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*Cowtown at the Crossroads*

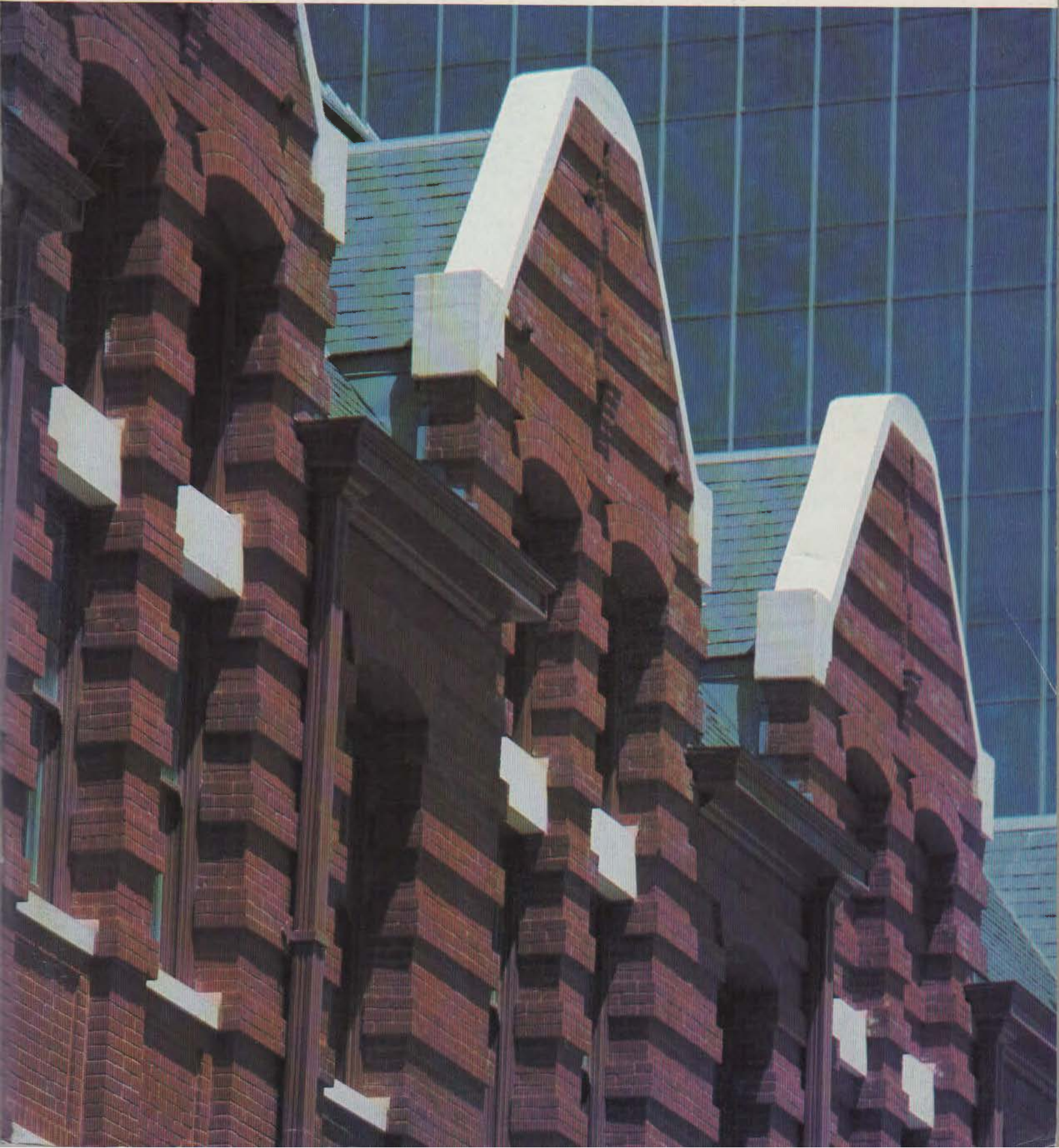
*Seven Buildings*

*On Continuity in Architecture*

*The Unforgettable Mr. Ford*

*Humor by Braden*

# Texas Architect



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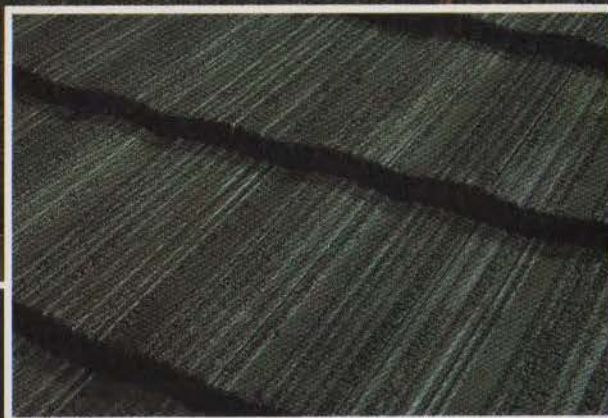
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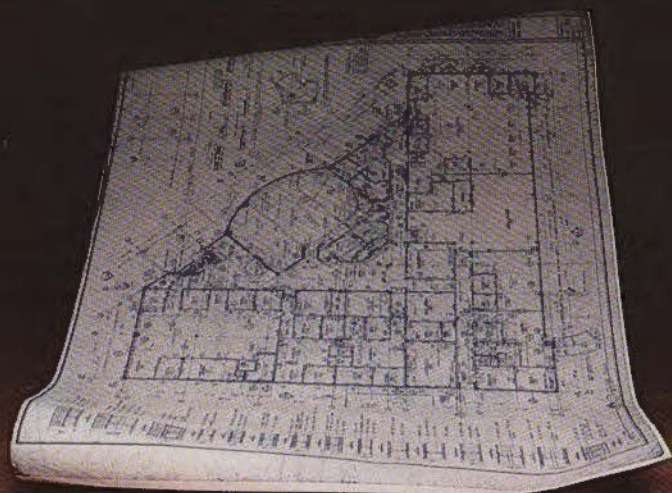


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## Circulation Manager

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*Upon the death July 20 of preeminent Texas architect O'Neil Ford, a host of friends, colleagues, protégés and admirers share views and memories of the man and his work.*

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**Coming Up:** *The November/December issue of Texas Architect will feature the 27 winning entries in the general design, adaptive use and historic preservation categories of the Texas Society of Architects' 1982 Design Awards Program.*

**On the Cover:** *Detail of Knights of Pythias Building in Fort Worth, contrasted with Paul Rudolph's City Center in the background. Photography by Phillip Poole.*



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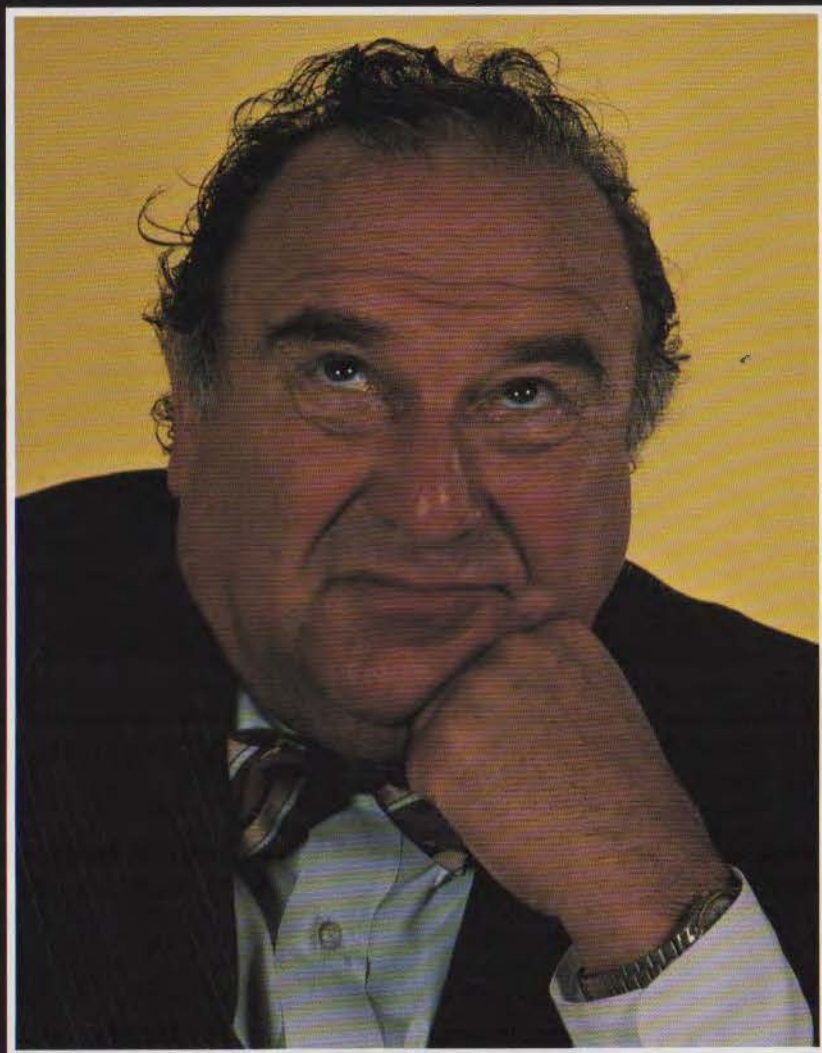


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# CHARLIE'S ROASTING



Actually, Charlie roasts every sunny afternoon. In fact, during July and August he's well done at about 5:00 P.M.

You see, Charlie's desk is next to a south facing window-wall in a nifty, new office building in Virginia. The architect's idea of collecting passive solar energy was great last winter. But this summer Charlie needs help and neither the building's air conditioning nor solar tint glazing are quite up to the task. Sure he could close the blinds. But Mildred over in accounting would complain that she couldn't see the Blue Ridge Mountains just over his left shoulder. And Agnes in sales service would say she can't work in the dark.

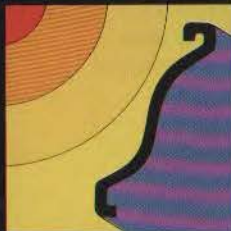
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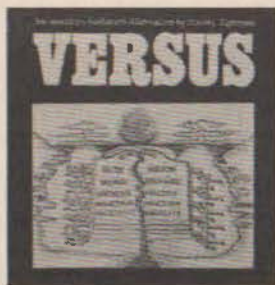
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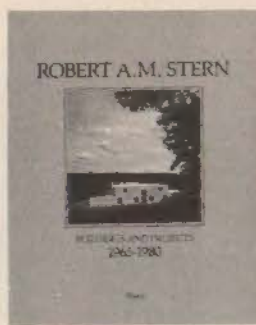
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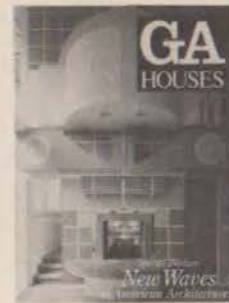
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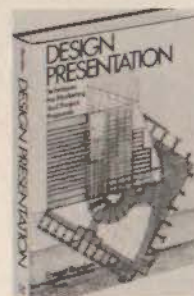
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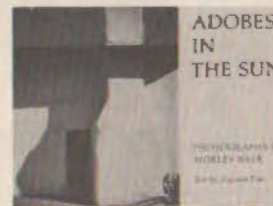
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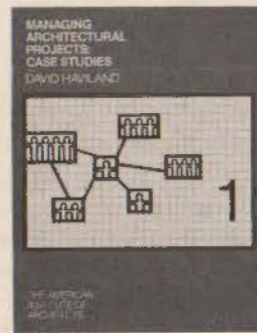
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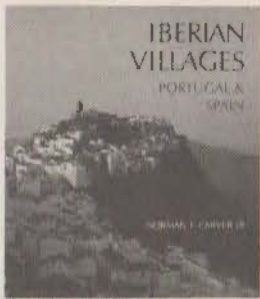


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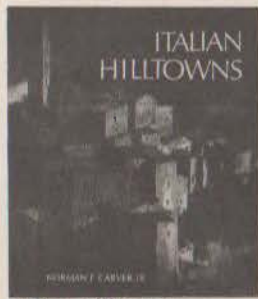


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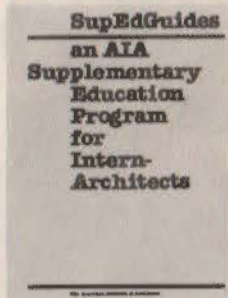
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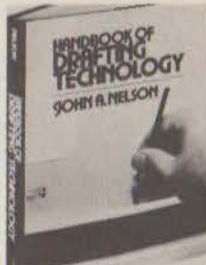
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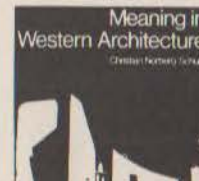
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# Letters

**Editor:** Upon first reading the July/August issue of *Texas Architect*, I was drawn to the housing articles with their striking photographs. After a closer look, however, I discovered what is probably the most inspiring article to appear in our magazine in quite some time—"Land, Sky, People," by Max Levy. This kind of creative thinking is what makes me glad that I'm an architect.

Billy Jack Greaves  
Architect  
Waco

**Editor:** I have greatly enjoyed reading *Texas Architect* and have found some of your articles very keensighted indeed. I do have a weakness for Texas and your magazine keeps me abreast of the very interesting developments in a regional architecture which is slowly emerging into full bloom with unique characteristics. I was particularly pleased to read your article on "Texas Housing" in your number of July/August 1982.

Emilio Ambasz  
Architect  
New York, N.Y.

**Editor:** Isabel and I appreciated the report of our Arts Council award in Denton (July/August 1982) and your pleasant words about our work. While it is true that there was no mass movement toward energy conservation in architecture in the 1950s and '60s, however, it is useful to recall that there was always *some* movement. Besides the well-known names—the brothers Keck and Olgyay, for example—and their disciples, there were a good many people working and publishing in the field. There were the wind experiments at Texas A & M, and other investigations at places like the Universities of Delaware and Arizona. Even in Dallas, I remember an AIA chapter meeting at which the program was on designing with the climate (this was in the '50s), and there were some articles—in the *Forum*, I believe—by Bud Oglesby on what is now called "passive solar design."

Tom Miller  
Mount-Miller Architects  
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While still in school at the University of Texas-Arlington, David went to work in the Dallas plant as a draftsman trainee. Since that time, he has held responsible jobs in Operations, Sales, Quality Control and Production Management, before being named Manager of Sales-Dallas in 1981.

Harwell's a familiar name in Mosher, for David's father and his uncle have 70 years of service in the company between them. In his position, David is


primarily concerned with the high rise market in the Metroplex area. "Putting together a proposal for a major building is the most exciting part of my job," he says.

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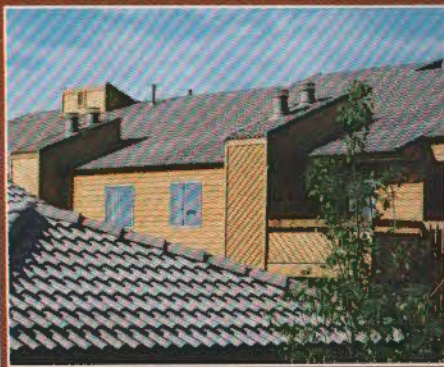
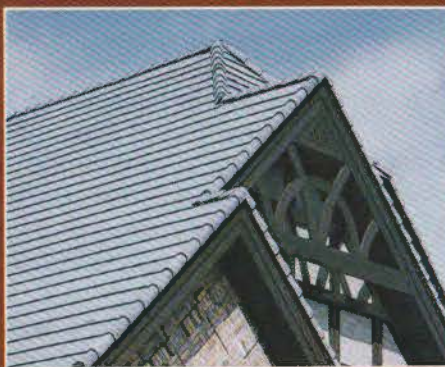
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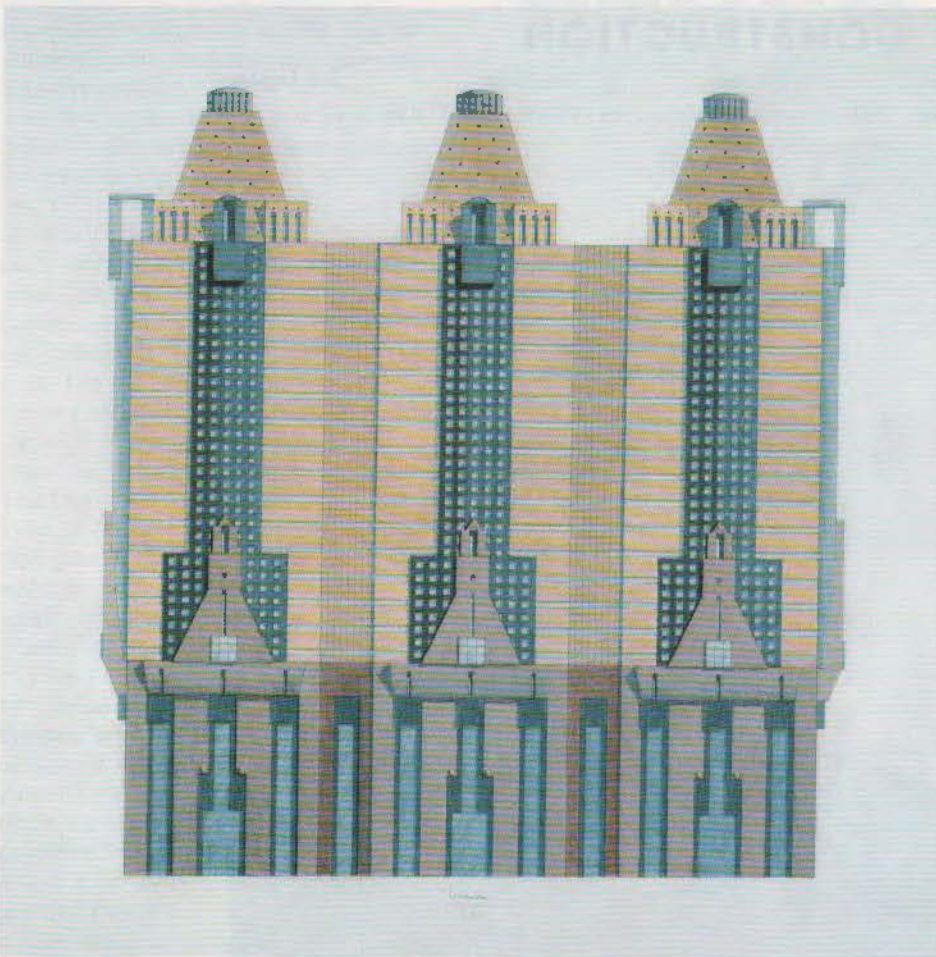
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## People, Projects, Schools, Firms, Products, Events

Edited by Michael McCullar



Proto Acme Photo

Republic Building proposal by Graves, St. Mary's Street elevation, San Antonio.

### Graves Designs Alternative in RepublicBank, Texas Theater Imbroglia

For a very brief moment, it looked as though San Antonio might become the site for Michael Graves' second big project—after "The Portland Building"—and his first major building in Texas. A last-ditch attempt by local conservationists to save the 56-year-old Texas Theater in its entirety involved a six-week charette by Graves and the local firm Reyna/Caragonne Architects to come up with an alternative to the

design of a proposed downtown office and banking complex that saved only the theater's ornate "Mediterranean" facade.

The battle began in December 1981 when RepublicBank of San Antonio announced plans to build the \$125 million project, designed by Ford, Powell & Carson, a well-established and respected local firm headed until recently by the late O'Neil Ford,

ironically one of Texas' most passionate proponents of historic preservation (see page 54). The decision to demolish all but the facade of the theater raised the ire of the San Antonio Conservation Society, which insisted that the theater was a classic example of the "Cinema Palace" of the 1920s and therefore should—if anything—be incorporated as a whole into the RepublicBank project.

The two factions went at it in council, court and press. The bank and the conservation society finally went before a district judge and hammered out an agreement whereby the bank would postpone demolition of the Texas Theater for 60 days, allowing the conservation society time to find an alternate solution.

The conservation society then interviewed several local architects, hoping to arrive at a solution that would satisfy the bank's needs *and* preserve the theater. All the firms felt the project—at a million square feet—was too big, and the time—six weeks—too short for them to tackle alone. Alex Caragonne, of Reyna/Caragonne Architects, suggested contacting Graves.

"I felt like it was an important enough project that we needed to have absolutely the best talent available," says Caragonne. "It was going to take a team that was committed enough, knowledgeable enough, talented enough, *and* well-known enough to pull it off." Caragonne went back to his office and called Graves—whom he had never met—introducing himself through their mutual contact with Colin Rowe, a godfather of sorts to the New York Five, and a mentor to Caragonne during his student days in the 1950s at UT-Austin.

Graves agreed to take on the design with Caragonne acting as local associate. The firm of Schlaes & Company, of Chicago, was hired to

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handle the financial analysis and feasibility study. From the start, the design team's position was an iffy one. RepublicBank already had a design they liked, one done by a prestigious local firm. Also, according to the court agreement, the bank was under no obligation to accept the alternate proposal at the end of the 60-day grace period.

Under such conditions, did the design team feel they really had any chance of effecting change? "I felt all the way up to the end that we stood a damned good chance of changing the bank's mind," says Caragonne. "We couldn't have done this much work in this short a time if we didn't believe in it. We had no doubts that the alternate proposal would be fairly assessed."

And what did the alternate proposal involve? Graves' design shows four towers standing shoulder to shoulder in an "L," three of them facing east to St. Mary's Street, an historically significant thoroughfare linking north and south San Antonio. The Texas Theater is kept intact, though the interior is reorganized, a thrust stage projecting from the shortened version of the existing stage, the ground floor seating replaced by three broad tiers that would allow for tables or movable chairs. The four towers are linked at street level by an interior pedestrian promenade that passes through multi-story lobbies, with nooks and nodes in between, looking in plan like a Beaux Arts vision of a Mesopotamian palace.

Though Graves' plan has a great deal of interest and delight, it was the massing and facade that drew the most comments locally. No one in San Antonio was indifferent. Even those who liked the design called it bizarre. The detractors—and there were many—called it a "monstrosity," something airlifted from Oz.

The facade of the San Antonio design extends the attitude expressed in the Portland Building and suggests the direction Graves' future large commissions might take. Vaguely classical forms, seen often in silhouette, are juxtaposed over a fairly simple underlying mass. The four towers would read otherwise as a single block were it not for the individual entablatures at each base, vertical swelling of colored tiles up each center, and truncated pyramid at each crown. Graves speaks of the tower facade as a column, the first seven stories reading as the base, the main

tower body serving as shaft, the whole topped by the pyramidal capital.

The use of color is one of Graves' strongest talents, and the San Antonio proposal glows with the mauve of the pink granite base, the deep sea green of the colored tile on the vertical swellings, the tawny natural limestone tower shaft, and the pale blue capping the penthouse pyramids.

As it turned out, RepublicBank considered the Graves-Caragonne proposal for a week, then turned it down, citing increased costs, increased construction time, and the design's poor response to the adjacent river. Demoli-

tion has now commenced on the bulk of the Texas Theater, with scaffolding in place to hold the facade for inclusion in the Ford, Powell & Carson design.

Having spent \$125,000 on the alternate proposal, does the conservation society have any regrets? Says Lynn Bobbitt, president of the society: "We did, in fact, show the bank that there was an alternative to tearing down the Texas Theater, and that's what we set out to do. As to public response, there wasn't any in-between; people either liked it or they didn't. We took that chance in hiring Michael Graves."

—Jon Thompson



Tom Cox

Good Luck gas station, Dallas.

### Threat to Art Deco Gas Station Stirs Archival Movement in Dallas

A Dallas community activist and an intern architect have persuaded the city to hold off demolishing one of Dallas' art deco treasures as they thoroughly document the 43-year-old Good Luck gas station on Ross Avenue, one of 39 buildings in the central business district deemed "architecturally distinctive" by the Historic Preservation League. But their efforts are for more than just the sake of building preservation. Linda Anderson, an attorney's wife and mother of two, and Tom Cox, an architecture teacher at a local high school, are trying to convince the city of the need for a permanent repository to hold the measured drawings, photographs and artifacts of various species of Dallas buildings that are fast becoming extinct.

The fight to save the Good Luck

began in early June, when the city issued a demolition permit to the owner of the property, a prime bit of urban real estate just on the edge of the proposed Dallas arts district (see *Texas Architect*, May/June 1982). Anderson, a docent at the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, is an admitted art deco fanatic. When she heard that the Good Luck was endangered, she leaped headlong into a save-the-Good-Luck crusade, complete with bumper stickers, T.V. appearances and press releases. The city eventually granted a stay of demolition, giving Anderson until Dec. 2 to come up with a reasonable alternative.

From the start, Anderson says, she knew that the flamboyant little building, built in 1939 as part of a chain of gas stations in Dallas, was not long for this

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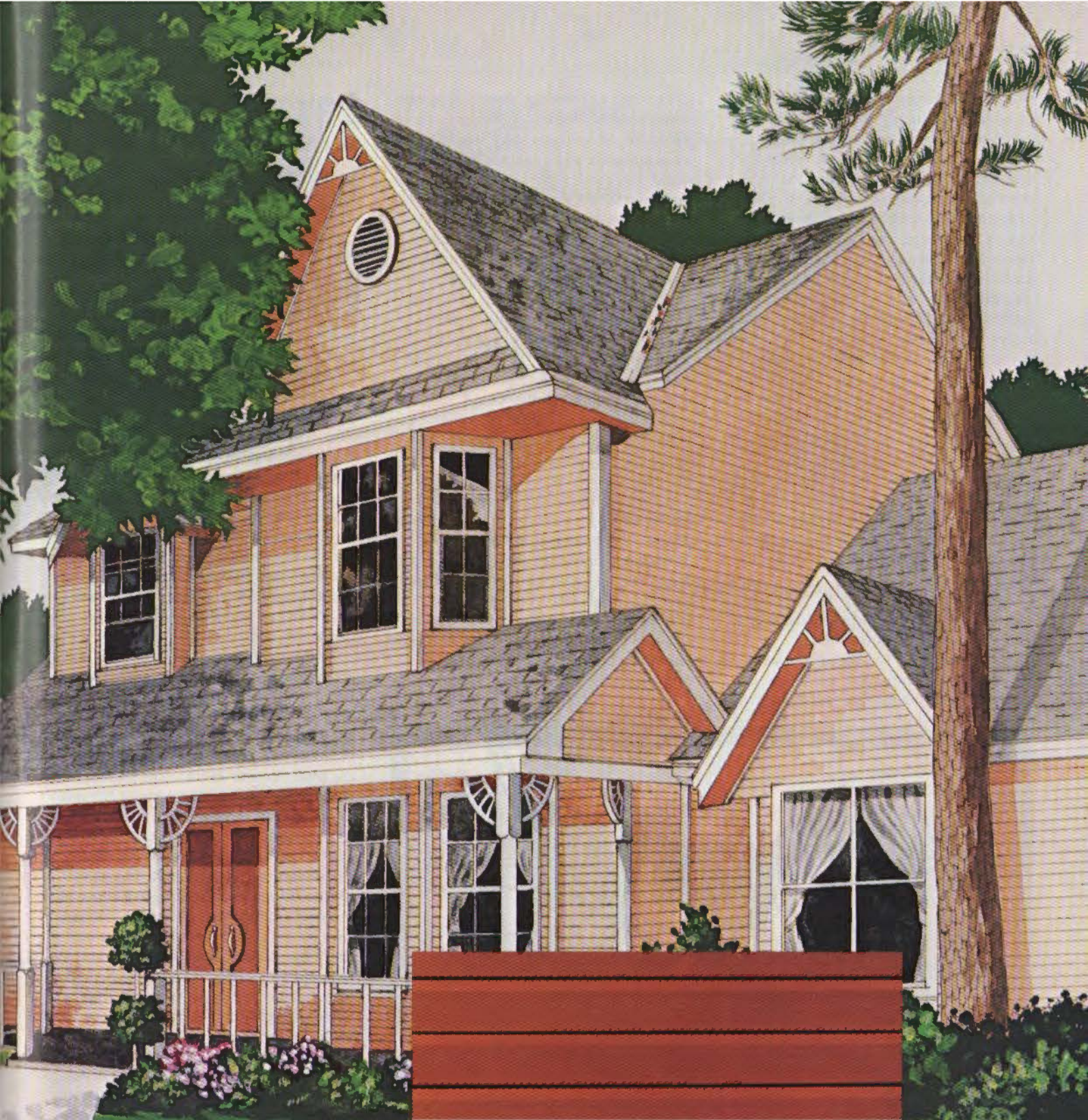
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world. The current market value of the property was simply too much for a 1,800-square-foot gas station with peeling plaster. Nevertheless, while Cox and one of his students spent the summer measuring, drawing and photographing the Good Luck while it was still in one piece, Anderson—with the help of city planner Lief Sandberg and architect Keith Downing—looked into alternatives for its salvation. Options were limited. Moving the building, either intact or piece by piece, was determined to be cost-prohibitive, given its stucco and masonry construction. “You move a masonry building when its Mount Vernon,” Anderson says, “not when its an art deco gas station.” What Anderson would really like to see, of course, is an alternate use of the building where it sits—perhaps incorporating at least a distinctive part of the Good Luck, such as its portico or ziggurat, into the design of the highrise that probably will replace it.

Anderson is not going to hold her breath until that happens. What she is really trying to achieve, she says, is a “public mandate” for the need for architecturally important buildings in Dallas to be documented and filed away

before they can be torn down. This can either be done by city ordinance, or by convincing developers that routinely cooperating in such a noble endeavor would be good P.R. Ultimately, Anderson and Cox would like to see Dallas have a kind of architectural museum for the display of drawings, photographs and artifacts of architecturally distinctive—albeit expendable—Dallas buildings, the likes of which will probably never be built again.

Anderson has already gotten a commitment from a Dallas developer to provide interim storage space for selected remains of the Good Luck until a permanent space becomes available. Drawings and photographs would be housed at the Dallas Public Library.

Aware of the ironic possibility that archiving could become a “rubber stamp” for tearing a building down, Anderson emphasizes that the idea is to document *all* architecturally significant buildings, not just the run-down endangered ones. Then, “if all else fails and you lose one,” she says, “you’ll have something more than just a pile of rubble.”

## Freeway Planned to Bisect Fort Worth Cultural District, But Not Without a Fight

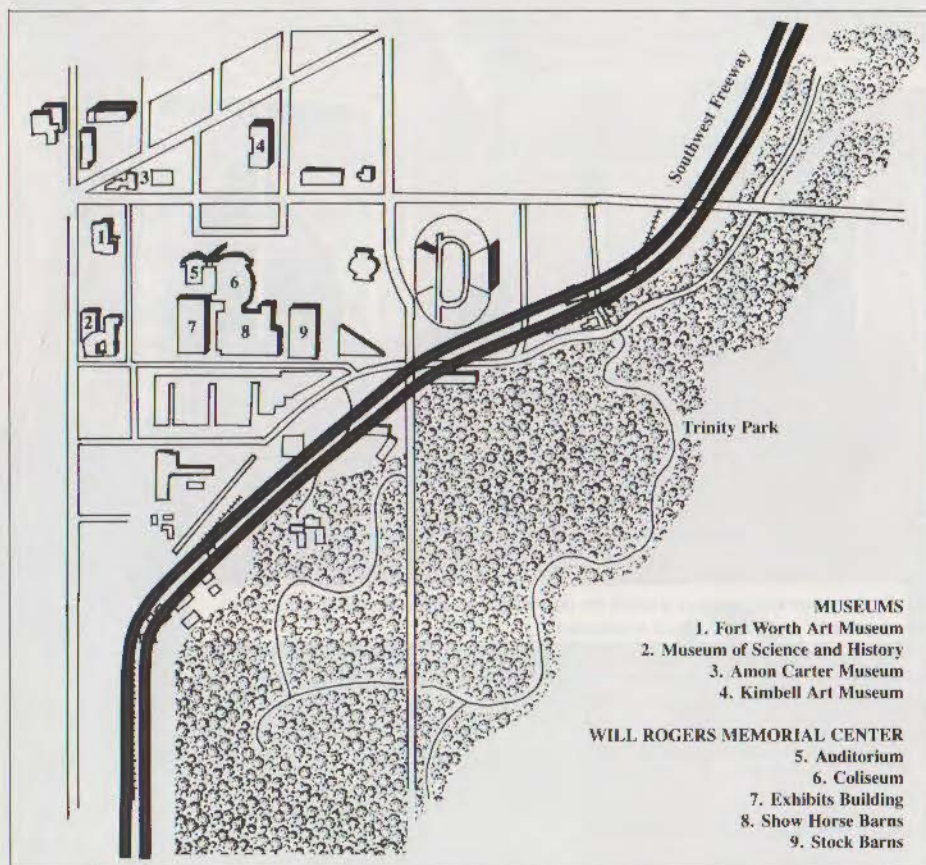
Fort Worth City planners and park board members have locked horns with the Texas highway department over a proposed six-lane freeway that would divide the Will Rogers Memorial Center from Trinity Park, the unification of which is a primary element in the formation of a proposed cultural district just west of the central business district (see *Texas Architect*, Sept./Oct. 1981).

The freeway plan became a controversy last winter when the city planning department began to revise Fort Worth’s comprehensive plan. In the process, planners discovered that the highway department had revived a 10-year-old plan to build the Southwest Freeway, shelved in 1972 due to lack of funds. Convinced there was no way that it would ever be unshelved, planners had told consultants preparing the cultural district master plan last year just to ignore the freeway proposal.

And ignore it they did. The New York architecture firm Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, working with the New York landscape architecture firm M. Paul Friedberg, prepared a master plan for the cultural district that linked the Will Rogers center and museum complex to the north with the Botanic Gardens and Trinity Park greenbelt to the south.

The cultural district plan, which partner-in-charge Malcolm Holzman likened to mixing a unique assortment of livestock arenas and art museums into “a kind of stew,” includes renovation of the Will Rogers center auditorium—remnant of a 1936 Texas centennial exposition—and construction of a new \$18 million exhibits building. Funding for the latter project, designed by the Fort Worth firm Hahnfeld Associates, has been approved by the voters, and construction of the 100,000-square-foot facility is scheduled to begin soon.

The highway department plan, designed to ease traffic congestion in the booming southwest part of town, calls for the freeway to extend from highway 121 southwest to Interstate 20 and loop 820, evenly splitting the cultural district. The park, in effect, would become completely surrounded by freeways. After the initial hoopla subsided, some residents of the area



Proposed cultural district and freeway, Fort Worth.



*Will Rogers Exhibits Building, Fort Worth.*

voiced qualified support for the plan, suggesting that measures to prevent traffic congestion in the southwest might be more important in the long run than a unified cultural district. The eventual consensus was to look for ways to have both—an alternate route that would solve the traffic problem and leave the proposed cultural district intact.

Although the highway department has insisted all along that the Southwest Freeway is not carved in stone—that the department would be open for a more subdued two- or four-lane “parkway” or similar alternative—it also insists that there is no practical alternative to the route of the roadway. The proposal is part of the state’s 20-year development plan, which—as it concerns Fort Worth—concludes that by the year 2000, the city will have to be able to move traffic back and forth from downtown to the southwest quadrant.

Meanwhile, the North Central Texas Council of Governments is studying the issue, and each side is confident of a victory. “People’s values have changed a lot in the last 10 years,” says city planner Carol Minar. “People are more aware of environmental impact, and now they’re saying it might not be so nice to have a freeway right next to a park.” Highway department design engineer Burton Clifton agrees that attitudes have changed, but not necessarily for the better. When the freeway was first proposed, he says, (based on a study by Lawrence Halprin, who recommended the route before there was a proposed cultural district to disturb), the plan was seen by many as a way to enhance the park, since the roadway would displace such “industrial incursions” as a pipe foundry next to the Botanic Gardens. “Now,” says Clifton, “people totally disregard the fact that creative freeway design could serve to integrate the area.”

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## Tigerman to Design Knoll Showroom, Office in Houston

New York-based Knoll International has awarded the contract to design its new Houston showroom and office complex to Chicago architect Stanley Tigerman (with Ray B. Bailey, Houston, as associate architect).

The 15,666-square-foot showroom will be housed in one of two existing buildings on a block bounded by Main, Hadley and Fannin Streets in downtown Houston. Originally a furniture store and warehouse, and later converted into a garage, the single-story structure will be transformed this time into a glazed cube of grey glass with red mullions and a large pyramid-shaped skylight on the roof.

An adjacent seven-story building, designed and built in 1958 by Houston architect J. Victor Neuhaus, will be renovated to relate to the single-story showroom building, using a different color glass and topped with a gabled skylight.

Tentative plans call for clearing part of the site to make way for a new four-story building, which would be clad in yet another shade of glass with a pyramid-shaped roof.

"The intention for the complex was to develop an integrated structural whole that reflects Knoll's position as a major force in classical design," Tigerman says. "Houston is known as the Paris of the Southwest—a city built on the classical lines of Mies van der Rohe and his school. The classic proportions and forms will echo a style that pervades the city, while defining the Knoll presence as an elegant oasis in the downtown area."

The showroom is scheduled to open in October 1983.

## 13 Projects Cited in 1982 Environmental Improvement Awards Program in Houston

Thirteen projects, including the restoration of an historic Houston church, were cited in the 16th Annual Environmental Improvement Awards Program sponsored by the Houston Municipal Arts Commission and the Houston Chapter AIA.

Awards were presented to project sponsors June 23 at a luncheon meeting of the Houston Chamber of Commerce Civic Affairs Committee.

The winning projects are:

- Relocation and restoration of the Heritage Presbyterian Church by Friendswood Development Corporation.
- Additions to Eastwood Park by Win. T. Cannady & Associates.
- The Collins Memorial Outdoor Classroom in the Houston Arboretum by Charles Tapley Associates.
- A parking identification system in the Southwestern Bell parking lot at Bell's Wesleyan branch by The Falick/Klein Partnership.
- Antioch Park by Century Development.
- Mary Considine Cullinan Park by Winslow/Moore.



*Heritage Presbyterian Church (before).*

- Retaining wall to protect the bank of a tributary of Buffalo Bayou by Herbert Pickworth.
  - "Vaquero," a sculpture in Moody Park by Luis Jimenez.
  - A sculpture by Mark di Suvero and a mural by David Novros in the Texas Medical Center.
  - "Personage and Birds" by Joan Miro in front of Texas Commerce Tower.
  - The Tree Coalition, an effort to preserve and improve Houston's urban forests, by the Park People.
  - A liveoak planting by the Southwest Civic Club.
  - Ongoing litter abatement in Houston by Clean Houston.
- Jurors for the program were Stephen Fox, an architectural historian at Rice; Willie C. Jordon, Jr., with the Houston architecture firm Haywood Jordon McCowan; Guadalupe Quintanilla,

assistant provost of undergraduate affairs at the University of Houston; and Jacqueline Schmeal, Houston journalist and board member of the Houston Ballet.

## Texas Construction Activity Shows 4 Percent Decrease For First Six Months of 1982

Construction contracts in Texas for the first six months of 1982 reflect a four percent decrease compared to the same six-month period in 1981, according to McGraw-Hill's F. W. Dodge Division.

Dodge Vice President and Chief Economist George Christie reports that contracts for residential and non-residential building statewide totalled \$7,092,781,000 for January through June 1982, down from a total of \$7,407,043,000 for the same period last year.

In the Houston metropolitan area, total residential and non-residential building contracts show an 18 percent decrease for the first six months of 1982. In Brazoria, Fort Bend, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller Counties, building contracts for January through June this year totalled \$2,169,243,000, down from a total of \$2,655,405,000 for the first six months of 1981.

Building activity in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, however, shows an increase for the first six months of 1982 compared to the same period last year. Residential and non-residential construction contracts in Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hood, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant and Wise Counties totalled \$2,102,713,000 for January through June 1982, up from a total of \$1,875,208,000 for the same period last year.

## Woodward & Associates Wins Woodworking Award For Restaurant and Bar

Winfield's '08 by the Dallas firm Woodward & Associates, located in the historic Plaza Hotel on Sundance Square in Fort Worth, was one of nine projects nationwide to receive an award of excellence this year from the Architectural Woodwork Institute.

Rustic ponderosa wood is used extensively throughout the space on columns, bar, railings and bookshelves. High, molded-tin ceilings, skylights and



Winfield's '08, Fort Worth.

greenery are intended to create an "airy, open feeling." Interior features recalling a bygone era include etched-glass windows, porcelain-edged terra cotta and antique lamps. Authentic posters, period pictures and mirrors adorn the old brick walls.

Winfield's '08 is named after Winfield Scott, one of Fort Worth's leading industrialists at the turn of the century, who built the Plaza Hotel in 1908.

The purpose of the awards program sponsored by AWI, which is headquartered in Arlington, Va., is to recognize architect, owner and craftsman for outstanding use of architectural woodwork. The woodwork manufacturer for the Winfield's project was The Lanford Corporation and the general contractor was Thos. S. Byrne, Inc., both of Fort Worth.

## NCARB Approves New Registration Exam

Delegates to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards' 61st annual meeting June 23-26 in Minneapolis, Minn., voted to implement the NCARB Uniform Architect Registration Exam (ARE) nationwide in June 1983.

The new "ARE," which will replace all previous exams in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, will be 32 hours long, given over a four-day period, and will consist of five major sections: pre-design, site design, building design, building systems and construction documents and services, each of which must be passed.

Candidates transferring from the previous exam must take only those sections for which they have not received credit. First-time examinees must take the entire test. And those who were candidates for the qualifying test—which will no longer be given

after December 1982—must complete the standard three-year internship before being eligible to take the ARE.

For more information, contact the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners, 8213 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 107, Austin 78758. Telephone: (512) 478-1363.

## Gensler and Associates Wins First Place in Contract Interior Design Competition

The Houston office of Gensler and Associates/Architects has won first place in the national Contract Interior Design Competition for its design of the Osborn-Heirs Company offices in San

Antonio. The firm received the award, first place in the category for offices over 10,000 square feet, during the National Exposition of Contract Design (NEOCON) June 15-18 in Chicago.

The design concept for the 22,000-square-foot, floor-and-a-half space involves a central cube-shaped staircase enclosure in the reception area serving as a simple sculptural form. This form is repeated in entrances to executive offices, furnishings and partitions. Creative use of light and color, a mix of subtle textures and tones accented by black lacquer and white plaster, and glass block along the window wall to diffuse natural light, all are intended to create a "reserved environment."



Richard Payne

Osborn-Heirs Company offices, San Antonio.

## George Kassabaum Dies in St. Louis



Barnes Hospital in St. Louis following a stroke Aug. 12 in his suburban St. Louis home. He was 61.

Kassabaum was born in Atchison, Kans., and educated at Washington University in St. Louis, where he received a bachelor's degree in architecture in 1947. He was one of

George E. Kassabaum, FAIA, president of St. Louis-based Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, which has offices in Dallas and Houston, died Aug. 15 at

three founding principals of the distinguished St. Louis firm, which he helped establish in 1955 with George Hellmuth and Gyo Obata. Under Kassabaum's direction as principal in charge of project administration—which included construction documents, cost-estimating, scheduling and construction—HOK gained a reputation for completing projects on time and within budget. Kassabaum was recognized nationally for his system of cost analysis and control and for his concern for the quality of architectural services.

Kassabaum also served as president of the American Institute of Architects from 1968 to 1969, received Washington University's Alumni Citation in 1972 and was named Missouri's Architect of the Year in 1978.



## Projects in Progress



American School, Monterrey.

### Plans Announced for New American School in Monterrey, Mexico

The San Antonio firm Chumney, Jones & Kell has completed the preliminary design of a new American School of Monterrey near Monterrey, N.L., Mexico.

The present campus, designed by the Houston firm Caudill, Rowlett, Scott and built in the late 1950s for children of Americans working in Monterrey, is too small for the school's projected student population, which now stands at 1,500 and consists mainly of children of Mexican nationals.

The 48-acre site for the new school is just west of Monterrey, in the Santa Caterina, Huesteca Canyon area, a largely undeveloped tract flanked by rugged mountains. The design of the new campus is along the lines of a hilltown, with lower, intermediate and upper schools each comprising a "neighborhood."

These neighborhoods will be connected to a "village center," which will consist of such facilities as library, auditorium, amphitheater, administration building, dining hall, gymnasium and field house. In keeping with traditional Mexican town planning, the zocalo (or square) will be the heart of the campus, complete with bell tower.

Most of the campus buildings will be small in scale and single story, with floor lines accommodating the contours of the site. A series of lakes with waterfalls, connected by canals, will meander through the site. Building materials will be indigenous, including stucco, concrete, brick and tile.

The project is scheduled for completion in 1985.

*Continued on page 74.*

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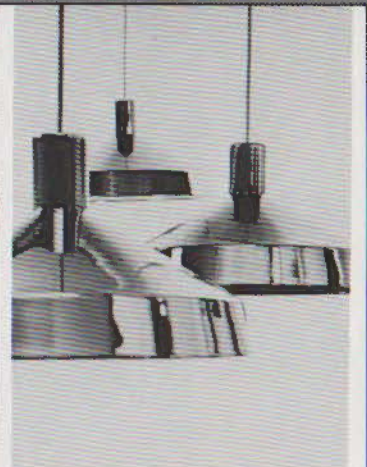
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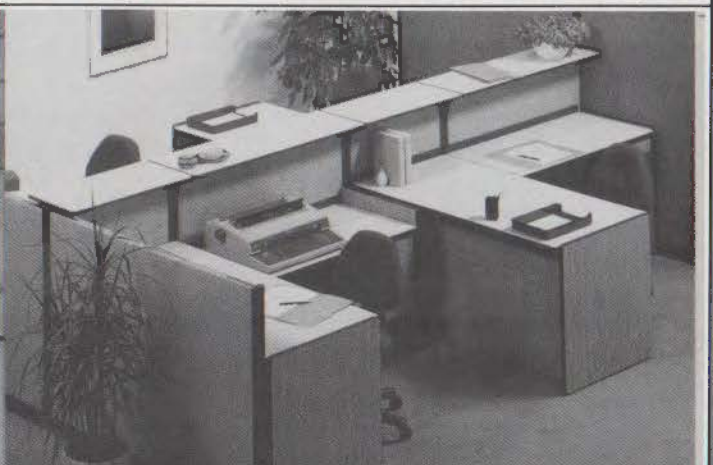
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<p><b>Space 605</b></p>  <p><b>Glenn Hennings &amp; Associates</b> 214/651-1556</p>	<p><b>Space 611</b></p> <p>Representing Jansco, Contemporary Shells, L.S.I., Terfeste, Ltd., Salvarani Kitchens, Paul Hoppenfeld, Desience Corp., Lomac Marble, Coeval Contract</p> <p><b>ernest low &amp; associates</b> 214/747-8839</p>	<p><b>Space 642</b></p> <p><b>Monarch Furniture</b> 214/741-5347</p>  <p>a Mohasco company</p>
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<p>Space 650</p> <p>Open Office Systems Contract Furniture</p>  <p><b>American Seating</b> 214/748-8383</p>	<p>Space 633</p>  <p><b>alma</b></p> <p>The AD system . . . Alma's open plan office system</p>  <p><b>Dick Lowe &amp; Associates</b> Alma Desk Company Box 581363 / Dallas 75258 214/747-7626</p>	<p>Space 635</p>  <p><b>krueger</b></p> <p>technical innovation . . . by design</p>  <p><b>Dick Lowe &amp; Associates</b> Krueger Contract Box 581345 / Dallas 75258 214/747-7629</p>
<p>Space 672</p>  <p><b>HAWORTH</b> OFFICE INTERIOR SYSTEMS</p> <p><b>Haworth, Inc.</b> Dallas Division 214/748-0506</p>	<p>Space 666</p> <p>Gregson, Continental Woodcrafters, McGraw Edison, Corry Jamestown, Color Shop, Gift Craft, Hoosier, Jefsteel, Stylex</p>  <p><b>Loyd Brotherton &amp; Assoc.</b> 214/742-3654</p>	<p>Space 679</p> <p>Open Plan Office Systems</p>  <p><b>Westinghouse ASD</b> 214/744-5685</p>
<p>Space 660</p> <p>Interact, Haller Systems, Inc. Davis Furniture Industries, Taylor Chair Co.</p>  <p><b>Bob Gray, Inc.</b> 214/747-6361</p>	<p>Space 668</p>  <p><b>Metro</b></p> <p>Metropolitan Furniture Corp. Robert Long Lighting, Inc. Helen Webber / Heron Intl.</p> <p>Metropolitan Showrooms, Inc. P.O. Box 58256 Dallas, Texas 75258 (214) 747-4135</p>	<p>Interior products for the architect, specifier and interior designer</p> <p><i>For further information on any of the showrooms listed in the ad, please circle the reader inquiry number. If you would like information from a specific showroom, please indicate so on the reader inquiry card.</i></p>



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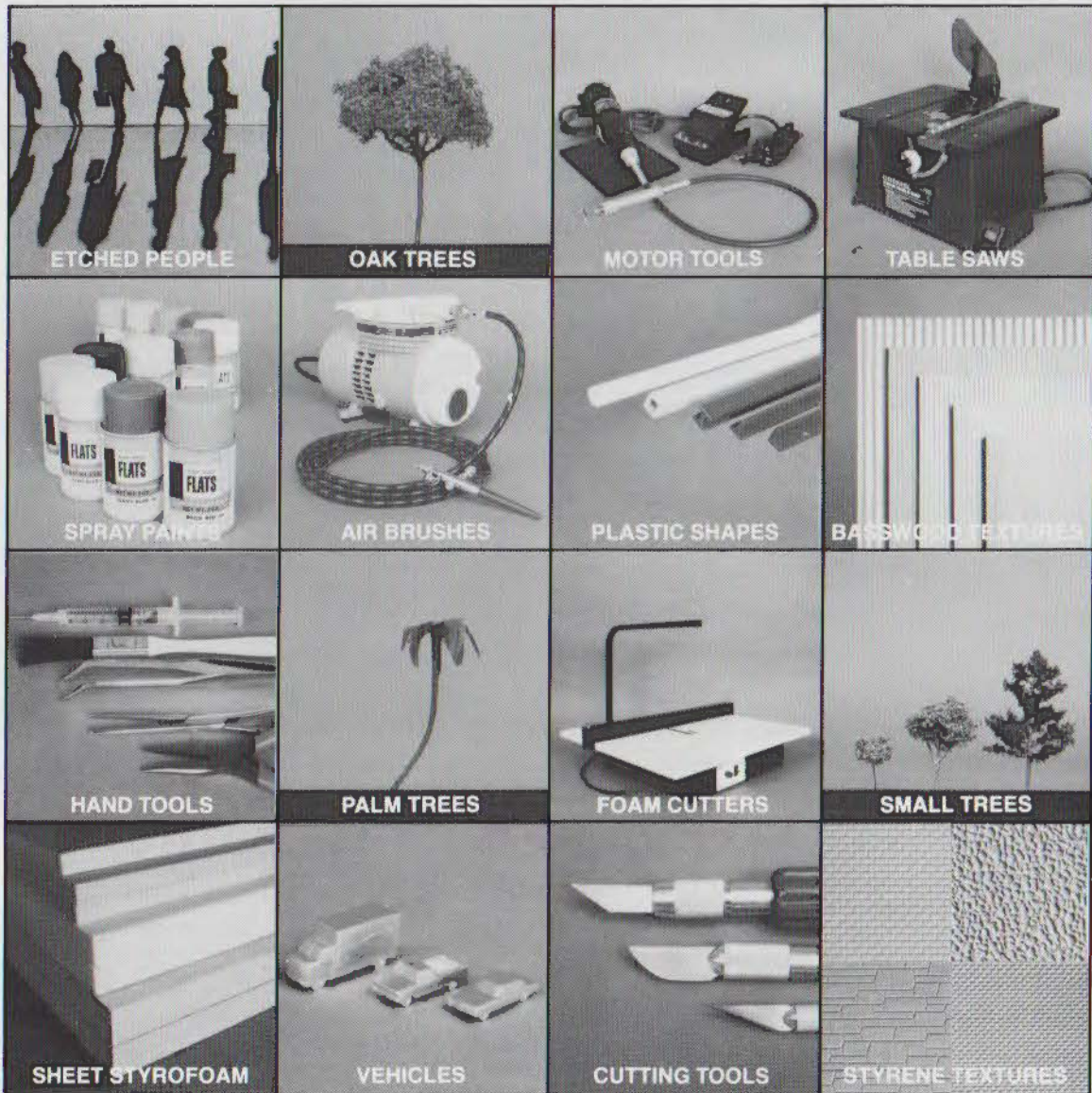


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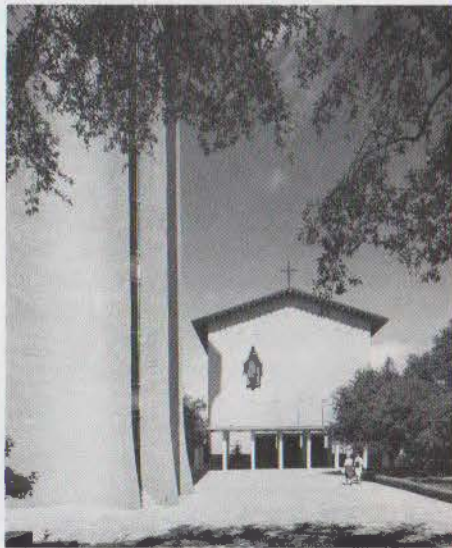


# About this Issue

While Fort Worth, Texas, is certainly no "City of the Future," its time-worn "Cowtown" label doesn't seem to fit either, as a mere glance at its sparkling new skyline will reveal. Laid-back Fort Worth was in the depths of virtual slumber during the architectural commotion of the '70s, which led in other major cities to a proliferation of gleaming glass high rises. But now the "Texas-most City"—site of the Texas Society of Architects' 43rd Annual Meeting November 4-6—is very much awake and, as if to play catch-up, has set its own building boom in motion. The result, despite overt manifestations of Fort Worth's history-mindedness, is that the once familiar, comfortable and predictable feel of the city is changing fast.

Coping with urban change—managing it—is a thread that runs through this issue, beginning with architecture critic David Dillon's assessment of Fort Worth's downtown renaissance and continuing with Lawrence Speck's essay on "Continuity in Architecture." These articles reflect a general bias toward the notion of environmental change as a gradual, continuous and responsible process—*evolution* rather than *revolution*. Implicit are several related precepts: that a city's unique visual character derives from a combination of architecture and place, and uniqueness is a quality that should be respected; that visual continuity, but not necessarily stylistic homogeneity, is a component of those places generally conceded to be among the most beautiful in the world; that an individual building in the city should be conceived as part of the urban whole, the extension of an existing fabric; and that throughout this fabric, the presence of human history should be felt rather than concealed.

The thread through this issue continues and ends with our tribute to the late O'Neil Ford, FAIA, whose buildings affirm unfailingly the aforementioned precepts. His work is modest and unassuming—an architecture of courtesy—without being bland. It is enriched by a keen awareness of time and place. And, meeting the true test of context-sensitive design, it always seems to fit.—*Larry Paul Fuller*

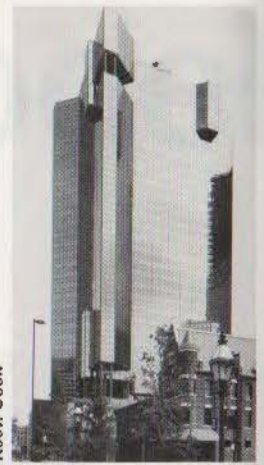


# Cowtown at the Crossroads

## *Fort Worth's Struggle for a New Identity*

By David Dillon

Robt. Cook



Craig Kuhner

Fort Worth is having an identity crisis, brought on by a surge of new development but by no means confined to it. If Fort Worth is no longer only an aw shucks, beer-and-barbecue town, neither is it just another faceless medium-sized city whose architectural heritage consists mainly of cloverleaves and shopping centers. Between these extremes is an image the Fort Worth of the 1980s can live with. The trick is finding it.

The problem is particularly visible along Main Street, described by planner Edmund Bacon as one of the great urban vistas in America. It is compact and comprehensible at a glance; only nine

short blocks separate the Renaissance Revival Tarrant County Courthouse on the north from the Convention Center on the south. Until recently, most of these blocks were occupied by modestly-scaled masonry buildings that created a comfortable, richly-textured pedestrian environment. What few new buildings there were did not overpower the older, more ornate structures that give the downtown skyline a special visual coherence.

All of this began to change with the opening of the Dallas/Fort Worth regional airport in 1974. Overnight, Fort Worth was as accessible as Dallas to executives and corporations hunting for

*View north on Main to Tarrant County Courthouse through Sundance Square, two city blocks of turn-of-the-century Fort Worth restored by Woodward & Associates, Dallas, for Bass Brothers Enterprises. The glass-sheathed City Center I (architect—3D/International; Design Architect—Paul Rudolph) hovers above the square; City Center II is shown under construction at right. On the corner is the fanciful Knights of Pythias Castle Hall, built in 1901.*



View west across Main toward Second-Street intersection. The Americana Hotel, by 3D/International for Bass Brothers Enterprises, steps back in deference to the courthouse, which terminates Main Street.

Robt. Cook

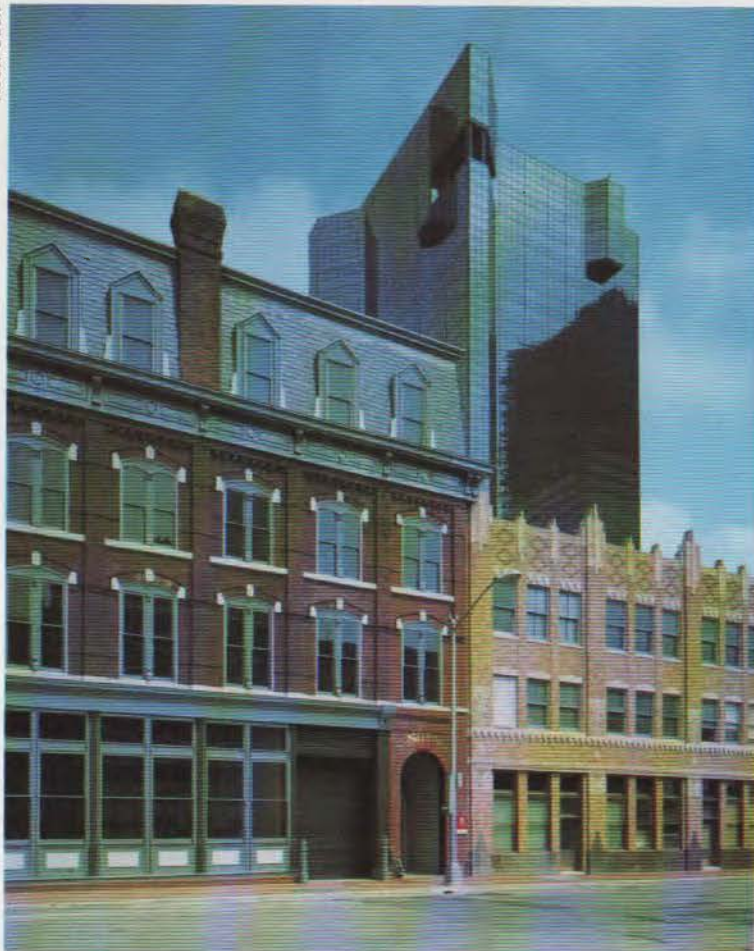
a new home. The Sunbelt migration only increased the pressure until, now, Main Street has two new massive glass office towers, containing approximately 1.75 million square feet, with a third almost finished on neighboring Commerce Street and a fourth in the discussion stages. A 510-room Americana Hotel opened last year at Main and Second streets and a major expansion of the Tarrant County convention center is under way at the south end of Main. Overall, twice as much new office space has been built in downtown Fort Worth in the last three years (approximately 3.5 million square feet) as in the preceding three decades.

**Restoration and Renovation**

More surprising perhaps is that all this new construction has been accompanied by major restoration and renovation projects: the 1894 Tarrant County courthouse is being gutted and restored to its original spacious elegance at a cost of \$8 million; two entire blocks of turn-of-the-century commercial buildings between Main and Houston Streets (named Sundance Square) have been restored for shops, restaurants and offices; the old Hotel Texas (1921) has been converted into a new Hyatt Regency; several other vintage office buildings, including the Burk Burnett building at Main and 4th, are being refurbished. All of which would seem to suggest that Fort Worth has found that comfortable niche between progress and preservation. But appearances can be deceiving. Regardless of what the new office towers are doing for the city's tax base, they are dramatically altering the scale and texture of downtown. Of the major buildings now under construction, only the First United Tower at West 7th and Burnett Park (by Geren Associates/CRS, Fort Worth; Sikes Jennings Kelly, Houston, consulting architects) acknowledges its masonry environment. Yet, at 40 stories and 1 million square feet, it is a massive intrusion in a neighborhood of smaller buildings. And along with the restoration has come the inevitable gentrification that threatens the heterogeneity that makes downtowns alive and compelling.

The tensions are most evident at the intersection of Main and Second streets, presently occupied by City Center I and II, Sundance Square, and the Americana Hotel, all projects of Bass Brothers Enterprises. City Center I and II are Paul Rudolph's first glass buildings, and only his second spec office project if one counts One Brookhollow Plaza in Dallas. The basic plan is similar to one Rudolph

Robt. Cook



The top of City Center I as seen from Third Street above the old First City National Bank Building (left) and the "vaguely Art Deco" Western Union Building.

used in the Art and Architecture building at Yale and several other projects—a series of horizontal trays of space intersected by vertical shafts, creating a pin-wheel effect. Turning the building slightly on its site enhances this effect by creating the impression that the gray glass skin, designed by 3D/International of Houston, has been stretched tightly around a skeleton. Add crimped corners and a few turrets and you have a startling Star Wars image on the otherwise sedate Fort Worth skyline.

Rudolph has tried, with some success, to reduce the impact of both buildings by exposing the support columns at street level. In City Center I, for example, they appear in pairs or as a tripod, sometimes inside the glass skin, sometimes outside. The exposed columns do break down the scale of the building at street level, and they also help to form a pedestrian arcade between Main and Commerce. But the columns are still enormous, and the arcade is not particularly well designed for shoppers. The floors of some of the potential retail spaces are several feet above the sidewalk, not a situation that encourages window shopping. The Americana Hotel across the street, designed by 3D/International, is ultimately more responsive to Main Street by virtue of its concrete exterior and stair-stepped east facade, although at sidewalk level the facade becomes unnecessarily blank and hostile. Without the City Center development, Sundance Square would not have been economically feasible, yet set against a background of slick futuristic office towers, this enclave of freshly restored buildings inevitably comes off looking like a stage set or a toy instead of an authentic piece of Fort Worth's past.

#### Diversity

One of the most impressive things about the project, directed by Thomas Woodward and Associates of Dallas, is its architectural diversity. In addition to some unremarkable turn-of-the-century commercial buildings, Sundance Square includes the Richardsonian Knights of Pythias Hall, the First City National Bank with its French mansard roof, the vaguely Moorish Plaza Hotel, and the vaguely Art Deco Western Union building. Several of these structures were in such poor condition that they had to be taken down brick-by-brick and then rebuilt, making them as much replicas as restorations. Others were simply gutted and then refitted with period facades. So successful were the architects in some of their cosmetic surgery that the Fort Worth fire

Phillip Poole



*Trouvé, an exclusive boutique for women's apparel located in the Knights of Pythias Building, is one of several "high-end" establishments in Sundance Square. Interiors by Albert S. Komatsu & Associates.*

Phillip Poole



*Courthouse: northern terminus to Main.*

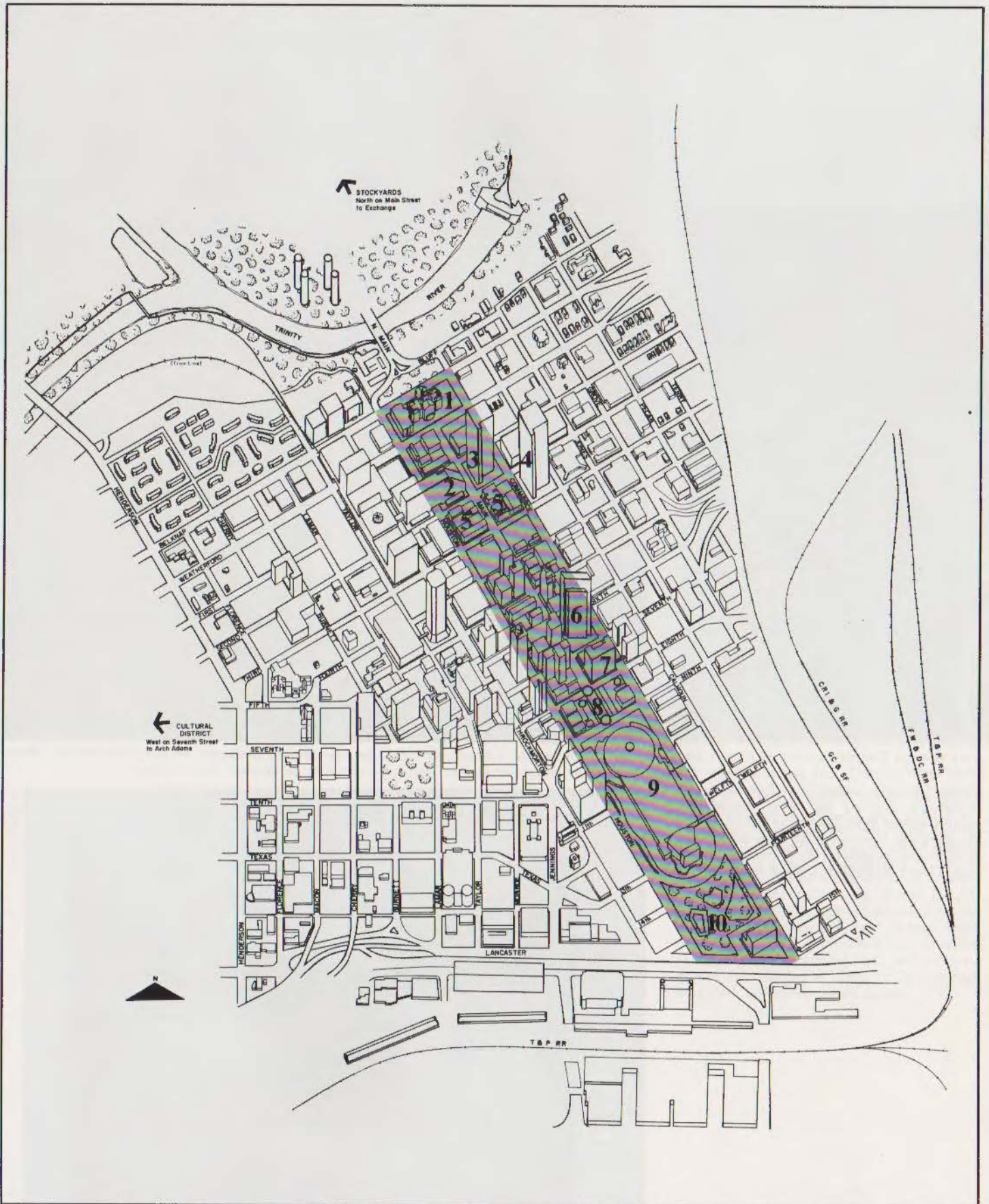
Jack White Enterprises



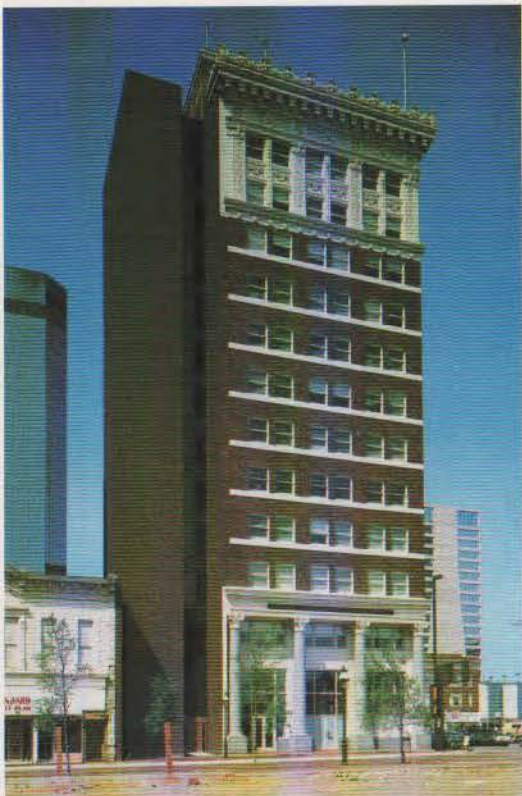
Studio 3 Photography



*ABOVE: Tarrant County Courthouse, designed by Gunn and Curtiss Architects of Kansas City, under construction in 1894. Having suffered countless ad hoc modifications through the years—including the closing off of the dramatic rotunda—the red granite Renaissance Revival structure is being restored by a joint venture of Ward Bogard & Associates, Fort Worth, and Burson Hendricks & Walls, Dallas. LEFT: The ornate rotunda will be re-opened and a grand staircase restored.*



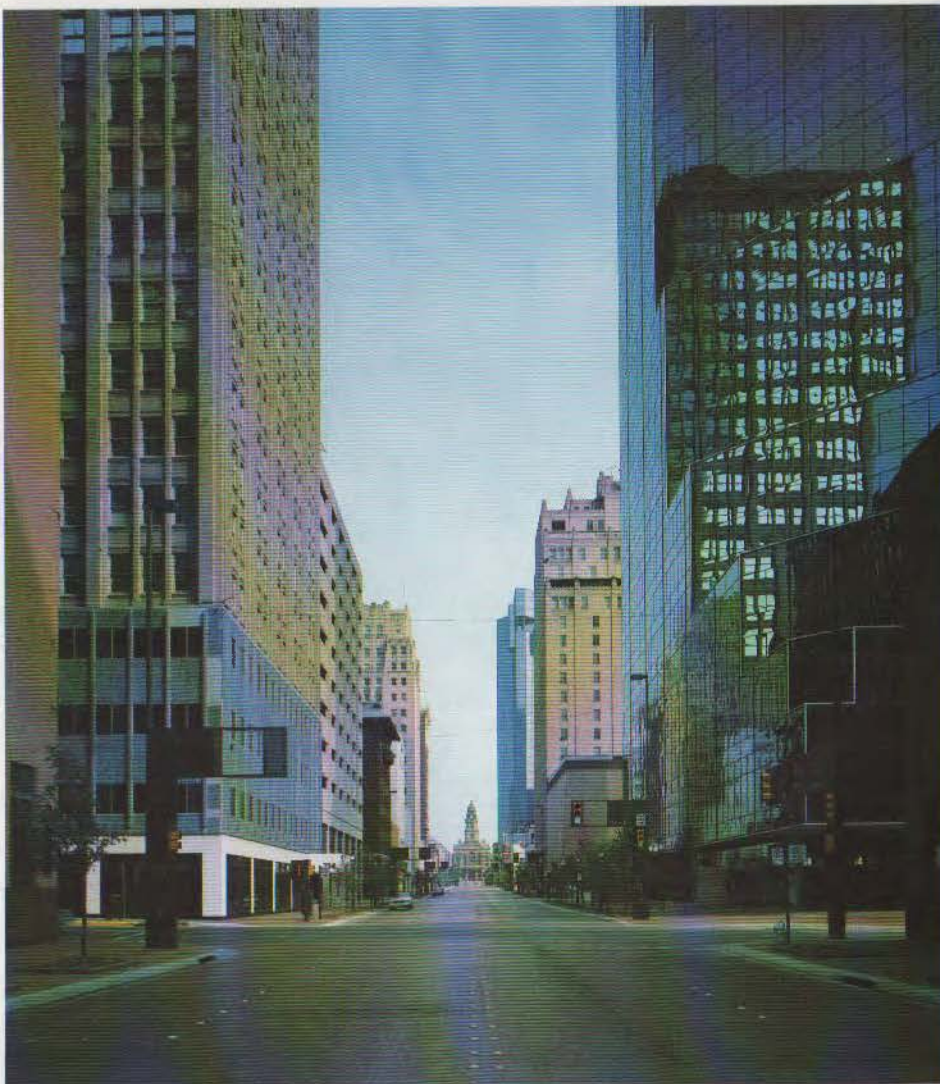
Downtown Fort Worth. Legend: 1. Tarrant County Courthouse, 2. Americana Hotel, 3. City Center I, 4. City Center II, 5. Sundance Square, 6. Continental Plaza, 7. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 8. Main Street Plaza and Parking Garage, 9. Tarrant County Convention Center, 10. Fort Worth Water Gardens.



James F. Wilson

Burk Burnett Building, corner of Fourth and Main, built in 1912. The ornate exterior detailing, formerly concealed and destroyed by remodeling, recently has been restored and interior spaces have been refurbished. Original elevators were replaced by a new tower of elevators adjoining the building. Architects: Geren Associates/CRS, Fort Worth.

Robt. Cook



View north on Main Street. At right, the new rhomboid-shaped, 40-story Continental Plaza, by JPI Architects of Dallas, stair-steps down to its Seventh Street corner.

Hursley & Lark

Phillip Poole



Twenty-third floor reception area for Western Preferred Corporation, which occupies eight floors in Continental Plaza. Western's interiors designed by Cauble Hoskins Architects, Fort Worth.



Bob Lukeman



ABOVE: Hyatt Regency Fort Worth viewed from Main Street Plaza, a park located between the hotel and the Convention Center. The 1921-vintage Hotel Texas, which opened as the city's tallest building and is on the National Register of Historic Places, recently has been renovated as the Hyatt by JPI Architects of Dallas, also responsible for the public plaza and the two-level parking facility below it. LEFT: Inside the Hyatt, an atrium in the building's existing light well rises six stories to a sloping skylight. A 26-foot high waterfall spills into pools below.

inspectors at first refused to believe that they were new buildings and tried to force Sid Bass to insure them as historic structures.

At the moment, Sundance Square is approximately 40 percent leased, mainly to expensive boutiques, restaurants and specialty shops. The chili parlor is operated by Neiman-Marcus. If Sundance Square were in an exclusive neighborhood like Westover Hills, nobody would think twice about this kind of retail mix. But it is on Main Street, everybody's turf. Sid Bass's declared intention to create a real town square that reflects the indigenous character of Fort Worth is at least momentarily at odds with the character of Sundance Square, which is white, squeaky clean and very high-end. This could change once City Center I and II fill up but right now downtown has two distinct social worlds only a block apart—Sundance Square and Tandy Center. The one is mainly for tourists, the other for the folks who traditionally congregate on Main Street. If one believes that the health of America's cities depends greatly on attracting the middle class back to downtown, then some means other than a skybridge will have to be found to bring the worlds of Tandy and Sundance together.

#### **Vintage Fort Worth**

The same issues pop up in somewhat different form in the vicinity of the Hyatt Regency and the recently opened Continental Plaza, both projects of Dallas-based JPJ Architects for Woodbine Development Corporation, also of Dallas. The restoration of the old Hotel Texas is almost a capsule summary of Fort Worth's struggle with itself. Since the building is on the National Register, little could be done to the exterior except a bit of cleaning and repointing. It is vintage Fort Worth. But the interiors, by JPJ—with furniture, fabrics and finishes by Singer-Christianson Co. of Los Angeles—are just vintage Hyatt: a skylight atrium, waterfall, tracer lights, a dozen different colors of fabric covering every square inch of wall. The same look is available in Dallas, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and a dozen other locations. Yet both tourists and natives seem to prefer it to the elegant restraint of the Americana. The Hyatt is perceived as warm and homey whereas the Americana is considered cold and forbidding. It isn't, but it is formal, which in Fort Worth can be almost as bad. Some also see it as a rather self-conscious attempt to raise standards of taste in Fort Worth, which hardly sits well

with those who think their taste is fine as it is.

Continental Plaza, just north of the Hyatt, has a less futuristic shape than the City Center towers but is another large-scale intrusion—40 stories and 1 million square feet of emerald green reflective glass set diagonally on a standard 200-foot-square site. This configuration is partly for energy conservation—the building's narrow end faces the strongest sun—and partly to provide a more elegant context for the Hyatt next door. The building's best elevation is at the corner of Main and Seventh streets, where the combination of a wide sidewalk and the cascading facade breaks up the building's bulk and also creates the impression that it is really just an old-fashioned masonry set-back building that has been done in glass. But on the other three sides the building becomes somewhat bottom-heavy, taking up almost every square foot of site with little room for pedestrians. While it adds a rather bold sculptural element to the skyline, it does little for the street, which is what downtown Fort Worth has traditionally been about.

The city has already spent several million dollars on the revitalization of Main Street, mostly in the form of new brick pavers, planters and period street lamps. Proposals for turning the street into a pedestrian mall have been strongly, and sensibly, resisted, even though pedestrian malls were an important part of Victor Gruen's 1956 plan for revitalization of downtown Fort Worth. A small park has been built over the Hyatt Regency parking garage, but an informal survey by the city's urban planning department indicates that it is the least used of the major downtown parks. Part of the problem may be that it is new but it is also very severely geometric, the kind of project that generally looks better on the drawing board than in fact.

While all of these amenities have made Main Street more attractive visually, they have done little to stimulate street life. On most days, Edmund Bacon's sublime urban vista is more like a deserted path going from nowhere to nowhere. The completion of Sundance Square should improve the situation on the northern end of Main Street, but between there and the convention center are only a handful of small stores and coffee shops—authentic Main Street establishments, but insufficient in number to serve as magnets for pedestrians. This stretch of Main needs more retail—a good bar, a sandwich

shop—to compensate for the proliferation of imperial banking lobbies and bronze glass office suites at street level.

Unfortunately, downtown Fort Worth's premiere tourist attraction, the Water Gardens, is too far away to have much impact on this situation. Had it been built closer to the center of town, at the intersection of Fifth and Main, for example, it might have served as the catalyst for public activity that the downtown area so desperately needs. As it is, it remains an isolated but stunning piece of urban design, part playground and part agora, that most people visit only by car. When the Water Gardens opened in 1974, architect Philip Johnson was roundly criticized for pouring so much concrete in such a harsh climate. Why would anyone want to go there, especially in August? The critics were wrong. Although the central plaza is still too exposed for comfort, the live oaks and bald cypress have matured sufficiently to soften most of the other spaces. The succession of raised and sunken plazas, some quite Mayan in outline, offer moisture-starved Texans an experience of water in many forms, from a soothing trickle to a roaring maelstrom. In addition to shutting out most of the noise of the expressway, the high walls reflect light in the same rich way as the masonry buildings all over downtown.

#### **A Real Place**

The street historically has been Fort Worth's focus. Of late, the city has been giving more and more attention to the skyline, making bold sculptural statements that dazzle motorists on the freeway. Dallas does that because it can't do anything else. But Fort Worth is not Dallas. It's smaller, more coherent, more deeply rooted in history. Ultimately, the folksy epithet, "The city where the West begins," is almost right. In chasing some flashy image of urban progress, Fort Worth risks losing some of those singular qualities that make it a real place instead of just another non-place.

---

*David Dillon is architecture critic for the Dallas Mornings News and a Texas Architect contributing editor.*





Philip Johnson's Fort Worth Water Gardens, 1974, and the city's changing skyline. Maturing vegetation has softened the gardens' original harshness.

# Seven Buildings

## A Sampling of Recent Fort Worth Architecture

The following projects were selected as an interesting cross-section of recent work outside the downtown area.



View through stair tower to entry tower.



### ROUNDHOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

To transform the defunct Roundhouse Cafe into an office building, four distinct vertical forms—entry tower, stair tower, stacked conference rooms, and service tower—were inserted, on axis, through the center of the simple concrete block building, leaving clear-span office space on either side. The row of towers extends forward of the symmetrical street facade to create a porch and pops up above the flat roofline as shed-like forms. The four towers are spaced to let light filter in between them, and each is treated in its own vocabulary: storefront vernacular for entry, painted plaster with windows and balconies for the stair tower, Doric pilasters for conference, and plaster with industrial fixtures for mechanical spaces.

#### Credits

*Architect:* Moore, Ruble, Yudell—Santa Monica, Calif.

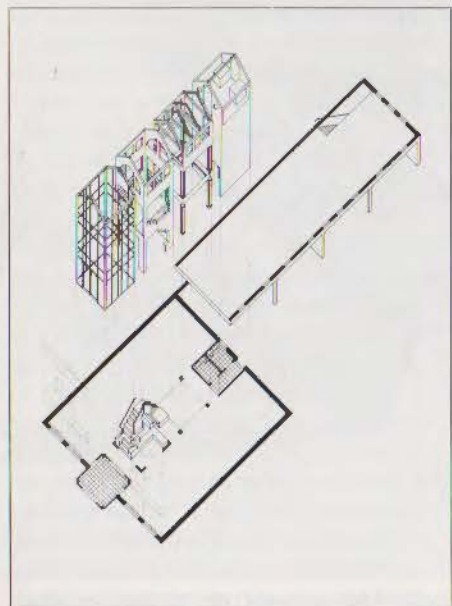
*Associate Architect:* Harvey Youngblood, Architects, Fort Worth

*Client:* John A. Meyer, Ltd., Hermosa Beach, Calif.

*Contractor:* B. D. Carpenter, Fort Worth



View through stair tower to conference room tower.



Entry to stair tower.

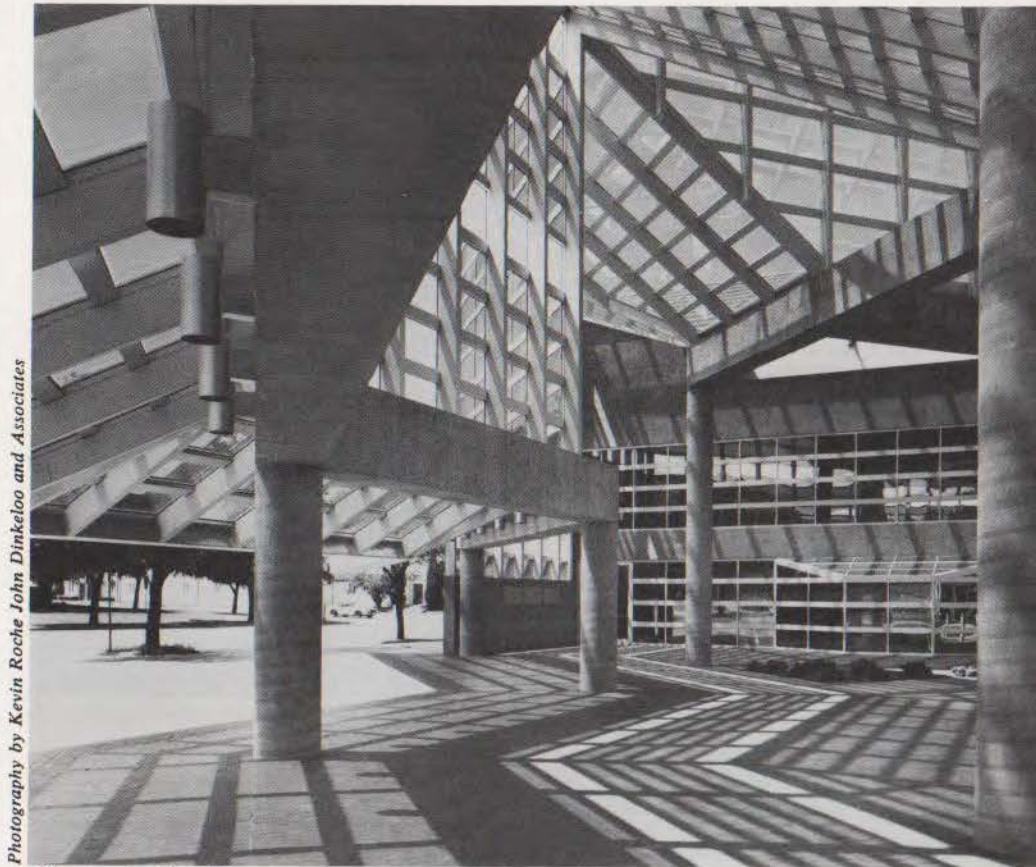
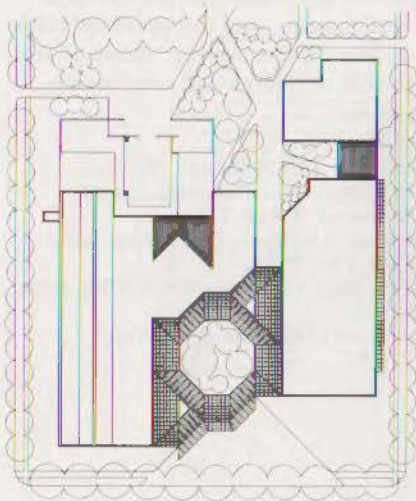
Photography by Phillip Poole

## J. M. MOUDY BUILDING

To combine facilities for the visual arts and communications under one roof, architects designed TCU's J. M. Moudy Building as two wings joined by a central courtyard and glass portico. The north wing houses the art department (painting, sculpture, printmaking), the south wing communications (speech, print journalism, radio/T.V./film). Inside, both wings are designed to accommodate the very latest in laboratory and life-safety technology. In response to program requirements, a ventilation and disposal system deals with hazards posed by the use of toxic materials in certain art and photography classes, making the building one of the safest of its kind in the country. High-tech facilities include television and radio stations, film-editing rooms, darkrooms and a multi-media room with 22 slide projectors that can project images onto all four walls and the ceiling at the same time. High-ceilinged art studios, open to the window walls, also are naturally illuminated during the day by clerestories. The exterior of the three-story, 130,000-square-foot building is distinguished by exposed concrete, ribbon windows and blonde brick, the latter to relate the building to its context, a campus consisting mainly of buildings clad in brick of a similar color (and a gesture some critics have charged was merely token).

### Credits

**Architects:** Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates, Hamden, Conn.  
**Client:** Texas Christian University  
**Contractor:** Thomas S. Byrne, Inc., Fort Worth



Photography by Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates

Glass-covered portico.



Main facade.



Lecture room.



North facade.

**KORNFELD RESIDENCE**

This one-bedroom, two-level house for a retired executive and his wife is organized as a series of enclosed and semi-enclosed spaces to achieve privacy and to capitalize on views over a steep ravine to the Trinity River Valley. Entry is through a brick-walled courtyard featuring a lap-pool with telescoping fountain. The flat-roofed house has a brick exterior on the first level and horizontal mahogany siding above as a gesture to more conventional brick and cedar shingle homes in the neighborhood. The siding becomes striking trellis members above each of three decks.

**Credits**

*Architect:* Emery Young Associates

*Interiors:* Emery Young Associates

*Landscape Architect:* Mike Bardis

*Contractor:* Bob Adcock, Inc.



*View from ravine.*

Photography by Phillip Poole



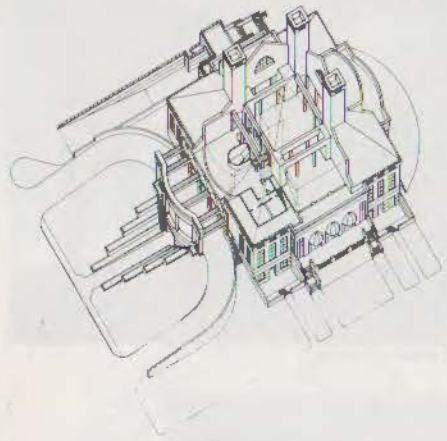
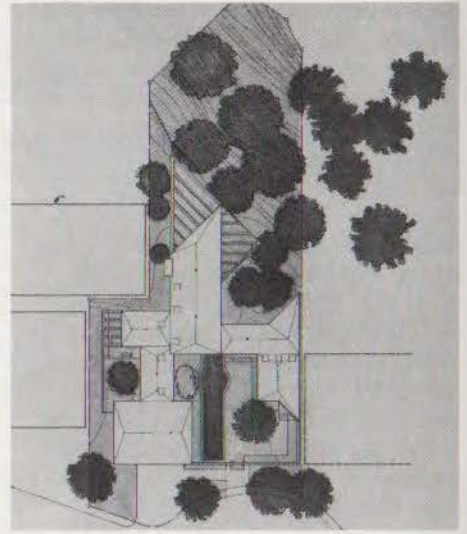
*View to entry.*



*Main living area oriented for view; opens to trellis-covered deck.*



*Entry court.*



*Main floor plan.*



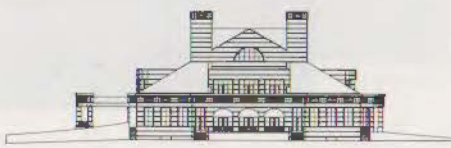
*East.*



*West.*



*North.*



*South.*

**RIVER CREST COUNTRY CLUB**

Scheduled for completion late next year, this new three-level facility in the prestigious Westover Hills area of Fort Worth replaces an 80-year-old clubhouse destroyed by fire. Program areas include formal and informal dining rooms, men's tavern and card room, locker rooms, grand ballroom, and related service areas. The lower level is expressed as a rusticated concrete plinth supporting the brick and terra cotta-banded building. Overall massing, and the use of red brick and green roof, evoke the "colonial" feel of the old clubhouse and neighboring mansions.

**Credits**

*Architects:* Taft Architects, Houston.

*Partners—*John Casbarian, Danny Samuels & Robert Timme.

*Associate Architects:* Geren Associates/CRS, Fort Worth

*Engineering:* Geren Associates/CRS, Fort Worth

*Contractor:* JBM, Inc., Fort Worth

## ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OFFICES

The program for the new Associated General Contractors Fort Worth office, the local chapter's first home of its own in its 58-year history, called for a building that would meet requirements for both association administration by AGC staff and daily use by AGC members. Needed were staff offices and work areas as well as a planning room, lounge and meeting space for the 40-member chapter. Appropriately, the chapter also wanted the building to exemplify fine craftsmanship in its construction and finishes. Architects made a distinction between staff and member areas by contrasting their volumes and finishes, making the staff areas smaller and exposing mechanical, electrical, lighting and other systems in the larger member areas. The junction of these two portions of the building, which occurs in the public entry space, is marked by a four-foot-wide skylight across the width of the building. A steel trellis system, which forms a clerestory on the south side of the building, serves to organize the building's elements while making a well-scaled gesture to its context, an older in-town neighborhood now being revitalized. The structure consists of steel columns, beams, joists, roof deck and trellis, with an envelope of brick veneer and one-inch insulated and tinted glass.

### Credits

*Architects:* Kirk, Voich and Gist

*Client:* Associated General Contractors, Fort Worth

*General Contractor:* Associated General Contractors, Fort Worth

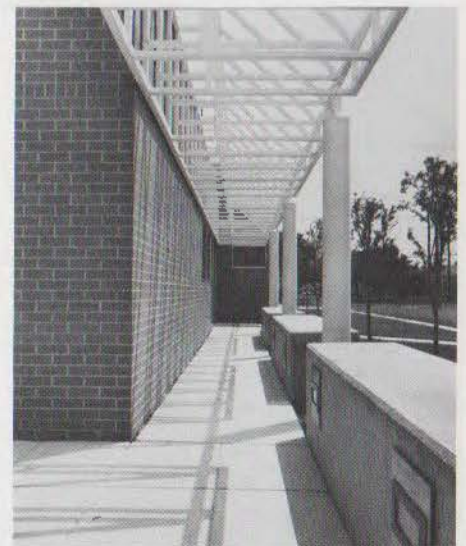
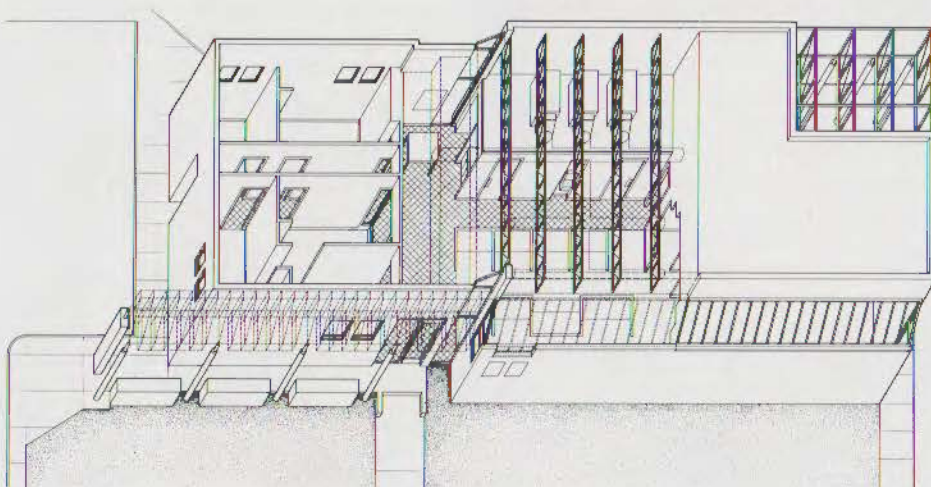


*Front facade.*



*Photography by Robt. Cook*

*Work space.*



*Steel trellis system.*

## OVERTON PARK NATIONAL BANK

This six-story, 128,000-square-foot office building, owned by the bank occupying the first two floors, is located in a suburban office park on a major thoroughfare. Visual impact from the roadway and optimum views from within were prime considerations in the design of this triangular building. From the exterior, the banking area is defined by rows of two-story columns which penetrate spandrels between the first and second floors. Facades and fenestration vary in accordance with solar considerations. Inside, tenant spaces occupy the perimeter of the building and are wrapped around a full-height, skylit atrium. Glass-enclosed elevators provide views of the landscaped banking hall below.

### Credits

**Architects:** Geren Associates/CRS; Robert Bradley, project designer

**Interiors:** Geren Associates/CRS

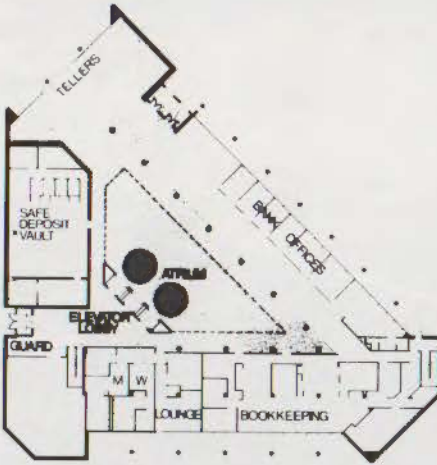
**Client:** Overton Park National Bank Building Joint Venture

**Consultants:** Mitchell/Hall, Dallas (structural), Adams, Reid & Associates (Mechanical/electrical)

**Contractor:** Walker Construction Co.



Short facade formed by slicing a corner off triangular plan.



First floor plan.

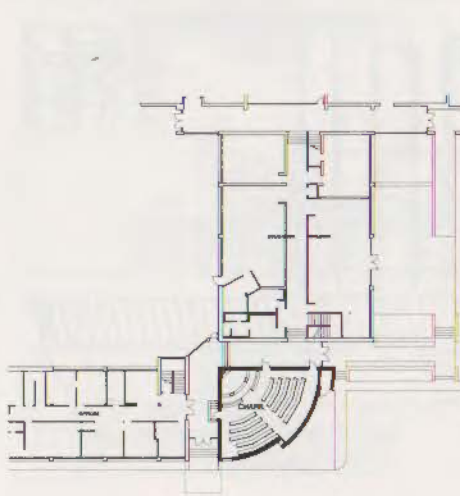


Perimeter corridors.



Photography by James Wilson

Banking floor and atrium.



## CHAPEL FOR FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

This 1,200-square-foot, 90-seat chapel for the First United Methodist Church in Hurst is a quarter circle in plan, built in the outside wedge formed by two existing church buildings joined at the corners in an L shape. Side walls of the chapel, which are the end walls of the existing buildings, are exposed orange-buff brick. A copper-clad wood roof deck slopes up to the highest point where the two buildings touch, with a skylight at the apex.

### Credits

**Architect:** Jackson & Ayers Architects

**Owner:** First United Methodist Church, Hurst

**General Contractor:** The Gann Company, Euless

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## *The Case for Attention to Context in the Design of Cities*

By Lawrence W. Speck

I recently visited Richard Meier's evocative new seminary building in Hartford, Connecticut. It was everything the photographs promised it should be—pure, clean, and elegant, an exquisite mastery of space, light, and shape. It is a consummate work of an eminently skilled designer. Proud and robust from the outside, serene and moving on the interior, it is a truly beautiful object.

But visiting the Hartford Seminary was, for me, very much like seeing a good movie. It was a powerful experience, yet one which seemed disjointed both in place and time. Like other Meier works done in a similar vocabulary (e.g. Smith House in Darien, Connecticut, and Atheneum in New Harmony, Indiana), the seminary building is a world apart. It divorces itself from life in and around it. As in a movie theater, the exigencies of everyday existence become intrusions or interruptions.

The building is not, as perhaps it should have been, located in an extra-terrestrial world. It is on a corner lot in a lovely old middle-class neighborhood with tree-lined streets and robust, characterful New England houses. Across a side street is the old seminary campus with gentle stone building volumes broken and carefully articulated to harmonize with, and yet intensify, the scale of the neighborhood. To stand beside the Meier building and glance across the street is like opening an emergency exit to broad daylight during the darkened fantasies of *Star Wars*. Everyday life, and especially the everyday context into which the building is placed, seems an encroachment, and obstruction.

The Hartford Seminary, like so much of the architectural work premiated as "outstanding" design today, rejects the notion of continuity with its context in favor of an abstract, recondite language of form which makes little deference to

specific situation. This attitude has been a prevalent one since the beginning of the Modern Movement. Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin for Paris, Mies' Barcelona Pavilion, Wright's Guggenheim Museum, and the U.S. Urban Renewal Program of the late 1960s all exemplify a repudiation of inherited context in favor of an idealized vision.

### **A Clean Slate**

Modern architecture loved a clean slate. New towns like Chandigarh or Brasilia were deemed near perfect opportunities while messy, constrained, irregular urban sites seemed far less promising. When the canvas wasn't clean, a bit of bulldozing often was judged in order. When bulldozing was not an option, it became necessary to crop one's vision (and, of course, all documentary photographs) to exclude the unwanted environment under the assumption that, in time, *progress* would rectify the situation. Modernism's faith in its universality and its ideal forms precluded anything but token accommodation to context.

The result of this attitude applied broadly over a period of 30 or 40 years is only now becoming fully apparent. In almost every Texas city and town, one finds glaring examples of streets, neighborhoods, and communities which have been badly eroded or at least pock-marked by interventions seeking abstruse ideals over quotidian ones. Often our most talented designers have been caught up in promoting the tenets of some current dogma rather than addressing the endlessly fascinating challenge of specific situations and real problems.

The fervor provoked by novelty, innovation, and a progressive/revolutionary spirit has often overridden basic good manners in design. Our Main Streets have been tarted up with flashy facades which mock their dowager neighbors. Town squares have sacrificed their "square-

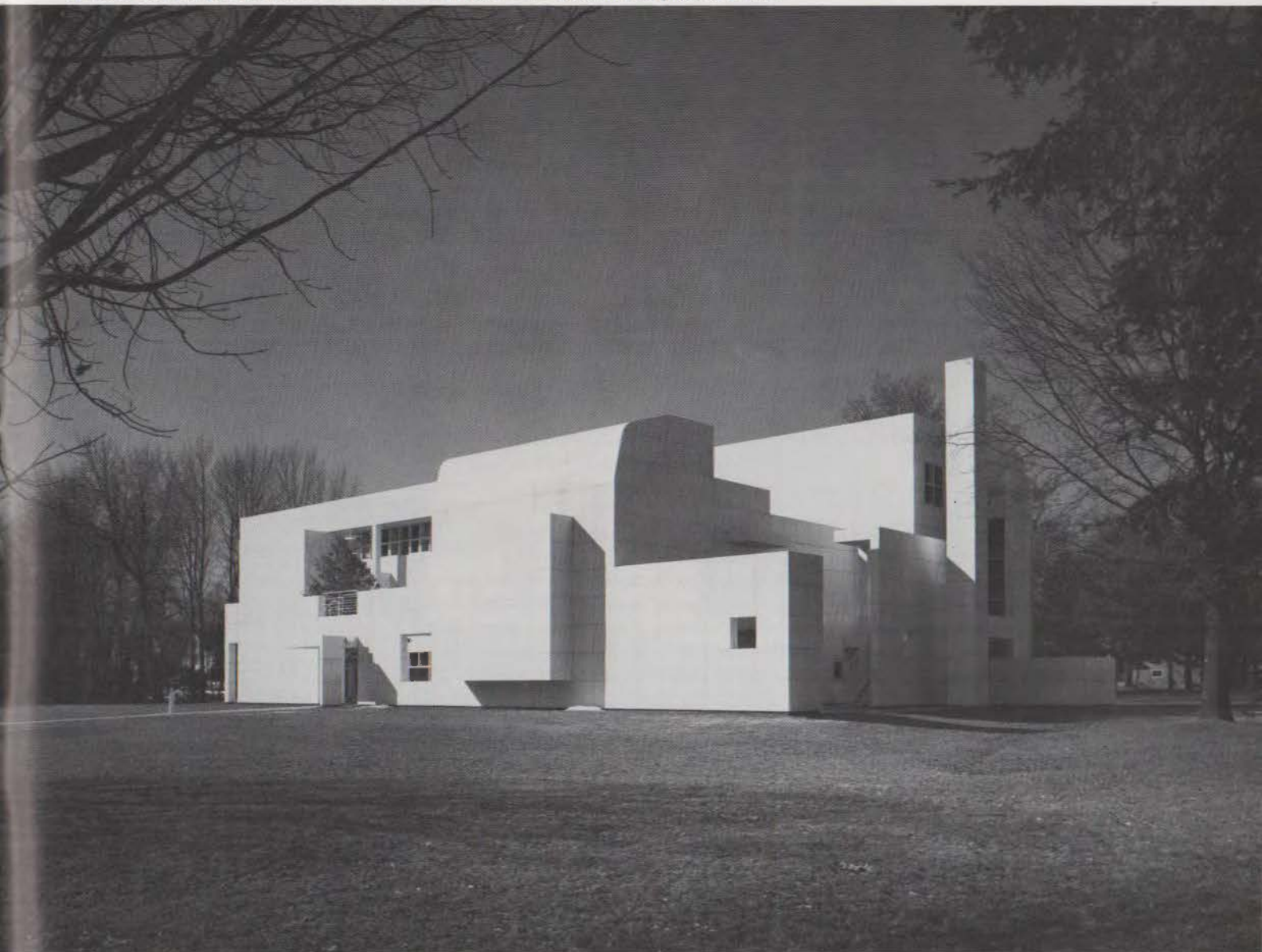
ness" to brash, attention-grabbing newcomers. Cityscapes have become battlegrounds for one-upmanship and accelerated obsolescence. The whole has become less than the sum of its parts as arguing neighbors have canceled or demeaned each others' virtues. Up and down our streets some nasty architectural squabbles are taking place.

Observation of the growing discontinuity and fragmentation of our built environments is nothing new or astounding. Gordon Cullen saw the beginning of this deterioration when he wrote *Townscape* 20 years ago and responded with the assertion that, "There is an *art of relationship* just as there is an art of architecture. . . . Bring buildings together and they can give visual pleasure which none can give separately." Robert Venturi dedicated a whole chapter in *Complexity and Contradiction* to "the obligation toward the difficult whole" wherein he convincingly advocates the interaction of a complex system of parts in a "non-simple" way. Robert Stern and other early Post-Modern advocates proclaimed "response to context" as one of that movement's cornerstones, provoking a spate of books over the last ten years on the topic of "contextualism."

And yet, even with all of this attention, a sensitivity to place, time and culture, and to the multiplicity of formal responses implied by diverse environments seem to be difficult precepts for architects to accept and implement. The works of current design "leaders" offer little more hope in this regard than the works of their predecessors of a generation ago. Late-Modern designers such as Meier or Cesar Pelli continue to emphasize consistency and originality within their own body of work over appropriateness or cultural relevance of their buildings in context.

In spite of their early rhetoric, leading





Post-Modern designers seem to be doing no better. As Robert Venturi observed recently, "The Post-Modernists, in supplanting the Modernists, have substituted for the largely irrelevant universal vocabulary of heroic industrialism another largely irrelevant universal vocabulary—that of parvenue Classicism, with, in its American manifestation, a dash of Deco and a whiff of Ledoux." He decries the "architecture of whimsical pavilions and picturesque follies that make insufficient reference to the diversities and subtleties of taste cultures at hand or to the context of place which should give substance to form."

In their anti-Modern zeal, Post-Modernists are beginning to produce major works which shun and exclude their neighbors of the prior generation in much the same way that early Modern buildings shunned their predecessors 40

years ago. Philip Johnson's step-gabled RepublicBank Center building currently under construction in Houston, for example, promises to isolate itself stylistically from the sleek and glittery modernity of neighboring downtown towers. Consistent with Johnson's work in his Modern period, the building will be an object, an event, a jaw-dropping statement rather than a complement to a larger environmental whole. Michael Graves' Portland Public Services building promises, similarly, to be heroic and at war with the immediate past. It draws more on Graves' esoteric theoretical predilections than on Portland in the 1980s or the building's civic role or immediate surrounds.

These and other Post-Modern pacesetters herald the founding of yet another stylistic vocabulary, no better or worse than what we had before, which will

leave a string of solitary monuments to its emergence in the 1980s. As isolated events, such revolutionary gestures are unlikely to make any real contribution to the improvement of overall environmental quality. There must be other alternatives.

#### **Continuity**

In the past, great works of architecture have often been produced by building environments in a continuous, evolutionary fashion rather than as singular revolutionary events. Michelangelo's magnificent design for the Campidoglio in Rome, for example, took inherited circumstances and worked *with* them to produce magic. The extraordinary angle between the flanking buildings and the Palazzo del Senatore was, at least in part, extant on the site when Michelangelo began his work in 1538. What Michelangelo did was to identify an implied axis in the

facade of the existing Palazzo del Senatore and repeat the angle already established by the flanking Palazzo de Conservatori symmetrically on the other side of that axis. He accepted the axis and the angle as a point of departure for his own very impressive bit of space making. As Edmund Bacon has pointed out in *Design of Cities*, "Michelangelo proved that humility and power can coexist . . . that it is possible to create a great work without destroying what is already there."

Michelangelo and other Renaissance masters were able to resist the currently common compunction to kill one's fathers in order to transcend them. Michelangelo built on the work of Bramante, del la Porta, Sangallo, and a number of nameless antecedents both figuratively and even literally in the case of the dome of St. Peter's. A healthy general respect for one's peers and predecessors and the artifacts they have left is a key to the building of rich, fine, timeless cities like Rome. Great public spaces of that city such as the Piazza Navona have maintained their vitality and integrity over centuries because the designers who have worked within them have valued continuity and a coherent, albeit often difficult, wholeness.

#### Forty Acres

Some of the best of our built environments in Texas display a similar continuity and respectful evolution over time. The original 40-acre campus of the University of Texas at Austin is one of the most lively and beautiful urban districts in the state, in part because its designers have respected and been inspired by the context in which they were working. Cass Gilbert's seminal Battle Hall and Sutton Hall at the beginning of the century strongly influenced the work of Green, La Roche, and Dahl in the 1920s. Their work, in turn, was respected by Paul Cret in his extensive planning and design a decade later. Even the post-war buildings, although less elegant than their predecessors, attempt to build on their legacy rather than preempt it. The result is harmonious without being cloying. It is a rich, diverse environment which satisfies a great range of functional needs while at the same time maintaining integrity and coherence.

#### San Antonio Riverwalk

The Paseo del Rio in San Antonio has been similarly blessed, for the most part, by a respect over time for continuity and context. The early WPA beautification in the 1930s got off to a good start by respecting the native character of the

river and its vegetation. When commercial ventures began to lay claim to the river bend a decade later, their sponsors both extended and elaborated upon the ambiance of the WPA gardens with low-keyed building forms and emphasis on people, vegetation, and paths. In the surge of commercial development in the sixties, the prevailing feeling was not lost. The scale increased, and the activity intensified, but the sense of the river as a pleasure garden was maintained. Although a great deal of construction has occurred along the Paseo del Rio over the past 20 years, it largely has been spared the labelable Modern, Late-Modern, Brutalist, High-Tech, Post-Modern icons which have proliferated most everywhere else. The architecture of the Paseo del Rio is of its place, particular to its special circumstances.

At a smaller scale than the UT campus or the Paseo del Rio, there are several recent projects in the state which show encouraging signs of respect for existing contexts, promoting a healthy dialogue between themselves and their surroundings. They illustrate the fact that new interventions can actually be used to heal environmental rifts and to enhance what might otherwise be chaotic or undistinguished places.

#### Stirling at Rice

The recent addition and renovations for the Rice University School of Architecture by Stirling and Wilford, for example, took a banal but inoffensive building of the late forties and reintegrated it effectively into the richer, more elaborate context of the original Ralph Adams Cram-designed campus. Both the massing and facades of Staub and Rather's 1947 Anderson Hall were used as points of departure for the subtle, but ingenious, scheme which elevates the character of this existing environment significantly both in terms of function and visual quality.

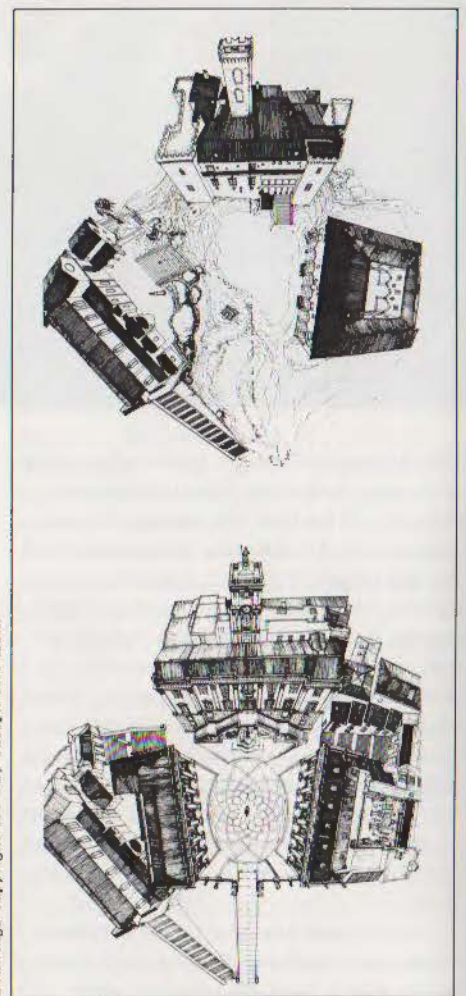
By reorienting the circulation of the original building, while maintaining the dominance of east-west wings, the architects have helped reconnect the Cram-designed Chemistry Building to the north of Anderson Hall with the central campus quadrangle to the south. In doing so, they have created as well an amiable massing dialogue between the renovated complex and the Physics Building immediately to its east. The respectful use of rose-hued bricks, buff stone and red pantile roof is taken much farther than one normally expects in "contextually sensitive" material usage. Attention to

Michael Benedikt



Paul Hester

Public Services Building, Portland, Oregon, Michael Graves, under construction: heroic and at war with the immediate past.



Drawings copyright 1974 by Joseph Aronson.

Before and after drawings illustrate Michelangelo's acknowledgement of context in his design for the Campidoglio in Rome.

George Holmes



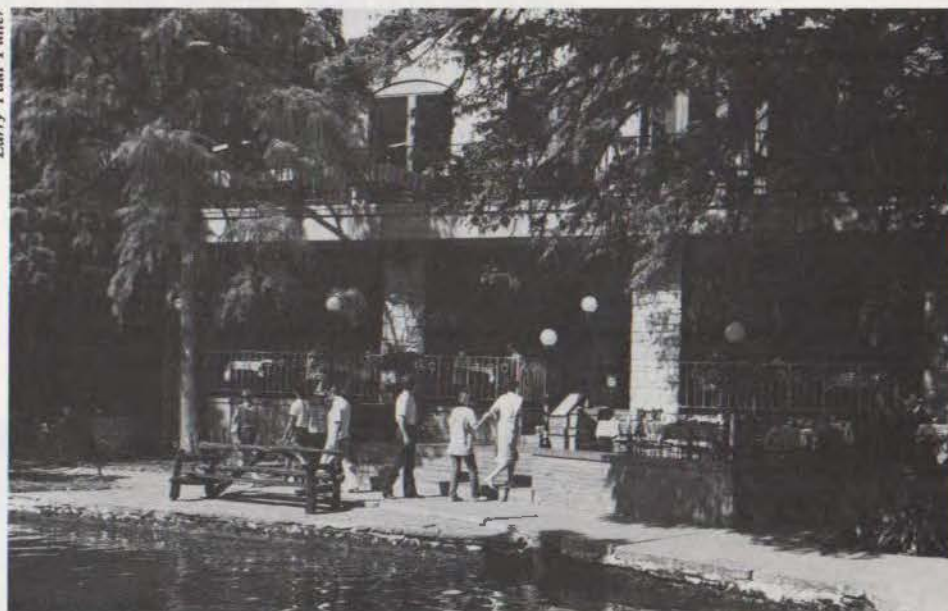
*Addition to Anderson Hall, Rice University School of Architecture, James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, 1981: an amiable dialogue between new and old.*



*Paul Cret's rendering of his plan for the original 40 acres at UT-Austin, 1933.*



*Larry Paul Fuller*



*ABOVE: San Antonio's Paseo del Rio: low-keyed building forms, with the emphasis on people, vegetation and paths. LEFT: RepublicBank Center, Houston, Philip Johnson, scheduled to open in 1983: a jaw-dropping statement rather than a complement to immediate surrounds.*

texture, shape, scale, and detail makes facades of the addition a near-perfect bridge between Cram's flamboyant fancy and Staub and Rather's tired, but right-minded, fidelity. Everyone wins in this instance. Neighboring buildings are made more integral to the campus whole. Anderson Hall looks considerably classier than it ever has before. And the new wing is a charming, elegant building in its own right.

#### Adolphus Hotel

Beran and Shelmire's recent extensive reworking of the Adolphus Hotel complex in Dallas likewise takes a ragged and mismatched group of buildings and knits them together into a complementary aggregate. In this instance, the treatment is appropriately more hierarchical than on the Rice campus. The proud old 1912 tower is respected as the kingpin of the ensemble with the remaining, more prosaic, volumes of space relegated to subservient roles. By overhauling the awkward massing, hodgepodge material selection, and insensitive stylistic devices employed in numerous hotel additions, the architects have created a compatible, though certainly not uniform, whole. There is an admirable understanding that concordance need not imply consistency and that a whole can consist of diverse but related parts.



ABOVE: Adolphus Hotel complex: a compatible, though not uniform, whole. RIGHT: New building for priests' quarters and parish offices (left) at San Fernando Cathedral relates to the original structures without mimicking or parodying. Note the carefully modulated window proportions in detail below.

#### San Fernando Cathedral

Perhaps the most poignant and challenging instance of successful contextual continuity of recent years are the additions and renovations to San Antonio's historic San Fernando Cathedral by Ford, Powell & Carson. When O'Neil Ford and Carolyn Peterson began work on the project in 1973, they found two of San Antonio's proudest relics—a 1749 neo-Romanesque parish church and its 1868 Gothic successor—walled in by insensitive additions of priests' quarters and parish offices and largely obscured by garish decorations. After removing the additions and restoring the venerable structures to their original clarity, the need remained for additional space for parish functions and priests' housing. The simple, unpretentious volume which the architects nestled beside the old Cathedral to accommodate these functions manages, as elegantly as one could imagine, to bring together 18th, 19th, and 20th century structures into harmonious dialogue.

Without mimicking or parodying its predecessors, the new building is like them. It shares their graciousness and generosity. Its strong walls, spare fenestration and carefully modulated window proportions capture the common essence of the earlier structures. Its muted colors and reserved ornamentation give a feeling of modest reverence appropriate to its function and consistent with the character of the original buildings. The addition is neither overtly new nor panderingly historicist. In isolation it is an unremarkable building. In context it is poetry.



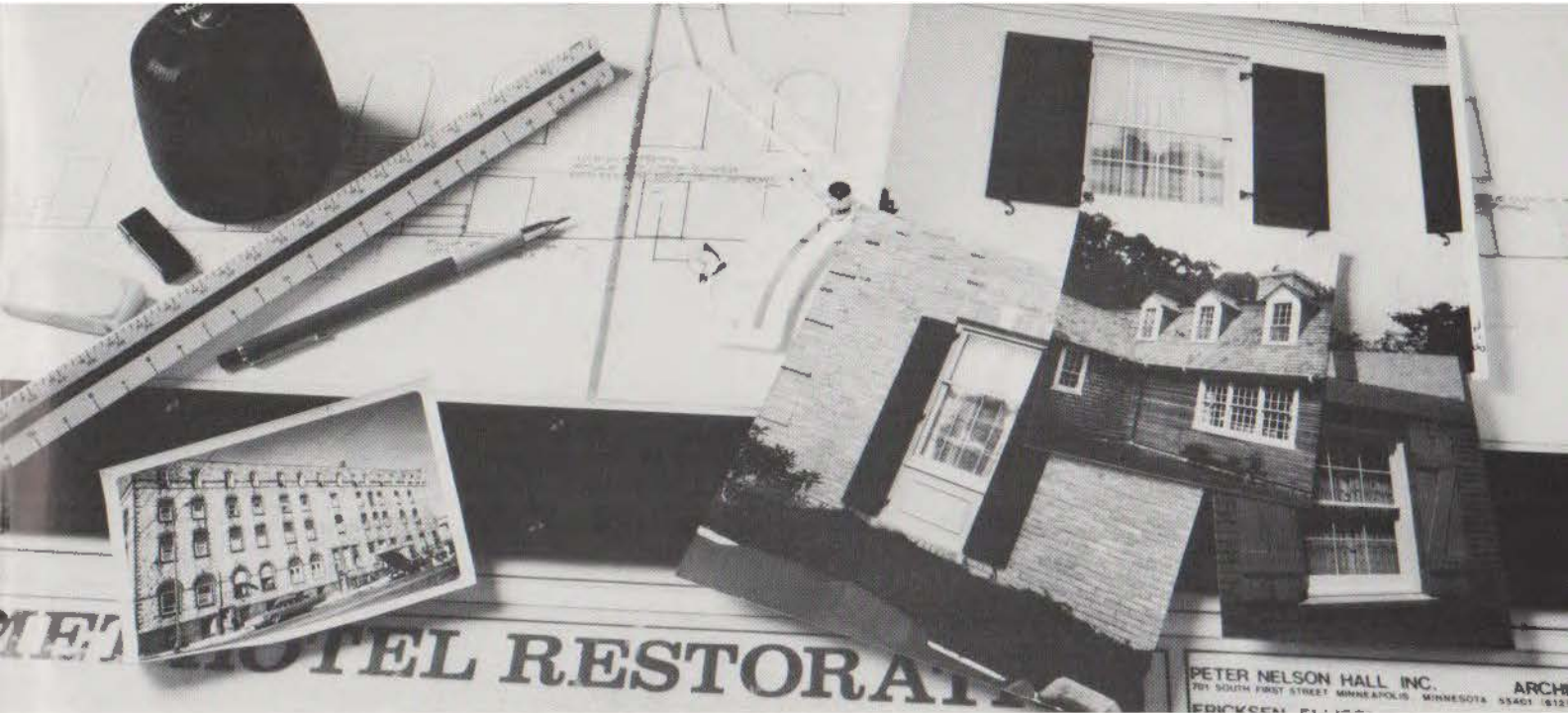
Larry Paul Fuller

These three projects—the Rice School of Architecture, the Adolphus Hotel, and the San Fernando Parish House—share the circumstance of being additions to existing building complexes of common ownership where, presumably, the client had a significant interest in establishing a respect for the environmental whole. Here, the architects commendably have addressed specific site circumstances and have evoked from themselves meritorious designs custom-fit to their place. It is more difficult to find examples of architects drawing on environmental circumstances when they are not explicitly charged with renovations or additions to existing buildings. And yet virtually every urban commission is, in fact, an addition to and a renovation of the larger environmental fabric.

Truly context-sensitive design weaves facades and building fragments into edges, paths, streets, and squares. It knits individual buildings together to form districts, neighborhoods, and communities. It makes the boundaries fuzzy and irrelevant between the work of one architect and the work of another or between works done at various points in time. It emphasizes environmental experience over demonstrative design bravado. It is a longstanding and thoroughly tested design attitude which has contributed to the making of some of our finest cities and towns.

Context-sensitive design is not, however, easy to label, copy, learn, teach, promote, publicize, publish, draw, or exhibit. It is often appreciated fully only in the experience of being there, by those people who use environments day-to-day. But isn't that where the real key to architectural quality lies?

*Lawrence Speck is an associate professor at the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture.*



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# Highlights of a Life: O'Neil Ford, FAIA, 1905–1982

**1905**—Born December 3 as Otha Neil Ford, the son of a railroad man in Pink Hill, Texas, a now-forgotten flag stop near Denton and across the Red River from Broken Bow, Oklahoma.

**1917**—Assumed part of the bread-winning role when his father was killed in an accident, leaving Mrs. Ford with three young children—O'Neil; a brother, Lynn; and a sister, Authella. A mutual interest in crafts formed a strong family bond, helped put food on the table, shaped O'Neil's seminal attitudes about building, and was the genesis for Lynn's lifelong career as an artisan.

**1924**—Traveled with his uncle in a Model "T" brass radiator Ford through dusty South Texas, examining—and falling in love with—the vernacular architecture of places like Fredericksburg, Castroville, San Ygnacio, and Roma.

**1925**—Dropped out of North Texas State in Denton after his second year of college and enrolled in a drafting course from International Correspondence School, which would be his only formal training in architecture.

**1926**—Secured a position with Dallas architect David R. Williams, who was acquiring a reputation for his Texas vernacular style and for his outspoken advocacy of indigenous art. During the next few years, Ford honed his design skills (as well as his party circuit prowess) and, with Williams, produced a number of exemplary regional houses.



*Dashing young gentleman, '29.*

**1933**—Remained in contact with Dave Williams, who had accepted a position with the Works Progress Administration in Washington. Ford subsequently worked in several capacities for the WPA and the Rural Industrial Resettlement Administration in Texas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana and Washington.

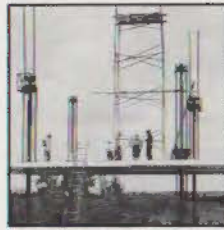
**1936**—Took Arch Swank as his partner in Dallas during a time of very few jobs, but soon began receiving some important commissions—Little Chapel in the Woods at Texas Women's University, the Frank Murchison House in San Antonio, and the Sid Richardson House (San Jose Ranch) on St. Joseph Island.

**1939**—Moved to San Antonio—at the behest of Williams and Mayor Maury Maverick—to direct the restoration of La Villita, a dilapidated 19th century residential quarter whose original character Ford was determined to maintain.

**1940**—Formed a lifelong partnership in marriage with the lovely Wanda Graham, who had been studying dance in London and who, as the daughter of the indomitable Elizabeth Orynski Graham, was descended from some of San Antonio's earliest families. Elizabeth Graham was an early activist in the San Antonio Conservation Society and had built Willow Way, a rambling



*Pilot, '42.*



*Lift-slab test, '49.*

ranch house near the San Jose Mission. The legendary Willow Way would become O'Neil's and Wanda's permanent home and the subject of colorful asides in articles about Ford, the eminent architect who lived in an unfashionable yet fanciful setting of books and clutter, fireplaces, porches, outbuildings, disabled classic cars and a veritable menagerie of dogs, cats, pigs, chickens, turkeys, guineas, parakeets and screaming peacocks.

**1941**—Appointed to Defense Housing Committee and, during the war years, served as a flight instructor.

**1945**—Resumed practice in San Antonio as a partner with Jerry Rogers designing primarily small industrial buildings and residences.

**1946**—Became a father with the birth of Wandita, followed by Michael in 1947, Linda in 1949, and John in 1950.

**1949**—Received the commission for the Trinity University Campus in San Antonio, along with Bartlett Cocke and Harvey P. Smith, where he first utilized the Youtze-Slick lift-slab construction process, which he had helped develop. The Trinity work, and a growing number of commercial and residential projects, occupied the firm during the late forties and early fifties.

**1953**—Founded O'Neil Ford & Associates and later moved to historic King William Street where, as recently as 1980, Ford's offices occupied adjacent residences in a somewhat makeshift fashion.

**1954**—Discussions began with some of the founders of Texas Instruments, which led to research with Felix Candela on the use of concrete shell construction

and its application in TI's first major installation, its Dallas Semi-Conductor Building, designed by Ford and Richard Colley. This collaboration, which initially included other associates such as Arch Swank and planner Sam Zisman, continued for years as TI spread worldwide. It was also during the fifties, in the wake of the lift-slab and TI successes, that Ford was first sought out as a lecturer. He would become a captivating speaker, averaging over ten major presentations per year to professional, student, artist and civic groups and accepting positions as a visiting lecturer at Harvard and other distinguished universities.

**1960**—Designated a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, one of more than a score of personal honors that he would receive, including several honorary doctorates, the Llewelyn W. Pitts Award of the Texas Society of Architects, the George Harrell Memorial Award of the Dallas Chapter of AIA, and citations from the Texas Historical Commission.

**1967**—Formed the partnership of Ford, Powell & Carson with associates Boone Powell and Chris Carson (which led to incorporation and additional principals in 1972). The firm produced the Tower of Americas for the 1968 HemisFair and has continued its involvement in university, industrial and residential work, as well as the design of museums, churches, theaters and banks and a broad range of adaptive use/historic preservation projects. The work is known for its human scale, its appropriateness for its setting, and its use of local crafts and indigenous materials—all with due regard for technological innovation.



*Home with Zisman, '50s.*



*Pitts Award, '78.*

**1977**—Received a plaque from colleagues on the National Council on the Arts declaring him a National Historic Landmark, to which he responded, "Does this mean I can never be altered?"

**1981**—Honored by the announcement of a proposed O'Neil Ford chair in Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin, which has been endowed in the amount of \$500,000 plus matching funds from the University.

**1982**—Died July 20 after emergency heart surgery, leaving a large following of Texas architects without a hero.



# The Unforgettable Mr. Ford

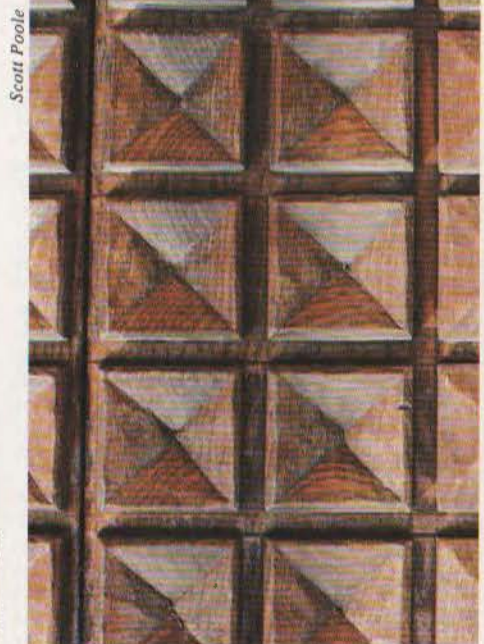
## *An Appreciation*



Those who knew and loved him—and there were many—used to “despair and get a little crazy” when faced with the certainty that, someday, O’Neil Ford would die. When, confounding all hopes, he *did* die, on July 20 at age 76, this preeminent-of-all-the-eminents among Texas architects left friends and followers reeling far and wide, facing a void that will not soon be filled. Ford left his indelible and finely crafted mark not only as architect, artist, preservationist, and technological innovator, but as teacher, philosopher, and articulate spokesman for continuity and a sense of place as wellsprings for the arts. He was a many-faceted, sparkling jewel of a man (with a few rough spots to make him real) whose true value and significance extend far beyond the capacity of one assessment to reveal. Consequently, in an effort to capture his elusive spirit, and to comprehend something of his legacy, we asked many of his colleagues and acquaintances to share their own insights into the O’Neil Ford that they knew. Their responses, pared down in many instances for the sake of the whole, appear on the following pages as a rich fabric of appreciation. From these tributes emerges not only a sense of Ford the accomplished professional but of Ford the warm and witty and irresistible human being. Full of energy, he milked each minute for all it was worth, and talked incessantly. He was saucy, irascible and irreverent. Yet he was sensitive and charming—captivating. He was the kind of person whose life touched others often and in profound ways. In a word, he was unforgettable.—LPF



Laurie Auditorium (1970) and Trinity campus, San Antonio, 1950—present (with Bartlett Cocke).



Scott Poole

Richard Payne

Wood detail by Lynn Ford.

**JAMES MARSTON FITCH,**  
**architecture historian and preservationist,**

**New York:** O'Neil Ford belonged to that always rare and now vanishing breed of American architects—the original, autochthonous native modernists who evolved their own special esthetic and technical responses to our country's building needs at mid-century. Far from diminishing Neil's unique contribution to this midpoint in the development of modern American architecture, it does him honor to link his name with the rest of that special breed: Gregory Ain, Harris Armstrong, Thomas Church, Alden Dow, Bruce Goff, George Fred Keck, Harwell Hamilton Harris, William Wurster. Distinctive as each one was, they shared a number of characteristics. They were either men who, on purely intuitive grounds, abjured a formal beaux arts education altogether; or who, having been exposed to such training, moved quickly away from its sterile protocol.

Each of them responded to the special needs and resources of his region but none of them ever slipped into the narrow parochial regionalism of painters like Thomas Hart Benton or the poets of the Southern Agrarian Movement.

They were almost magically immune to the lures of romantic eclecticism which was filling American suburbs in the twenties with beguiling facsimiles of Norman, Tudor, Georgian and Spanish houses. And—though as cultured and travelled men they were aware of contemporaneous European develop-

ments (the Bauhaus, Gropius, Corbusier, Mies, etc.)—they were none of them swept off their feet by the International Style after the thirties.

In a long and productive professional life, Neil did many buildings for which he will be long remembered. But for me, some of his most memorable works were among his more modest ones. I remember the house he designed for the landscape architects Arthur and Marie Berger which, on a rocky creek bank in Dallas, combined indigenous plant materials, straightforward functional design and a fine collection of vernacular furnishings and folk art in a ravishing synthesis of southwestern American culture, pre- and post-Columbian. I recall a summer evening in the formal sequence of cool and lofty rooms in the Steves's house in San Antonio, all in white plaster and candlelit Mexican antiquities. Most memorable of all were my visits to Willow Way, the old farm house compound in which he and Wanda led a life of relaxed and rather shabby elegance. Indoors, a mix of good books and fine food (and, on one occasion, a sick snake which Wanda was nursing back to health on the sunporch). Outdoors, a mix of his classic automobiles and her exotic birds: peacocks, white doves, grey guinea hens and black geese and some rare Japanese roosters with tail feathers so long and fragile that they had to be braided into coils to keep them out of the farmyard dust.

Willow Way was the domestic end of

Ford's spectrum of activities in defense of the historic patrimony of his home town. At the other end was the heroic battle which Wanda and he led to prevent the McCallister Freeway from destroying Brackenridge Park—a battle lost only when a special act of Congress was used to set aside an Advisory Council ruling against the Freeway. In between these two extremes—and co-existing with a steady stream of thoroughly contemporary building designs—was Ford's unswerving support of historic preservation in San Antonio.

In toto, O'Neil Ford's corpus of accomplished work constitutes an important chapter in America's recent architectural history. It was marked by his unflinching technical competence, his fundamental equilibrium between cosmopolitan taste and farm-boy common sense. And this work was fueled by a personality of inexhaustible optimism, generosity and simple good manners.

**HARRY S. RANSOM, friend and colleague, Houston:**

O'Neil Ford special and radical and familial and regional and textural and varietal and naturally outrageous and a wizard of an architect and man



*Paseo del Alamo, San Antonio, 1982 (with Thompson, Ventulett, Stainback—Atlanta).*

Texas Highways



*San Fernando Cathedral restoration, San Antonio, 1977.*

Lawrence Speck

**DR. AMY FREEMAN LEE; speaker, painter, poet, critic and longtime personal friend; San Antonio:** How could one define architecture in Neil's terms? The immediate reply that comes to mind is that if I were to define architecture literally in his terms, you probably would not print the statement. His vocabulary and his modes of expression were as wide as his inner eye. Neil was never vulgar, only colorful, in his choice of words and the manner in which he strung them together. While the strands were always long and casual, they sparkled in both the sun and moonlight often to the point of being quite dazzling and hypnotic. Let me choose my words from the more elegant side of Neil's expression. To him, architecture had to be honest, simple, congruous and individual. If the resulting form made his category of we-made-a-few-mistakes-but-it's-not-bad, it had to be unobtrusive by proving itself an integral part of the place where it existed, and it had to serve its intended purpose in a style pertinent to the period and handsome enough to engage and enchant the beholder. "Hell, it's got to work, and it's got to be damn good looking." I can hear Neil saying these words right now.

**COLIN BOYNE, Consultant Editor, The Architectural Review, London:** You ask what is the significance of O'Neil Ford. To an Englishman he demonstrated to the full that favorite American story: the poor boy who

makes good. And he made good in the most exacting of all professions: architecture. We admired him for his research and technical innovation, which we expect from Americans, but we admired him too for his work on landscaping, which, sadly, we don't always expect. But we admired him most for avoiding fashion and stylistic cliché and for his struggle to create a humane, indigenous, contemporary Texan architecture.

**HAL BOX, FAIA, Dean, UT-Austin School of Architecture, and former protegee at Willow Way:** Of course there can never be another O'Neil Ford. He spanned a period of time and set of attitudes which reached near the roots of Texas. He spent his life articulating, extending, and enhancing ideas about how to live and build in Texas. He discovered part of Texas. He explored how people felt and how things are best built to fit this place. The clarity and consistency of his ideas were strong enough to carry them through the prevalent architectural thinking of the Beaux Arts, Art Deco, and International Style Modern movement. Who but an irascible self-educated genius could create consistent order of that chaos?

O'Neil Ford's significance to the mainstream of architecture is yet to be assessed. It is clear that his buildings have a positive even exhilarating effect on people and there is a certain reality of time and connectedness to place that will cause the history of architecture

to note his work among the well-crafted and sensitive architecture of the 20th Century. But his major effect was on the region. The architecture of Texas is different because of him, and the architects of Texas are different because of him.

O'Neil Ford was my mentor. I was one of many mentees. He was a phenomenal teacher which resulted, I think, from his caring for every person with whom he came in contact. He was very direct—caused people to think, to act thoughtfully, carefully, and sincerely.

O'Neil Ford showed us what materials to use and how to use them, how to make shade, how to make space, how to use craftsmen. He also showed us how we might be better individuals of purpose, how to serve our community and our profession. But he never showed us how we could be like O'Neil Ford.

**MRS. EUGENE McDERMOTT, patron of the arts and longtime personal friend, Dallas:** Neil liked architecture and people to be natural and unpretentious—he wanted "the real thing." To me, he is the most significant of Texas architects. He not only leaves a standard of excellence for buildings, but there are vivid memories of his wit and his capacity for friendship. I am proud that Mr. McDermott introduced Neil to Pat Haggerty, who hired and worked with him on the Semiconductor Building of Texas Instruments, which set an architectural style for that company.



Ford pencil sketch, 1926.



Haggerty Hs., Dallas, 1958.



Kahn Hs., Dallas, 1932 (with Joe Linz).

**JOHN PASTIER, architecture critic, Los Angeles/Austin:** Despite his ailments, I fully expected O'Neil Ford to live out the century, in part to enjoy two added decades of attention, but even more because his life was the medium he chose to practice his finest art.

His larger professional contributions were in spheres outside the design of buildings. Many architects easily beat him at that game, but few could match him as an influence on his colleagues, as a red-blooded embodiment of a profession that seems abstract and esoteric to most of its baffled public, and as an unflagging spokesman for much of the older architecture of Texas and the world.

As a mentor he offered livelihood, professional challenge, encouragement, diversion, and lasting friendship to a staggering number of architects over a span of two generations. As a witty and irascible public being, he mapped out the architectural world into distinct hemispheres of light and darkness, allowing both clients and general audiences to savor the advantages of standing with him in the brighter half. He sensed a need for myths and heroes, and volunteered to fill it.

His greatest contribution, dating back to the 1920s, was his championing of native Texan buildings. He understood and loved the vernacular structures of the 18th and 19th centuries with an intensity that matched his antipathy for the vernacular

environment of his own era, and for most high art and high technology approaches to contemporary architecture. While Texas urbanized and plunged into the future with abandon, he basically remained loyal to the small town past both as an artifact and as a model for his work. Through actual restorations, deft sketches, evocative photography, and a torrent of spoken words, he let Texans know that their architectural roots were sturdy and often beautiful.

**STANLEY MARCUS, Chairman Emeritus, Neiman-Marcus, Dallas:** O'Neil Ford and I were friends for over 50 years. Sometimes I wouldn't see him for two or even five years; but each time we met, it was as though we'd seen each other the day before. Perhaps the reason we stayed friends was that he never did any work for me; because, in his early days at least, O'Neil could be very exasperating with his strong opinions and his dilatory habits.

I can't comment on the significance of O'Neil Ford, architect. Much more important was the success of O'Neil Ford, human being. He was a warm and loyal friend. He was a perpetual enthusiast which inspired both client and student. He was a strong advocate and never backed down when he thought he was right. He was fastidious in detail.

Perhaps all of these qualities put together are what made him a successful man and a successful architect.

**JANE LANDRY, architect, former employee and protege, Dallas:** Neil's art was to make the ordinary into the extraordinary. Honest, simple materials became special because of the way he used them.

He was labeled a Regionalist. But I believe he was first a humanist. He built in response to human needs. Shade, shelter, green space and water provided ease and comfort. No bald, mean spaces with mirror glass glaring down from all sides.

Neil learned from indigenous builders the world over. Nothing escaped his eye. He was always observer, adapter, transformer. But he applied the lessons of the past only when the past could answer a specific need of the present; there were no arbitrary applications of bits of history.

**ALAN TANIGUCHI, FAIA, Austin:** My admiration for Neil had not only to do with architecture, but the values and principles by which he lived, by which he designed buildings, by which he related to issues and public policies, by which he related to people. He always stuck by his principles, making him appear non-conforming in a profession that tends to play things safe.

On perhaps the last of his occasional visits to my office, he gave his version of the common bond between the Fords and the Taniguchis: "You know why we're such good friends? We 'hate' the same people."



Steves Hs., San Antonio, 1965.

**JOHN PALMER LEEPER, Director, McNay Art Institute, San Antonio:** The impact of O'Neil Ford's personality overshadowed everything else. He was trenchant and fearless, yet had a disarming country courtliness. He was simply larger than life, and in his orbit people and events and things acquired a new excitement.

I admired his quick comprehension of a project, sensing its totality immediately. His imagination was quickly fired, and a dozen possibilities had presented themselves before one had finished describing a project to him.

Despite his personal bravura, Neil was fundamentally a modest person, or at least his best architecture is modest. He built graceful buildings that are at home where they stand. As Dean Jack Mitchell of Rice remarked to me, "His architecture rarely makes a statement, and perhaps that is the best thing about it."

**FRANK WELCH, FAIA, Midland, former employee and protege:** Though he practiced architecture artfully, I don't think he considered what he was doing as art. I never heard him use the word applied to contemporary building. He believed strongly that there were "moral" choices made in creating a building. "Dishonest" or disingenuous use of structure, materials, or the way things go together were anathema to him as long as I knew him. Further, he railed against architecture as false expression. "Brick veneer,"

"later mod-drun," and "pew-eblo" were derisive terms he used for the artificial means and ends he saw in building.

His quest was simple but difficult: how to do the most for the least, how to achieve an economy of means. The results were subtle and elusive as graphic design and never self-centered or visually arrogant. I think he would agree that architecture was less a beauty contest than a torch race.

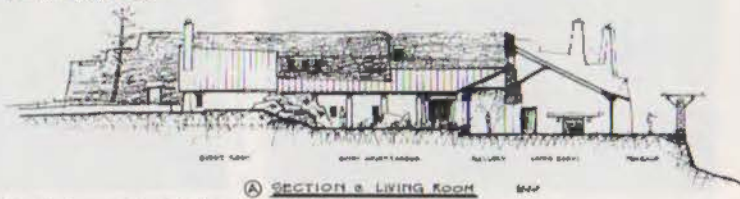
He was a hero to the young because he was young himself and was never condescending. In person he was the jolly iconoclast firing salvos at fashionable holy cows. While the students were designing in the current vogue, his cheeky attacks on the mode of the moment struck a warmly responsive nerve in them.

We mourn his death as deeply as we would youth, for that's what he had—unendingly. He never became old.

**CLOVIS HEIMSATH, FAIA, former employee and protege, Fayetteville:** I liked the world better when O'Neil Ford was living. Sitting for a moment after the funeral party in the garden beside the chapel, I saw him in the motion of the fountain, the pattern of the brickwork, in the severity, yet playfulness, of the building. I thought, "How will future generations know Ford when he's not there to thunder in their ears?" His involvement is written in his buildings and can be read by those who follow.



Plan, Vickers Hs.



Ford's last project: Vickers Hs., Castle Pines, Colo., in progress.

**DAVID DILLON, architecture critic, The Dallas Morning News:** In an era of bold geometry and resounding architectural statements, he designed buildings composed of small, quiet pleasures—Saltillo tiles, Mexican brick, edge-grain mesquite floors, handmade ceramic light fixtures. The first impulse on entering one of his buildings is not to stand back and look, but to touch, to read the architecture through the pores.

Ford's death marks the end of an era in Texas architecture, as surely as his rediscovery of early Texas houses marked its beginning. That's the kind of grand statement that would have provoked him to an uproarious commentary on the inanities of critics. But it's true.

**EUGENE GEORGE, friend and colleague, Austin:** Perhaps O'Neil Ford as an individual is correctly classified as a cultural asset in that he has, so far as architecture is concerned, brought the potential of the culture into advanced accomplishments—has made selections and decisions which moved the cultural averages into higher levels.

He decided to be a hero by taking up self-assigned causes which attempted to improve the quality of life. And to a lot of us, he played that role very well. One accepted his hero role in the process of intellectual interchange during the sharing of thoughts and observations.

O'Neil Ford's curiosity about the nature of art and life was infectious, and I was one of those stricken.



La Villita, San Antonio, 1930s.



La Villita, San Antonio, 1980s.

N. Bleeker Green



T.I. Semiconductor Bldg., Richardson, 1958 (with Richard Colley).

N. Bleeker Green



Texas Instruments under construction.



Richard Payne

St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio, 1969.

**BOONE POWELL, FAIA, partner, San Antonio:** A champion of causes, O'Neil tilted at windmills and got away with it.

He motivated architects and others to transcend their limitations, primarily by asking them to adopt a relationship to values, to some extent his values, but values in any case.

He recognized early that he could accomplish far more through others than merely by himself. His life and relationships were consequently extraordinarily rich in complexity and he touched others, though sometimes only briefly, to a depth they remember long after with great emotion.

He was still youthful at 76 and possessed the rare ability to relate to people of all ages and backgrounds with great facility. He was especially able to relate to children and the student latent in every one of us.

His legacy is not easy to define, though it is certainly great. The large number of architects he encouraged and taught is a major part. So is the dedication to values and the guts to stand up for them even if commissions were lost. He recognized that another job was always waiting somewhere, but there was no making up for a loss of credibility.

His sense of his own roots as small-town product of the land never left him. It was connected, in a myriad of ways, to his belief in the rightness of a regional approach to design; that the roots of a place and its building

traditions ought to be reflected in its architecture. He would search out colors and patterns and textures from the vernacular and find refreshingly new ways to employ them in contemporary works. Though these techniques could be corny in less sensitive design hands, he was able to avoid such confusion in his work.

He revered the individual contributions and contributors to the whole building process. A building was therefore not something drawn as much as it was the product of masons and carpentry foremen and craftsmen and painters. Because he spoke their language, contractors, laborers and craftsmen alike could identify with him and his goals for a project.

**DOWNING THOMAS, FAIA, Dallas:**

O'Neil Ford was an heroic Common Man. His buildings have that same quality; they seem to be simple structures of wood and brick that somehow transcend their function and lift our standards of excellence.

His gifted tongue charmed. But he was always prepared to exorcize evil, ready to play the Don Quixote giving verbal battle to the rapacious forces of mammon in the business community.

He spoke and acted for preservation of our historic buildings and of the elements of nature that give meaning to urban life. For six decades his buildings, like his words and his life-style, were an integrated expression of his land: Texas.

**WILLIAM SLAYTON, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Foreign Buildings, U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C.:**

I knew O'Neil best as a member of my panel of architect consultants at the Department of State and as a travelling companion when we visited several United States Embassies abroad. He was loved by his colleagues on the panel, by the architects who presented their designs to the panel (even though O'Neil at times could be quite critical), and by the Ambassadors and staff at the Embassies we visited. O'Neil could say the most outrageous things, but in a funny way so that one would accept his criticism. But, also, we all knew he was right. Of course, we had to tell him to shut up from time to time, but then that was part of the O'Neil we loved.

**MARY CAROLYN HOLLERS GEORGE, art historian and Ford biographer, San Antonio/Austin:**

O'Neil Ford was an artist. Architecture was his passion, his obsession. His extravagance of character and his legendary unconcern about promised delivery dates often exasperated clients and colleagues alike, but these are textbook symptoms of the artistic temperament. The design process, the nature of material and how to form it honestly, now these were things worth thinking about. The inquisitive child in him was ever young.

O'Neil Ford was an artist. Thank goodness.



Detail, Parker Chapel.

Rick Gardner  
Lawrence Speck



Margarite B. Parker Chapel (at Trinity), 1965.



Chapel in the Woods, Denton, 1938 (with Arch Swank).

**ANDERSON TODD, FAIA, Wortham Professor of Architecture, Rice University:** The theoreticians, the artists, the decorators of our fast-changing times bring wonderful new ideas and images to architecture. But they do not undertake to solve the main day-to-day problems facing architecture in our cities; nor do they try to make them understandable to the general public the way Neil did. It is not surprising that he is the only name in architecture known to the average person in Texas. He was the gentle, unrugged man who stood for rugged individualism. He stood for values beyond theory, fad or fashion. His values spoke out eloquently in plain-spoken architecture for fit, accommodation, unpretentiousness, permanency, good building and solid walls. Above all, O'Neil Ford stood forth and spoke out for integrity—and that is his great legacy and lesson for all of us in architecture.

**MARTIN PRICE, architect, Fort Worth:** O'Neil Ford is alive and well with a legacy that lives, a legacy of humanism. It is a humanism founded on an architecture which considers the culture and landscape of an area, the importance of a continuity of tradition, the use of common sense, doing things in a natural way, high craftsmanship in building, and the nature of "design for man and not for cause." And O'Neil Ford is also alive and well with another legacy that lives, a legacy of outspoken condemnation of the

"pseudo-intellectual claptrap" of the Graves, Stern, Tigerman "Posties" and their followers whose hyped up promotion has infected our press, and whose principles are so contradictory to his own.

**ARCH SWANK, FAIA, former partner and longtime friend, Dallas:** I was one of the many of his acquaintances who had to have the Ford fix more or less regularly. If he didn't call from the airport or drop into the office every few weeks, I would call him in an attempt to get my creative and rebellious juices flowing again—and it usually worked. If nothing more, listening to all his problems and adventures with cantankerous and demanding clients made my problems seem insignificant and solvable.

**SINCLAIR BLACK, architect and teacher, Austin:** O'Neil Ford proves the axiom that I am about to make up (with apologies to Winston Churchill): "Cities shape people and they in turn re-shape the cities." Neil was clever to choose an interesting place like San Antonio, and San Antonio was lucky indeed to have him.

Most men are merely a product of their place, but that has been reversed in the relationship between San Antonio and O'Neil Ford. The sheer force of his beliefs, the clarity of his integrity and his irresistible charm have combined to shape the attitudes and sensibilities of San Antonio and its leaders in ways that any other city would envy.

**CHARLES TAPLEY, FAIA, Houston:** Mr. Ford had agreed to talk about architecture with Charles Moore at the November convention. On the telephone O'Neil had been a little cool about the subject—Architecture as a Communicative Force—probably because it was a little fancy. But he had agreed to participate. We got together for a meeting one Saturday morning in late June and he talked about architecture—about deserted Mexican villages he wanted us to see, beautiful places he had visited with his great friends Charles and Ray Eames and Marie Berger, back in the '50s. He raged about some of the "so-called Post-Modernists" and showed us an exquisite chapel he had done in the days of the WPA. The subjects came and changed like quick lights.

He had been videotaped by the Learning About Learning Educational Foundation exploring San Antonio with a group of youngsters, explaining how the city works, and what it really is. He seemed to feel a link between his sessions with the kids and the convention panel and was beginning to build an idea. I told him we wanted the tape for November, but I don't know that he even heard me. He was talking, plain and fast, reaching into complexities and quickly unravelling them. His understanding seemed total and he wanted to share it, seemed in a hurry to give it away. I wish everyone could have heard him. I wish that June had been November.



"Sombrilla," UT-San Antonio, 1976 (with Bartlett Cocke).

Rick Gardner



Joseph Molitor

Bolton Hall, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, N.Y., 1967.

**LAWRENCE SPECK, architect and teacher, Austin:** O'Neil Ford was not a high-art, high-style architect of the sort that most commonly gets notice today. His work will be known, in the long run, I think, not for the number of new forms it invented, its novelty of shape or visual character, its uniqueness, its eyeball appeal or its ability to create instant Kodachrome memories. The strength of his work lies rather in its enhancement of everyday life. He made places to be—to eat, to sleep, to think, to chat, to drink, to laugh, to hang memories on. He used architecture to touch people's lives.

As a designer, Ford was a jogger, not a sprinter. He chugged along furiously shaping his world through a series of sidelong blows rather than driving single-mindedly toward a narrow goal. He demonstrated the fact that to commit oneself to a wide breadth of concerns is no less a commitment than to focus on a narrow band of issues. He was a pragmatist *and* a romantic, an idealist *and* an active doer, a flamboyant, Baroque personality *and* a gentle stone hut of a man.

Ford had an enviable grasp of the passage of time. He understood, in T. S. Eliot's words, "the pastness of the past as well as its presence." In an architectural world which was preoccupied with what was different about its own time, he dealt with issues which are always essentially the same—basic human and physical concerns which link all times together. He met himself

everywhere, in all places and ages—doing the same things but in a different way, feeling the same differently, reacting differently to the same. He lived in the whole world and at all times.

**CHRIS CARSON, partner, San Antonio:** Neil was the type who always preferred the back road to the main road. His own curiosity was intense, and he also had a rare ability to make other people see things they might tend to overlook. It was part of being a good teacher.

**PATSY SWANK, art critic and longtime personal friend, Dallas:** His significance as an architect is that that word is not big enough to hold what he meant to the profession, and architecture was such an organic part of him that I am not sure he himself could have defined it.

Structure and material were the means by which Ford fulfilled his urgent concern that people should have as useful and beautiful, as natural and comfortable a place to live and work and enjoy themselves as it was possible for him to give them. That concern embraced past and future, aesthetics and politics, society and mores, and often its force infuriated and frustrated him. But however certain he might feel that presentday foolishness threatened the future, he never failed to inspire those he taught—and that was everybody he touched—with his basic faith that tomorrow should be better, and that to make it better was the mandate of every architect who calls himself by that name.

**BILL BOOZIOTIS, FAIA, Dallas:** O'Neil Ford saw with the clarity of a child—but with the vision of a sage.

He was a caricature of joy, sensitivity and other particularly human values. His architecture embodied them all with the same commitment, but with understatement.

**FRANCIS D. LETHBRIDGE, FAIA, Washington, D.C., former associate of Ford on the State Department's architecture review panel:** He was truly a remarkable person, half again more "alive" than anyone else I have ever known. He was never inclined to shield himself with the armor of personal reticence or that of professional mystique or incomprehensibility. Architecture—the practice of architecture—was for him simply the natural and inevitable extension of his own experience, sensibility and skill.

He was demanding of others, but gave far more of himself than was ever asked in return. He was impatient with, and openly critical of, the games that architects are inclined to play for each other, and of the overblown critical evaluation of fashionable but inconsequential architectural posturing.

His own architectural work is durable, much of it is poetic and beautiful, and all of it is relevant to its place and time. He had more to give, had he been spared longer, for he had the heart and the mind of a young man. But he will be sorely missed—and will, by God, be remembered.



## Reflections on a Funeral

**JAMES PRATT, FAIA, Dallas, colleague, admirer, and former student of Ford at Harvard:** Standing in front of the mirror at 5:55 a.m., I woke myself up with, "This is plain wrong—Ford, you would snort at my wearing a black tie." I rushed to put on a bright one and made it to the 6:45 San Antonio plane.

"Neil wanted cornbread and champagne at the funeral," Mary reported. Mary Bywaters, and her daughter and son, Jerry Cochran and Dick Bywaters joined us at the ticket counter. We were a cross section of mourners, this Dallas group: Mary a peer and lifetime friend of Ford, Jerry and Dick who had sat on his knees, the rest of us his clients, former students, employees or professional colleagues. And me in between. (*Damn you, Ford, why did you do this, putting me that much closer to the abyss?*) We all thought of ourselves as friends, I certainly not a close one; I had known him 29 years. But somehow, when you were with him, he made you consider yourself a good friend. He skated from person to person, lighting them up with his Gaelic wit.

The police ushers were in place to shepherd us to a shady Trinity University parking lot 45 minutes early. The summer morning was still cool. Undertakers were pulling a coffin out of a hearse in the chapel porte cochere. (*God, Neil, is what's left of you really in that thing—you irascible wonderful bastard?*) The reality of the event jumped into blurred vision above a throat lump. We pecked a few friends on the cheek or shook hands, avoided eyes and went in to sit down.

### Under His Roof

We were sitting under his roof, on his campus, in his town. It was a nice roof covering this high, rather early Christian-feeling box. It was a larger version of his and Arch Swank's Denton chapel; the main parabolic brick arches were held apart by low segmented ones over the side aisles. Outside its altar area the interior was all painted white. On the right, windows opened into a small walled garden, and the clear glass was banded horizontally at intervals with lovely let-in patterns: handsomely restrained with no color. (The critic in me carped, "*Neil, you should have used the same glass in the tiny windows on the left instead of that colored stuff. The ones on the right are so great.*") He wouldn't have been offended, though he might not have agreed. He was a critic of his own

work; once I was on a design awards jury in San Antonio where Ford took me aside: "You guys did right not to award that entry of ours; it didn't deserve a thing."

Maybe it wasn't a coffin. Functionaries rolled it in like a tea cart. A group of men in somber clothes who looked like they might be pall bearers sat up front, but with no duty to carry their friend's body. The box was wood as Mary said he had ordered, but from a distance it looked suspiciously like a factory-made mortician's model, and not the local carpenter's handiwork that Neil probably meant. Neil belonged to the generation of architects that still had a connection to handcraft. He never let the taste arbiters of the compound (Tom Wolfe's word) intimidate him to "purify" his designs by eliminating ornament or color, nor by making his walls exclusively curtains on an industrial box. He wasn't going down any purist blind alleys of a style conceived for climes unrelated to Texas. No ornament he used was superfluous; he knew intuitively how much was necessary to keep the eye from being bored. They might not know why, but his buildings will continue to delight laymen because of this stubborn personal rationalism tied to his artist's intuition.

There were faces at the funeral that surprised me, and might have Neil. He always had a slight wild streak about him, and he loved to pull dignity's tail. (*Seeing the establishment at your funeral would make you chortle, wouldn't it, Neil. You always were a guide dog nipping at the heels of the sheep. In fact, you were a downright snob about not being a member of the herd. And god, how you hated functionaries and bureaucrats!*) But his ego would have been satisfied to see them there, that hungry ego that had to be constantly fed.

### When the Saints . . .

"The Happy Jazz Band" started playing unhappy spirituals at a quarter to nine. Sax, brass, clarinet, piano, drums and bass. The mournful clarinet was excellent, but "Deep River" and "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" didn't seem for Neil; he didn't admit to trouble. When I called him in the hospital after a heart attack, he bluffed, "They're just trying to scare me." But the recessionary "When the Saints Go Marching In" certainly was right. Jim Cullum's blues snapped me back to a

spring night when we had found Wanda and Neil at a party overlooking the river near Jim Cullum's domain. Ford had already had his lung chopped on and was wearing a sign "Don't touch my back!"—on the back of this man who was used to being hugged so much. Any ordinary mortal his age would have obeyed his wife and gone home to bed at nine. Not Neil; with his usual generosity, he had swept us up for a dinner downstairs on the river. Like most successful people, he had that extra energy, even after his heart had sputtered several times and he had been slit and peeled like an orange half around his girth.

The priest began, "We are here to thank God for O'Neil Ford." That was right. Lots of us were. But the morticians hadn't realized that this wasn't much of a commercial wreath-sending crowd. It hadn't even occurred to most of us. They scrambled about taking down all the unused racks for holding wreaths.

Soon after, I looked back and realized that the side aisles were crowded with standees. Neil's story of sitting with a

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second generation of computer chieftains at a sidewalk cafe on the Côte d'Azur pricked my conscience. An elderly lady known to all had paused at their table. "Those wimps with me wouldn't get out of their chairs. The SOB's aren't gentlemen like those they took over from." Neil was an artful gentleman with women. (It was too late for me to be a gentleman this morning. The priest was praying.)

After the reverend had set the tone, Amy Freeman Lee climbed to a lectern and confirmed my view of Ford's dictum on sentimentality. "Make 'em

laugh," was her duty under his design of the event. (*God, Neil, it's your last design.*) One of her five stories (there was one for each of the decades she had known him) was a word picture of Neil in a checked jacket driving up to a party in an MG just after the second world war. "Jaunty," she thought. "That's class." He was from a town in North Texas miles from anywhere, and he deliberately exaggerated his lack of education, as part of the Texas style of his generation. Ed Stone, another outré architect that Tom Wolfe makes a bit too much of in his anger at the Bauhaus, played the same dirt-under-fingers game out of Arkansas, and migrated clean away from his roots to prominence. But not Ford. He stuck to Texas as a base, and worked at evolving forms satisfying to us here, though he occasionally designed buildings in other places. "Class" in his buildings was deliberately defined in Texas terms, and the buildings certainly mirror the man. Amy Lee carried through her charge eloquently, and yet somehow made us smile.

#### **Dobie, Webb, Bedichek, Ford**

More blues; not even long-haired jazz here; and then a second speaker. Maury Maverick Jr.'s role was to put a frame around Neil's contributions to San Antonio. After these two, John Henry Faulk's use of Shakespearean analogies seemed a bit heavy, which he admitted in his last sentence, looking down at the coffin, mimicking Neil. "'Aw, Henry, you're laying it on a little thick,' but I guess I got it about right." Missing was the visual artist's or architect's view of Ford's contributions. Neil had asked that Jerry Bywaters, Ford's salad days pal in creating an artistic identity for Texas, be one of the speakers, but he was ill. Faulk was perhaps to put a frame around Neil's contribution to Texas. I thanked him for a line about "Dobie, Webb, Bedichek and Ford." It was a nice image. Those three verbal craftsmen, and the materials craftsman. I can vouch for the Bedichek parallel. Eating a really ripe peach bought from a farmer at Dripping Springs while Bedichek pointed out the character of a wild flower or a bird in a madrona tree was the same as listening to Ford talk about simple early Texas building forms, and the same as experiencing one of his better buildings.

"Architecture's craft. It's hard work," he snorted perversely to a question whether architecture is poetry.

Ford had been sitting behind us, tapping us on the shoulders, muttering about the "high-flown" words of Norberg-Schulz who had lectured. And my mind snapped much further back to a 1952 image of him sitting in the Masters Class lab in Robinson Hall at Harvard, reading aloud his office mail from home, even letters from Wanda. The European and eastern students, chosen by Gropius and expecting to find him there teaching, did not quite know what to make of Ford. He was one of four visiting critics brought in to fill the void of Gropius' sudden departure. By the time Ford arrived, Ieoh Ming Pei had led them through one five-week exercise. Immediately following Pei's articulate, incisive style, derived from a blend of patrician Chinese and New England schooling, Ford's personal style was a shock. Did he have anything to teach them? He had to struggle against an intellectual snobbism from those 16 gentlemen, and his asking them to design an office building for an oil company in Texas, an improbable place, did not help. He hadn't designed any Harvard boxes, and as Tom Wolfe has shown, was outside the compound. Ford gradually won them over, all but Norberg-Schulz, who must have hurt Ford by exiting from the class at that particular moment. Perhaps this accounted for his outburst in Dallas against the theoretician; Norberg-Schulz turned it back on Ford with a

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*Eating a really ripe peach bought from a farmer at Dripping Springs while Bedichek pointed out the character of a wild flower or a bird in a madrona tree was the same as listening to Ford talk about simple early Texas building forms.*

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complement about Ford's work, using rare grace and adroitness, a polished stiletto of words that skewered Ford's bluster. (*Neil, maybe you can take credit for making Norberg-Schulz a great critic by running him out of design class toward intellectual pursuits.* I

liked the irony.) At Harvard Ford's technical know-how shifted the orientation of the students to a practical base, and we were soon deep into how-to-do-it detail; however, we were applying the detail to flat-roofed Harvard boxes. Ford couldn't overcome fifteen years of German regime in his six weeks, though he worked on us every day.

#### **Frontier Suspicions**

The priest was dressed in a bright vestment that no cleric would have worn before the '60s. The meeting house services Ford must have known 70 years ago in Pink Hill, Texas, had to have been a sure contrast to this one. We had come a long way from agrarian frontier Texas, and Ford's life bridged the change. An Irishman full of stories, who talked endlessly, he nevertheless was suspicious of other people's words, perhaps out of his youth close in time to the frontier. After listening to a tape from a New Mexico professional meeting, he gruffed at me in a definitely ambiguous tone of voice, "I heard those words of yours about that upside down bank in Arizona." I never figured out if he was really disapproving, or begrudging, or both.

The service ended with "Amazing Grace," a camp meeting song which Ford probably did encounter in services at the Texas meeting houses of his childhood. He kept some of the style of a rural Texan, a part of his character admired. Older Texans loved him because he was still one of them, even though he worked in a subject they didn't know much about. His forms spoke to them, those sparse forms of brick. The intellectuals liked him because he was the first architect with any sizable body of work to give them their own identity in original physical terms. Ford knew his milieu and gradually distilled his designs from it. His color palette as well as his textures came to blend with a Latin character so long smothered or treated as a cliché in Texas.

We all got in cars and followed the hearse. It was only after we had gone by the Cathedral his firm had given new life to, and turned into King William Street by his old office, that I realized we were deliberately passing Neil's buildings and haunts. We took the river road by Concepcion. Out on the highway near the burial ground I could see neither the head nor tail of the file of headlighted cars. Police on motor-

cycles kept leapfrogging intersections. Did all San Antonio have to stop for that impressively long snake? The mayor had called out his police for an architect. Some things were changing in Texas; that would not have happened a generation ago.

Green gentle slope down to a dam on the river: large trees, for San Antonio. Instead of the grave my mind flipped to a story of Ford's bachelor days in Dallas: at Minnie Marcus's house a big lawn swept down to a small creek in a woods, where on a hot afternoon at a garden party, Neil and Eddie had snuck off for a swim. Their clothes stolen by some lady spies, Marcus and Ford marched out of the trees straight up the hill, deadpan, through the party, into the house and upstairs to find clothes.

"I don't know how to say there *must not* be any great ceremony—no weeping. I have gone away for pretty long trips before—and besides, does anyone have any choice about dying? Why fear the inevitable? Why scorn the natural ending?" Neil's words were printed under his picture in the program for the funeral. (*Neil, you were a better architect than a logician with words, but the gist was right.*) He really had played this ceremony straight, but with a Ford twist.

#### **Zinnias and Marigolds**

There were zinnias and marigolds through which four little crosses appeared on the coffin. Zinnias, yes, a nice Texas touch, but I wondered how he felt about the crosses. They were a familiar dining room table object from his house. Certainly he liked to design buildings for religious institutions, but was he a professed believer? He never said. I thought it more likely that he was content with the ubiquitous feather that someone said was in the lapel of his shroud. We went off and left the coffin standing there in the sun, in that terrible new practice of secret after-the-grave-service burial that undertakers have foisted off on us. None of his friends to help put him in the ground, or throw a flower down. The fantasies were all bad.

We drove down behind Mission San Jose, past the bull ring to park, and walked in the caliche dust bright under the hot noon light into Willow Way. I wanted a peacock to scream, and one finally did as we rounded the corner by the long outer bird cages. Under the arbor along one side of the front lawn

people were already eating. On the lawn two Latin ladies were patting out flour tortillas and another was buttering them with beans: wonderful burritos. Inside, on the porch, there really was cornbread and ham, while waiters passed champagne, as Neil had wanted. (*Neil, I'm glad you didn't have us drinking the wine out of gourds and pails.*) In Cambridge I remembered meals at the Henri IV, and other Harvard bistros, where Neil seemed to be spending his entire critic's stipend entertaining us students. There was a bar we came to frequent with Neil, principally because

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*On the lawn two Latin ladies were patting out flour tortillas and another was buttering them with beans; wonderful burritos. Inside, on the porch, there really was cornbread and ham, while waiters passed champagne as Neil had wanted.*

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there was a barmaid whose body Gaston Lachaise must have used as a model for his sculpture. Most afternoons at six we marvelled at her. She was so decorative that she eventually captured, yea married, one of us, but not until long after Neil had set a pattern for us drinking beer there. He was in lab every afternoon, and in the mornings he was off looking at Richardson train stations or churches with a good brick or stone detail. This all ended when his turn with the Masters Class was finished, before a holiday. On a brisk wool suit morning after the leaves had all fallen, Neil and five of us took off for New York. There he introduced me to Luchow's, that great gastronomic institution, where he said goodbye. He was a Texan who knew his way around, for all that down home cornbread.

The lawn continued to fill with people. Except for the self-conscious ones in three-piece suits, the young had sensibly pared down their clothes to open shirts. The over 50s ones had pulled open their ties. There were some over 60 in formal daytime attire, including a few women in silk chiffon.

Like Bedichek, Ford wanted, demanded, connections to other generations than his own. Once we weren't sure why we were invited to a job interview because we knew it was Ford's turf. And this was confirmed when we got back to the office. The drafting studios were in disarray because Ford had wandered in, asking for people who were smokers, saying he wanted to show them what was going to happen to them. By the time he had left he had shown all the architects the entire extent of his big red new scar from the lung operation. There was a side comment relayed back to us absent partners: "Oh, I know where they are, but they won't get it." And we didn't.

There was a sizable number of architects standing on the lawn who had been influenced by him. Some like Harold Box had lived at Willow Way when Ford had had a studio of apprentices in the Wright tradition. Ones like Welch absorbed his wit and personal style. Others like the Petersons had carried out his early impetus to save and restore Texas' building heritage. The Landrys carry on his form style, as do O'Neill and Perez, from a still younger group of alumni. A few struggle to evolve the direction he set in more contemporary, machine-derived terms. On these people's doorsteps he appeared with erratic frequency, but he could be gotten for help, and was always solicitous when playing mentor. Once in the '60s when we were in trouble with a client over the design of our first four million dollar building, Papa Neil came to spend two hours with our questioner: "That building will come out fine if you leave 'em alone," was his summary aid.

#### **National Windows**

At the funeral I recognized none of his Texas Instruments clients who enlarged the scope of his work with homes, factories, and donated institutional buildings after the '50s. Lucy Nugent was there from the Johnson family, who gave him another kind of national window with an appointment to the National Endowment for the Arts. But none in our Texas adolescent culture were confident enough of their own taste to entrust him with the LBJ shrine, the major city halls, and art museums. Ford commented about himself and another architect, after losing the commission to design a museum, "We could have gotten that job together, if he hadn't thought he could

get it alone." I doubt that. Neil's forte was an American vernacular, earthy and out of the Texas past. For those self-conscious, capital "C" cultural projects, Texas donors played it safe with commissions resulting in approved national abstract designs, not regional ones, placeless though these designs may be. Texas is as yet no Italy with its own Michelangelos.

And Ford did tax some clients' patiences. One hired us on the rebound with a comment that Ford was always "out of sight, out of mind." But he had a capacity to maintain an enormous

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*Ford permitted himself to let a hint of sentiment show through his gruffness and to wax lyrical: Then the timbre of his voice rose and softened, became slightly airy in its caress about some beautiful soft stone or a brick vault.*

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network of friends, including some of those he exasperated. (*Ford, you were sometimes arrogant and jealous, but a lot of us forgave you because of your wit.*) He did have enemies. The adversary role he played in the profession during the '40s and '50s was partly due to ego, but also to his concern for saving early vernacular buildings before it was fashionable to do so. His seeming perverseness was also due to the style revolution then going on. Ford's work belonged neither to the beaux arts tradition, nor to the pure International Style. The moral fervor of the new style's evangelism did catch him to the extent that he eschewed classicism. This did not become clear in his work until the '40s, when his designs evolved in a new direction. By then his scorn of the beaux arts had the same moral tone as that adopted by all of us who were brainwashed in the training of the '40s; it was this moral tone that baffled and angered the traditionalists, and exaggerated Ford's separation from the then professional establishment. Time changed his evangelical architectural ideas, and softened Ford's ego; passing a campus

building being razed as we rode in the cortege, critic Dillon reported him recently saying, "I'm glad I lived long enough to see some of this '50s stuff of mine torn down."

Standing in the shade of Neil's house at this wake partly planned by the honoree on the back of a will, a different kind of party floated to mind: the one *Texas Homes* held for Neil when they did the issue on him last fall. Its ingenious pull-out invitation presaged good hors d'oeuvres and lots of people at the Mansion in Dallas. ("Don't touch my back, it's still sore as hell!") The issue showed his better side, his more personal buildings, and not the losers. Most of the latter were bigger institutions, or factories, where it is harder to control the subtleties of scale, or to introduce the materials and handcraft that he had become known for. Was that why he was reported to have evolved an office within the office, to keep control? Sometimes in the work of the grown-up firm, long weaned from him, there was no personal stamp. At the funeral one eulogy predicted that Neil would be installing those ceramic light fixtures in Heaven. I don't think so. Neil knew when not to use those fixtures, which now have lost spontaneity. They have the same mechanical character as Wesley Peters' imitations of Wright's detail. No one is varying their patterns, evolving them toward something new; Ford lived to see that detail of his work become a cliché.

#### **Waxing Lyrical**

At the end of the mowed lawn we saw the two little vaulted buildings that he had built on an excuse of needing *piéd-à-terres* for the young, but I suspect for the real reason of watching those Latin masons put up domes without centering. He was fascinated with the romantic handcraft technique wherein the mason started laying bricks or stone in a spiral out over space, working quickly with the mortar just stiff enough to hold the units, until he could plug the center with a keystone to make the dome secure from gravity. Talking about this was the special case when Ford permitted himself to let a hint of sentiment show through his assumed gruffness, and to wax lyrical: then the timbre of his voice rose and softened, became slightly airy in its caress about some beautiful soft stone or a brick vault.

To eat my burritos, I took a place at a

picnic table under the arbor. A shy 13-year-old, olive skinned and jet-haired, continued to eat next to me. I did not know how to get him to talk. Wanda and Neil had done more than most to bring Latin friends and culture out into the Texas sun, and mix them with the Anglo as they should be. History will say that Ford's real contribution was uniting the Anglo with a Latin tradition as the beginning of a style appropriate historically and in climate for that portion of Texas and Mexico west of the hardwood forest, north of Monterrey, and south of the caprock out to the Rockies.

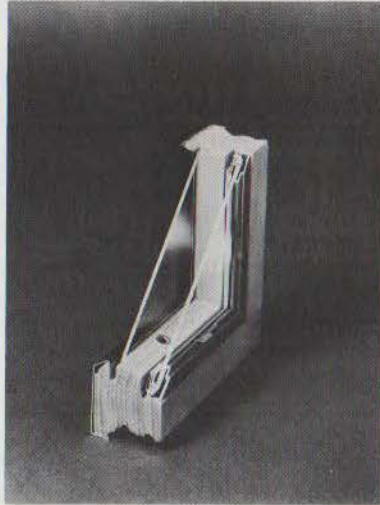
#### **The Cobbler's Retreat**

The Happy Jazz Band was now playing New Orleans in the living room as I walked through the house. But this Texas house, Neil's own, was not of the gloss of *Texas Homes*. It was tangible, decaying, and like my mind, full of the detritus of several lives. An enlarged version of a Texas country house before air conditioning, dressed in fashionable garb of the '40s: a mass with flat eyebrows, wood awning windows, screened porches. How different from Eliel Saarinen's turn-of-the-century artists' compound outside Helsinki, or from Charles Eames' oceanside house, an homage to the machine. There was something of the friendly relaxed ramshackle of a large, old Texas farm, what with all of Wanda's long birdcages for exotic birds and laying hens, and numerous outbuildings. The house was the cobbler's retreat, no self-conscious stage set of Architecture. Piles of books stacked randomly. Rooms full of stuff. No pretense; none at all, and almost perversely so. He obviously didn't like to alight for long, by the evidence of this house. It seemed already that Wanda had properly taken it all back, though it was the same as a year ago, when we had the inevitable tour of the two tiny vaulted buildings. We had been sent to mass at Mission San Jose to hear the mariachis, and when we returned he was asleep. He was ordered to nap by the doctor. We hadn't waited for him to wake after Wanda gave us something to eat, and had packed green eggs for us to take to Dallas.

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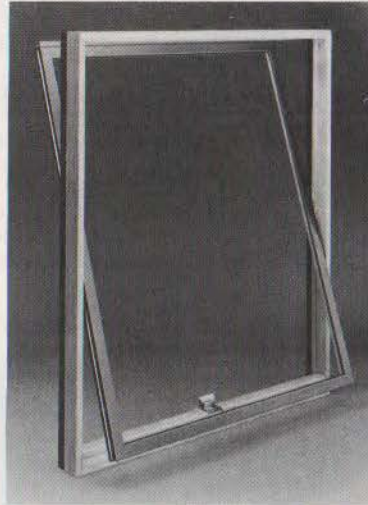


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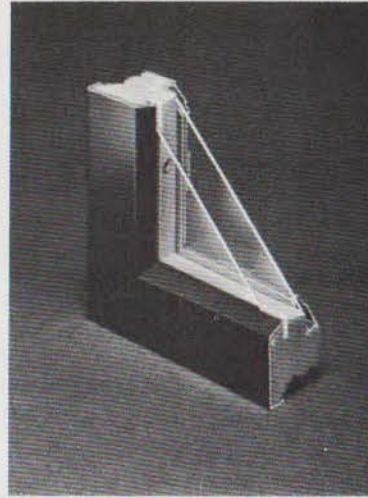


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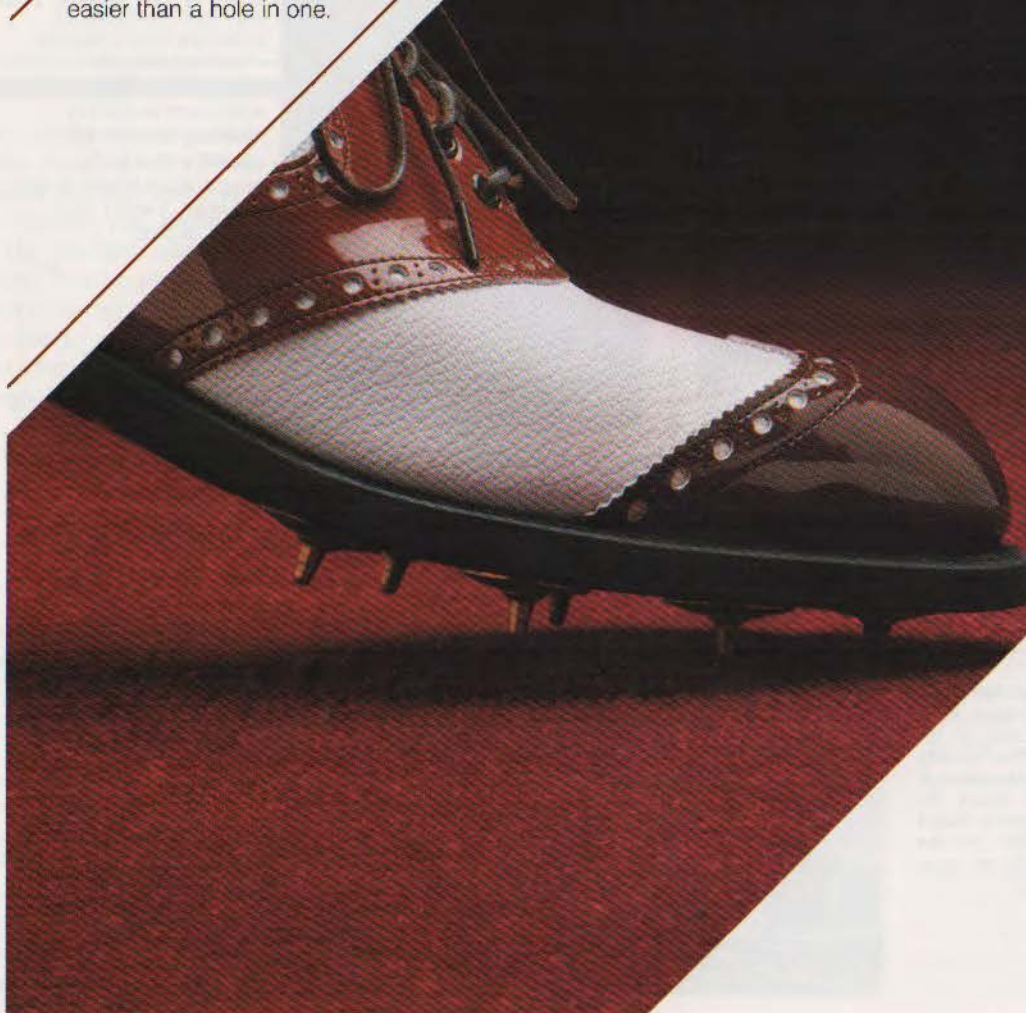
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## *A Praiseworthy and Valuable Compendium*

By Jay C. Henry



From the New York Sketchbook of Architecture, June 1876.

North Congregational Church, Springfield, Mass., 1868, 1871-73.

**H. H. Richardson: Complete Architectural Works**, by Jeffrey Karl Ochsner (Hobson architect and *Texas Architect* contributor). M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 466 pages, \$50 (hardbound).

With the approaching centennial of the death of Henry Hobson Richardson in 1986, it is appropriate that a complete catalogue of his work be published. The fruit of Ochsner's labor is just that—a catalogue, not a new interpretation. It

complements but does not supplant previous studies, such as Mariana van Rensselaer's *H. H. Richardson and His Works* of 1888, Henry-Russell Hitchcock's *Architecture of H. H. Richardson and His Times* of 1936, and James O'Gorman's *Selected Drawings: Henry Hobson Richardson and His Office* of 1974. It also incorporates the growing body of Richardsonian scholarship which has appeared in periodicals and unpublished research,

all of which is noted in the complete textual references. The illustrations draw heavily upon contemporary photography (the use of which Richardson pioneered in promoting his work), and include numerous unconventional but appropriately descriptive views. The Richardson archives of Houghton Library at Harvard have been combed exhaustively. The listings include accurate addresses and even location maps, so the work also functions as a guidebook.

As a catalogue, Ochsner's book is a meticulous piece of scholarship and a boon to Richardson scholars and students of American architecture. Some 151 buildings and projects by Richardson are presented in chronological order. This will obviously become the basic source book for Richardsonian studies from now on. Each building or project is described uniformly: clients; how the commission was received; history of design, construction, alteration, demolition; collaborators; architectural description; and, finally, historical and architectural significance. This presentation makes for a rather dry text which may inhibit casual readership, but such is not the primary objective of a reference catalogue. A reader familiar with previous Richardsonian studies and who peruses Ochsner's meticulous narrative comes away with certain new impressions and with a subtly altered perspective on Richardson's career.

For one thing, Ochsner's systematic presentation tends to draw more attention to Richardson's minor works than is the case in previous studies. A full 90 pages are devoted to 44 commissions from 1866 to 1872, preceding Trinity Church, his first great masterpiece in the mature Richardsonian Romanesque style. The reader observes Richardson working in the *au courant* Victorian Gothic and Second Empire modes, and exploring the Romanesque in a number of experimen-



tal commissions anticipating his mature style. More than a third of the entries are for projects never executed.


Another consequence of Ochsner's catalogue is the prominence it tends to throw upon Richardson as a domestic architect, correcting an historical bias which goes back to Van Rensselaer's study of 1888. Fully one third of the 151 buildings and projects catalogued are residences, and all of the well known Richardson houses are shown to have lesser known counterparts. Richardson's domestic architecture displayed more stylistic variety than his public work, and the Richardsonian Romanesque comprised but a minor part of his residential work. Richardson designed houses in both the stick and shingle styles, in brick as well as in stone, as town houses for urban lots and as country houses for spacious estates. In all of these commissions he displayed the same sensitivity to the scale of materials that characterized his handling of rusticated ashlar.

The information on Richardson's clients is particularly interesting, emphasizing the dominant role of personal friendships in attracting commissions, and the recurrence of the same prominent patrons in varying roles as directors of railroads, officers of corporations, elders of church congregations, and members of extended families. Ochsner's account is replete with references to prominent former patrons who may have introduced Richardson to newer clients. Moreover, it contradicts the common stereotype of the Gilded Age as a dichotomy between aristocratic brahmins and parvenu businessmen. Richardson's patrons were both, often in the same personality.

All of this is not to suggest that Ochsner's work is without fault. The architectural descriptions are bland and uninspired. He frequently fails to assess the historical or architectural significance of a building, and the conclusions of Van Rensselaer and Hitchcock are rarely summarized.

These are, however, minor reservations about a praiseworthy and valuable compendium, one which will serve scholars and aficionados for many years. It is altogether worthy of its subject—the first great American architect of international stature, whose tragically brief career comprised a watershed between Victorian eclecticism and modern architecture.

*Jay C. Henry is an associate professor of architecture at the University of Texas at Arlington where he teaches courses in architectural history.*



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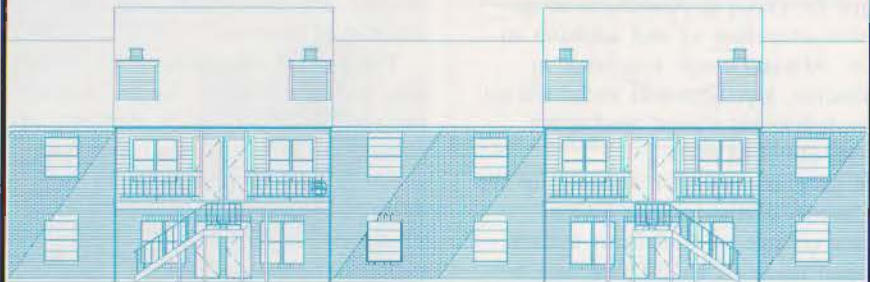
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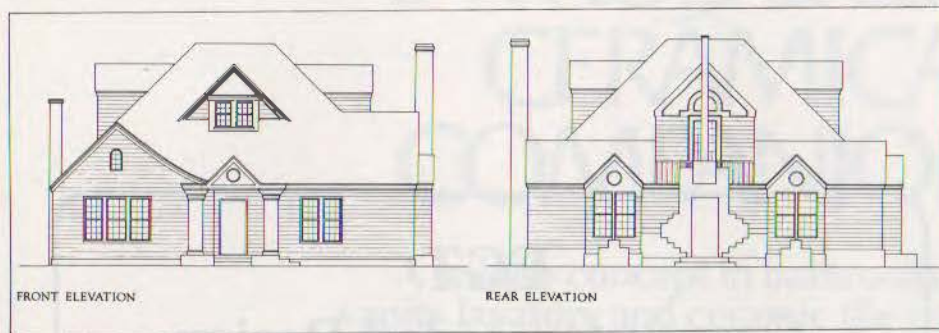
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Dr. Maria Ortega residence, Waxahachie.

### Alteration, Addition for Waxahachie Cottage on Drawing Boards

On the drawing boards of the Dallas firm Richard D. Davis & Associates is an extensive alteration of and addition to the Dr. Maria Ortega residence in Waxahachie, a project that architects say is intended to be a good deal more than the sum of its parts.

The program calls for opening up the small rooms of the modest 1920s builder's cottage to transform a dark, disjointed maze of an interior into a more open plan by establishing a new circulation sequence from public to private areas. In addition, the existing ground floor will be expanded to the rear garden side of the house to include a den and master bedroom suite, and

attic space formerly used for storage will become children's bedrooms with the addition of dormers.

The formal vocabulary of the addition is determined by the features of the vintage bungalow—such elements as gables, planters, porches, double-hung windows and window seats as well as dormers with which architects hope ultimately to achieve a "richer mixture" than that which existed only in the original house. "It is an exploration of architecture from the inside out," architects say, "seeing in the vocabulary of the parts the opportunity to establish an enriched grammar for the whole."

### Dallas Pump Station to be Restored as Turtle Creek Arts Center

Plans are in the works to convert the abandoned Turtle Creek Pump Station in Dallas, built in 1909 as the nerve center for the city's water system, into the Turtle Creek Center for the Arts.

The 8,000-square-foot structure, now an empty brick shell, is wedged between the North Dallas Tollway, Oaklawn Avenue and Harry Hines Boulevard. The city leased the building to the Turtle Creek Center for the Arts last summer on the condition that the group raise the money for its restoration. Fundraising for the \$1,338,815 project, designed by the Dallas firm ArchiTexas, is now under way, with construction scheduled to begin later this year and to be completed in the fall of 1983.

In 1954, when Harry Hines Boulevard was widened, a section of the building was removed, including a high-pilastered main entrance on the south facade. This original entry will be recreated on the north side. In addition to repairing the brick shell and tile roof, the project also will involve the installation of new "high-performance" windows to

reduce noise levels from the stream of traffic rushing around the site. A 2,816-square-foot rehearsal hall, rising to a height of 35 feet, will be located in a clerestoried penthouse above the old boiler room and designed to accommodate the Dallas Symphony or Opera Chorus.



Turtle Creek Center for the Arts, Dallas.

### Two SASA Center Under Way in North San Antonio

Two SASA Center, designed by the Houston firm Lloyd Jones Brewer for the San Antonio Savings Association, is now under way as part of a 21-acre mixed-used development in north San Antonio.

The 10-story, 183,000-square-foot building, scheduled for completion in July 1983, will be crescent-shaped in plan, with a curved facade of bronze and blue reflective glass, the change in glass color emphasizing a series of



Two SASA Center, San Antonio.

setbacks along the surface of the facade to relate the building to the pyramidal SASA home office building nearby, designed by the Dallas office of Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum (see *Texas Architect*, Nov./Dec. 1981).

Inside, floors will vary in size from 17,900 to 19,000 square feet. The ground floor lobby, finished in Italian travertine, will feature structural concrete columns covered in cast stone to relate to the limestone exterior of the SASA home office.



*Petro-Lewis Tower, Houston.*

### **Petro-Lewis Tower Going Up in Greenspoint Near Houston Intercontinental**

Construction is now under way on the Petro-Lewis Tower in the Greenspoint multi-use development near the Houston Intercontinental Airport, designed by the Houston firm Sikes Jennings Kelly. Upon completion, which is scheduled for early 1983, the 23-story tower will be the tallest building north of the Houston central business district.

The upper five levels of the building will be stair-stepped in a series of terraces to present "a strong geometric silhouette against the north Houston skyline." The building exterior will be dark bronze glass, with gold-colored panels above the terraces on the upper floors. Plans for the building's entry plaza call for a fountain and extensive landscaping.

A high priority is placed on the project's energy efficiency. Windows will be dual-paned and insulated and air conditioning will be provided by a variable-volume, multi-zone system. Life-safety features will include sprinkler, fire detection and emergency communication systems.

### **400-Room Hilton Hotel To be Built in El Paso**

Construction is scheduled to begin later this year or early in 1983 on the 400-room Hilton Hotel in downtown El Paso, designed by the Houston firm 3D/International.

The 20-story, 300,000-square-foot facility, designed to complement the nearby convention center and civic buildings, will feature rounded columns

and balconies and will be clad in tan precast concrete and bronze glass. A landscaped plaza atop a 400-car underground parking garage will join the hotel to the convention center and city hall.

Entrance to the hotel will be through a 50-foot-high skylit atrium lobby, the edges of which will stairstep up to varying levels to accommodate restaurant, lobby bar and lounge. A second-level promenade on three-sides of the atrium will overlook the lobby floor.

Construction is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 1984.



*Hilton Hotel, El Paso.*

## **News of Schools**

### **Charles Estes Dies of Heart Attack in Bryan**



attack Aug. 9 in a Bryan hospital. He was 53.

Charles Edwin Estes was born Nov. 22, 1928, in Houston. He received both bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from Texas A&M, then began his career in 1949 with Caudill, Rowlett, Scott, then in College Station.

In 1963, Estes became a partner in the Bryan firm W. R. Mathews and Associates, eventually joining the A&M faculty as an assistant professor in 1967 and becoming an associate professor in 1969. In 1970, he rejoined CRS, then in Houston, where he remained until his return to A&M as a full professor and department head in 1979.

Charles Estes, head of the department of architecture at Texas A&M's College of Architecture and Environmental Design in College Station, died of a heart



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# FRITZ

### McDermott Joins UTA as Director of Architecture



John McDermott, former chairman of the department of architecture at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, has been appointed director of architecture at

the University of Texas at Arlington School of Architecture and Environmental Design.

McDermott is a 1966 graduate of Notre Dame University with a bachelor's degree in architecture and served as department chairman at Ohio State from 1971 to 1974. He received a master of arts degree from Notre Dame in 1976. McDermott also has written extensively on the theory and teaching of architecture and has served on design studio juries at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., among other schools.

### UTA-SAED Alumni Meet To Form Association

Alumni of the University of Texas at Arlington School of Architecture and Environmental Design will meet Oct. 2 in the Fine Arts Building at UT-Arlington to discuss the formation of an alumni association.

The former UT-Arlington students hope that a permanent endowment for student scholarships can be established and funds can be generated for the school's curriculum. Founders also hope such a move would establish a reservoir of professional expertise to supplement involvement by area professionals.

Interested alumni should contact David Browning at (214) 748-8407, or the University of Texas at Arlington School of Architecture and Environmental Design, Arlington 76019. Telephone: (817) 273-2801.

### Effort Under Way to Establish Roland Roessner Professorship

The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture has launched a campaign to endow the Roland Gommel Roessner Centennial Professorship in

Architecture. Professor Roessner, FAIA, who has taught some 2,000 students at the UT School of Architecture since joining the faculty in 1948, retired in May.

The School has been challenged by the RGK Foundation to raise half of the \$100,000 required by the university to establish a professorship. Architecture Dean Hal Box says the campaign is currently \$30,000 short of that goal.

Persons interested in supporting the Professorship should contact Vivian Silverstein, director of professional affairs, the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, Austin 78712. Telephone: (512) 471-1922.

### O'Neil Ford Archives At UT-Austin Seeks More Material

The archives of the late San Antonio architect O'Neil Ford (see page 54), established at the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, seeks materials from friends and clients that would enhance the collection. Letters, drawings, photographs, tape recordings and other material may be sent to Hal Box, Dean, School of Architecture, the University of Texas at Austin, Austin 78712.

### Aubry Named Distinguished Architecture Alumnus at UH



Eugene Aubry, FAIA, partner in the Houston firm Morris/Aubry Architects and a 1960 graduate of the University of Houston School of Architecture, has

received the School's first distinguished alumnus award.

Aubry, a Galveston native, has been with the firm (formerly S. I. Morris Associates) since 1970. During that time he has been largely responsible for the design of such completed projects as the Houston Central Library, First City Tower and Alfred C. Glassell, Jr., School of Art, all in Houston. He also has been in charge of the design of such projects in progress as the Gus S. Wortham Theater Center in Houston and the One American Center retail/office complex in Austin.



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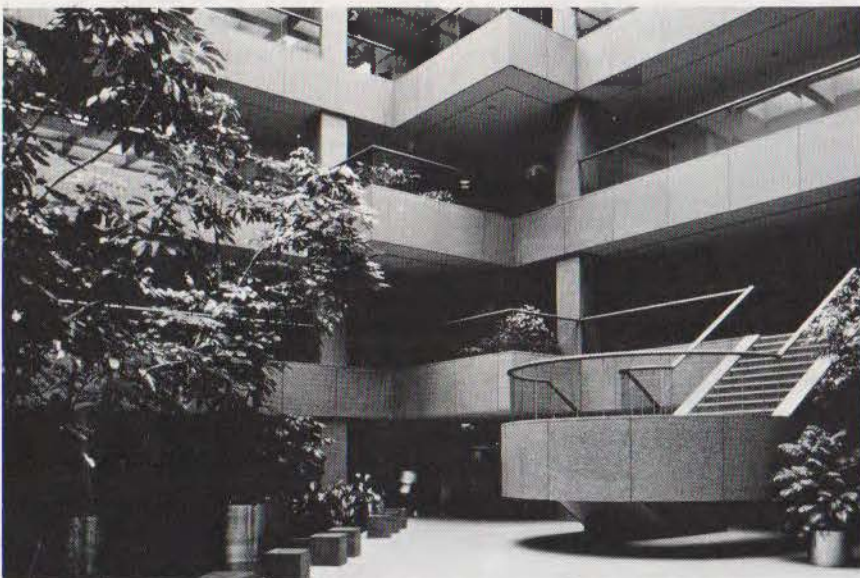
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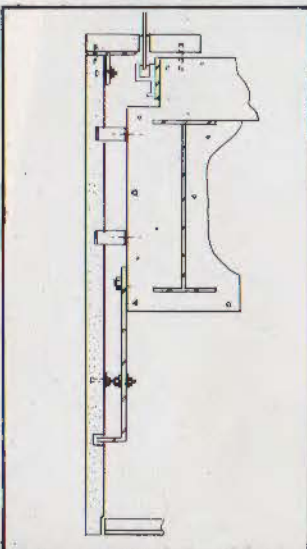
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## News of Firms

The Chicago-based firm **Harry Weese & Associates** has opened a branch office at 2001 Bryan Street, Dallas 75201. Telephone: (214) 742-1805.

William E. Phillips has been named vice president of the Dallas firm **Charles R. Womack & Associates**.

Robert S. Daniel, III, has announced the establishment of the firm **Gordon & Daniel Architects & Planners**, 5952 Royal Lane, Suite 109, Dallas 75230. Telephone: (214) 369-8624.

The Dallas firm **Harper Kemp Clutts and Parker** has relocated its offices to the First International Building, 1201 Elm Street, Suite 5464, Dallas 75270.

Mike Meinhardt and Roger Dahlin have announced the formation of their firm **Meinhardt and Associates, Architects**, with offices at 3518 Fairmount Ave., Dallas 75219. Telephone: (214) 352-2913.

Lewis L. Faulkner, Jr., has announced the establishment of his firm **Faulkner Associates/Architects Planners**, with offices at 6314 Clubhouse, Dallas 75240. Telephone: (214) 239-9234.

Bud Luther has been named vice president of the Houston firm **Gensler and Associates/Architects**.

The Houston firm **Denny, Ray & Wines** has moved its offices to 4100 Westheimer, Suite 201, Houston 77027. Telephone: (713) 622-2671.

**Kenneth Bentsen Associates Architects** of Houston has relocated its offices to 2919 Allen Parkway, Suite 1266, Houston 77019. Telephone: (713) 521-2093.

Harry A. Harwood and Craig A. Kess have been named partners in the Houston firm **Brooks/Collier**.

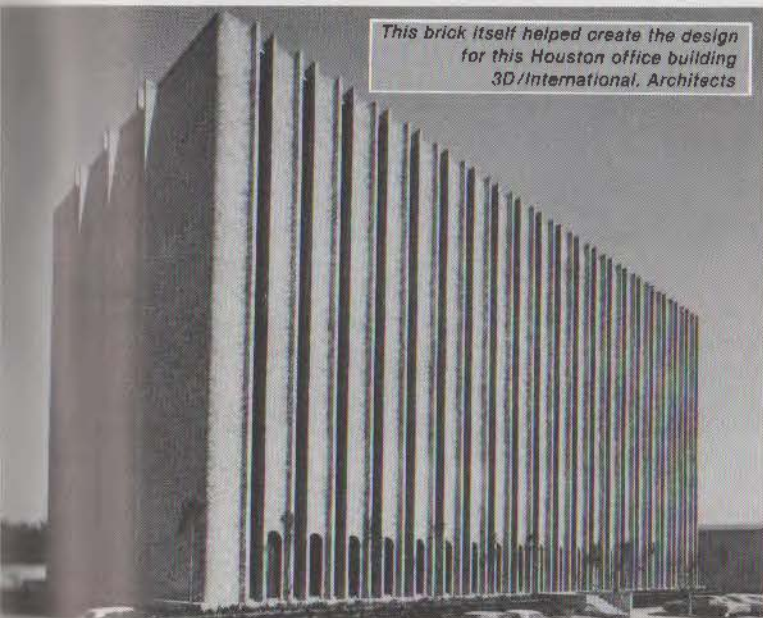
**Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum of Texas (HOK-Texas)** has named George E. Mahoney vice president and director of interior design for the firm's Houston office.

The San Antonio firm **Rehler Vaughn Beaty & Koone** has elected John W. Koone senior vice president of the firm, Michael Beaty executive vice president (architecture), Sam Briggs vice president (architecture), Bob Turner vice president (marketing), John Meister vice president (landscape architecture), Ted G. Kohleffel vice president (construction), and June Beaty vice president (administration).

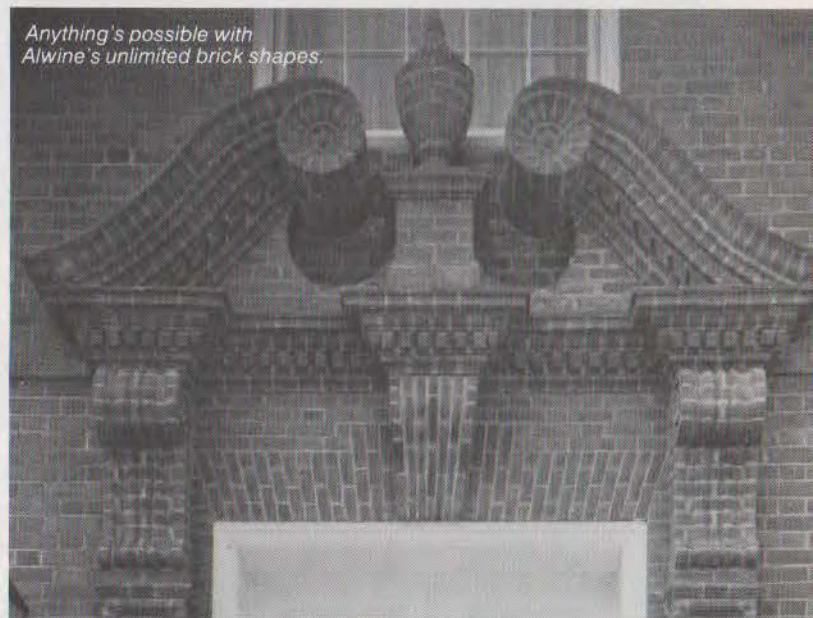




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Austin architect **Ponciano Morales, III**, has relocated his office to 3205 S. First St., Austin 78704. Telephone: (512) 447-5515.

Beaumont architect Douglas E. Steinman, Jr., FAIA, has announced the formation of his firm **Douglas E. Steinman, Architects**, at 2900 North Building, Suite 300, Beaumont 77702. Telephone: (713) 892-5425.

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## News of Products

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*Raftery Executive Seating by Vecta.*



*Wilkhahn FS Operator Stool.*

**Vecta Contract** in Grand Prairie has introduced two new seating systems: Raftery Executive Seating, designed by William Raftery, Vecta's manager of design, and the Wilkhahn FS Operator Stool, designed by Klaus Franck and Werner Sauer of the German furniture

manufacturer Wilkhahn GmbH in Bad Münders. The Raftery chair is designed to allow the edge of the seat to tilt downward while the feet remain on the floor, thereby eliminating pressure points that tend to cut off circulation and promote fatigue. The series consists of eight models, three of which are highback versions with height adjustment options. Upholstery choices are fabric or leather; the base is finished in polished aluminum or "thermoset" colors. The design of the Wilkhahn stool is based on a spring-tension system to provide constant support as the user changes sitting positions. Shell construction is intended to provide a zone of flexibility between seat and back. The 25-inch-diameter, five-leg base, with a 19-inch-diameter foot rail, has a pneumatic height adjustment with a range of seven inches. Vecta Contract, 1800 South Great Southwest Parkway, Grand Prairie 75051. Telephone: (214) 641-2860.

Now available from **Molenco** in Houston is a new building components catalogue highlighting the company's line of wall panels and accessories. All panels and trims are coated with "Kynar 500," Molenco's stock finish. Factory-assembled "Insul-Wall" panels come in a variety of insulation thicknesses and U-values. Molenco, 2103 Lyons Ave., P.O. Box 2505, Houston 77001. Telephone: (713) 225-1441.

A seminar on the uses and history of fibers and textiles over the last 20 years, sponsored by **Jim Wylie and Company** of Irving, will be held from 6 to 9 p.m., Oct. 7, in the Jim Wylie showroom on the ninth floor of the World Trade Center in Dallas. Chico Batavia of Allied Corp. will speak on "everything you wanted to know about fibers and how it relates to your market." Jim Wylie and Company, 3410 Century Circle, Irving 75062. Telephone: (214) 438-5050.

San Antonio-based **Restorations Incorporated** has opened an operational office at 4141 Southwest Freeway, Suite 410, Houston 77027. Telephone: (713) 840-1032.

**Micro Mode**, a San Antonio software house specializing in A/E computer applications, has introduced an integrated project management/general accounting software package. This "one-pass" accounting system, tailored around AIA's Computerized Financial Management System, was designed to

the specifications of a 47-person architectural firm in Houston. The system is designed to handle cash or accrual accounting for professional corporations, partnerships or sole proprietorships and to run on any microcomputer that uses a CP/M 2.X or MP/M operating system. Micro Mode, Inc., 322 Greycliff Drive, San Antonio 78233. Telephone: (512) 341-2205.

**Brayton International** of High Point, N.C., with showrooms in Dallas and Houston, has introduced a new seven-piece chair collection called Linea, designed by Burkhard Volgtherr. The seating comes in highback or lowback, with a spring system designed to absorb the initial impact of a person sitting down. The chair also features a tilt-locking system and height adjuster. Chair arms come in ash wood or cast aluminum, with five-star bases finished



*Linea chairs by Brayton.*

in mirror chrome and powder coat, sled bases in wood or mirror chrome and four-legged bases. Timco Associates, 2702 McKinney Ave., Dallas 75204. Telephone: (214) 747-7130; 3333 Eastside, Suite 146, Houston 77098. Telephone: (713) 523-4900.

**Clayworks Studio/Gallery** in Austin is now producing handmade signs in clay, ranging from large exterior signs to small name and number plaques. The studio will provide design services itself or produce the signs according to an architect's specifications. Clayworks also makes tiles, sinks and tile murals by hand. Clayworks Studio/Gallery, 1209 E. Sixth St., Austin 78702. Telephone: (512) 474-9551.

Jean (Ito) Prats has been appointed Gulf Coast architectural representative for San Angelo-based **Monarch Manufacturing, Inc.** Prats will office at 10751 Meadowglen Lane, Houston 77042. Telephone: (713) 266-6266.

**Lamberts**, a Dallas landscape architecture and construction firm, has announced the recent expansion and

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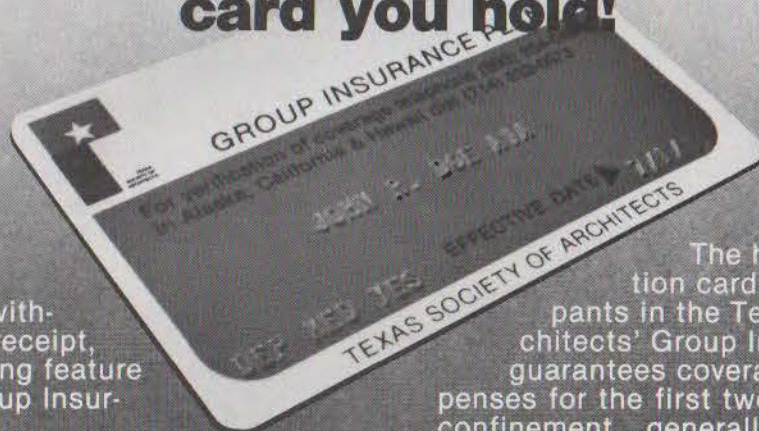
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In the News, continued.

remodeling of its Garden Shop (formerly a horse stable) and the construction of a 8,000-square-foot design studio at the firm's headquarters at 7300 Valley View Lane, Dallas 75230. Telephone: (214) 239-0121.

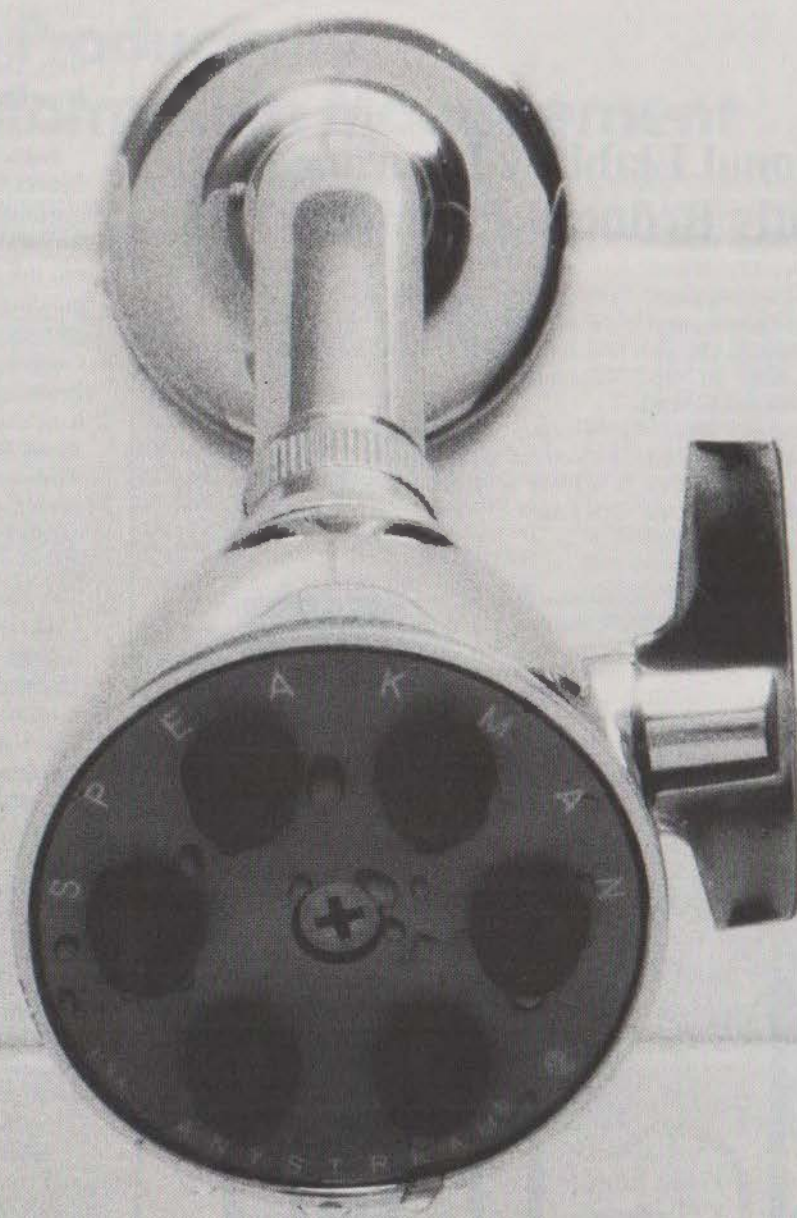


Casement window by Howmet.

Howmet Aluminum Corporation in Dallas has developed a casement window, for retrofit and new construction, that features double-glazing and weatherstripping for thermal insulation. Structurally, the window uses a two-inch tubular sash member with ½-inch walls. A split-sash design allows the use of mini-blinds. Available in walnut, cherry, oak and birch wood-grain patterns and a variety of solid colors. Howmet Aluminum Corporation, 10202 Miller Road, Dallas 75238. Telephone: (214) 340-9300.

## Coming Up

Sept. 1, 15, 22, 29, Oct. 6: "Classical Architecture in the South: The Transformations of an Ideal," sponsored by the Rice Design Alliance, in Brown Auditorium at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. This series of six lectures will examine the reemerging styles of classical architecture in the American South, from the earliest permanent buildings constructed by European colonists to today's attempts to create a sense of place amid the



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In the News, continued.

modern disarray of Southern cities and suburbs. General admission is \$30, \$21 for RDA members, \$12 for students. Rice Design Alliance, P.O. Box 1892, Houston 77251. Telephone (713) 527-4876.

**Sept. 7-Nov. 20:** "Urban Open Spaces," a photographic exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institution's Cooper-Hewitt Museum focusing on the distinctive spaces in between buildings that help create the urban environment, at the Pasillo de Artes Gallery in the Texas Commerce Bank Building in Austin. The exhibition explores plazas, streets and pedestrian malls throughout the world, from the Tuileries in Paris to the Galleria in Houston, revealing some of the common qualities of successful open space design. Texas Commerce Bank Building, 700 Lavaca, Austin 78701. Telephone: (512) 476-6611.

**Sept. 11-Nov. 28:** "Creativity—The Human Resource," an exhibit examining how prominent American artists and scientists think and work, sponsored by Chevron to commemorate the California oil company's centennial, at the Museum of Science and History in Fort Worth. This travelling exhibit, designed by The Burdick Group in San Francisco, features the work-in-progress of such creative Americans as Jonas Salk, Jasper Johns, Linus Pauling, Merce Cunningham, Buckminster Fuller and Judy Chicago. Museum of Science and History, 1501 Montgomery, Fort Worth 76107. Telephone: (817) 732-1631.

**Sept. 28-29:** "Low-Sloped Commercial and Industrial Roofing," a seminar sponsored by the Construction Research Center at the University of Texas at Arlington, at the E. H. Hereford University Center at UT-Arlington. The program will concentrate on the built-up roof system, the component parts and their functions, and the various factors that lead to roofing problems. Registration fee for members of the Construction Research Advisory Committee is \$100, \$150 for CRC members, \$200 for non-members. Construction Research Center, Box 19347 UTA Station, Arlington 76019. Telephone: (817) 273-3701.

**Sept. 30-Oct. 3:** "The Unconstitutional Jail," a conference on designing jails that reflect the rights and needs of inmate, jailer and society alike, sponsored by the American Institute of

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# LET'S TALK BUSINESS

A continuing series on business communication issues.

## Increasing Productivity Through Information Management

The ability to increase productivity and remain competitive in the business office of the 80's will depend largely on how you manage information.

With the office consuming 40 to 50 percent of today's corporate expense dollar, nearly half the workforce deals with processing information rather than producing concrete products.

As a result, the tools of the 1800's – the typewriter, face-to-face meetings and even the telephone as we know it – are evolving into the systems which will make up the "office of the future."

Let's examine some of the ways that improvements in the management of information can begin to increase your productivity right away.

### Increase Your Competitive Edge with Electronic Systems

To increase your competitive edge, you must improve on standard methods of operation. And electronic systems can help you. Too frequently, we simply accept traditional methods of communication.

Today's electronic communications systems have many time-saving features to help both large and small businesses. Automatic Callback, Call Forwarding, Call Waiting, Call Pickup and Automatic Route Selection are just a few of the features designed to minimize time wasted on callbacks and busy signals.

But the real advantage is system flexibility. Electronic telephone sets can be individually programmed so you can assign the right combination of features to each of your employees. And, you can make feature and station changes yourself – without the assistance of telephone company personnel. More long term, as technology advances or your needs change, software packages can be added to include new capabilities.

### More Productive Meetings

Meetings eat up a large amount of managerial time –

especially when travel is involved.

While some face-to-face meetings will always be needed, in many cases, teleconferencing can help displace travel, reduce expenses and obtain immediately resolution to business problems.

Most multi-button and electronic systems have teleconferencing features for a minimum of three locations. And special telephones – as simple as an inexpensive speakerphone – can expand teleconferencing capabilities when several people are involved at a particular location.

A number of new teleconferencing products such as the high-quality GATT (Quorum\* Group Audio Teleconferencing Terminal) can be installed in conference rooms for audio teleconferences involving large groups. And the Quorum Omnidirectional Microphone and Loudspeaker can enhance the transmission quality of GATT – or the speakerphone – even further.

Picturephone Meeting Service will become available in many cities in 1982. Besides enabling meeting participants to see and talk to each other, each video teleconference room will be equipped with cameras to

display slides, charts and other graphic materials.

### A New Approach to Sales

Two components – technology and management systems, work together. And much of the technology that exists today is provided by Bell.

New telecommunications technology makes it possible to set up centers within a company to support and supplement the outside sales force. For example, a Telemarketing representative can respond to customers by using a data terminal to access preplanned questions that determine customer needs, find out shipping, billing and credit information and even make inventory adjustments.

WATS, 800 Service, automatic call distributors and data terminals are some of the ingredients needed to make a Telemarketing center work. Your Bell Account Executive can give you some help with management systems and procedures needed to actually get a Telemarketing program off the ground.

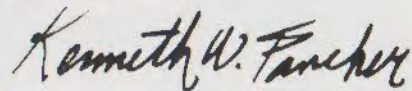
### Stay Informed

You'll have questions from time to time regarding how to better manage your planned and existing communication systems. Obviously the entire subject could not be covered here.

So here's a suggestion: Call your Southwestern Bell Account Executive (or one of the toll-free numbers below) for more in-depth information.

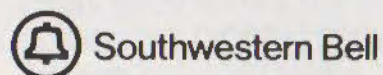
You might even be able to use an accurate evaluation of your company's present and future communication needs – at no cost to you.

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Architects, at the Galleria Plaza Hotel in Houston. The two-day conference will cover such subjects as the responsibilities of the architect and administrator, the political and legal climate for change in the justice system, a history of penal facilities, recently designed state-of-the-art jails and prisons, and new directions in correctional facility design. American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20006. Telephone: (202) 626-7300.

**Oct. 6-8:** "Grappling with Growth," annual conference of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Austin. Topics covered during the three-day enclave will include the comprehensive plan in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, what happens when a city chooses to grow or not to grow, the regulation of morality, water problems in Texas, urban-runoff and storm-water management and directing growth with utility extensions. Registration fee is \$75 for APA members, \$95 for non-members and \$25 for students and family members (\$25 extra on all fees after Sept. 1). APA State Planning Conference, Texas A&M University, Archi-

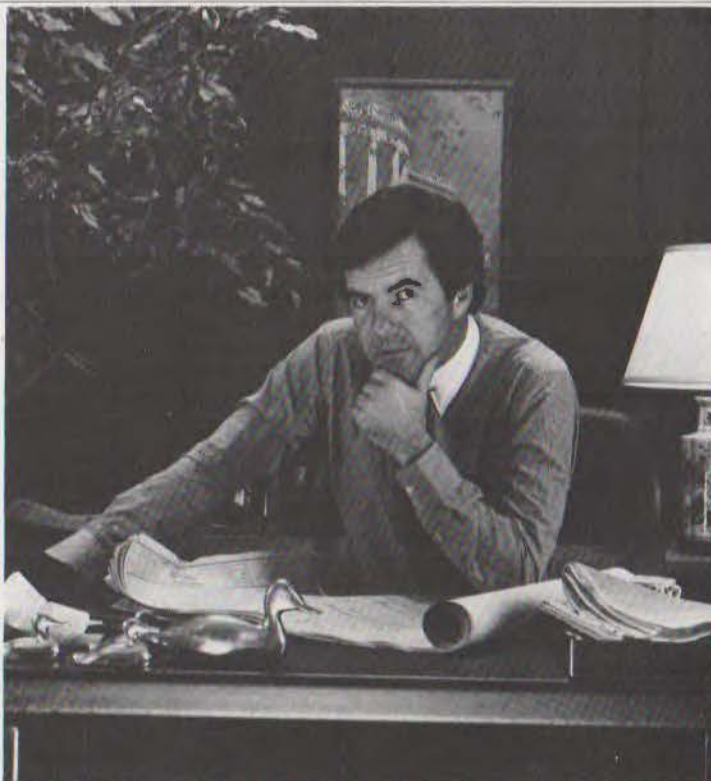
ecture Building, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, College Station 77843. Telephone: (713) 845-1046.

**Oct. 9-10:** "Courtlandt Place: A Houston Classic," a tour of one of the most architecturally distinguished neighborhoods in Houston, sponsored by the Rice Design Alliance and the Courtlandt Association. This historic inner-city Houston subdivision contains 18 houses, most of them built between 1910 and 1920. Open for the tour will be works by Houston's two great eclectic architects, John F. Staub and Birdsall P. Briscoe, as well as the only house in Texas designed by Warren and Wetmore of New York, architects of Manhattan's Grand Central Station. General admission is \$12, \$8 for RDA members, \$5 for students. Children under 12 are free. Rice Design Alliance, P.O. Box 1892, Houston 77251. Telephone: (713) 527-4876.

**Nov. 4-6:** 43rd Annual Meeting of the Texas Society of Architects, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Fort Worth. Keynote speaker will be Walter Wagner, Editor of *Architectural Record* magazine, whose address is entitled, "Communication in Architecture."

The program also will include a panel discussion on design and mini-PDPs on practice management and marketing architectural services. Registration fee is \$50 for TSA members, \$40 for associate members, and \$15 for family members (all fees go up \$15 for members and associates and \$5 for family after Oct. 15). Texas Society of Architects, 1400 Norwood Tower, Austin 78701. Telephone: (512) 478-7386.

**Nov. 9-12:** "Rehab '82: New Economic Opportunities," jointly sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission and the Texas Society of Architects, in Amarillo, Dallas, San Antonio and Houston. This one-day conference, held in four Texas cities on successive days, will cover new tax incentives for, and the intricacies of, the rehabilitation and adaptive use of historic commercial buildings. The conference will be held Nov. 9 at the Hilton Inn in Amarillo, Nov. 10 at the Plaza of the Americas in Dallas, Nov. 11 at the Marriott Hotel in San Antonio and Nov. 12 at the Shamrock Hilton Hotel in Houston. Pre-registration fee is \$50 (\$20 for students). Texas



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Historical Commission, Box 12276,  
Austin 78711. Telephone: (512)  
475-3094.

**Nov. 17-Jan. 9:** "Joseph Hoffman:  
Design Classics," an exhibition of the  
work of the Viennese designer and  
architect (1870-1956), at the Fort Worth  
Art Museum in Fort Worth. The  
exhibition will consist of approximately  
150 pieces, primarily furniture and  
decorative-arts objects, designed during  
Hoffman's most creative period, from  
1900 to 1920. Drawings, architectural  
renderings and a catalogue containing  
an essay by architecture historian  
David Gebhard will supplement the  
exhibition. The Fort Worth Art  
Museum, 1309 Montgomery St., Fort  
Worth 76107. Telephone: (817)  
738-9215.

**Jan. 18:** Opening of "James Riely  
Gordon: Texas Courthouse Architect,"  
an exhibition of Gordon's work in  
Texas between 1889 and 1904,  
sponsored by the School of Architecture  
at the University of Texas at Austin,  
at the Architecture School Library in  
Battle Hall. The exhibition will consist  
of, among other primary materials,  
Gordon's original watercolor renderings  
and measured drawings of numerous  
Texas courthouses and other public  
buildings. The University of Texas at  
Austin, School of Architecture, Austin  
78712. Telephone: (512) 471-1922.

**March 31-May 22:** "Paul Cret of  
Texas: Architectural Drawing and the  
Image of the University in the 1930s,"  
an exhibition of 120 drawings of the  
University of Texas' master plan  
designed by the noted Philadelphia  
architect, in the Archer M. Huntington  
Gallery at the Harry Ransom Center at  
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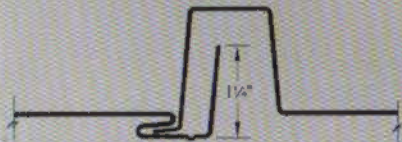
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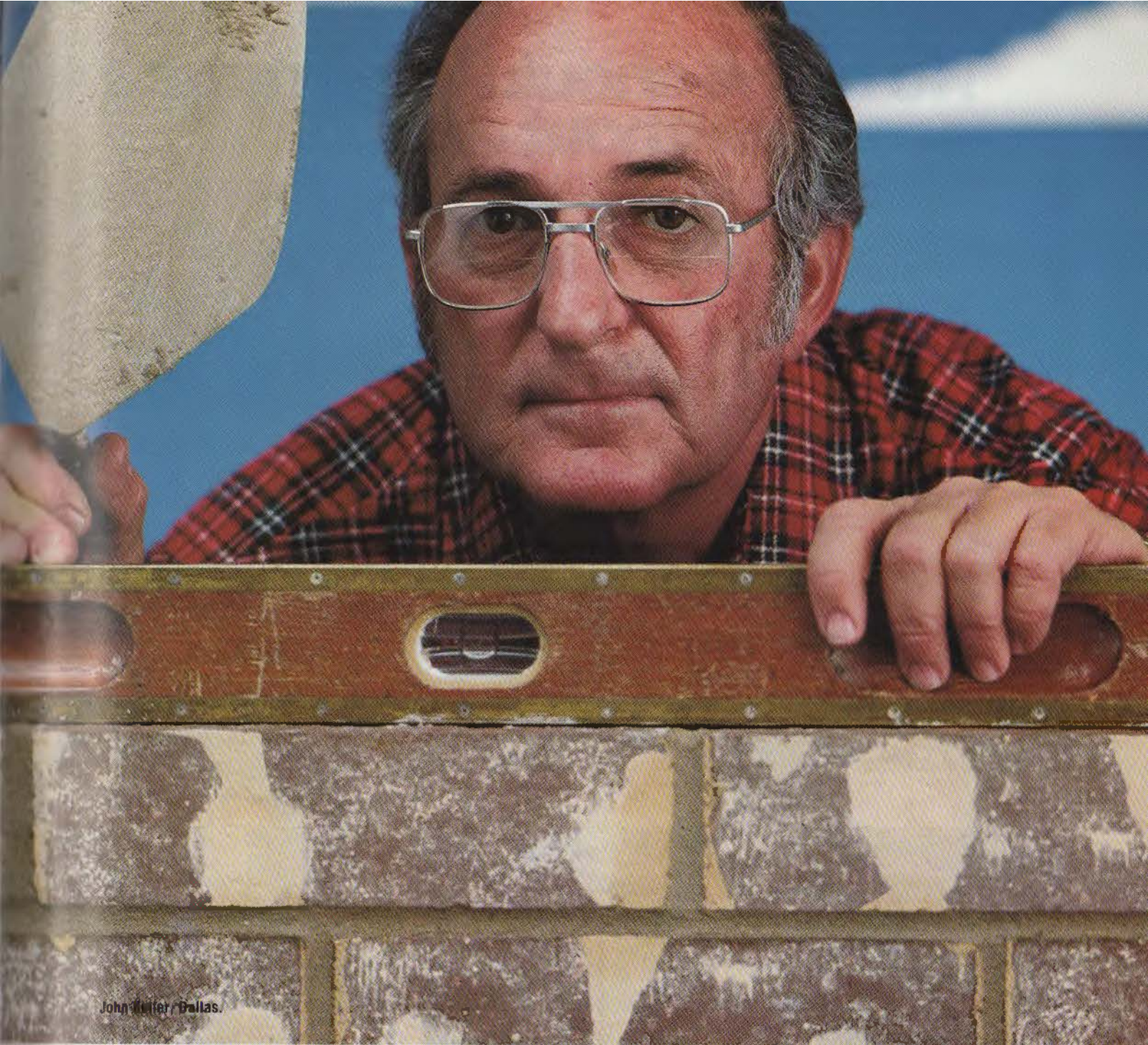
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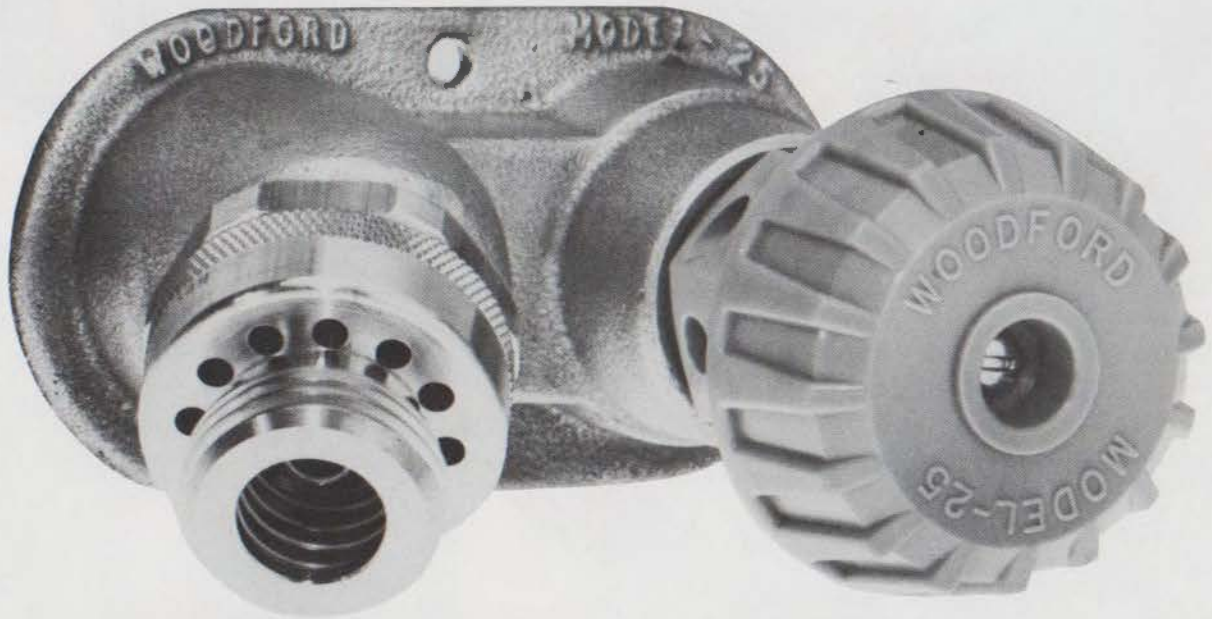
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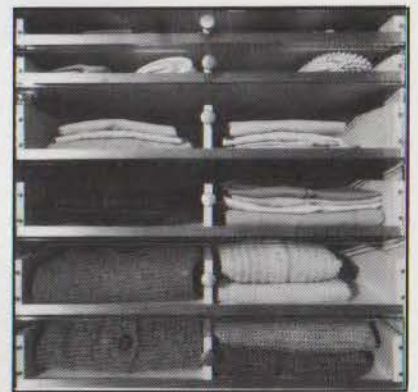
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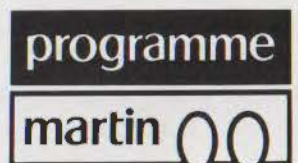
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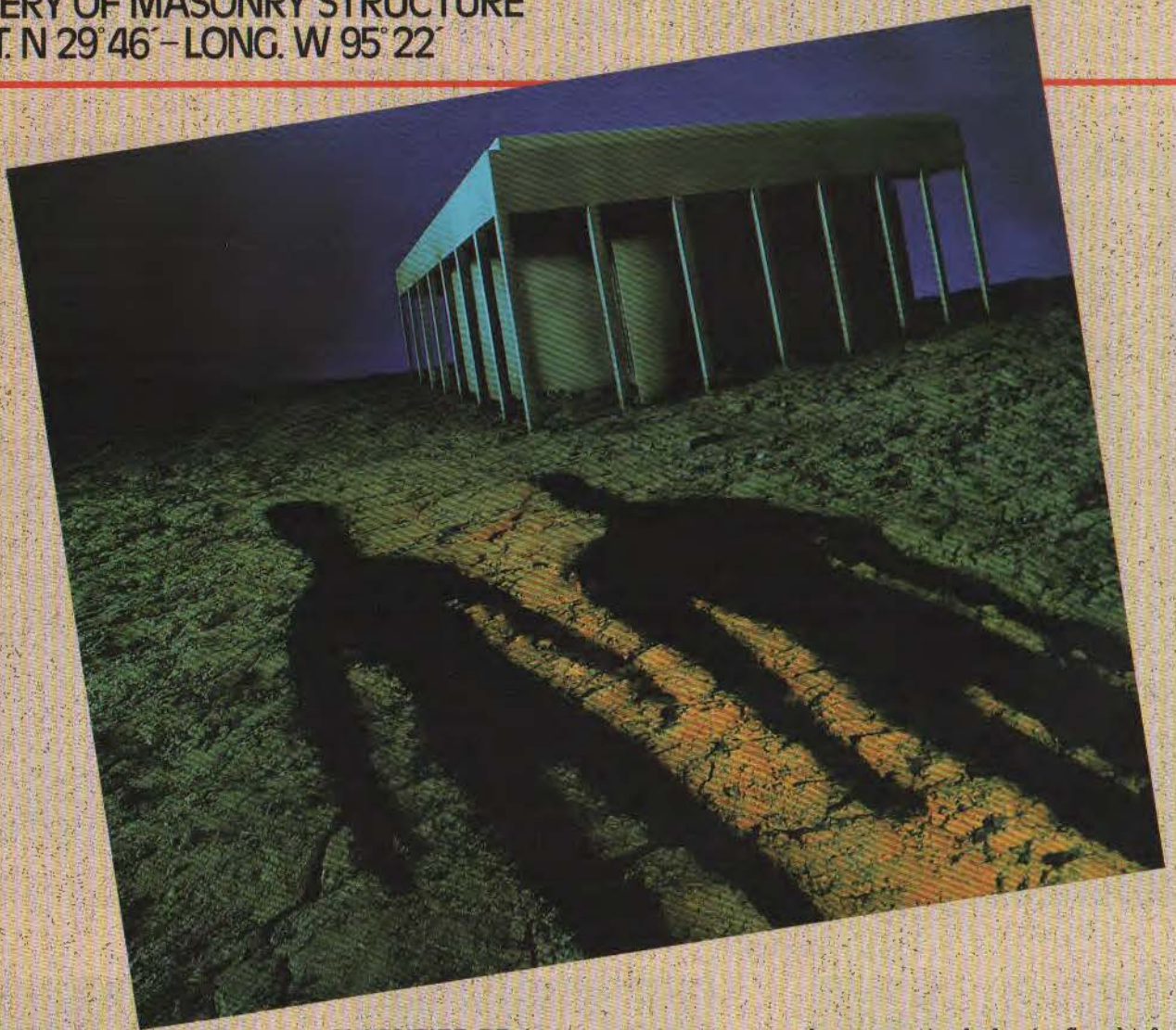
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Do you write or approve product specifications?  
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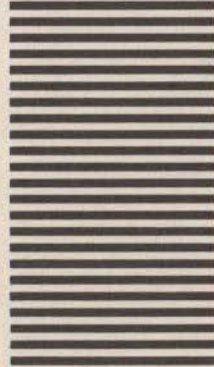


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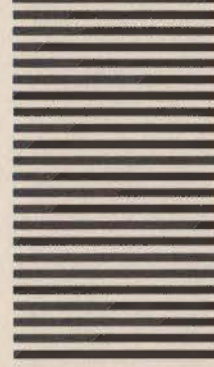


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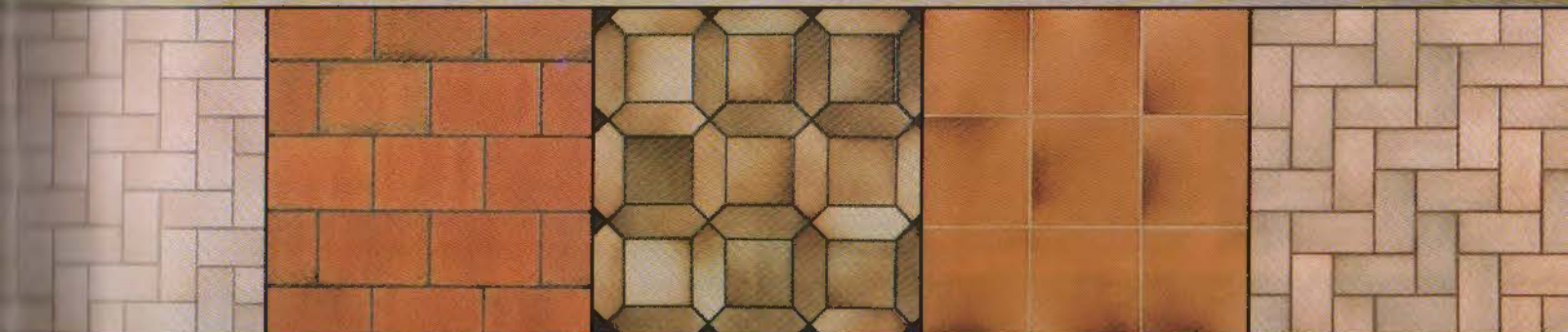
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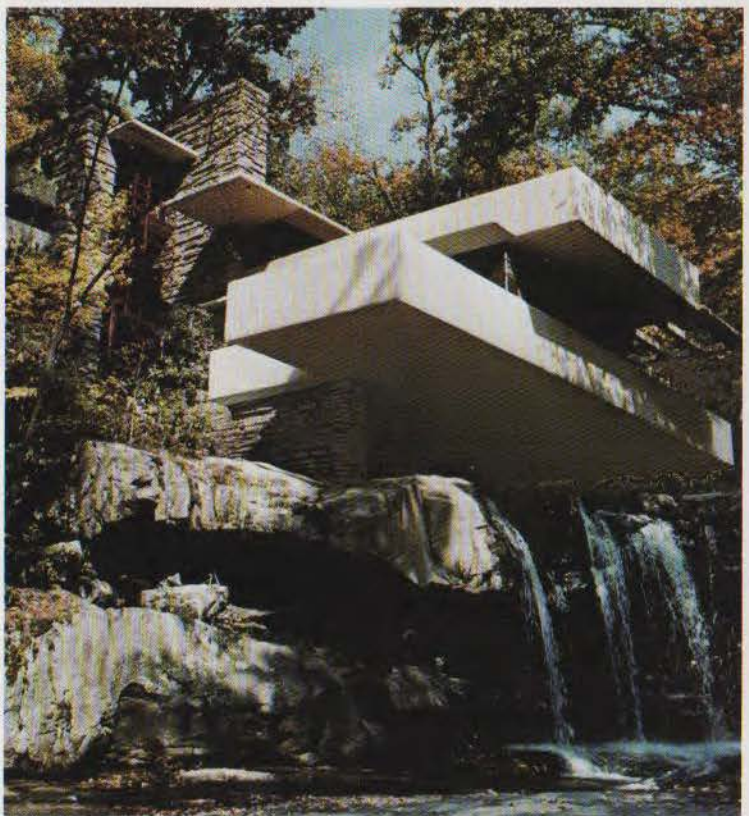
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# David Braden/Musings



## Foat Wuth, Ah Luv Yew

Songs about romantic cities turn you on. "Big D" (my oh yes), "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," "New York, New York," "Chicago, Chicago," (that tod-dlin' town), and even "San Antonio Rose" all stir up the old adrenalin. Sad to say, there is no song about Poughkeepsie, N.Y., or Fort Worth, Texas. I'm changing all that. How about: "You Can Keep Poughkeepsie, but Foat Wuth, Ah Luv Yew"?

"Cowtown" has changed; it has done gone and become an urban place. With great civic pride, Foat Wuth now features, as star attractions, the architectural contributions of the Eastern stars: Johnson, Kahn, Rudolph and JPJ. Yet, constantly overlooked in their glossary of architectural treats (now including City Center and Sundance Square) is Foat Wuth's most significant structure: Joe T. Garcia's Mexican Restaurant.

Nowhere but Texas could such a place exist, much less flourish. Joe T's sits on a dusty side street a few blocks from the stockyards, its sidewalls 15 degrees out of plumb, and its patrons lined up outside clamoring for the especialidades. Inside, the hungry aficionado must traverse the kitchen (skirting the block-house pissoir, which services the cerveza imbibers) to arrive at the main dining room. It's so functionally bad its wonderful, so ugly it's beautiful. I nominate it for a Texas Hysterical Treasure.

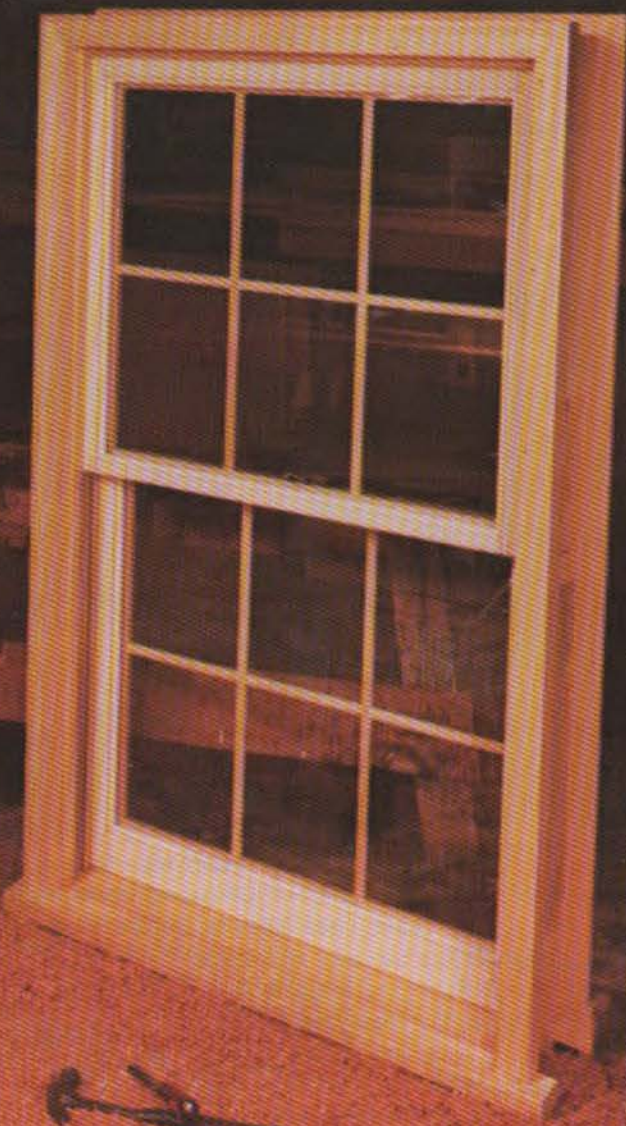
The city's second-best kept architectural secret is the design credit for Joe T's Tex-Mex Emporium. It is popularly assumed that this wonder just grew out of the ground when, in fact, it too is the brainchild of a master architect—the most Eastern star of all—Le Corbusier. You no doubt remember Corbu's only appearance on T.V. (I believe it was on the Dinah Shore Show) wherein Suzette, his third mistress, puttering in Dinah's kitchen, in a French cooking demon-

stration, accidentally dropped a chili pod in the crepes, thus inventing the enchilida. When the tasting began, Corbu, in front of 20,000,000 viewers, shouted, "La cocina es una maquina para cocinar," (the kitchen is a machine for cooking) and sketched the plan for Joe T's on the tablecloth. It is thus that great architecture is born.

The purists among you will be saddened to hear that Joe T has cloned himself. The "Son of Joe T" has been birthed in Addison, a township on the very edge of both Dallas and Oklahoma City consisting of an airport and a Restaurant Row. It is a fact that there are 17 restaurants and two bars for every registered voter in Addison. It thus becomes the only city in America whose tax base is the cheeseburger and the martini.

A Joe T clone makes about as much sense as franchising Pflugerville into a chain of small Texas towns, but I suppose it is a marvelous way to freeze the Foat Wuth establishment's excess, and feed it to the unsuspecting Sunbelt refugees who populate the environs of Addison. After all, it is the American way to grow and prosper, and it is Dallas' good fortune to have been gifted with this small portion of her western neighbor's culture.

As for a few other Foat Wuth delights, try Billy Bob's, the restored stockyards area and the complete transsexual operation on the Hotel Texas, which changed him into a lady named Hyatt. Please see and enjoy. Foat Wuth, Ah Luv Yew.



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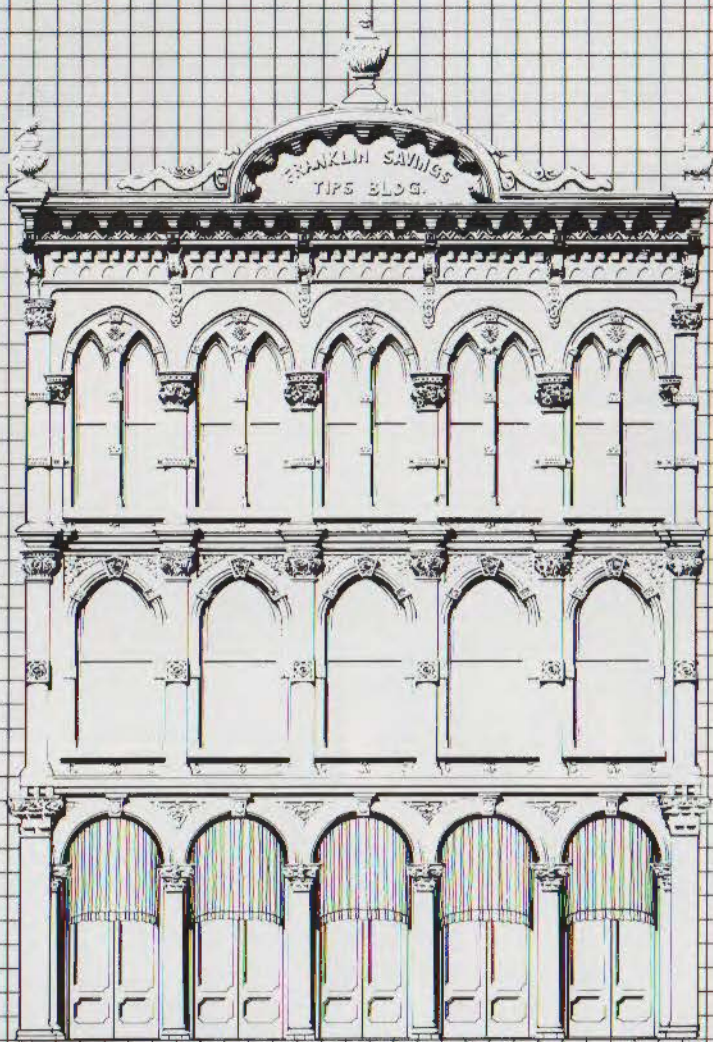
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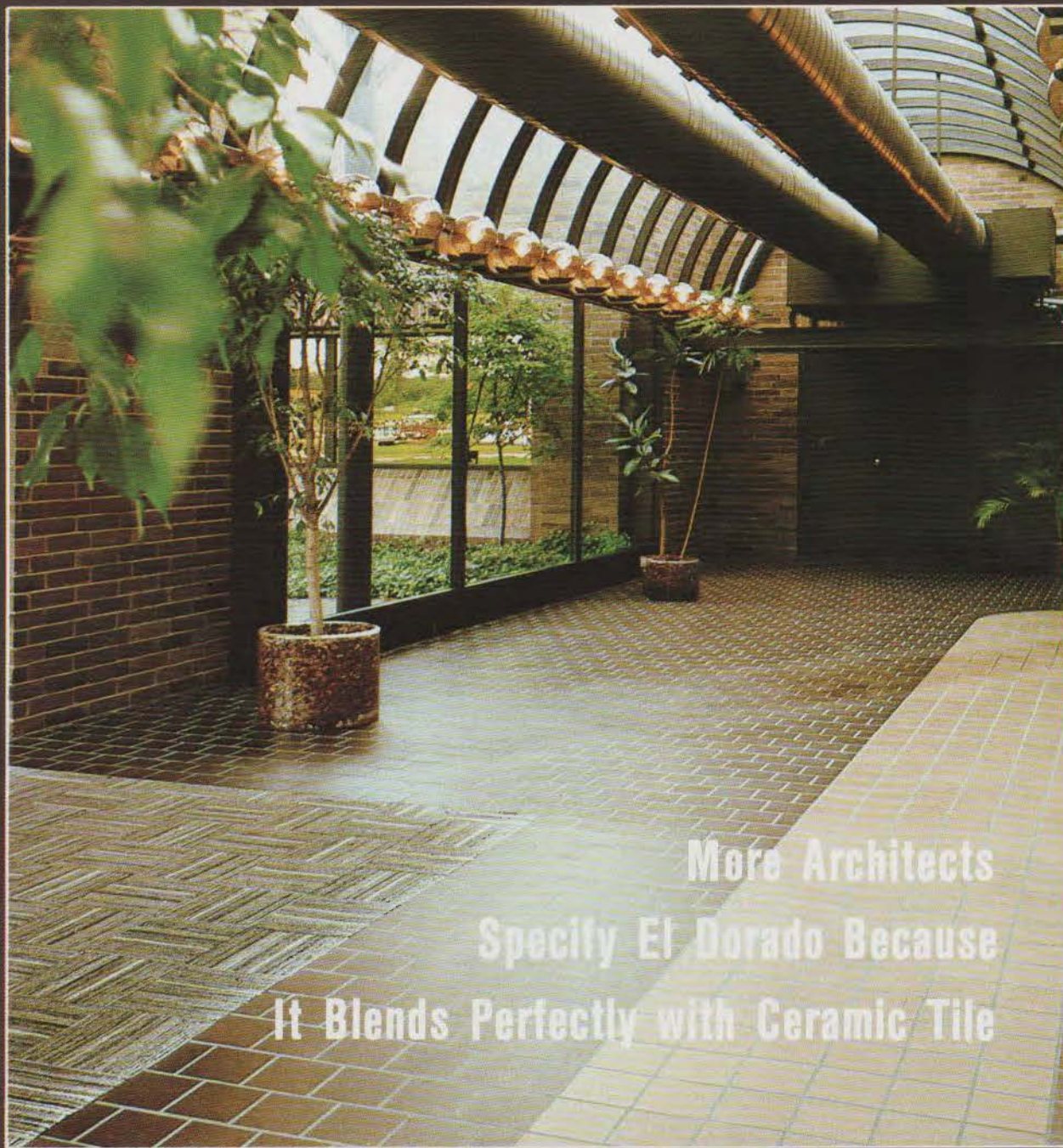




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