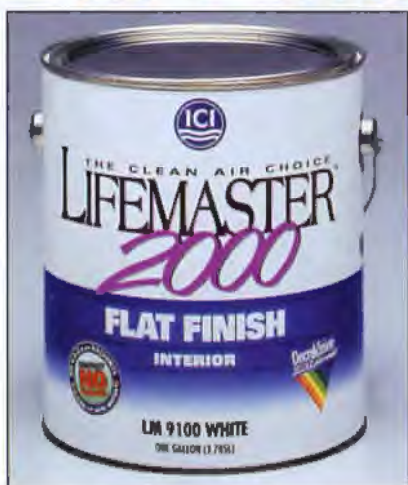
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The State of Texas Cities

By Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

Why do we live in cities? Since the dawn of humanity, people have come together for mutual support. First villages, then towns and cities provided the communal necessities of shelter, security, ceremony, and economic activity. Throughout history and around the world, many urban forms and organizations have satisfied these needs.

In the ancient city, the home and workplace were frequently within the same building. The shops of bakers, merchants, and craftsmen faced the street and their families lived upstairs or beyond the interior court. Even Roman patricians sold wine and made loans from the front rooms of their houses. Cities were dense and compact, shaped by requirements of defense, economy of construction, social relationships, and transportation means of the time. Rich and poor lived and worked side-by-side.

continued on next page

The integration of the ancient city, where all functions and necessities were mixed together, took its first major blow in the 18th century with new patterns of work created by the industrial revolution. The workplace was separated from the home as workers were gathered in factories. Other functions of the city started to fragment; changes in city organization and in family life are ongoing as new technologies restructure the workplace.

The second major change to city structure came in the 19th century with new forms of transportation. Trains and trolleys helped people escape crowded, polluted cities for the bucolic naturalistic surroundings of low-density residential suburbs while still working in the city. As the suburbs spread, eventually developing their own shopping and work districts, the traditional downtown became less important as the focus of economic and civic life. The final blow to classic patterns of urban development, both urban and suburban, came with the automobile and the destruction of the public-transit systems that had made the first suburbs possible and established the model for growth at the city's edge.

Spatial requirements for more roadways and parking to accommodate everyone's cars, along with the segregation of city functions into zoned homogeneous districts, make it difficult today to build the compact, multi-use, walkable districts found in the "traditional" city. Finding ways to reverse these centuries-old trends, to understand the nature of the modern city, and to design it for human habitation are the challenges we face with the approach of the sixth millennium of western civilization.

Cities Today

THE CITIES OF TEXAS, largely the products of post-World War II growth, reflect the main trends of the last 40 years: rapid decentralization through suburban sprawl made possible by federally subsidized highway construction, cheap land, and affordable personal transportation. As residential subdivisions expanded outward into farmland, businesses and services followed, leaving downtown to become a single-purpose district of office towers

surrounded by destitute inner-city neighborhoods.

Most of the problems of today's city are related to this suburbanization and the destruction of the traditional mixed-use urban core: declining economic and tax bases, troubled inner-city districts, traffic, pollution, and economic and cultural segregation. Government policies, especially zoning and



all photos on pp. 45-47 by Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

1 As citizens, we treasure the desirable qualities of urban life:

- 1 convenience (Chinatown, Manhattan, New York);
- 2 identity (Bukhara);
- 3 convenience (Plaza Campo Fiori, Rome);
- 4 culture (bookstalls, Paris);
- 5 community (Luxemburg Gardens); and
- 6 privacy (steps, Rome).



2



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freeway planning, have perpetuated the suburban model of homogenous districts of detached single-family housing isolated from commercial areas. The simplest daily activity is dependent on the car.

Long-range planning in the public interest is virtually nonexistent. Instead, small-scale planning happens ad hoc, project-by-project by private developers with short-term, quick-return interests. A balance must be found between public and private needs. We need a shared vision for what the city should be to enhance our lives. But it is a fact of life in Texas cities that there is a low level of public process in urban decision making. People don't know how or by whom the decisions are made that will have a substantial impact on the city and their lives. An educated, committed leadership with a vision for the future is needed to fill the vacuum.

A Positive Approach

AS THE PREVIOUS COMMENTS indicate, most discussions on the nature of the modern city have a negative premise: The high-density traditional city has eroded into a dilapidated core surrounded by sprawling suburbs where life is dependent upon the automobile. Typical urban problems, together with the demise of traditional spatial references, combine to form an urban conglomeration that can only be criticized.

A more positive approach to comprehending the contemporary city, however, would be to understand the current status not as the bad end of the

traditional city that must be repaired and returned to some imagined Arcadian state, but as an uneven phase in a gradual, non-linear cycle of change from concentrated density surrounded by low density to a more homogenous overall structure with a rich variety of micro-densities. There should not even be a distinction between “urban” and “suburban.”

Urban cores were once the concentrated focus of political and economic life. Expanding suburbs drained many functions from the city center, leaving downtowns without the diversity that made the traditional city vibrant. But now even the suburbs have developed nodes of high density, concentrating services required by the surrounding population. In time, these dense areas of “edge city” will also gradually break down as the population shifts and economies change. Movement back into deserted downtowns and gentrification of inner-city neighborhoods will further even out the overall density.

City growth may be likened to a pulse—first out, then back in—forming cycles of expansion and contraction that repeatedly seek to correct previous



4

deficiencies. Thus, the fact of urban decay is inevitable as various parts of the urban fabric expand and contract. In this light, it may not be suitable to see downtown as a place to be fixed, returned to its past uses. Downtown is no longer the heart or the focus of the urban megalopolis but just one area among many of density or specialization. The real problem is to find an appropriate role for the old downtown district as one part of a new city fabric consisting of many nuclei.

Are there lessons from the historic city that will serve us today to live and design with this cycle of growth and decay? One urban design concept, derived from compact traditional cities, that may have the most relevance to the many and varied parts of

the conurbation is the semi-self-sufficient neighborhood, variously called “urban village,” “neo-traditional neighborhood,” or “pedestrian pocket.” Consisting of a variety of housing types and income levels with schools, shopping, recreation, and work opportunities all within walking distance, neighborhoods are connected to each other and to nodes



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of specialized use (downtown, sports arenas, factories) by public transportation. New neighborhoods can be designed to this model and existing suburbs and inner-city districts can be repaired with these concepts.

This concept of neighborhood should be the basic planning module of the city. Unfortunately, these ideas by the “New Urbanists” are already being used to promote more suburbs, only differentiated from their predecessors by a stifling cloak of nostalgic historicism. Real structural changes in transportation, zoning ordinances, social services, and workplaces are required to make the model work, not just design codes for front porches.

By now, history has proven that the city cannot be constrained by a static pattern. Rather than a universal city design concept, we need a flexible attitude accepting multiple design concepts that are adaptable to social and economic change.

While the cyclic nature of urban change may be inevitable, the causes and effects of that change are not predetermined. Things will happen because of what we do and don't do. We can't afford to sit back and wait for the process to correct itself. It won't. It is especially dangerous to believe that economic or “market” forces will always balance out to the best advantage. History proves the contrary: Values driven by economic motives are the most in need of correction by other considerations, including public welfare and long-term problem solving.

Our goal as architects, designers, and planners of the physical environment is to understand the inevitability of this change and to design the most humane environment possible within each cycle. We cannot return to the past but we can learn from history that the qualities of urban life most suited to our welfare are community, privacy, identity, convenience, and culture. **TA**



6

Where We Live

In Houston, revitalization hits and misses

INNER-CITY REVITALIZATION is a hit-and-miss affair in Houston. In some neighborhoods, grassroots efforts have sparked new investment, especially in residential development. In other neighborhoods, grassroots planning efforts have resulted in big visions but, to date, modest results. And in one neighborhood, grassroots efforts seem to have been eclipsed by publicly funded redevelopment projects whose extent remains unclear but whose costs will be enormous. Race and class correlate with success: Neighborhoods where Anglo-American professionals are building and buying housing are Houston's inner-city success stories. Working-class Hispanic and African-American neighborhoods where Anglo-American professionals are not building and buying have not experienced visible turnarounds in perception or a rise in real-estate values.

Near-town neighborhoods northwest of downtown Houston—the Sixth Ward Historic District, Houston Heights, and the West End—are the success stories. Sixth Ward, the city's oldest intact neighborhood, has not experienced much new construction, but its modest wood cottages remain affordable enough to attract young professionals. The neighborhood's status as a National Register Historic District and its closeness to downtown make it attractive not only for residential rehabilitation but for commercial rehabilitation, such as Cameron Armstrong's conversion of the Hubig Pie Factory Building into the headquarters of Technical Risks, Inc., a speciality insurance company.

Historic-preservation advocacy is the backbone of revitalization efforts in Sixth Ward, and has been since Sixth Ward was "discovered" 20 years ago. Preservation has also been crucial to the revitalization of Houston Heights, a much larger, more varied neighborhood that is a National Register Multiple Resource Area. Victorian cottages and wood bungalows comprise much of the Height's housing stock, along with projects built during the last 10 years, such as Addington Court by William F. Stern & Associates and the Chadwick House by Carlos Jimenez. This neighborhood is perceived as so stable and desirable that developers have begun to build expensive single-family houses, even though the area is without deed restrictions. Thompson-Frater Architects has designed compatible in-fill housing in adjacent Woodland Heights, where unconventional houses by Peter Waldman and Wortham & Callis have also been built.

New developer-built housing clouds the future of the West End, a collection of modest, working-class neighborhoods developed around the turn of the century. Facing the drainage-ditch-lined streets of the West End are small wood cottages, many rented to Hispanic and African-American families. The affordability of these cottages first lured Houston artists to the West End in the 1970s. Since the late 1980s the West End has become famous for its Tin House architecture, houses surfaced with corrugated metal siding, many built for artists and architects. The Tin House phenomenon has attracted developers who, since 1995, have been building conventional suburban townhouse developments at a bewildering pace. New development threatens both the distinctive architectural look of the West End and its future as a predominantly minority, predominantly lower-income neighborhood. In 1992 and 1993, West End residents crafted a zoning plan to encourage mixed residential, commercial, institutional, and light industrial (i.e. artists' studios) uses, with provisions designed to frustrate multi-lot, single-use development. The defeat of the zoning referendum in 1993 left the West End defenseless against developers capitalizing on the West End's bohemian chic.

Once off the west-bound axis from downtown, it is not the problems of revitalization that trouble, but its slow pace. In Fifth Ward, northeast of downtown, Habitat for Humanity has constructed new single-family houses. Since

Neighborhoods are the places where we live in the city. In the pre-World War II town or city, the neighborhood was a place of identity that included schools, stores, parks, and some workplaces. Post-war developments lost this mixture of uses as residential suburbs were planned to be separated from any commercial activity, necessitating the use of the car for any simple errand. With the revival of "traditional" town-planning concepts, architects and urban designers hope to find new models for "sustainable" developments and for the repair of the inner city. As the basic building block of the city, the neighborhood needs to reclaim the diversity that brings not only convenience to daily life but identity for its residents, a sense of place within the megalopolis. GM



photos this page by Paul Hester and Lisa Carol Hardaway





3

1990, the grass-roots-based Fifth Ward Community Development Corporation has built 50 affordable houses in the area, which is African-American in the middle and Hispanic along its west and east edges. The current expansion of U.S. 59 through the center of the Fifth Ward is a vivid reminder of how these inner-city neighborhoods suffered in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s to provide the rights-of-way for massive new public infrastructure projects that tore through them without offering community compensation. In Fifth Ward, history repeats itself.

South of Buffalo Bayou and east of downtown lies the East End. Here, as in Fifth Ward, community-development corporations are the bodies most involved with revitalization. In 1994, the Second Ward Community Development Corporation built its first two houses, designed by architect Karen Hamilton. The most ambitious revitalization proposal is the Greater Third Ward Community Plan, compiled in 1994-95 for the Third Ward Redevelopment Council by a team led by planner Roberta F. Burroughs. The plan covers nearly 10 square miles southeast of downtown. It includes not only the historically African-American neighborhoods in Third Ward, but parts of the South End, the 1920s-1950s neighborhoods of Washington Terrace, Riverside Terrace, and Timber Crest, the Texas Medical Center, Hermann and MacGregor parks, the University of Houston, and, at the center of the plan, Texas Southern University. The dilemma faced by the Third Ward Redevelopment

Council is how it, as a non-governmental entity, can entice and coordinate development in a minority community that, despite areas of affluence, has lost substantial parts of its employment and service infrastructure. The weakness of the Greater Third Ward Plan is extrinsic: the historic inability of Houston's city government to orchestrate and support public-planning initiatives. Given the real time frame within which revitalization occurs (the developer booms in West End and the Heights are based on 20 years of concerted individual and community effort) and the goals of the Third Ward plan to foster public investment and community revitalization, not just opportunities for developers, success is dependent on breaking new ground in city-community relations and in holding city government to a much higher level of expertise and services than it has shown itself willing, or able, to deliver.

Fourth Ward, Houston's oldest African-American neighborhood, which lies just west of downtown, is where uncertainty about the role of Houston government bodies is most acute. Fourth Ward consists of late 19th- and early 20th-century neighborhoods (half of its 40 blocks constitute the Freedman's Town Historic District) and Houston's largest public housing complex, Allen Parkway Village (listed on the National Register as San Felipe Courts Historic District). These are the only two National Register historic districts in Houston listed at a national level of significance. The Housing Authority of the City of Houston obtained a

1 Turn-of-the-century shotgun houses on narrow lots are typical of ward neighborhoods.

2 Low-income, in-fill housing has been constructed in some of Houston's inner-city neighborhoods by organizations like Habitat for Humanity and others.

3 a map of greater Houston area: Dark lines show the city limits and ward boundaries as established in 1906 when the ward system for election of city council members changed; circled numbers show ward designations.

federal court order in July to clear Allen Parkway Village of its last residents, who for years have opposed the plans of the Housing Authority to demolish most of the complex and have developers build affordable housing on the site. At Allen Parkway Village and in Fourth Ward, residents have worked with architects (Morris Gutiérrez Architects at APV and Hill Swift, III, in Fourth Ward) to explore grassroots alternatives to the kind of redevelopment that would destroy the historic integrity of both communities and quite likely lead to gentrification.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has granted the Housing Authority \$50 million in HOPE VI and other funds for the "revitalization" of Allen Parkway Village and the surrounding low-income community (and the Housing Authority now seeks \$30 million more). Planning the revitalization of Fourth Ward is not the city or the community-based Fourth Ward Community Development Corporation, but the Houston Renaissance Foundation, headed by real estate broker and zoning opponent Julio Laguarda, with a board composed of representatives of real estate interests (some involved in previous attempts to radically alter Fourth Ward through massive redevelopment) and Houston architect Frank S. Kelly.

Redevelopment of Fourth Ward is apparently part of a larger plan by Houston Mayor Bob Lanier to let private-sector-developer know-how produce housing and revitalization in Houston. Investigative reporter Brian Wallstin, writing in *Houston Press* of July 11, 1996, about the mayor's Homes for Houston program (20,000 new units of federally subsidized housing to be built over the next three-and-one-half years), noted that the program has been realigned to finance new housing outside low-income neighborhoods and that the city is reducing its support of community development corporations and eliminating support of housing rehabilitation programs in favor of "new, for-profit built housing."

Although African-American residents of Fourth Ward want their historic community to be rehabilitated and improved with new social, economic, and educational services (which is what HUD's HOPE

VI program is supposed to achieve), their voices have not moved the foundation, the housing authority, or the city government. Like the successful rehabilitation efforts just across the bayou, grassroots resistance to what appears to be an urban-renewal-style program of redevelopment in Fourth Ward has been underway for nearly 20 years.

Experience suggests that where Houston inner-city neighborhoods have been successfully revitalized, it is because resident homeowners have made commitments to their communities, working for their improvement and conservation, not turning them into raw dirt for a round of publicly subsidized "private" development. Rather than supporting conservation efforts in minority neighbor-

En Houston, algunas vecindades centrales han estimulado nuevas inversiones residenciales al ser revitalizadas.

Otras vecindades enfrentan posible desaparición. Áreas tradicionalmente hispanas y afro-americanas sufren deterioro, mientras que regiones populares entre jóvenes profesionales se mantienen con éxito. Las causas de este patrón son complejas e involucran conflictos entre historicismo y economía.

Fourth Ward, al oeste del distrito central, es la vecindad afro-americana más antigua de Houston, y se compone de residencias centenarias. El potencial económico de esta región amenaza su permanencia. El área incluye distritos históricos a nivel nacional, los únicos en la ciudad, y sus habitantes luchan por su preservación.



Paul Hester and Lisa Carol Hardway

hoods, Houston currently seems bent on using federal funding to erase an African-American community that has the misfortune of being on the good side of downtown, and at the same time uncertain whether it will extend the kind of long-term support to other grassroots community groups that could reverse patterns of decline and stabilize historically low-income neighborhoods by making it possible for the people who live in these neighborhoods to buy housing there.

Stephen Fox

Stephen Fox is a Fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas; he lives in Houston.

1 Houston: Trolleys once connected the Fourth Ward to downtown.

2 San Antonio: The Alamo Market serves Southtown

and King William.

3 San Antonio: New restaurants like Babylon help make Southtown a destination.



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photos this page by Kevin Miltread

A Southtown Renaissance

WHEN THE FINE late 19th- and early 20th-century houses of San Antonio's King William Historic District regained their original luster after a long period of neglect, the abutting commercial district was slow to follow suit.

At the same time the residents were concerned about too little attention, they were concerned about too much—a plague of tour buses roaming the streets, a proliferation of bed-and-breakfast establishments, and the threat of incompatible redevelopment and insensitive street improvements.

Enter the Southtown Urban Main Street Program. Created in 1990 and designated an Urban Main Street Program agency in 1991, Southtown is a joint effort of two distinct neighborhoods—King William and Lavaca—that flank a trio of commercial streets running south from downtown. The organization promotes redevelopment and business recruitment, runs political interference on policy and infrastructure issues, offers design assistance, and sponsors arts-related programs.

In addition, Southtown developed a comprehensive master plan based on a charette conducted by a national Urban Main Street Program team. That planning effort helped assure that Southtown's interests would be served by planning for the Mission Trails, a system of improved streets and hike-bike trails linking downtown with the historic Spanish missions. "A big accomplishment was to get ahead of Mission Trails," says architect Irby Hightower, a Southtown volunteer. "In the first round of community meetings, we said 'We'd like to show you this master plan and how Mission Trails should be developed.' We had far less conflict because we could give them all the reasons."

Improvements in the appearance and liveliness of the commercial corridor are clearly visible, but

far from pervasive. Change is most evident on South Alamo Street, where a coffee bar, a moderately expensive restaurant, and several professional offices have opened in renovated historic buildings, and where longstanding businesses have painted their buildings in a tasteful palette (some might suggest too-tasteful) recommended by the Urban Main Street program's architectural office.

A few blocks to the south, on Presa Street, a window booth at the popular Taco Haven restaurant affords a view of a less gentrified version of neighborhood revitalization. On one corner, a laundromat's concrete block rear wall, formerly covered with graffiti, now sports a Terry Ybanez mural celebrating labor organizer Emma Tenayuca. On another corner a former bar has been painted burnt orange with floral swag highlights and is occupied by a gift and antique shop. On the third corner, a modest mission revival building is boarded up, an irregular band of new gray paint covering the graffiti on its faded hospital-green exterior. But that building has been purchased by a neighborhood doctor, who is renovating a former residence on an adjoining lot for a medical clinic.

Taco Haven owner Jerry Torres says he will soon open a bakery next door to his restaurant. His brother is preparing to open a hamburger restaurant at the other end of the same retail strip. Just beyond is a cluster of three turn-of-the-century buildings that had become a rundown tenement; a small developer has handsomely renovated them, painted them vibrant colors, and reopened the complex as 11 moderate-income apartments.

But the best sign of change is around the corner, where the Pig Stand's historic concrete pig-shaped food stand is being restored. **Mike Greenberg**

Mike Greenberg is a writer for the San Antonio Express-News and a TA contributing editor.

En San Antonio se creó, en 1990, un programa de desarrollo económico para el área sur del distrito central. Southtown (su apodo) hoy disfruta de un renacimiento urbano con nuevos comercios, remodelación física e inversiones prometedoras. Las vecindades King William y Lavaca unieron fuerzas para realizar mejoras a sus comunidades, por medio de una organización que promueve negocio y actividades culturales.

La organización de Southtown además participó políticamente en la planificación de los Caminos de las Misiones, al proponer un calculado plano maestro al gobierno nacional.

A Luminous Jewel

By Mike Greenberg

THE SKYSCRAPER, WE ARE TOLD, was made possible by the high-speed elevator and made necessary by rapid business expansion in an era before fax machines, e-mail, and teleconferencing.

Yes, but the best skyscrapers did more than just mark the place where the limitations and possibilities of technology intersected. They expressed the strivings and hopes of urban culture in the buoyant youth of the 20th century.

No skyscraper in Texas so symbolizes its city or mesmerizes the eye as the Tower Life Building in San Antonio. For a time after its completion in 1929 it was the tallest building west of the Mississippi—404 feet to the top of its copper lantern—but the building doesn't dominate by dint of height; several comparably tall newer buildings hide it from some perspectives. Rather, this building's special magnetism derives from felicities of site—the way it is framed by certain strategic urban canyons and avenues—and from its assured bearing.

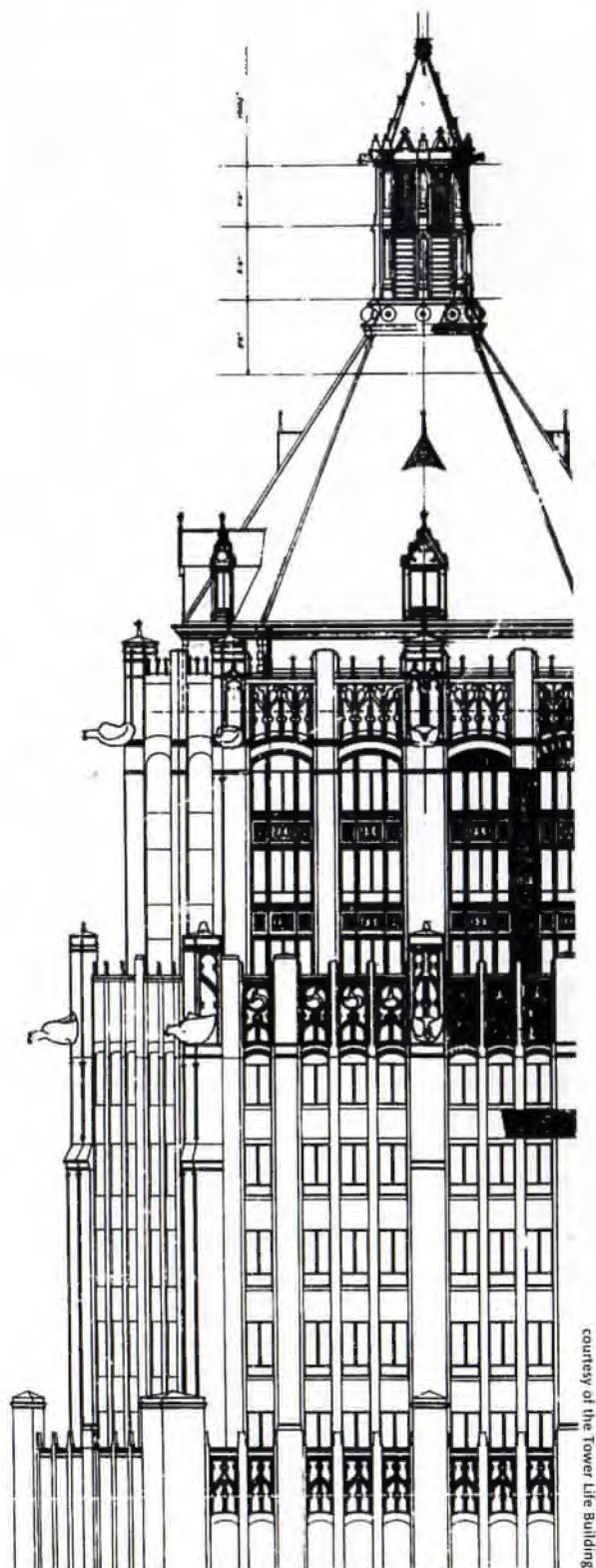
Father and son Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres were the most prominent San Antonio architects of the 1920s. Ayres & Ayres designed several other nearby buildings—the Plaza Hotel, the A.B. Frank Co. wholesale building, a Federal Reserve Bank branch, all still in use, though for new purposes—for Smith Brothers Properties, Inc., between 1926 and 1928. The centerpiece of this cluster, and the Ayres' masterpiece, would be the Smith-Young Tower, named for the principals in the development firm, brothers J.H. and F.A. Smith, and their attorney J.W. Young. The irregular six-story base was designed for a Sears Roebuck & Co. store. The octagonal tower would be speculative office space.

Very speculative, as it turned out. Wall Street crashed a few months after the building opened. The Smith-Young Tower fell under the control of the courts in 1932. But recovery came. The San Antonio Transit Company bought the building in 1942 and sold it to contractor H.B. Zachry the following year. Called the Transit Tower, it served for a while as headquarters for the Third Army. The building was renamed the Tower Life Building, for Zachry's Tower Life Insurance Co., in 1955. Lovingly maintained by its owner, the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. Despite a glut of downtown office space, the Tower Life Building is fully leased.

The style is Gothic Revival with a Southwest accent. The octagonal plan of the brick-and-terra-cotta tower responds in part to the obtuse angle formed by the abutting streets. The octagon is bilaterally symmetrical, with two long sides, two short ones and four in between; from most perspectives, the viewer sees facades with three distinct bay divisions, giving the building a dynamic rhythm in the horizontal dimension that complements and curiously emphasizes the assertive vertical lines. Adding further stress to the verticality are setbacks at the twentieth, twenty-fourth, and thirtieth floors—terra-cotta gargoyles project from the vertices at the top two setbacks—and a dormered pyramidal roof, which is clad in green-glazed clay tile and surmounted by a copper lantern. The setback terraces accommodate intense uplighting, which gives the upper floors the character of a brilliant, luminous jewel at night.

Thanks to masterful subtleties of form and detail, the building is dignified but lively, commanding but light on its feet, richly detailed but not flamboyant, proud but not to the point of hubris. But let's cut to the chase: The thing is just flat-out, heart-stopping gorgeous.

TA



Dream Landscapes

By Barry Moore, FAIA

I GUESS I'VE LIVED IN HOUSTON TOO LONG. Although I appreciate what good zoning can do for neighborhoods, there is a little piece of me deep inside that cheers for anarchy. I like the way that my big, ugly city stimulates benighted visionary builders of folk-art environments to work from the inside out with unfettered creativity.

Often—even frequently—I will go out of my way on my appointed corporate and professional rounds to pass by the Orange Show, or the Beer Can House, or the Fan Man's house, just for the hell of it. These driven folk have taken ordinary houses on ordinary lots and turned them into dream landscapes, with nothing but roadside junk as their building materials. About the most you can say about these constructions from a city ordinance frame of reference is that they don't block the sidewalk and they are bolted down reasonably tightly.

Maybe the appeal of these places is that we see so much urban junk, it's a real kick in the pants to see someone use it aesthetically and without irony.

I'm used to Houston being laughed at by more-or-less pretentious municipalities who have zoned themselves up in the most commendable ways. My home town is full of what in the rest of the South is a rural art form, and has given it a warm welcome in a randomly vital inner city. It's a fair trade out, in my opinion.

TA



Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

Neighborhood Civility

By Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

MY ONLY RESPITE FROM AN OVERLOADED COURSE schedule and archi all-nighters was to take walks through the oak-canopied Houston neighborhoods around the university. On one of my first perambulations, I discovered this drinking fountain and have paused many times in the years since to reflect on its considerate civility.

Placed near the sidewalk but well away from the 1920s-era house, the cast-iron fixture was obviously intended for the convenience of passersby or the gardener. Even more thoughtful is its three-layered design: The brilliant white porcelain top burbles water for man; halfway down the stem a bowl protrudes, catching unused water for the dog; remaining water drains into the base well for smaller creatures, a bird bath.

It still worked when I found it back in the mid-60s, but now the neighborhood is "gated," so I doubt if any pedestrians pass by today to have their thirst quenched and their dog watered.

TA



Gerald Moorhead, FAIA



Craig Blackmon, AIA

Moving Around

In Dallas, public input influences change

The shape and organization of our towns and cities have been largely determined by transportation systems. Earliest settlements congealed on trade routes, along railroad tracks, and at river crossings with grid plans brought from the old world. The all-pervasive use of the automobile brought a new low density to cities and freeways became armatures for sprawl. The density of traditional cities dissolved as the population seeped into the surrounding countryside.

Transportation systems are starting to reverse this outward movement. While it may be argued that freeways have always served to bring workers into downtown, they have more strongly encouraged those workers to live further away. Where freeways promote diffusion, the rail systems underway and under consideration in several Texas cities may encourage density along their routes since trains can carry people faster and cheaper than freeways. This increased capacity can bring more people into downtown for work and leisure activities.

Freeways, though, are still having their traditional negative effects upon the small towns they bypass. Town squares are being deserted as businesses move out to the interchange to be near the traffic. GM

DURING THE COURSE of major growth in the Dallas/Fort Worth area since World War II, transportation planning has been hard at work, reacting to the needs and forces generated by that growth and the resulting demographic shifts. In large part, however, the transportation projects constructed during this period were planned without the help of the community-at-large.

A familiar anecdote among architects and planners tells of a university that didn't construct sidewalks when a new section of the campus was built. The designers waited to see where paths were worn as the students walked from place to place. Only then were the sidewalks built, laid on top of those user-drawn paths.

City-wide transportation systems have often been developed in a similar fashion. As users overcrowd a part of the system, a solution is devised: a road is widened, bus routes are added. But while such reactive planning may solve an immediate problem, other issues often go unaddressed.

A transportation system is the skeleton upon which a region's growth patterns develop; like a skeleton, roads, airports, and mass-transit systems provide linkages and give form. However, when a transportation system is more reactive than planned, the body it supports—the built environment—may reflect its inadequacies. In the same way, projects that reflect the needs and desires of the users may help create a built environment that also meets those needs.

Past Projects

AS A CITY'S TRANSPORTATION infrastructure evolves, the city itself evolves in response. The way in which the infrastructure pieces are designed determines the tone for the adjacent land-use patterns and the larger neighborhood; those patterns gradually evolve into the built environment.



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For example, what is now IH-30 between Dallas and Fort Worth was originally constructed as a toll road. It was designed to carry automobiles in the most cost-effective way between the two downtowns; as such it had no frontage roads and few access points. This design meant that opportunities for development along its route were limited. On the other hand, North Central Expressway, built to move commuters from the northern suburbs to downtown Dallas, followed a different design model, including frontage roads and numerous entry and exit points. Development along that corridor boomed, so much so that, within a few years of its completion, Central was beyond capacity.

Other pieces of the transportation infrastructure have a similar impact upon the built environment; in fact, the impact of some projects, like the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, may be felt far outside the immediate area, affecting land-use patterns in the entire region.

Present Projects

ALTHOUGH THE NEEDS OF THE USER have always been an important influence on transportation planning, only in recent years has the public become more directly involved. In Dallas this public involvement has brought innovations and improvements as well as some compromises on the part of transportation planners and designers.

If the original design of North Central Expressway turned its back on the adjacent neigh-

borhoods, the current redevelopment of the corridor is another story. The reconstruction of 10 miles of the expressway from downtown north to IH-635 involves increasing the roadway from four lanes to eight (see "News," *TA*, March/April 1993). At least partly because of an increased level of awareness on the part of—and pressure from—neighborhood groups, property owners, and other civic and business groups, the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), for the first time ever, hired an architect to participate in the design of a highway project. The Dallas office of Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, along with a team of landscape architects, urban designers, and civil engineers, developed design guidelines for all of the visible elements of the project: retaining walls, bridges, lights, signage, streetscape, and landscape.

A related kind of public pressure affected the planning and design of Dallas Area Rapid Transit's (DART) recently inaugurated light-rail system (see "News," *TA*, July/Aug 1996). Although demographics and anticipated usage patterns were primary factors in DART's route plans, public reaction—often negative—to the proposed routes and station locations led the planners to rethink their strategy and, in more than one case, to utilize routes and station locations that were second choices.

In another way public influence has benefited the light-rail system. Faced with a potential client population firmly wedded to its cars and possibly hostile to a transit organization with a history of funding and planning confusion, DART needed to create a system with an attractive image, one of safety, security, and ease of use. To create that image, DART has made a substantial investment in the architectural character of its stations, hiring Sasaki Associates, Inc., and the Oglesby Group (now Oglesby-Green Architects) to design a downtown transit mall, and HOK to create a prototype and design guidelines for the outlying stations; other architects were hired to implement those guidelines on a station-by-station basis.

In the cases of both North Central and the light-rail system, public input—some would say pressure—combined with a commitment of financial resources has led to the creation of transportation infrastructure that is better than it had to be. The reborn North Central corridor and the DART stations do more than meet an immediate need; in both cases, the infrastructure establishes a new tone for the surrounding areas. The level of quality displayed in these projects should set the stage for responsive and responsible development in the areas they serve.

1 The northern four miles of the reconstruction of Dallas's North Central Expressway are completed; all visible elements of the project were designed by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum.

2 light-rail station in Dallas's downtown transit mall by the Oglesby Group (now Oglesby-Green Architects)

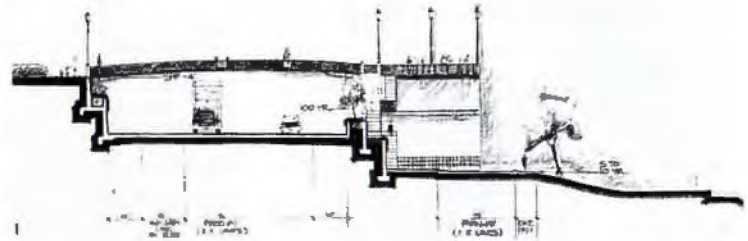
Future Projects

A NUMBER OF transportation projects are underway or under consideration in Dallas: extension of the DART light-rail system; reconstruction of LBJ Freeway in north Dallas; a satellite airport in south Dallas; and construction of the George Bush Tollroad in far north Dallas. All have drawn the public's attention and input. But the true test of public participation in the planning of the city's transportation system may come with the design of a plan for the Trinity River corridor.

Although the project is currently defined only in broad terms, some components include development of a system of parks and recreation areas in the river's flood plain; addition of new flood-control technology; and construction of new roads allowing access to the parks and relieving congestion on IH-35. The U.S. Corps of Engineers is moving ahead with the flood-control upgrade and TXDOT has begun planning for a new IH-30/IH-35 interchange and a new highway paralleling the river corridor.

The project involves not only transportation issues, but also questions of flood control, the environment, recreation, and economic development. The test is whether the will of the public, the sensitivity of the designers, and the leadership of policy makers can give equal acknowledgement to each of these

1 A preliminary scheme for development of Dallas's Trinity River corridor would include a freeway inside existing flood-control levees, with northbound lanes on the north side of the river and southbound lanes on the south side. A parkway and bike lanes adjacent to the freeway would allow access to proposed parks and recreation areas to be built in the flood plain. Rendering courtesy of the Trinity River Citizens Committee.



factors. Can the components be integrated or will they—as has happened all too often in our cities—be addressed linearly, one at a time?

Reagan George, FAIA

Reagan George is managing principal of the Dallas office of Lockwood Andrews & Newnam/Leo A. Daly and chairman of the Greater Dallas Planning Council.

Form follows bypass

IN THE PUSH TO MAKE traveling by car from big city to big city as fast as possible, historic downtowns have been bypassed and travel made faster but more monotonous. These highway bypasses have significantly changed the physical form of small cities and towns, with little consideration given to the long-term effects. In the search for sensible design, several issues must be considered.

What is the effect on the historic downtown (Figure 1)? Elimination of noisy truck traffic and fast-moving through traffic can sometimes make for a more pedestrian- and shopper-friendly environment; examples are Georgetown and La Grange. However, elimination of traffic may cause businesses to fail and buildings to be boarded up, which is exactly what has happened in Columbus and elsewhere. In larger communities, a new shopping area may develop adjacent to the bypass. Then the strip between downtown and the new shopping area gets additional commercial development (Figure 2). Again the downtown suffers—just look at Plainview, Sulphur Springs, or Greenville.

What is the effect citywide? Old commercial properties are abandoned for new sites on the bypass and become unsightly. It is difficult to interest anyone in converting the property to residential or agricultural use because of the perceived higher value of commercially zoned property. The term bypass implies getting around an area quickly,



Paul Hester and Lisa Carol Hardway

which should imply limited access. However, the political reality, based on expectations of greater income for property owners and taxing entities, is that areas adjacent to the bypass get strip-zoned commercial. Borderline businesses spring up, eventually requiring construction of more continuous left-turn lanes or additional traffic signals (Figure 3).

The livability and historic character of a town are affected by transportation decisions too often based only on efficiency criteria and vague expectations of new wealth instead of on a more holistic consideration of transportation needs, economic data, comprehensive design, and community desire.

Dick Ryan and Kevin Milstead

Dick Ryan and Kevin Milstead are architects at the Texas Main Street Program of the Texas Historical Commission.

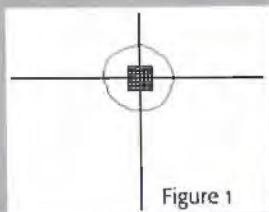


Figure 1

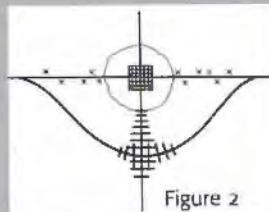


Figure 2

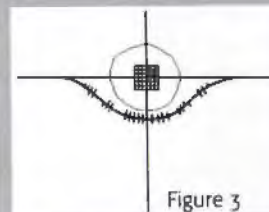


Figure 3

Sketches by Kevin Milstead



More Roads for Houston

FOR THE NEAR FUTURE, Houston is committed to meeting its transportation needs primarily by constructing more roadways. While some of these projects will improve the city's transportation system, others seem ill-conceived, even unnecessary.

For several years, METRO (Houston's Metropolitan Transit Authority) has been developing a project, known as Transit Streets, for the redesign, reconfiguration, and reconstruction of 13 downtown streets. Seven north-south streets, primarily west of Main Street, and three pairs of east-west streets will change significantly. Portions of the work will also extend south to the Medical Center area.

The project should provide better access to park-and-ride routes and better transfer service; relieve the impact on Main Street of heavy bus traffic; and improve the streetscape. Plans call for streets to be removed and rebuilt; sidewalks widened with new bus shelters, graphics, and street furniture; and trees planted. On-street parking is to return in some areas where it has not been allowed for decades, including Main Street. These improvements are sorely needed and, if completed, would encourage use of the bus system, reduce traffic, and make downtown more pedestrian-friendly. However, the project is on hold pending resolution of a suit challenging METRO's "good faith" effort encouraging use of minority and underutilized businesses as required by federal funding.

Other aspects of the downtown transit picture are also unresolved. Progress on a southside transfer terminal on Main at IH-45 seems to be in limbo, with many questions unanswered: Will one transfer facility be adequate or should there also be transfer stations on the north, east, and west sides? The Downtown Management District has proposed a transit-to-tunnel superstop at Main and Lamar, but

how will that be coordinated with METRO? Should some kind of downtown circulator be implemented to allow movement around downtown with minimal cost and effort?

While Houston has seen its share of freeway work in recent years, the work is far from over; however, several proposed new routes are of questionable value.

U.S. 59 North is currently undergoing a major reconstruction from downtown north to Beltway 8. The outer sections are well along, while the portions closer to downtown are last in line. The major interchange at IH-10 has not begun, but the downtown section from IH-10 to IH-45 is well under way. This fall the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will remove and reconstruct first the southbound then the northbound lanes of IH-45 south of downtown. Curiously, all this work will not enlarge the capacity of the freeway.

TxDOT also planned to rebuild U.S. 59 South from Shepherd to the Midtown exit. The original proposal added two high-occupancy-vehicle lanes above the existing 12 elevated lanes. However, adjacent neighborhoods organized and convinced TxDOT to cancel its plans for this area.

Just when the situation seemed to be on an even keel, TxDOT announced two more projects: the construction of what was originally designated as Texas 35, planned over 15 years ago, beginning near the University of Houston and proceeding to Alvin, and the reconstruction and enlargement of South Main Street (U.S. 90A) from Loop 610 South to U.S. 59 South near Missouri City.

These projects seem redundant and unnecessary. State Highway 288 provides adequate access south to Pearland and Alvin. Perhaps Texas 35 should stop at Loop 610 South, giving relief to IH-45 and giving UH the chance to realign its eastern boundary as well as improving access to the campus. The South Main work appears to conflict with Mayor Bob Lanier's emphasis on redeveloping the inner city. Instead of coordinating with what Houston wants and needs, TxDOT is making it even easier to get to the ever-expanding suburbs.

Joe Webb

Joe Webb is president-elect of AIA Houston.

1 Following a decade in which several rail-based mass-transit schemes were defeated, Houston has chosen to meet its transportation needs primarily by constructing additional highways and other roads; many existing highways are currently undergoing reconstruction, including U.S. 59 North and IH-45 south of downtown.



Photo and rendering courtesy of Sinclair Black, FAIA

1

1 IH-35 through Austin has formed a barrier between downtown and East Austin since its construction in 1952, hampering economic development efforts. New design proposals that would re-link the two sides of the city are an outgrowth of R/UDAT recommendations and work by the Downtown Austin Alliance.

2 A scheme developed by Sinclair Black, FAIA, in conjunction with the Downtown Austin Alliance would re-establish the historic street grid by lowering IH-35, limiting access to the freeway through downtown, and freeing land for development along existing rights-of-way.

New partners plan Austin

SEVERAL EMERGING transportation and planning projects in Austin are being shaped by focused citizen groups and a coalition of transportation, design, planning, and business professionals. Among these projects, the redesign and reconstruction of IH-35 through downtown Austin, combined with the option of a light-rail component, has the most potential to alter the form of the city since the freeway was built in 1952, as well as to increase political stress in a city known for land-use related conflict.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) has concluded that regional growth and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have combined to require substantial modifications to IH-35 soon, even if a by-pass is constructed east of the city. As a response to these needs, as well as to the citizen input requirements of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), TXDOT recently presented a design to the Downtown Austin Alliance, a public/private partnership formed to rescue downtown. The proposal included elevated off-ramps at 15th, 12th, 9th, and 8th streets, as well as sunken lanes for through traffic and collector/distributor lanes to channel traffic to the elevated off-ramps.

Response by DAA members and others to the initial proposal was uniformly negative, according to DAA Project Director Lucy Buck. Most comments focused on the broad negative impact on the city fabric, specifically the way the plan worked against DAA's goal of including East Austin in downtown development plans. DAA then prevailed upon Austin architect Sinclair Black, FAIA, to propose an alternative; Black designed a scheme that reconnects the historic city grid over a sunken IH-35. The design allows for the recapture of signifi-



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cant right-of-way for economic development through new construction and the elimination of the fly-over ramps. While there are numerous issues to be resolved concerning capacity and vehicular access, the design is a clear advocate for urban quality of life compared to the scheme initially proposed by TXDOT. Importantly, quality of life is an explicit goal of ISTEA and the Major Investment Study (MIS) required by the law as part of improvement designs, as well as a continuing focus of the R/UDAT and other formally adopted plans.

Related to the IH-35 work is the recently completed Mobility Action Plan commissioned by Capitol Metro that included the Downtown Austin Alliance, city and county representatives, TXDOT, and others as participants. Focusing on pedestrian accessibility, parking management issues, and development goals, the plan attempts to project and respond to growing pressures on the infrastructure. Surprisingly, the most common-sense urban design proposal discussed in the plan—converting several one-way downtown streets to two-way traffic—was recently rejected by the Austin City Council. Informed small businesses see a two-way system as a



definite plus, but opposition to the proposal was vocal. The vote came on the heels of a previous council vote to eliminate the recently created position of pedestrian coordinator. Perhaps the council should have tried to walk to the new downtown post office before they voted. To its credit, Capitol Metro's production of the Mobility Action Plan covers a lot of urban design ground, and includes a wide range of participants.

Historically, land-use planning in Austin has been subject to confrontation more often than coordination. In response to this unconstructive dy-

namic, a Citizens Planning Committee chaired by architect Ben Heimsath has been formed to evaluate neighborhood planning initiatives and provide early neighborhood participation in the zoning approval process. Council member Jackie Goodman, among others, has blazed the local trail for constructive public participation, and these efforts are beginning to take root in the form of plans for the reuse of Robert Mueller Municipal Airport.

While the Citizens Planning Committee attempts to formalize this process through modifications to the land-development code, a group led by University of Texas architecture faculty member Kent Butler has conducted a series of charettes producing designs for the soon-to-be-abandoned Mueller; the Community Vision Project, which also addressed the 3rd to 5th street corridor in East Austin, was substantially funded by Capitol Metro. A significant dynamic of these sessions, in addition to the participation of neighborhood groups, potential developers, merchants, and environmentalists, is that architects retained their traditional role as designers throughout the process, thus reinforcing the client-professional relationship. Recent trends in similar workshops put the pen in untrained hands in the name of inclusion, perhaps at the expense of a more productive and efficient working relationship.

Each of these projects illustrates the complexity and difficulty of designing and building a city. Together, they indicate a glacially paced but long-overdue shift toward including the city dweller as an active participant in the design process.

Vincent P. Hauser

3 The Downtown Mobility Action Plan, prepared by Capitol Metro, advocates a mixture of one- and two-way streets, shifting the current dominance of the one-way street grid.

4 As Austin looks toward the move to the new Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, various plans have been discussed for reusing Robert Mueller Municipal Airport. Shown is one of three schemes developed during a series of workshops organized by Kent Butler, a planner at UT Austin School of Architecture. The plans include neighborhood-oriented retail, services and offices along Airport Boulevard, and single- and multi-family housing at the interior of the site.

Dallas Desde los años '40 el área de Dallas/Fort Worth ha crecido a ser un gran centro metropolitano, y su planificación de transporte urbano no ha sido siempre adecuada. La autopista 75, que conecta el Centro de Dallas y sus afueras, nunca fue un medio totalmente eficiente. En el presente, ésta carretera se expande a ocho carriles, y se inaugura un nuevo sistema de tren urbano. Muchos ciudadanos del área participan en los nuevos planes, e intentan integrar todas las variables involucradas.

By-Pass Muchas autopistas hoy en día no atraviesan distritos centrales históricos, y como consecuencia, algunos pueblos pierden su calidad urbana. Autopistas marginales tienden a convertirse en zonas comerciales, y atraen los negocios de áreas más antiguas. Este patrón causa el abandono de regiones históricas e importantes edificios. Muchas veces la planificación de transporte vehicular se concentra en eficiencia inmediata, e ignora factores fundamentales de urbanismo.

Houston La ciudad de Houston está comprometida

a mejorar su circulación de transporte, por medio de construcción de más carreteras. Oficiales de la ciudad han propuesto reconfigurar varias calles centrales, pero el proyecto se enfrenta a oposición. Por otro lado, el Departamento de Transporte de Texas continúa aprobando nuevas expansiones a autopistas. En una ciudad muy necesitada de calidad de vida urbana, lo único que aparenta mejorar es el transporte hacia sus afueras.

Austin Debates sobre uso de tierras en Austin siempre ha causado más contratiempos que decisiones. Varios esquemas sobre la reconfiguración del segmento urbano de la autopista IH-35 son base del último tema de discusión. El Departamento de Transporte de Texas propone aumentar el número de rampas que conectan con las calles centrales, mientras que Sinclair Black prefiere conectar el este y oeste de Austin por encima de una autopista bajo puentes. Cada uno de estos proyectos ilustra la complejidad y dificultad envuelta en la creación de ciudades.



all photos by Mark Gunderson unless noted

Art and the City

By Mark Gunderson

Arts institutions, especially museums displaying traveling blockbuster exhibitions, have become big business and are congregating into arts districts in cities around the state. Art museums, galleries, children's museums, historical and science museums, and performance halls for music, dance, plays, and opera, represent the breadth of Texas culture.

On the edge of downtown Dallas, the Arts District is anchored by the Museum of Art and the Meyerson Symphony Center, while artists and galleries congregate in Deep Ellum.

Houston's art scene happens in several districts: performing arts in the Theater District downtown, fine arts in the Museum District on Main Street, galleries and artist lofts in the warehouses east of downtown, and groups of galleries around the city. A new art/cultural center is planned for El Paso as the Art Museum renovation begins and the new Arts Festival Plaza is planned to connect the Convention Center with

San Jacinto Plaza in the heart of downtown. But Fort Worth is where most of the recent action has taken place, including the area in downtown around Sundance Square and in the Cultural District to the west around the Kimbell and Amon Carter museums.

These and other arts-related projects around the state indicate not only the vitality of arts programs and institutions but the recognition of the place of art in the quality of life. Of great importance is the use of these facilities and activities to enrich the downtown environment. GM

"WESTERN CIVILIZATION" IS THE BINOMIAL expression promoted by the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce to describe the unique blend of "wild west" history and "fine" arts in the city. Fort Worth has quietly, yet assuredly, established a national, and even international, reputation as an arts center, while reconciling its colorful past with a higher public sensibility. Art critic Hilton Kramer was quoted earlier this year in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* regarding the visual arts: "If you have a passion for great paintings, you're better off going to Fort Worth than San Francisco. The scenery may be more fetching in San Francisco, but the quality of art is greater in Fort Worth."

Ongoing reductions in public funding for the arts have had only marginal effects on the growth of community arts institutions and facilities in Fort Worth, due largely to the philanthropy of a few local patrons and their respective foundations fulfilling or assisting public planning, filling gaps, or many times simply positing their own visions. Fort Worth's long history of such personal contributions includes the Amon Carter Museum (1961), Kimbell Art Museum (1972), and the Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art (1982), as well as any number of other lower profile yet crucial bequests and arts grants. Individual support of such endeavors has typically carried with it, however, a carefully orchestrated public component. Tax abatements, matching grants, corporate sponsorship, and other more intricate forms of leveraging have become the fiscal vocabulary for this work, as they have in most cities.

This growth in both the public and private art realms continues to gain momentum. A number of major arts-related projects are currently proposed or underway in Fort Worth, including two new museums, two new downtown contemporary arts centers, studies for a museum expansion and remodeling, a downtown movie theater/retail complex, and a 2,000-seat multiuse performing-arts hall presently under construction.

With the exception of university art programs, the physical location of these Fort Worth arts-related entities historically has been focused in two main areas—downtown and the near westside Cultural District. Although the typological distinction that exists, for example, in Houston by its demarcation of

Theater District and Museum District, is not so categorical in Fort Worth, these two areas are nonetheless fairly well defined within the city as a whole. Complementary yet discrete, they each have mirroring outdoor arts festivals in the spring that reflect their special characteristics.

Sixty years ago, in preparation for the Texas Centennial and in competition with Dallas for the Fair Park celebration, Amon Carter, Sr., led the city in the creation of a district west of downtown that included the original Casa Manana outdoor theater, Will Rogers Auditorium, Pioneer Palace, and Pioneer Tower. Its large structures "floated" on an open lawn in a triangular space generated by intersecting urban grids; in the 1970s, with the completion of the Kimbell, it generally came to be known as the Cultural District. For years, the Stock Show, which also utilizes these buildings, was known as a "livestock exposition," and the area does have a 19th-century French quality.

At the time, the only public art gallery was in the original 1901 Carnegie library downtown. Established in 1892, the Fort Worth Art Gallery Association had made early acquisitions of Inness, Eakins, and other notable contemporary artists. In 1936, the year of the state centennial, the library was demolished and rebuilt in art deco style; the new structure incorporated the new Fort Worth Museum of Art. This entity would grow to become the present Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, and would eventually relocate (in 1956) to the Cultural District in a building by Bauhaus faculty member Herbert Bayer.

Spaces for performances such as symphony, dance, and voice had been created in several locations around the city. The first Opera House was constructed downtown in 1883, only 34 years after the founding of Fort Worth, and other performances had also taken place in shared venues such as the 1908 Northside Coliseum, site of the first indoor rodeo in 1917. The Coliseum has hosted such diverse acts as Enrico Caruso, Elvis Presley, the opera, wrestling, and religious revivals.

From the late 1920s until the 1970s, a "Show Row" existed along West Seventh Street, consisting of the Worth (1927), the Hollywood (1930), and the Palace theaters, known for having the best of current cinema. Elaborate theme interiors designed by Houston architect Alfred Finn, who trained in Fort Worth with Sanguinet and Staats, were inspired by Egyptian and other popular motifs.

The 1960s saw the requisite urban "renewal" project—the Tarrant County Convention Center and JFK Auditorium, which is presently home to the opera, symphony orchestra, and the Fort

Worth-Dallas Ballet. Its location is an area that was known in the late 1800s as Hell's Half-Acre and was popular with such persons as Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid for its "entertainment" value. This downtown facility is analagous in many aspects (size, amenities, etc.) to the Will Rogers Auditorium.

The 1980s were the beginning of the present phase of vitality with the initiation of the Sundance Square project by the Bass family. When Ed Bass decided to live downtown, he created the Caravan of Dreams, a mixed-use/arts facility sheathed in original brick facades, which also included his rooftop apartment. It is still a premier venue for the performing arts. In 1989, Sundance West added apartments (see *TA*, March/April 1994, pp. 36-39) and the AMC Sundance 11 movie theaters to the downtown mix.

To the extent that culture or the arts may be considered to "re-side" in a given location, or that a city benefits from consolidation of related activities, then Fort Worth has been fortunate in the aggregation of these elements. The Cultural District, in fact, does provide a conceptual and physical corpus for many of Fort Worth's institutions, although the recent activity in downtown is causing several of these entities to open reciprocal "annexes" to take advantage of the renewed activity and urban qualities there. The diverse groups involved have clearly benefitted from the symbiotic nature of related urban factors—parking, restaurants, and housing.

Downtown

THE NANCY LEE AND PERRY R. BASS PERFORMANCE Hall is a 2,052-seat multi-purpose hall that will house the opera, symphony orchestra, ballet, and the Van Cliburn Foundation. The \$60-million budget was raised from private donations, and the site at 4th and Commerce was donated by the hall's namesakes. Designed by David M. Schwarz/Architectural Services, Inc., of Fort Worth, with HKS Inc., of Dallas, the 10-story, 183,500-square-foot structure is scheduled to open in May 1998.

The split lobby configuration is a function of program compression on a small (200-foot) urban



Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

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Jay Catalano

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1 Artist Richard Long on April 29, 1996, creating *Waterfall Line* at The Modern in Sundance Square.

2 the 1936 Pioneer Tower, restored recently along with limited work on the Will Rogers Auditorium, by Hahnfeld Associates

3 a recent construction view of the new Bass Performing Arts Hall showing the truncated dome corner entrances and the facade the angel sculptures will occupy



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1 the new AMC Palace 9 movie theaters in Sundance East, whose name refers to the original Palace theater in Fort Worth's "Show Row"

2 Three arts districts in Fort Worth are home to more than 15 cultural sites.

3 from the Kimbell, a view of the Parkview Apartments, which will be demolished to provide a site for the new Modern Art Museum

block, and, in fact, much of the building's support space continues beneath the street and adjacent lot to the east. Some controversy exists over the hall's aesthetics, which are vaguely Vienna secessionist in flavor, and over the inclusion of two six-story limestone angels with trumpets on the north entry facade. The angels embellish vertical mechanical chases and are likely derived from the existing trumpetless judicial counterparts on the 1957 Civil Courts Building by Wyatt Hedrick.

The genesis of the project was the July 1990 defeat of a \$20-million bond proposition for the upgrade of the existing Will Rogers Auditorium in the Cultural District that was supported by the Bass family and would have provided the quality performance spaces that now will exist in the Bass hall. Much of the engineering analysis for the Will Rogers improvement was utilized in the new hall, whose location downtown (not coincidentally) was also a remedy for an empty urban corner in the otherwise tight Sundance fabric. Offices for the arts groups utilizing the hall will be located in the remodeled Maddox-Muse Administration Hall, connected by an underground walkway. This building was the original 1913 City-County Hospital and may grow to include an adjacent rehearsal hall.

With a list of over 60 "charter artists," the Contemporary Arts Center of Fort Worth is a new organization intended to display and promote regional artists, and to "engage the public in contemporary art issues and help create a sense of commu-

nity and fellowship." It will open in November in a 2,700-square-foot street level lease space at 4th and Commerce, opposite the new performance hall.

The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, whose main site is in the Cultural District, recently opened a new downtown annex with retail sales and display areas (see *TA*, March/April 1996, p. 71). Known as The Modern at Sundance Square, it is one of only two such remote museum locations nationally.

Casa on the Square, located in the 1901 Knights of Pythias Castle Hall on Main Street, is the new downtown "annex" for Casa Manana Theater. Several live theater facilities have located to this area, including the Jubilee Theater, taking advantage of Sundance's pedestrian volume and retail activity.

The AMC Palace 9 Theaters is one element of the new Sundance East retail project by Sundance Development. The original AMC Sundance West theaters (see *TA*, March/April 1992, pp. 12-13) were so successful that expansion was considered, but space was unavailable. Located adjacent to the performance hall and the 1889 Land Title Block Building, it is constructed in a composite of styles—art deco, Romanesque revival—and was also designed by David Schwarz. The same block will contain a Barnes & Noble bookstore enfronting the hall, a prototype theme entertainment complex named Big Time Texas, and the Angeluna restaurant.

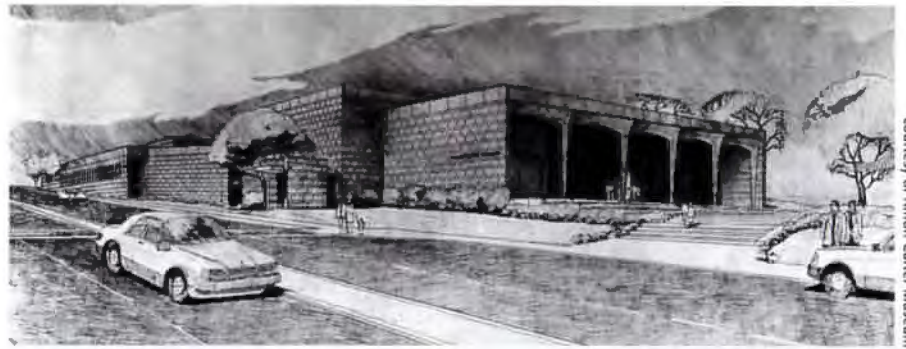
Cultural District

A SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT was made July 19 of the purchase of an 11-acre site east of the Kimbell for the construction of a new building for the Modern Art Museum. Anne W. Marion, president of the Burnett Foundation, established the project with a grant to the new nonprofit MPA Foundation to initiate and oversee the design and construction process. An architectural program is yet to be written and a designer has not been selected, but the short list includes Tadao Ando, Richard Gluckman, Arata Isozaki, Ricardo Legorreta, Carlos Jimenez, and David Schwarz.

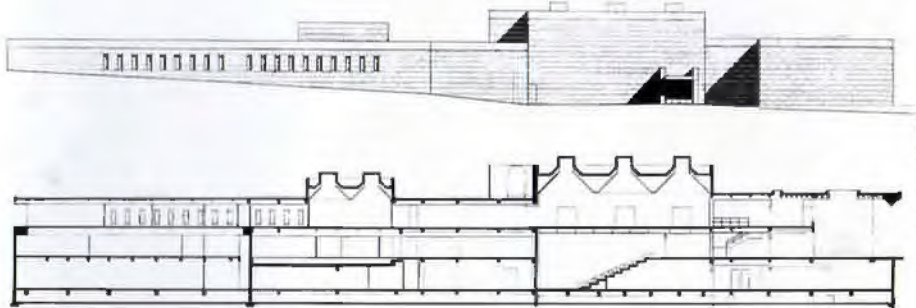
The \$9.3-million site is occupied by the Parkview Apartments, a 1940s-era 248-unit brick complex constructed for military dependents, which will be demolished. It fronts a major traffic intersection to the northeast, becoming a new "gateway" to the Cultural District. This move will create a "row" of museums along Camp Bowie Boulevard, distinctly changing the urban quality from a great lawn with museums around it, which has existed with West Lancaster as a focal boulevard.



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No plans were announced as to the reuse or removal of the museum's existing structure, which is also home to the Scott Theater, although there is some speculation regarding its use by the Museum of Science and History, now located south of the Modern. The existing museum site is owned by the city and the new location would remove the museum from this control.

In 1993 the Amon Carter Museum commissioned Philip Johnson (its original architect) to provide a proposal for the expansion of the existing museum to allow increased display spaces for both permanent and special exhibitions, in addition to improved support spaces and curatorial/work area. The museum's directors had observed the abandoned expansion process for the Kimbell Art Museum and hoped to avoid such a debate regarding Johnson's intentions by requesting oral and video interviews along with the design itself.

The Carter Museum has a world-class photography collection, including the archives of Eliot Porter and Laura Gilpin, in addition to the Remingtons and Russells for which it is best known, and considerably less display and study space than could be desired. Johnson's expansion plans attempt to rectify this shortage.

It is expected that the Carter expansion might occur in 1998 pending further design modifications and a capital campaign. The recent acquisition of a nearby building has facilitated the relocation of some of the museum's support functions offsite, al-

4 a 1993 preliminary study by Philip Johnson showing additions to the Amon Carter Museum, including a new south entry canopy for direct access to new lecture space

5 south elevation and sectional studies for the Amon Carter remodeling showing proposed skylight monitors at new galleries

6 existing Modern Art Museum, remodeled in 1974 by O'Neil Ford and Associates, with the 1966 Scott Theater beyond

courtesy of Amon Carter Museum

courtesy of Amon Carter Museum

lowing the consideration of existing space for reuse. Work has been completed on the reglazing of the east entry facade for light control, thermal, and structural reasons, limited upgrading of interior finishes, and the addition of a handicapped access ramp (see *TA*, July/August 1996, p. 23).

Preliminary discussions have been undertaken among the museums in the Cultural District regarding the consolidation of certain curatorial and conservation activities common to all entities, whether in a separate building or other configuration, but no agreement exists as to the feasibility of such a concept. Several of the museums would benefit from such an arrangement.

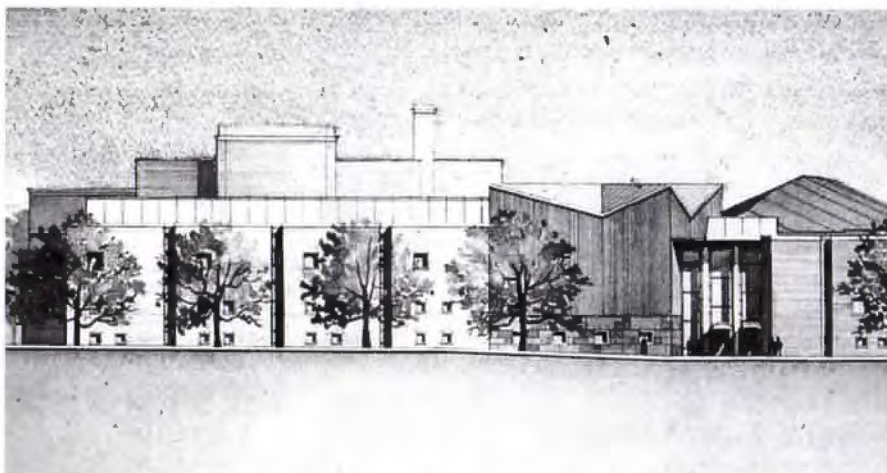
The Kimbell has installed a 12-foot-tall Miro sculpture entitled *Woman Addressing the Public, Project for a Monument* (1981) at its east entry, and has been in the process of reroofing the museum vaults with lead-coated copper after extensive hail damage last year. Presently, no plans exist for expansion after the abandonment of the 1989 Mitchell/Guirgola/Thorp proposal (see *TA*, January/February 1990, p. 10).

After much negotiation, the Cultural District will also be home to the Cowgirl Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center, now located in Hereford. The site is the open space between the Museum of Science and History and the existing Museum of Modern Art. The project is being designed by David Schwarz, with Walt Disney Imagineering as consultants.

The original 1936 Casa Manana Theater was demolished and replaced in 1958 with a Buckminster Fuller-derived "Kaiser" geodesic-dome system designed by A. George King, and has undergone several studies for expansion and remodeling, including a proposal by Mitchell/Guirgola, which fell victim to the same 1990 bond election that stopped the Will Rogers Auditorium work. A capital campaign is currently underway, however, to fund a much-needed remodeling and expansion of lobby and support areas.

Finally, while not located in downtown or the Cultural District, the Ed Landreth Hall at Texas Christian University is currently undergoing an expansion to augment the performance space, which

has served quadrennially as the site of the world-renowned Van Cliburn Piano Competition preliminaries. To be known as the Walsh Center for Performing Arts, the new center was designed by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates and contains a 358-seat recital hall, a 266-seat studio theater, choral rehearsal hall, instrumental rehearsal hall, and a



Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates

1 rendering of the west elevation of the new Walsh Center for the Performing Arts by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, an expansion of the Ed Landreth Hall at Texas Christian University

2 Silence and light.

3 the alley of trees, a kind of "green vault," which forms a preface to the west porticos of the Kimbell and now contains Leger's 1952 ceramic *Running Flower*

4 A Miro sculpture was recently installed at the east entrance of the Kimbell, which is being reroofed to repair hail damage.

5 the Western Union Telegraph Building (1931, James Davies, Sr.), renovated as part of the initial Sundance Square project



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piano wing with studios, practice rooms, electronic piano laboratory, and technicians' workshop. The project will cost approximately \$11 million and shares the same theatrical and acoustical consultants as the new performance hall downtown. Paul Beard, managing director of Performing Arts Fort Worth, said, "I see the two projects as complementary, with the community coming out the winner."

En Passant

THE PRESENCE OF SUCH artists as Van Cliburn, symphony director John Giordano, ballet directors Paul Meija and wife (and Balanchine muse) Suzanne Farrell, and the directorial/curatorial talent of Edmund Pillsbury of the Kimbell, Rick Stewart of the Amon Carter, and Marla Price of the Modern cannot help but contribute to an enviable quality level. Whether in the visual or performing arts, the city's dedication to excellence manifests itself in a tight cohesion of efforts. The Arts Council, under the leadership of president Ken Kahn, further facilitates this with a highly developed understanding of the public and private mechanisms required to complete these types of projects. A similar phenomenon, directly related, is occurring in downtown housing and restaurant and retail activity. In addition, such benefactors as Ruth Carter Stevenson, Anne W. Marion, Kay Fortson, the Walsh family, the Bass family, and others have directed their wealth and experience at common goals and have enhanced the opportunities for dialogue with institutions at the international scale.

For example, Stevenson, president of the Carter Foundation and the first female chair of the National Gallery of Art, contributed, through the foundation, the Water Gardens and the TCU Moudy Fine Arts Building by Roche/Dinkeloo; Marion has contributed Matisse's *Backs*, on display in Burnett Plaza downtown. Nationally, she established the O'Keefe Museum in Santa Fe and was instrumental in the inception of Site Santa Fe, a contemporary arts organization.

Such enormous patronage is no doubt a factor in Fort Worth's presence in the art world. Monetary resources are only a part of this; the quiet, genuine, parallel commitment on the part of many citizens cannot be underestimated. This enrichment of the public by a devoted application of public and private means is certainly not unique to Fort Worth, but is especially evident in the work of recent months, and perhaps demonstrates that when such resource is paired with equal commitment, then art in the city is an art of the city. **TA**

Mark Gunderson is an architect in Fort Worth.



Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau

5

El crítico de arte Hilton Kramer dijo a la prensa que para apreciar pinturas grandiosas es mejor visitar Fort Worth que San Francisco. El Distrito Cultural de Fort Worth, que ya cuenta con varios museos de fama mundial, continúa creciendo a causa de apoyo popular. Nuevas galerías de arte son parte de los nuevos planes. En un solar al este del museo Kimbell, local de un complejo de vivienda, se construirá un nuevo edificio para el Museo de Arte Moderno. Su arquitecto no se ha escogido, pero será uno reconocido.

El centro de la ciudad también espera grandes eventos en la Sala de Teatro Nancy Lee y Perry R Bass, que abrirá en 1998. En combinación con otros teatros y un anexo al Museo de Arte Moderno, el centro de Fort Worth continúa creando su propio distrito de las artes.

The Big View

By Max Levy



photo and illustration by Max Levy

EVERY BUILDING IN EVERY TEXAS city has access to a magnificent panoramic view. The key to this access depends simply upon our willingness to remove a veil of convention from our buildings and from our own eyes. The view I'm talking about is the sky. It turns out we all live on a shore—not between land and sea, but between land and sky. This shore is not a line but a region encompassing the entire city, granting each building site and public space a prime location from which to enjoy the big view. In all its majestic moods the sky possesses a timelessness and a soothing quality over mind and eye comparable only to that of an ocean.

Architecture is uniquely equipped to bring this consciousness into our daily comings and goings. It can be a source of visual and spiritual refreshment, fortifying us in our struggles with city life. Look up. Frame off a piece of sky using building planes, openings, or other architectural strategies. If the view you have captured is free of telephone poles, tree limbs, and other buildings, you will see a picture as intense and refreshing as a window onto the Mediterranean. Sometimes you will have to wait awhile for the view you want: The "ocean" overhead has its periods of dull calm, flat and gray. But it is alive and therefore constantly changing, a vast untamed wildness in the very midst of our cities.

Perhaps more than any other architect, Luis Barragan knew how to capture a piece of this blue wildness. In his urban and suburban buildings he employed courtyards in a new way. Traditionally, courtyards are the domain of the intimate, inner view. But Barragan's courtyards are empty, formed by detail-less wall planes saturated with color, terminating crisply against the sky, compelling one's gaze upward. The sky completes the courtyard composition and becomes the living part of the picture. These silent, contemplative spaces, brilliant with sunlight, are spiritual launchpads.

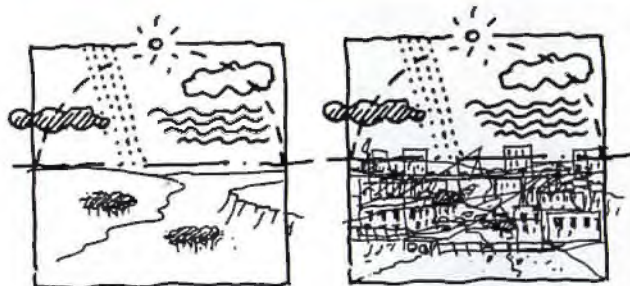
One of Architecture's most elementary acts is the framing of a view. Placing a frame around something in the right way emphasizes it, takes it out of context for a moment, and thereby releases our perceptions to enjoy a heightened vision. William Wurster said, "Architecture is the picture frame and not the picture." In this respect there are great, untapped, creative opportunities to bring the sky into play architecturally.

My office recently completed a house oriented in this direction. Its flat roof is punctuated by a series of forms that offer each principal room the culmination of a carefully framed sky view. From inside this building these vistas are luminous and startlingly pure. Under their influence, it is difficult to move from room to room without being awakened from the trance of one's routine.

Increasingly amidst the visual litter of our cities and suburbs, the only unfettered view we have left is upward. Compared to our handling of the land, the sky remains little changed since Coronado journeyed around Texas almost 500 years ago. Although it is probably not as blue as it once was, Coronado's sky endures to this day overhead, floating like a boundless Gregorian chant above our complications.

Here at the end of the 20th century as the computer invites us to hunch over the infinity of inner views, we need the relief of the outer view more than ever before.

TA



Old Growth *Allee*

By Frank D. Welch, FAIA

THE ALLEE OF LIVE OAK TREES between Rice University and Hermann Park on Houston's South Main Boulevard never fails to stir me with awe and pleasure. It is part of a civic improvement scheme for the district carried out 80 years ago shortly after Rice Institute was founded.

The half-mile-long parallel rows of *quercus virginiana* were mere saplings when they were planted on each side of the 75-foot-wide boulevard. Almost touching hands now, the oaks vault over the busy street in what Stephen Fox calls a "spatial tunnel," mediating between and joining the two major public realms in this part of the sprawling metropolis, the Museum District and the Texas Medical Center.

The turn-of-the-century City Beautiful movement was still a pervasive force in the hinterlands when this breeze-swept part of Houston was claimed for park and campus by enlightened founders and developers of the day. The classical order of regularly spaced street trees, a simple enough device for humanizing a new public space, has enriched local lives with its forceful identity for nearly a century: a device so simple yet so powerful now in its maturity on South Main. The vocabulary of regularly spaced ranges of oak trees is both civic and intimate: Extending through the Rice campus into the nearby residential fabric, rows of trees enhance those rich private domains with a domestic grandeur.

This tunnel of oaks forms a linear space of a strength and identity one usually associates with an architectural experience of procession like a gallery, arcade, or pergola. Though only a short vehicular passage, it is basically a structured linear arbor, not of retreat but of respite. In the broad and varied spread that is Texas, it is the state's most memorable and singular urban space, an image one might compare to the Ringstrasse or the Champs Elysee. More kin to Mobile's Government Street or New Orleans' St. Charles Avenue, however, the trees along Main Street enclose automobile movement primarily.

There is great satisfaction for some of us in the secure certainty afforded by the ordered arrangement of things. The success of a regular scheme of columns, arches, or openings in a building lies in the quality and character of the pieces and the intelligence behind their arrangement. Here on Main Street, the identical ordered parts, initially quite small and inconsequential, are grand living things, eight decades later responding to sun, wind, and rain in a corporate dynamic. The awesome arching giants move stiffly and scatter shifting shadows. There is satisfaction in the order here but also in the picturesquely disordered: the kinetics of the changing overhead tracery of leaves and branches embroidering the sky as we pass under and through, alas returning too soon into the unforgiving glare of the coastal sky.

The brevity of this spatial experience in motion is a sharp reminder that simple, rational urban design moves are the most enduring and rewarding. The 1916 planting initiative was easy to implement, needing only the lead of desire and imagination. The result in 1996 is grand place-making with riveting strength and serenity, an urban talisman for the rest of the state to admire and ponder as the millennium comes into view. **TA**



photo and illustration by Frank D. Welch, FAIA



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ARCHIMOVIES Gerald Moorhead and Yolita Schmidt explore where to find the influence of America's most famous architect in film.

Border Rehab

PRESERVATION The Roma Restoration Project, a joint venture of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Conservation Fund, in association with Los Caminos del Rio Heritage Project, recently completed the rehabilitation of the Manuel Guerra Store and Residence (1884) in the border town of Roma (see *TA*, January/February 1993, p. 9). Designed by Heinrich Portscheller, the Guerra Building dominates the plaza of Roma and forms part of the National Historic Landmark District, which received its designation in 1993.

Rehabilitation work undertaken by the TPWD includes the repair of the building's brick roof, which is an example of the distinctive construction technologies of the Lower Rio Grande region. A carefully researched colorful paint scheme now covers the once-decaying exterior brick and balconies.

The rehabilitation efforts followed the guidelines of the Roma Conservation Plan, a 1993 planning document completed by a 20-member interdisciplinary team under the supervision of Killis Almond and Associates of San Antonio, TPWD, and the Texas Historical

Commission. The document laid out cost estimates and the conservation philosophy for eight historic buildings that form part of the Roma Restoration Project. Based on the Conservation Plan, a sizable grant from the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), administered by the Texas Department of Transportation, was secured for rehabilitation of four of these structures.

In the coming year, the Conservation Fund will undertake a management plan for the long-term care and use of these structures. While some of the buildings will be available for commercial ventures, others may be offered to the public sector. The City of Roma has already expressed interest in locating city hall in one of the historic structures to help overall project efforts to reclaim the plaza, once again, as the heart of the city.



all photos by Mario L. Sanchez





3



4

Across the Rio Grande, the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) unveiled in March a preliminary project for the rescue of Guerrero Viejo, the 1750 Spanish colonial town flooded and abandoned in 1953 as a result of the construction of Falcón Dam (see *TA*, May/June 1995, pp. 14-15). Now completely exposed as a result of the drought, Guerrero Viejo offers many opportunities to foster cultural tourism and architectural education.

The INAH proposal includes an emergency plan for immediate measures to control visitation (30,000 during the 1995-96 winter season) and to shore up key structures. A more ambitious plan to build a levee around the town is presently under joint study by INAH and the Ministry of Tourism of Mexico.

Mario L. Sánchez

Mario L. Sánchez is an architect and historian at the Texas Historical Commission. He serves as Director of Regional Heritage Programs at THC.

1 a detail of the Guerra store

2 The Plaza of Guerrero Viejo was laid out in 1767. Abandoned in 1953, this Spanish colonial town is completely exposed during periods of drought. Remnants of elaborate sandstone buildings with a variety of arches and doorways still line the streets.

3 Manuel Guerra Store and Residence (1884), Roma, as seen in 1990, suffered from decades of neglect and partial structural failure. Recently rehabilitated by the Roma Restoration Project, the building has recaptured its position of prominence in the plaza of Roma.

4 restored facade of the Guerra store

An Island in the Making

ARCHITECTURE The Costa del Sol of Spain is virtually a continuous tourist mega-resort extending from Gibraltar to France (and continuing around the Mediterranean to Italy). Mountain ranges restrict expansion inland, so a new direction for growth—into the sea—is being explored by 3D/I offshore at Marbella. Within sight of Gibraltar and Morocco, a man-made island will be constructed to provide needed anchorage for cruise liners and entertainment venues away from the traffic-choked mainland.

The 25-acre island will rise out of 50 feet of water about one-third of a mile offshore. Every imaginable amusement will be built on the island: a casino, convention center, cinemas, yacht marina, aquarium, shops, restaurants, discos, bars, parking for 2,000 cars, and an open-air auditorium with a floating stage. Absent from the construction will be any hotels. Visitors will have to return along the new four-lane bridge to the city or to their berths in a cruise ship to sleep off their island pleasures.

Grouped around a core of parking and civic buildings, village-like clusters of whitewashed buildings will be reminiscent of nearby Andalusian *pueblos blancos* and island fortresses like Mont Saint Michel. Winding streets will lead through shopping bazaars to high plazas with views of the sea and the coast.

The island will be constructed using a system developed by Iran to protect its offshore oil platforms. Hollow concrete caissons are driven

into the ocean floor and linked with concrete panels. When the ring of these elements is complete, sand from the adjacent sea bottom is pumped inside, displacing the water and forming a semi-solid base for building construction. Cost for the island itself is about \$50 million, with an additional \$150 million for the bridge and one million square feet of buildings.

Alberto Diaz Hermidas, a Spanish architect with degrees from Harvard and Seville, is the project's principal designer in the San Antonio office of 3D/I, with design direction by Norman Hoover, FAIA, 3D/I director of architecture. Andres Andújar, director for 3D/I's International Operations, is the principal-in-charge. Diaz's father, Marbella engineer Alberto Diaz Fraga, was involved in early planning of the scheme and alerted 3D/I. Investors are being sought for the project, which is expected to begin construction next year and take about four years to complete.

Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, is an architect in Houston.

PROJECT *Isla Marbella, Spain*

CLIENT *Turismo Ayuntamiento de Marbella 2000 S.L.*

ARCHITECT OF RECORD *3D/I, San Antonio (G. Norman Hoover, FAIA, Andres Andújar, Alberto Diaz Hermidas, Alberto Diaz Fraga, design team)*

1 The 25-acre man-made island is within sight of the coast of Gibraltar and Morocco.

2 The structure will rise out of 50 feet of water; amusements of all kind will be its focus.



1



2

Filling some gaps

BOOKS At the end of 1991, as I was preparing to give Rice University Press the final version of my book, *The See-Through Years*, I visited a small but evocative urban landscape that I had been driving past, off and on, for years. For once, I got out of my car and walked around. As I did so, several things fell into place for me, and I drove home to Lockhart that night and rewrote the book's last chapter.

Here is how I described the area: "Near the corner of Washington Avenue and Studemont Drive in Houston . . . , in a space about five blocks from north to south and ten blocks from east to west, one sees at first only widely spaced trees and a few shrubs, arranged with an oddly familiar near-formality . . . split not just by vacant land, but by drive-ways, and, here and there, one can find the remnants of a house foundation. The slight familiarity of the situation becomes clear: This urban grove is made up of the trees of a once-occupied neighborhood. It is as if . . . some environmental artist had been at work, changing what used to be the background into the figurative element, like a Houston version of an 18th-century map of Rome by Nolli. But this is Houston, and what lies before us is no intentional work of art. It is a failed real estate development."

I cited this area as one of a number of anti-landmarks around the state, a counterbalance to the symphony halls and postmodern office towers built in the 1980s, a reminder of "a sinkhole yawning at the edge of the property, a fault line of hungry valuelessness that threatens to pull us down, a zone of subduction that we helped create" during a decade in which hundreds of billions of dollars were risked and lost in real estate and the Texas middle class was saved from certain ruin by "government subsidies at a scale the out-of-work commissars of Moscow might envy."

Now, someone has finally done something with the property: They've crammed a bunch of apartments or condos or whatever they are onto the lots, and people are living again in what, five years ago, was an urban dumping ground.

Although one might wish for stronger architecture, the situation is a pleasing turn-around. *The See-Through Years* was a meditation on the centrifugal forces that were exploding our cities and tearing at the already fearfully thin fabric of civic society, ranging from market and subsidized housing, trans-



Paul Hester and Lisa Carol Handaway

portation, and a changing workplace, to the relationship between concentrated capital and the political and cultural legitimacy enshrined in the urban landscape.

So it's nice to see that inner-city density, that most centripetal of forces, is back, for now. The editorial pages of *Texas Architect* have been trumpeting every new near-town residential project for so long that one can hardly be blamed for thinking each one represented a legitimate trend-in-the-making. But now, I think it's getting to be true.

The west side of downtown Houston, from the I-59 overpass to River Oaks, is changing from single-story to multi-story dwellings lot by lot. Dallas's Deep Ellum, State-Thomas, and Farmers' Market areas are fulfilling David Dillon's prediction that downtown would become a bedroom for the city's emerging suburban job centers, reversing the traditional urban pattern. The same thing is happening in other Texas cities.

And the talk of dense cities is showing up in surprising places. Recently, I heard Pike Powers, a prominent Austin businessman and lobbyist, on the radio. He and a partner were talking earnestly about the bad effects of cul-de-sac development and the need for new neighborhoods to be more like Austin's traditional streetcar suburbs. And Powers was plugging an appearance at the Austin convention center—not the Rotary Club, not the University of Texas at Austin architecture department, but the *convention center*—by Andres Duany.

Pleasant as it is to see important chunks of the city fabric rescued from dereliction, I wonder if increasing in-town density points to anything like a return to traditional urban form. With the exception of Dallas, where we will see what happens, there has been no change in an automobile-dominated transportation system. The newly dense neighborhoods may have bars and coffee shops to walk to, but these types of establishments mark their zones as incubators for yet another generation of young adults staving off marriage and child-rearing. Perhaps when the inhabitants of these new apartment-lands are ready to move up, they will have a full range of Seasidevilles to choose from, each with a walkable town center and mix of urban uses. That would be a trend worth thinking about.

Still, I wonder if any urbanistic strategies are robust enough any more to tame the atomizing tendencies in our society, in which the membrane between mobile international capital and the fates of families and individuals has become vanishingly thin. Five years after *The See-Through Years* went to press, some small things have changed, but the big things remain the same. **Joel Warren Barna**

Joel Barna was editor of Texas Architect from 1985 to 1995.

A once-vacant area is filled with housing, but will the city return to a

traditional urban form? Memorial Heights, BGO Architects, Dallas.

Equatorial Developments

ARCHITECTURE Established by the Spanish in 1533 as the collection and embarkation point for South American loot, the city of Cartagena on Colombia's Caribbean coast is a historic gem. The walled town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was neglected in the centuries following Spanish decline; in recent decades, new developments tied to the discovery of oil have taken place beyond the historic El Centro. But now again, El Centro is the place to be, with restoration reclaiming courtyard buildings for shops, restaurants, and fashionable homes.

With space at a premium in the walled, water-bound old city, a master plan for the Chambacú district across the lagoon provides the closest place for growth. The 50-acre site, planned by the Houston office of 3D/I, is a former squatter's village built over the centuries on swampy landfill. While two-thirds of the site is reserved for park and recreation uses, the new urban village will be an entertainment, shopping, and residential focus for surrounding neighborhoods. A main avenue bisects the site and connects across the lagoon to El Centro.

Focused around canals and a small harbor, the layout of Chambacú's pedestrian streets reflects the patterns of the old city. Curved, arcade-lined shopping streets lead to small plazas and open to vistas of the sea, the mountains, the nearby fortress, and El Centro. The master plan sets standards for density, massing, heights, and a vocabulary of materials and finishes. A 22-story tower and mid-rise blocks will contain 250 residential units.

Based on the character of El Centro, 440,000 square feet of retail space is provided in two-story buildings where shopkeepers own their space. Over 250,000 square feet of office space is designed to attract international corporate leases in first-class buildings. Parking for 2,400 cars is mostly located below grade beneath buildings and plazas. Without descending to a theme-park coyness, the designs for Chambacú reflect Cartagena's Spanish heritage of stucco finishes and tile roofs.

After the master plan was finalized in late 1995 in conjunction with local architects and with the participation of Cartagena's two architecture schools, the client (Banco de Colombia and a consortium of developers) commissioned 3D/I to proceed through schematic design on the buildings of the plan. Remaining phases will be developed by local architects. Site work is planned to begin this fall. **GM**



1 the historic El Centro
2 residential towers at Chambacú

3 motel and proposed Chambacú development
4 site plan

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What's Wright in Movies

ARCHIMOVIES Frank Lloyd Wright is the most famous American architect of the 20th century, known for his individualistic architectural design, planning work, teaching, and writings. But throughout his long career, Wright was also a colorful and controversial character, always battling architectural and social conventions. Although his turbulent personal life was well-publicized, it did not seem to hinder his creative abilities. In fact, his professional and private life cast him in the role of the great uncompromising genius, making him the model of the individualist architect-hero who appears on film from time to time. It is not surprising that Hollywood responded to this character type, since Wright lived in Los Angeles for a time, built many projects in California, and was familiar to the film community, many of whom had similar rebellious and egotistical temperaments.

The sets of *Lost Horizon* (1937, Frank Capra; art director: Steve Goosson) portray a mountain paradise in luminous Wrightian forms. A British diplomat is kidnapped to Shangri-La, a remote, idyllic civilization in a Tibetan valley. Protected from the impending doom of civilization outside, the agrarian citizenry live peaceful, long lives under the benign guidance of a dalai lama. The lamasery shows definite Wrightian influence of the Prairie School era. The oriental attitude of his work seems perfect in this use, although Wright seldom designed such symmetrical groups of buildings. The main structure is the centerpiece of a quadrangle of floodlit buildings arranged around a landscaped courtyard and reflection pool. Each building has broad flights of stairs and terraces with colonnaded pavilions and is roofed with wide flat eaves, a most contemplative environment. Taliesin under the guidance of Wright comes to mind; Wright was certainly the dalai lama of his domain and disciples.

The Fountainhead (1949, King Vidor; art director: Edward Carrere) is considered Hollywood's last great display of modern architectural sets on film, closing an era that began in the 1920s when modern sets were used to convey the image of glamour and affluence. These film sets were among the earliest introduction the general public had to the radical new styles of the 20th century. In *The Fountainhead*, Frank Lloyd Wright's designs are the inspiration for the interior sets, models, and renderings. His life also had many details in common with the central character, architect

Howard Roark, dourly portrayed by Gary Cooper. Renderings were created for the homes Roark designs; these were an amalgam of Wright's work from the late '30s and '40s with obvious references to Fallingwater (1935, Mill Run, Penn.). The film was heavily criticized by the architectural press for showing what they believed to be caricatures of Wright's work. They missed the point: The film is about character, not design.

In *A Summer Place* (1959, Delmer Daves) Richard Egan and Dorothy McGuire leave broken-down marriages, symbolized by a dilapidated Victorian hotel, for a new life together in a Wright Usonian house (the Mrs. Clinton Walker House, 1948, Carmel, Calif.). The opening shot of the house shows a low blue roof hovering above a stone terrace and rocky sea-coast. Stair-stepped windows give the house its prow-like form. Egan and McGuire park their white Jaguar in a carport tucked under an overhang and enter the house through a Japanese-like rock garden court framed by a low rock wall and deep shadowing overhangs. "Frank Lloyd Wright designed our house," exclaims McGuire as she gives Sandra Dee a tour. Except for one dining scene beside the actual fireplace, the interior scenes are shot on constructed sets that bear no resemblance to the actual house.

Alfred Hitchcock was exacting when it came to architectural sets. When he was unable to shoot in a particular place he often built an exact replica set. In *North by Northwest* (1959), a Wrightian house was designed for a cliff in the South Dakota forest above Mount Rushmore. Sweeping balconies cantilever over rocks, anchored to the mountain by vertical ashlar stone pylons, all reminiscent of Fallingwater. A dramatic interior set complements the exterior design, although furnished in the motel-modern of the day.

Although Wrightian design influences are not apparent, Wright's character image as a high-minded artist is called up again in *Strangers When We Meet* (1960, Richard Quine). Kirk Douglas plays the self-important architect. Misunderstood, he works alone in his suburban home-office, waiting for an exciting job, "a client willing to take a chance." A hillside house,



Walker House, Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

Bay Region-style chalet moderne, is built from scratch in the course of the film.

Goldie Hawn and Walter Matthau tour Wright's Guggenheim Museum (1959, New York) in the screwball comedy *Cactus Flower* (1969, Gene Saks) to celebrate the exhilaration of their engagement. The camera makes good spatial use of the spiraling main gallery by looking up and across the space.

Blade Runner (1982, Ridley Scott) is set in a perpetually rainy Los Angeles of 2019. Police hit man Harrison Ford's crash pad, located inside a bleak high-rise building, is shot in the Mayan-inspired Charles Ennis House (1923-1924, Los Angeles). The Ennis house is one of four Wright designed in southern California using patterned concrete block. The strong shadows cast by the deep geometric casting of the block adds an exotic touch to the harsh, strobe lighting of the back-lit scenes and make for an inspired, if psychologically frightening, use of this house.

After viewing these examples and searching for others, we wondered why there are not more examples of Wrightian inspiration in the movies. Perhaps his buildings and spaces are so individualistic that they would distract from the story, or maybe the associations with modern design are not pleasant. For residential scenes, modern houses are often the habitat of unusual people. Except for corporate settings, power, wealth, and glamour tend to be represented in traditional architectural settings while modern settings are reserved for the artistic or eccentric free-thinker or for someone evil or troubled. Modern design is most favored in futuristic or science fiction movies where a harsh or frightening effect is desired. Is that why people don't like modernism: scared by the movies?

Yolita Schmidt and Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

Houston architects Yolita Schmidt and Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, write about movies in every other issue of Texas Architect.

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