We dedicate this journal to
Bill Scott,
whose enthusiasm
fueled the search for the elusive.
Our teacher.
Our friend.
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Introduction

*Dimensions* is back for the third time since its inception in 1987. The publication takes its name from *Dimension*, which was initiated at the College of Architecture and Design in 1955. For 12 years it was the voice of architecture students at the University of Michigan, but in 1967 it was discontinued.

Two decades later, a group of four students in the College of Architecture and Urban Planning decided to publish a journal and used the name of the former journal as a starting point. The aim was to encourage student discussion in printed form and to make public the lively debates taking place around drafting tables, seminar rooms and jury spaces.

This year, 32 articles were submitted for publication, more than for any other issue since the magazine was reborn. Deciding what to publish was difficult, resulting in late-night discussions that were sometimes exasperating, but never dull.

When the sorting was finished, nine articles were selected. In addition, the staff of *Dimensions* conducted an interview with Mitchell Rycus and Kent Hubbell, respective department heads of Urban Planning and Architecture.

These articles delve into problems and controversies that architects and planners must face in a rapidly changing world. Concern for human problems around the globe is more than a matter of listening to the evening news; it is the source of the challenge. Volume 3 includes articles on the lack of affordable housing in Ghana, the demolition of historic districts in India and the plight of the rural homeless in the U.S.

Theoretical issues are examined as well. Students throughout the College are concerned about modernism as a philosophy of design and the search for alternatives. An article about the work of Mario Botta and an exclusive interview with Hans Hollein reflect these concerns. So too does an article about Centro Direzionale in Naples, a mega-development whose form and style may not be appropriate to the surrounding city. Other articles examine conflicting visions of the role of the architect in society and qualities of architectural experience.

We hope that students, faculty and other readers find this issue of *Dimensions* enjoyable and stimulating. Finally, we hope succeeding students at the College believe in the mission of the publication enough to keep it alive in the future.
Looking for a Home
Rural Homelessness in the United States

by
Mary Stover

There are more homeless people in the United States today than at any time since the Great Depression. While most studies and public attention have focused on “captive populations” in emergency shelters and soup kitchens located in large cities, homelessness also exists in non-metropolitan and even rural areas. Planners and planning students need to address the tragedy of rural homelessness.

Although difficult and controversial, determining the number of homeless is extremely important. The perceived magnitude of the problem affects the public’s and political decision makers’ willingness to make necessary changes in policy and provide funds for homeless and housing programs. A 1984 study conducted by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated the number of homeless nationwide to be 350,000. Housing advocates argue that the number of homeless is closer to three million and growing at a rate of 25 percent per year.

According to the 1984 HUD study, approximately 12.5 percent, or 44,000 of the homeless lived in non-metropolitan areas. An analysis of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Emergency Shelter Program (ESP) expenditures, during October 1986 through September 1987, suggests that non-metropolitan areas’ share of homelessness is even greater. Approximately four million nights of shelter provided by ESP through mass shelters, rental and mortgage assistance and motel vouchers, were provided in non-metropolitan counties. These represent 25 percent of all shelter nights provided through ESP. Further, half of the non-metropolitan shelter nights were provided in rural counties. Over three
fourths of Community Action Agencies surveyed in 1987 reported that the incidence of rural homelessness has increased in the last five years, especially among families, women and children.  

The FEMA estimates represent assistance which was provided, not the total needed or even demanded. Mass shelter is not available in most rural areas and many who need housing payment assistance may not know it is available or how to get it. Some rural homeless move to a city in search of shelter. Boston mayor Raymond Flynn argued that smaller jurisdictions provide only “Greyhound therapy” to their homeless, busing them to the large cities.  

Most of the homeless who remain in rural areas are forced to seek shelter in the homes of friends and relatives, or worse, in tents, shacks, cars, caves, along the road, or under bridges. A director of planning for a rural Community Action Agency in the Northeast gave this account of homelessness:  

A fifty-six year old wheelchair-bound man who had been living with his sister and her family in a trailer left because of lack of space. There were nine
children and three adults living in this trailer. He went to a hotel where he was able to stay until his money ran out. He was evicted from the hotel and managed to wheel himself under a bridge. I found him there and finally convinced him, after four days, that it was safe for him to come out. I used my own money to put him in a hotel until we could find him public assistance.

Many rural homeless do not find help if housing is not available. Migrant farmworker families sleep under the trees where they labored during the day. American Indian families have reconstructed teepees, not as a tribute to their ancestors, but because the supply of adequate modern housing is severely limited on reservations. These are some of the invisible rural homeless.

According to federal legislation, a homeless person is "anyone without a permanent, adequate residence, which includes individuals or families temporarily doubled up out of necessity with relatives or friends." Housing analysts typically define as inadequate those units which are classified as substandard according to HUD. Thus, in dealing with rural homelessness one must address the issue of substandard housing. Housing units are classified as substandard if they are crowded (have more people than rooms) and/or lack complete plumbing facilities (hot and cold piped water, a flush toilet, and a bathtub or shower).

Rural areas have a disproportional share of substandard housing. In 1980 approximately one quarter of the nation's population, one third of its substandard housing and more than one half of its housing units which lacked plumbing, were in rural areas. Approximately two million rural households live in substandard units.

Large pockets of substandard housing are predominantly occupied by poor blacks in the Southeast; Hispanics in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona; American Indians in South Dakota, New Mexico, and Arizona; and poor whites in the Appalachian regions of Kentucky, West Virginia and Virginia. More than one quarter of rural black households, nearly one third of rural Hispanic households and more than one fifth of American Indian and Eskimo households live in substandard housing. Although minorities are disproportionately affected, rural poverty and substandard housing are not just minority problems; over half of the 600,000 rural shelter poor, those who are both poor and occupants of substandard housing, are white.

Farmworkers are probably the most poorly housed group in this country. They also represent a large portion of the rural homeless. In 1981 the average income of farmworkers for both farm and off farm employment was only $4,299. Not only do they receive low wages, most farmworkers receive no health, disability or retirement benefits. A productive farmworker has some chance of finding and paying for housing. For elderly and disabled farmworkers, finding adequate housing is nearly impossible.

During harvest seasons, migrant farmworkers often rent housing owned by farmers or growers associations. This housing is usually inadequate and undersupplied. A study conducted by the Inter America Research Service in 1980 indicated that there was a need for approximately 800,000 additional units of migrant farmworker housing. More than 70,000 Texans—farmworkers and their families—live in third world conditions in the 500 colonias scattered across the Lower Rio
Grande Valley. These Texas Colonias are unincorporated subdivisions made up of substandard housing units. Since they were developed in unincorporated areas, the level of services in colonias has been left up to the developer/owners. According to Norberta Salinas, a southern Texas county commissioner, "There was a long standing system of friendship between elected officials and land owners that permitted people to turn a blind eye to the colonias." 19

Almost all residents of the Lower Rio Grande Valley colonias are poor Hispanics (the majority of the American farmworker population, however, is not Hispanic). Most colonia residents are American born or legal residents. In hope of the American dream of owning a home, families buy a tiny lot of land in the colonias for as little as a $100 dollar down payment and 50 dollars per month. Their annual incomes are typically below 6,000 dollars for a family of four or five people. After "mortgage" payments (which can continue indefinitely since the developer/owner often holds title to the land) there is no money left to build more than a shack with whatever materials can be found. 20

Colonias have inadequate or nonexistent water supplies, waste water treatment and road drainage. Many children in the colonias must walk through mud streets with raw sewage in them to catch a school bus. The colonias have a rate of parasitic intestinal disease at least five times that of the State of Texas as a whole and an above normal incidence of hepatitis and tuberculosis. 21 These statistics understate the problems in colonias, however, since most residents cannot afford to seek medical care. Rev. Armand Matthow, a member of Valley Interfaith, a group which is trying to improve conditions in the Lower Rio Grande Valley said, "I've had friends come and visit from New York and Chicago. They're used to seeing urban poverty. But here they can't believe they're in America." 22

Homelessness in rural as well as urban areas is primarily the result of inadequate social and economic policies. Underemployment and unemployment, falling wages, reduction in government social programs, chronic low income housing shortages and rising rents are the causes of homelessness. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, "Homelessness is simply the most extreme manifestation of contemporary poverty in America."

Funding needs to be increased for emergency shelters and services in rural areas. But these are only band-aid solutions. The only true solution to homelessness is permanent affordable housing. Rural housing starts are not keeping pace with demand while housing costs continue to rise. Housing costs paid by low income non-metropolitan households increased 64 percent from 1975 to 1983 while low income metropolitan families' housing costs increased 54 percent. 23 Meanwhile, funding for federally subsidized housing has been dramatically decreased during the Reagan administration. Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) housing programs, the only federal programs designated for rural areas, have been cut in half, from producing 169,242 units in 1979 to 78,013 units in 1988. 24

What can planners do to diminish the homelessness and near-homelessness problem in rural areas? Planners can use their status as development experts to lobby for increased funding of local, state and federal housing programs which are demonstrably needed. They can provide housing advocates with data and
technical assistance with which to demonstrate the severity of the housing crisis in communities of all sizes.

Planners can have a direct effect on the supply of adequate rural housing in the areas in which they work. They must evaluate state and regional housing, environmental and economic development policies and plans with the needs of rural citizens in mind. Regional land use planning should provide appropriate water, sewer and other service requirements and equitable zoning laws for prefabricated housing.25 Building codes should be performance based and encourage the use of a wide range of design, construction methods and materials.26 Rural construction regulations and housing standards should be revised with “maximum citizen participation, to preserve health, safety and conservation of the environment, not to carry out local economic and social exclusionary policies.”27

Planners need to become low income housing coordinators. They should be familiar with and provide the valuable networking between non-profit housing corporations, FmHA county offices, HUD, state housing finance agencies, banks and other funding sources. The causes of rural homelessness and substandard housing will not be mitigated without the coordinated efforts of housing developers, all levels of government, non-profit housing groups and governmental housing agencies. Planners have a professional responsibility to improve the quality of life for all citizens. They must recognize and take a leading role in resolving the tragic housing situation of many rural families in the United States.

Notes on Text:


4 Emergency Shelter Program funding data provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and analyzed during employment at the Housing Assistance Council, Inc., 1988. Rural here is defined as non-metropolitan counties with an urban population of fewer than 20,000.


10 Wilson, Harold. "Housing the Rural Poor: Why We Need the Farmers Home Administration," *Journal of Housing* (July/August, 1986), p. 161. Rural here is based on the U.S. Census definition and defined as open country and non-metropolitan places with fewer than 2,500 residents.

11 Lerman, p. 40. Rural here is defined as outside urbanized areas and outside places with a population of 10,000 or more (20,000 or more in non-metropolitan counties).

12 Lerman, pp.40-41.

13 Wilson, p. 161.


15 Wilson, p. 161.

16 Ibid.


19 McLemore and Tomaso, p. 23a.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid, p. 22a.

22 Ibid.


26 Ibid, p. 5.

27 Ibid.

Photos courtesy of the Housing Assistance Council, Inc., Washington D.C.
The Centro Direzionale of Naples
Ren Cen on the Mediterranean

By
Cece Helgesen

Just northwest of Naples Harbor, in the crowded downtown below Mount Vesuvius, steel and glass towers are rising from a vast, bulldozed clearing. The towers glint in the Neapolitan sunlight, their glossy surfaces a sharp contrast to the junkyards and masonry apartments across Expressway Nuovo Poggioreale. This is Kenzo Tange's Centro Direzionale di Napoli (CDN), a huge, ultra-modern city-within-a-city. More than two decades of delays and controversy have made it the most hotly debated development in the city.

Like Detroit's Renaissance Center, the CDN is a massive urban complex whose architectural style repudiates the surrounding city. The CDN, however, is much bigger than the Renaissance Center, therefore the impact on its host city could be much greater. The CDN has the potential either to lift Naples out of its apathy and stagnation, or to accentuate the city's problems and destroy its vital urban culture.

Scheduled for completion in 1992, the multi-billion dollar project contains over 260 acres of floor space, enough to house 210 football fields. It will also contain enough different activities to constitute a self-sufficient community. Included in the program are commercial and office buildings, a new city hall, three courthouses, a fire station, churches, schools and housing for 10,000 people, sports facilities, parks, "piazzas" and parking for roughly 25,000.

The plan chosen for the Centro Direzionale, like many of Tange's other projects, is modernist. It imposes a new aesthetic on a city where both modernism and multifunctionalism are an anomaly. While Tange's design features strong
geometric lines and reflecting glass mounted on continuous metal frames, most of the buildings in downtown Naples are less than ten stories high, made of natural materials, and date back to the early part of this century. Their appearance is often regarded as “unkempt” by outside standards.

And, while the CDN’s differentiated circulation system may enable the city to reduce automobile congestion, it will almost certainly deter Neapolitan pedestrians, who are used to moving through a more crowded, less authoritarian, and smaller scale environment.

Some Neapolitans are still eager about what they are calling “the new underground city that the Japanese are building.” But many are calling the project a failure. Among the critics is City Planner Gennaro Esposito, who said the CDN is “living testimony to those very problems in Naples which it was meant to eradicate: poor planning, an inappropriate transportation scheme and political corruption.”

The success of the CDN is a point of intense disagreement. But designers, citizens and policy-makers are asking: is it good to build something so vast that it supersedes the existing city? Will the CDN bring economic vitality to a decaying dis-
strict? Will it benefit the people it displaces? Will Neapolitans want to use it? The project's questionable future has its roots in a tangled history.

In 1964, city officials proposed building a new downtown business center for Naples to catalyze modernization in the over-crowded city of 3 million. For the next 11 years local politicians, corporate sponsors and members of the European Economic Community haggled over who would control the project. By 1975, the first of a series of master plans appeared. Yet it took another six years to produce agreement on a general scheme between the city and several investors, including La Generale Immobilare, La Societa di Risanamento di Napoli, Il Banco di Napoli, and Mededil, a state-subsidized holding company. The selection of a construction site followed, as well as the appointment of Kenzo Tange as chief architect.

Between 1981 and 1984, disension on the project continued. Factions within the development team fought over the scale and priority of land uses in the project. Then Mededil came under the control of Italstat, a major public finance company. Italstat became the CDN's principal investor, and the city's holdings were reduced to less than half. Meanwhile Italstat increased capital investments by almost ten-fold and the project gained momentum. Construction began again in earnest in 1985. Since that time, however, unanticipated changes in the national government coalition and political upheaval within the Common Market have delayed construction further. At present, the Centro Direzionale is scheduled to open in 1992.

The CDN's development story repeats a familiar pattern, albeit one normally found in the Third World, where large design-bonanza projects are most commonplace. The scenario features city administrators who seize on a futuristic design in hopes of seeing their city depart radically from existing patterns of movement, congregation, and consumption. This makes the development a poor candidate for integration into its host city's life.

Italy's national government and proponents in Naples believe the CDN will transform Naples' image as a city hampered by inefficiency, crime, unemployment, regional separatism, and pessimism about government's ability to bring positive change. They have pinned their hopes on a shiny new downtown, like Mayor Coleman Young and others who believed the Renaissance Center would bring about an urban rebirth in Detroit. Like the Renaissance Center, the CDN is supposed to stimulate a sluggish urban economy and restore the city to its historic role as a major port and center of commerce.

Politically and socially, of course, Naples is a world apart from Detroit. Notwithstanding the controlling interests and corruption of the mafia, or the camorra as it is known there, the mayor in Naples is weak and the City Council is infinitely more divided than its American counterpart; it must accommodate six political parties. A consensus among Christian Democrats, Socialists, Fascists, Libertarians, Communists and Republicans is rare, and political favors outweigh the importance of one's responsibility to constituents even more than in the United States. Furthermore, the Italian government appoints top management in the country's largest corporations, according to political strength (most of Italy's large firms are publicly or semi-publicly owned banks and holding companies). Thus, business elites are often party bureaucrats. 2
This preponderance of the Italian bureaucracy in real estate and the existence of a powerful political machine at all levels of government, combined with a flourishing black market and the daunting influence of the camorra in the neighborhoods, has given Neapolitan citizens a testy indifference to authority.

Their indifference is realized in many ways. The most evident is a flagrant disregard of many civic regulations. Black market roadstands, for instance, exist within yards of legitimate stores selling identical merchandise. Litter and noise ordinances, traffic lights, and parking regulations are routinely disregarded. Operating licenses and zoning laws are ignored and in some cases unheard of, particularly by small businesses and artisans. And, in the neighborhood sidelong selling contraband cigarettes, gasoline and camera equipment obtained from NATO ships, open advertising is the rule.
Just as many citizens ignore the law, government ignores the needs of the people. City planners allowed construction of a heavy industrial zone in the heart of Naples, next to two of the city's most densely populated neighborhoods, Barra and San Giovanni. These areas face the constant threat of pollution and industrial accidents from adjacent oil refineries and steel plants (in 1980, one of the refineries exploded at 4:00 a.m. Several people were killed and a passing subway train was destroyed). Overcrowding has left the city with few parks, road and sewer systems have been stretched to their limits due to disrepair, and the gulf waters, which once made Naples a prime tourist location, have been unusable for years, due to industrial and domestic contamination. Ironically, neither swimming nor fishing are prohibited by the city. Even the cheap emergency shelters constructed to house the victims of the 1981 earthquake remain today as viable dwellings.

Such mutual tolerance and neglect on the part of both the government and its citizens is actually unique in Italy. As an old Mediterranean port and long-time foreign occupied territory, Naples has historically been insulated from the rest of Italy. When a federal government formed in 1870, Neapolitans had already developed a distinct urban culture. This culture is a point of pride for most Neapolitans and survives today in the city's separate dialect, its preference for fast-paced, chaotic street life, and its mistrust of government.

Crowded living conditions, and the blood ties which most of the populace shares, reinforce this cultural identity, which, because it is rooted in the past, poses an obstacle to the success of any would-be large-scale modern development. As if this weren't enough, the city, because of its geographical location, is negatively predisposed toward sweeping change. In the past, change has been more closely associated with foreign invasions, earthquakes, and eruptions by Vesuvius, than with urban planning decisions.

Interestingly enough, Michele Mattei, one of the principal architects on the team of Mededil-Italstat, had this to say about the appointment of Kenzo Tange as chief designer:

"Of course there are many experienced professional people in Italy. But above all we needed an international name with a certain charisma, someone who would be above all factional infighting and calm the political diatribes that were going on. More than a choice of an architectural kind, I think, it was a strategy choice, a desire to resolve political problems and move on with the project, that led us to choose Kenzo Tange."³

Even more enlightening, perhaps, is a quote from Kenzo Tange himself, which appeared in the promotional brochure on the Centro Direzionale given out at Italstat headquarters:

"I already admired and loved Naples for its incomparable beauty and vitality. Now that I have become familiar with its numerous and serious problems of urban planning and development, I love it even more. It was this sincere and impassioned regard for the city that guided me in my design plan for the Centro Direzionale."⁴

One has to wonder if Kenzo Tange, at this point, could realize the irony and paternalistic tone of his statement. Tange's plan is in fact a classic example of a preconceived, abstract design being imposed upon an existing urban fabric. This arrogance is surprising, in light of his avowed love.
for Neapolitan tradition. It also contradicts the 1981 master plan for a new business center for Naples, which stated as its goal the effort "to restore the historic center and to make viable its original functions."5

The wording of this goal conveys the intention of leaving intact as much as possible of the city that was, in order to create the city that could be. But since, in the chief developer’s own words, the basis of the design choice was mainly political, a plan was implemented which chose to disregard the historic city, overlook its already vital (if unproductive) downtown, and start again from ground zero. Through its presumption about design values, the CDN pays no homage whatsoever to the city of Naples.

Yet the inappropriateness of the CDN design scheme cannot be blamed entirely on politics. If the experiences of Detroit’s Renaissance Center and other large-scale, modernistic developments contain any message, it is that non-contextual design decisions often grow out of twin beliefs (products of the insecurity that comes with fiscal despair) that radical physical change is needed to remedy problems which are mainly economic, and that foreigners and other “outside specialists” should be chosen to solve local planning problems. In the process, important buildings are often lost, residents can be displaced, the city may go deeply into debt, and the populace (who may or may not have been the development’s intended user) can become alienated from its own downtown.

In the end, real satisfaction is often had only by those special outsiders, such as Kenzo Tange, who, at no small cost to the city, sincerely pledge its administrators their love and respect, and then promptly take its citizens for a ride.

Notes on Text:
1 Gennaro Esposito, Commune di Napoli, Sezione Pianificazione Urbana, Naples, Italy.
3 Prof. Michele Mattei, Architect for Ufficiostile magazine (January, 1987).
4 Kenzo Tange, Centro Direzionale di Napoli brochure for Mededil-IRI Italstat, Societa Edilizia Mediterranea S.P.A.
Sanjay Dahr is in the final year of the Master of Urban Planning program at the University of Michigan. Dahrr, a native of India and holds an undergraduate degree in architecture.

Charles Correa, an internationally renowned architect from India, has a favorite story he tells:

*During the sixties due to a voluminous influx of hippies from the West into India there was a considerable resentment amongst the Indian elite, who thought that hippies were bringing with them all the ills of Western society. To an Indian elite in a Mercedes Benz, Indian poverty was not a cause of concern or resentment, but the Western hippie was, because he conveyed a symbolic message: “I’m coming from where you are going, and it’s not worth it.” To which the elite, as a spokesman of a spiritual, non materialistic society, had a retort: “I’m coming from where you are going, and it’s not worth it.”*

This story is a graphic illustration of prevailing thought among people in both the West and the Third World. It also illustrates differing attitudes toward historic preservation in the East and the West. The West, primarily America, has realized the folly of the era of Urban Renewal and reconstruction, which led to destruction of many historic buildings and districts. Attempts to correct this folly have resulted in increasingly prevalent preservation and adaptive re-use movements. The developing world on the other hand, in its attempts to modernize, is simply repeating the Western folly. Priceless architectural heritage is constantly
bulldozed, making way for modernistic structures to symbolize development. The folly of imitating the West is not restricted to architecture, for the natural environment too has a similar fate. Present day Third World social thinking parallels the United States' and more recently Japan's, in their eras of reconstruction. The maturity and thought processes of societies are often identical between different cultures, in comparable stages of the development process. It also indicates an important lesson: one does not necessarily learn from the experience of others.

Throughout the Third World today, the theme of development places stress on "modernization." Developing countries view modernization as synonymous with Westernization, and as a result the United States is accorded the status of a role model that must be emulated. In pursuit of the ideal of Westernization, sprawling industrial complexes, airports, railroad terminals, highways, and multi-story buildings have become icons or symbols of "development" in the Third World. All governmental activity is geared to the creation of an environment that visibly tries to imitate the West. Architecture, as an indicator of the society in which it exists, is most heavily influenced in this drive toward Westernization. In order to label the city as "modern," the services of famous international architects are often undertaken at exorbitant cost, with results that are often inappropriate to the social, architectural and climatic context. Critics have attacked the work of Le Corbusier in Chandigarh and Louis Kahn in Dacca as the realization of willful mannerisms amidst oceans of poverty; yet modernism is still looked upon as the ideal architecture. The old architecture in contrast is viewed as a burden from the past to be discarded.

Why is it so? Why is modernism so popular in developing countries? To understand why, and to understand attitudes toward historic preservation in the Third World, it is important to understand historical influences that motivate the current thinking.

First, in a developing country like India, for example, history has been replete with foreign domination ever since Alexander invaded in 326 B.C. India has a history of oppression by the Turks, the Mughals, and finally the British, who acceded to Indian independence in 1947. Although buildings from almost all these eras still exist, they serve as symbols of oppression and domination to a segment among the diverse religious or ethnic groups of the population. Modern style in that context, because of its newness and consequent "neutrality" assumes a unifying role. That is one reason for its popularity. This viewpoint is in stark contrast to the U.S., where many older buildings are seen as assets because they instill patriotism and are hence worthy of being preserved. In the Third World, the concept of selecting older buildings as an educational setting for the general public does not hold to the degree it does in the U.S., because the associations that the older buildings convey are often negative.

Second, the perception of "old" in a Third World context is radically different from the American definition. In the Developing World, with its ancient cultures, old often means much more than three to five centuries. The concept of old is often debatable and evades consensus. Because of this lack of definition of what qualifies as "old," the criterion of architectural or symbolic quality is most often used to prevent demolition. The problem is
that while selected buildings of outstanding quality are saved, vast urban districts filled with commonplace but noteworthy buildings are being demolished without protest.

The third reason for the popularity of modernism is poverty. Old buildings that have fallen into dilapidation or decay due to neglect or abandonment, are not protected or restored. They are stripped apart by the poor for fuel, or for building materials used to patch or construct makeshift dwellings in burgeoning shantytowns. The historical significance and preservation of older urban districts is irrelevant for the poor in comparison with their need for food, clothing, and shelter. If, as is true in many Indian cities, 70 percent of the people live below the poverty line, historic preservation is a luxury they cannot afford even to contemplate. Preservation thus, is a concern of the elite, who in turn, are concerned only with exceptional architecture. This elitism is often reflected in the monuments developing countries seek to preserve. Thus India has the Taj Mahal; Cambodia, the Angkor Vat; and Indonesia, the Borobodur Temple.

Unfortunately, tourism is the only economic reason elites can use to justify saving historic structures in the Third World. Tourism also encourages elitism in architecture, because significant buildings are classified according to what tourists like rather than what is historically relevant in a broader sense.

The role governments often take is to set up a Department of Archaeology, which usually has a highly trained academic staff to identify and conserve the "elite" buildings. Energy is mostly directed towards preserving these buildings, and very rarely does one come across a long-term overall plan of action for expanding the definition of what should be preserved. It should be borne in mind, however, that one cannot and must not blame the governments of these countries for their apparent obliviousness towards historic preservation. Their energies, and priorities are concentrated elsewhere, primarily in meeting basic needs for the survival of the population.

Governments simply cannot afford to allocate funds for activities such as preservation. Lack of funds also leads to conserving the top bracket of tourist attracting buildings which again adds to elitism. International agencies like UNESCO do help with financing and expert advice, but the total impact of such measures is very limited and occasional.

One can, however, and must blame architects for having failed to educate the general population about the sensibility of vernacular styles and their advantages. Architects have instead fostered elitism by designing structures that elude the sensibilities of the common man, in terms of aesthetics, functionalism, and affordability. At the root of this ideological attitude towards architecture lies an important fact: The current generation of Third World architects, during their formative years, were very directly influenced by modernism in their own backyards. The influence of Corbusier in Chandigarh, Doxiadis in Islamabad, and Kahn in Dacca, has been phenomenal. They set the standards to be emulated, thus causing native architects to continue designing on similar principles without verifying the validity and relevance of the style. For example in Chandigarh's Capitol complex buildings, Corbusier's "brise
soleil," or sun breakers, were designed to keep the direct afternoon sun off the face of curtain wall glazing and to keep the interior cool. In reality they became dust catching, pigeon infested fire hazards, which gathered heat all day long and radiated it back into the building in the evenings. Such Corbusian contrivances became hallmarks of the structures which Indian architects, primarily B. V. Doshi and Shivnath Prasad subsequently designed.

The results of this preoccupation with modernism are visible to any casual observer. There is a graphic dualism in the architectural form and content of Third World cities. Typically, the historic old section of the city, often in varying stages of decay, has streets that are narrow, flanked on both sides by congested agglomeration of two to three story buildings. The buildings often follow the natural topography and generally stand alongside a river. The second section or the new part of the town generally lies in the outskirts. It is often “planned,” with bylaws accommodating modern design standards, amenities, elaborate sanitation facilities, wide roads, parks and open spaces. To an outsider, the old section might appear abhorrent. But it is vibrant, thriving with activity, full of life and people at all times. In contrast, the new section, for all its modernist planning, is devoid of vitality. Yet the new section is seen as desirable because of its upper class associations. There is a considerable migration of people from the old to new, because of this aspect. Therefore the buildings in the old section are abandoned and allowed to decay. The architects, by following and encouraging “modern” standards are acting as catalysts in this process.

Imitating Western style modernism or urban renewal in the Third World is especially foolish because of climate. In the vernacular style, the narrow streets in the warm tropical sun were always shaded and permitted activity during the day. The houses stacked next to each other often had one exterior wall, with high ceilings and tiled roof, which created cool interiors. Buildings through their very form and materials, created climatic controls. In stark contrasts, the modern houses are made from reinforced concrete with setbacks and green spaces that make them almost completely dependent on energy to make them livable. Energy in developing countries is not as plentiful or cheap as it is in the West. A continuous supply is not guaranteed. It is being proven everyday that a preoccupation with modernism lacks the reality of people and culture, and a stage will come when the people’s attitude towards it will be similar to what exists in the West today. And then it will be as it was in the West; too late.
Traditional vernacular structures which embody design wisdom accumulated over centuries have been wiped out in just 40 years of modernist urban renewal. Traditional building trades, which include skilled artisans, for whom building is a familial occupation passed generationally, have slowly withered away like the buildings they once built. Those who remain, do not use their talents, which remain untapped, due to a lack of initiative, direction, and usefulness.

The efforts of historic preservationists to awaken people to the architectural treasures that exist in the Third World involves a task of phenomenal magnitude. In contrast to America, where historic preservation was a popular movement initiated by the people, in the Third World, historic preservation must begin with the education of the architectural profession. From there, diffusion into the general population will take place. This method of diffusion would be similar to the spread of modernism, i.e. from the profession itself. The fact that modernism was able to usurp historic architecture in India in just four decades, because of its acceptance among professional architects, illustrates their importance in the entire process. If historic preservation were to gain similar acceptance among the profession, perhaps its diffusion could be as widespread and powerful as that of modernism. In essence, the values and principles of the time tested vernacular architecture, would have to be translated into modern contexts and used to design the new structures. Use of vernacular materials in contemporary designs would have to be encouraged. Architects have to recognize that there exists a domain beyond the upper and middle class clients, where the architect’s expertise is crucially needed and the environment challenging. It is when the people see the products of these efforts, that the diffusion of the concept of historic preservation will effectively take place; then and only then, will people recognize the historic treasures that are in their possession, and as a consequence respect them. If not, the precedents are there for all to see.
Inadequacies in Housing
A Close Look at the Lack of Affordable Living Spaces in Ghana

by
George Intsiful

Human settlements are places of organized human activity. These organized spaces are the basic and necessary precondition for all social and economic development. Human settlements in Ghana, however, do not foster development due to the Ghanaian view of housing units as merely physical structures, and not as organizers of human activity.

Directly or indirectly, the government of Ghana has played a leading role in promoting this view. The result is a vicious circle of inadequate housing which impinges on individuals, families and communities; which further aggravates poverty, social ills, alienation, sanitary problems and untapped economic potential among others; which is itself attributable to the lack of participation by those housed, and this finally has resulted in disrespect for the existing building regulations and code of practice.

For the purpose of this paper, adequate housing is defined as a housing environment which provides shelter from the elements, storage for one’s property and simultaneously enables residents to participate in social, cultural, economic and political activities which facilitate sustainable economic development. The concept therefore implies that residents should be able to carry out activities in this environment which will enable them to generate sufficient income to support themselves, their families, and their family businesses.
As in many developing countries, Ghana experienced a significant increase in its national population over the last two decades. In 1970, the population was estimated at 8.6 million people but this figure had jumped to 12.4 million by 1985. ¹ The annual population growth rate is about 2.7 per annum. ² Translated into housing terms, the continuous population growth in Ghana will compound an already explosive situation. A 1975 study by Ghana’s Building and Road Research Institute (BRRI) stated that “shelter is one of man’s basic necessities, and within the next two and a half decades, Ghana will be faced with the problem of providing shelter for over 5.3 million new inhabitants if the current rate of population growth prevails.” ³ Fourteen years later, in 1989, the situation seems to have grown worse.

The most significant population growth, however, has been in urban centers. As a response to this threat, the central government in Ghana has joined forces with the private sector to develop housing for the population. Thus, two forms of housing development in Ghana have resulted; private and public.

Private housing development on a large scale or commercial housing basis is non-existent in Ghana. Thus, the acquisition and registration of land, the raising of capital for the housing project, and the hiring of contractors and completion of the development process, are all undertaken by the individual. Sometimes, relations pool their resources together to develop housing units; bank loans are another source of capital.

Public housing development is carried out by public agencies. Public funds are used to acquire the land for the development which is undertaken by public corporations. Public housing agencies in Ghana have specialists such as architects, engineers, urban planners and quantity surveyors. Unlike what pertains in the western world, especially in the United States, public housing in Ghana is not for the poor, underprivileged and economically disadvantaged groups. Rather, public housing units are of the highest quality; the highest possible standards and construction techniques are used. As a result, low income groups cannot afford public housing units which in turn end up being purchased by middle and upper income groups.

Consequently, even though the aim of public housing agencies is to provide housing for as many Ghanaians as possible, their housing units can only be afforded by a small segment of the community.

Private housing development in Ghana can be divided into three types: the traditional or indigenous sector, the tenement sector, and the high cost (nuclear family) sector. Public housing, however, is mostly one-story, nuclear family housing.

In traditional housing, indigenous building materials are mostly used. Thus, across the length and breadth of Ghana, traditional sector housing has walls in earth (sometimes reinforced with timber members) and roofs in either thatch, bamboos, or earth. In more recent times, many houses have been roofed with corrugated metal. The form of the housing unit is the same as those handed down from generation to generation.

Throughout Ghana, therefore, traditional housing is synonymous with the courtyard house, with rooms surrounding the courtyard and opening on to it.

Tenement housing is largely found in the urban centers. It can be described as a direct response to the
need for housing the large urban population. The tenement house has the same form as the courtyard house. The main difference, however, is that the same floor plan is repeated for three to five stories. Another major difference is that tenement houses are constructed in reinforced concrete.

High cost housing is found in the exclusive sections of urban centers which used to be neighborhoods for expatriate civil servants. Presently, these neighborhoods provide housing for the top civil servants, businessmen and women, and professionals. Housing units here are generally for the nuclear family and are developed according to very high standards bequeathed to the nation by the former colonial power, Great Britain. The housing units rarely rise above two stories and the planning laws demand that the sleeping rooms be located on the second level.

To assess the housing situation in Ghana the Department of Architecture in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at the University of Science and Technology (UST) in Kumasi, Ghana conducted field studies between 1972 and 1982. During this period, I participated in these studies in the neighborhoods of Jinyase, Ayija, Bomso, and Ayeduase all under the jurisdiction of the Kumasi City Council. Subsequent field studies took me to the other nine administrative regions of Ghana.

The researchers made measured drawings of buildings, interviewed people using structured questionnaires, and also undertook informal interviews and discussions about the housing environment.

A second segment of the field studies relate specifically to Ayija Township (AT) and the Asawasi Housing Estate (AHE). These settlements in Kumasi, respectively, are examples of private and public housing development. Selected for the more recent field studies between April and May in 1987, they had been the subjects of previous studies in 1970 and 1975. An attempt was made to establish whether housing issues identified during those studies still existed. Additionally, these settlements were selected due to the wide income of the residents.

The main objectives of the field studies were:

1). To identify the issues which have prevented a holistic approach towards housing development in Ghana; to establish the values attributed to housing by residents of the two settlements; and to establish the reasons why residents have no control and do not participate in, the housing development process.

2). To recommend policies to remedy the situation.

The field studies undertaken between 1972 and 1982 revealed such housing problems as overcrowding, the lack of basic amenities such as toilets and bathrooms in each unit, the inability of local residents to undertake economic activities to sustain themselves and their families because of the existing building regulations, and exorbitant rents charged for housing units. Additionally, there were not enough playgrounds and schools for children in various neighborhoods; and several facilities in housing units, such as kitchens and courtyards, were shared by residents.

The 1987 research confirmed the existence of inadequate housing in the two settlements studied. Many of the same problems revealed in the earlier studies still existed. It was further established that the role of the central government, manifested through the
existing, excessively stringent building rules and regulations, the high cost of land for development, the absence of an affordable financial system for home ownership, and the view of both technical experts and politicians of housing as only physical structures, has contributed to the present inadequate housing conditions in Ghana. Other issues included the scarcity of building materials, controversial rent control legislation and unnecessary government interference in the housing sector.

In order to correct these problems, housing development in Ghana must be seen from a holistic viewpoint. Therefore, housing should be more than just physical spaces for sleeping or storing one’s property.

The values of residents must be taken into consideration in the development of settlements in Ghana. This calls for a review of the existing building regulations which were introduced by the British colonial administration (but which have not been revised since). Additionally, there is the need to enable residents or users to both participate in the housing development process and to control their housing environment. For example, even though the field studies established that about 40% of the housing is provided by the traditional sector, this sector is not officially recognized by the planning authorities and such housing is classified “illegal development.”

Rent control legislation has been used in the past to regulate the activities of landlords and simultaneously protect tenants. The field studies, however, established that rent control, particularly the 1982 Rent Law which stipulated rents not only for various room sizes but also building materials used, has contributed to the present inadequate housing environment by scaring investors away from the housing sector. Many investors now are only interested in activities which they feel will not attract the attention of government and will bring them quick returns. Furthermore, the field studies established that many residents were not satisfied with the present composition of the Rent Control Boards. It is therefore recommended that members of the boards be elected as part of local government elections.

There is also the need for revision and/or relaxation of the existing building standards in Ghana. As has been noted above, the present standards were imported in their entirety from Great Britain during colonial rule. They do not take into account the socioeconomic and cultural practices of the local population. Since the same institutions charged with maintaining such standards in Great Britain may not exist in Ghana, it is only logical to suggest that these standards be revised to reflect the reality in the country. For example, the regulation that buildings in urban centers should only be in certain specified materials such as reinforced concrete, sandcrete blocks, etc., is not realistic. This is because such materials are imported and therefore are almost always in short supply, thus delaying housing development and escalating construction costs.

Furthermore, there is the need to recognize the role of self-help housing in the provision of housing in Ghana. Charles Abrams (1964) had noted that during the 1950’s:

"virtually all building in the rural areas (80%) was accomplished by self-help. Though there was room for improvement in village layouts, in drainage and water..."
supply, in foundations, cattle pounds, and grain-storage facilities, almost everyone in the rural sections was a builder of a sort. Labor was divided between the men and women: the men put up the walls and roofs, and the women rendered (plastered) the walls and finished the floors.5

This situation still prevails in Ghana and the recognition and acceptance of community-based or self-help housing development can only help the country move towards an adequate housing environment as local solutions will be found for local problems. The modern version of self-help housing could include concepts such as the sites-and-services approach in which serviced plots of land are sold to residents who then develop the neighborhood at their own pace and with their own funds and the sweat equity system in which residents or intended beneficiaries contribute their manual labor in exchange for the financial means which they may lack.

Human activities take place in organized spaces which reflect on the welfare of residents. Therefore, housing should no longer be seen as merely physical structure but rather in a holistic vein. This means a recognition that the housing environment includes more than spaces for sleeping and storing one's property. The values of users must be taken into consideration in the design of housing and simultaneously, users must be allowed to participate and even control their housing environment.

Notes on Text:
Architecture Without Clients
Designing Environments that Empower

By
James Chaffers

There is an underlying and persistent notion within prevailing paradigms of architectural education and professional practice that great masses of people are not competent to make responsible judgements about their environment. This notion of widespread environmental illiteracy now enjoys considerable professional promotion and has become central to the maintenance of mainstream architectural practice. By promoting a view of mass ignorance "out there," and suggesting that professional architects are the experts most qualified to alleviate such "human misfortune," we have sought to create a market niche for ourselves as the indispensable leaders of an indispensable "human servicing" profession.

The concept of incompetent masses needing to be "serviced" by design "professionals," lies at the center of an emerging polemic:

ARCHITECT AS MANAGER versus ARCHITECT AS STEWARD.

At one pole, the architect is perceived to be an independently enlightened force (somehow, outside and immune from life's evolutionary struggles), anticipating and orchestrating appropriate environmental change for others. Emphasis here is on the management or "business" of architecture. Persons to be served are viewed either as receptive "clients" (those who provide direct financial renumeration for our ideas) or as passive "users" (those who are expected to participate in the design and building of their environment in essentially, after-the-fact ways). At this pole, the product, i.e., the "building" to be designed and delivered, is the "bottom line."
At another pole, the architect is seen as being an integral part of a larger design partnership, i.e., part of an enriching infrastructure of shared insight and enthusiasm wherein the architect's main task is to work toward evolving appropriate human-environmental change with others. Within this lay-professional paradigm, "people are the measure," and persons to be served are creatively engaged as co-equal participants throughout the design/build process—"codesigners" sharing competences and aspirations in ways that are mutually rewarding and enlightening.

Flowing from the above polemic, a central question emerges: Is the primary task of the design professional to provide static forms to "fit" an evolved context "for" a client of passive spectators or is our primary task one of consciously considering (with others) what human transformations might we seek to achieve in our continuing creation of new environmental forms?

Reflecting on the above question, design professionals are now challenged to provide a kind and quality of inspiration that has heretofore not been seen as falling within our professional purview. Specifically, we are challenged with the possibility of providing a genuine environmental leadership for our time; leadership more fully appreciative of the "problem-posing" dimension of our task and one which moves us beyond the limited view of ourselves as hired "problem-solvers" and/or competent "building-makers."

Stated another way, there is compelling need now for a grander orientation to guide the education and practice of architects—an enlarged professional perspective that would serve to buttress and sustain a view of ourselves as environmental stewards; "caretakers," in the broadest, humblest sense, having responsibility for expanding basic knowledge of human-environmental relationships and for creating a genuine public enlightenment about the need for quality in the built environment.

If we choose to accept the challenge of stewardship and to address the richer whole of our professional responsibilities, our education and our practice will necessarily undergo a fundamental shift in prescribed working perspective: a shift from "designer as impartial form-giver"—
one centrally engaged in the pursuit of static forms to fit an "evolved" context, to the generally neglected challenge of "designer as environment-maker" – one seeking to more broadly understand and introduce qualitative change i.e., one seeking to give form to quality within environments of designed change.

Such a "working perspective" challenges us to move beyond a preoccupation with the prevailing debate over such things as market positioning or the latest in CAD and office computer systems, etc., to a more fundamental redefinition of our professional "reason-for-being," i.e., to a more critical self-evaluation of our wider purposes as a profession.

With a more holistic conception of our personal-professional obligations, we could begin to address the task of creating a truly quality-focused paradigm for design education and practice. Specifically, we could begin development of a paradigm centrally focused on both life and environmental quality – a guiding perspective broadly respecting the interdependent world within which we live and one seeking harmony with the cultural and ecological realities of our time.

Lest there be misunderstanding, a "stewardship paradigm" is not to be seen as a substitution for our basic design and craft skills as architects. Rather, it is an appeal to use these "building blocks" as a platform from which to make conceptual leaps and move beyond.

Such a new standard for professional education and practice would serve to organize our personal-professional energies around broad, interlocking themes ("life quality" themes, if you will) designed to stress again and again:

The Value of Human-Human Dialogue and Human-Environmental Interdependence
(from personal introspection to global/planetary collaboration)

The Value of Contextual Reality
(a recognition that we are designing within a totality of interdependent systems, human/environmental/technological, in which nothing is really isolated from anything else)

The Value (and Obligations) of Environmental Stewardship
(an understanding of the need to establish a broader social-ethical framework for our profession and for our personal/professional actions therein; a spiritual frame designed to address our "noble causes," i.e., a framework for practice designed to enlighten, to educate, and to heal.)

Lest we forget, the central focus of our design talents is to enrich life in all of its forms. There is no overriding "professional-client" relationship apart from this obligation.

As we more fully comprehend this reality, we may likewise come to more fully appreciate the transitory nature of "designed" things and begin placing their temporariness within life's ongoing evolutionary and revolutionary flows.
The Forgotten Few
A Look at Individuals in Northern European Expressionist Brick Architecture

by
John Myefski

Between the turn of the twentieth century and the late twenties lies a period of highly stylistic work in Northern Europe. Within this time frame, which saw the birth of the modern movement, sits a window in which few have chosen to reflect. If we clear our minds of the images of Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, J.J.P. Oud and the like, we are forced to look beyond the shattered glass caused by those who could only see into the future. The architects whose individualistic works combined the vision of the future with reflections of the past, held within their palms the tool of expression. It is through their architecture that we discover a moment in history in which the architect as creator flourished.

The demise of art nouveau and the rise of functionalism led to this stylistic work. Originally belonging to the pictorial arts, this new style spread to all art forms. This was essential in defining a link between specific trends in society (including aspects of civilization) and the intellectual movements that became predominant in the arts. Expressionism is one of the best examples of a phenomenon in the arts that was true to all forms of artistic expression. The work that was the outcome of this generation was certainly not a school or general movement. It was a questioning by artists who devoted themselves to a group on the basis of faith in their own general feelings about the future of society. Expressionism represents, Yvan Goll said in 1921, "a state of mind which, in the intellectual field, has affected everything, in the same way as an epidemic does, not only poetry and
Expressionism first appeared in the literary works of the Danish Christian thinker, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855). Kierkegaard’s works were published in Denmark in the middle of the nineteenth century, and later in German in a book written about his philosophy by H. Hoffding in 1886. Kierkegaard contributed mainly through his questioning and analytical writings. These were the foundation for Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), the future pillar of expressionist literature. Nietzsche was concerned with a reappraisal of the Greek attitude to art and culture. He wanted to see the human society re-establish itself by being free of the culture of tradition; “The spiritual and creative qualities, in man were one; not in seeking a personal God in the Christian sense, but in producing great works of art as an expression of life.” Nietzsche’s Thus Spake Zarathustra portrayed the epic of the superman, a man who as we have learned from Darwin could, and would, change himself; a man who must change himself because if he does not, he would destroy the world the minute he possessed the power to do so.

Expressionism in art had begun near the end of the nineteenth century and was nurtured in the northern countries of Europe. Its beginning is imprecise in terms of a clearly defined period of time. But like architecture it was a reaction between two distinct movements, the impressionists who were considered traditionalists, and the modernist who desired a complete break away from the influence of impressionism. In painting this new emotion is best observed in the work of Edvard Munch (1863-1944); Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944); Emil Nolde (1867-1956); Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938) and Franz Marc (1880-1916). The work of these artists evoked an emotional response which, eventually, found itself in the form of built architecture.

Expressionism in art and architecture was strongly supported by the Germans at the turn of the century. German art has always followed a path of mystical development and during periods of political unrest, expressionism would tend to arise. Economic conditions before World War I also led to the development of Expressionism, especially in Germany. At that time, there was artistic stress connected with the fall of the Imperial European regimes, which had grown to the point of being extremely militaristic. Artists and architects of Germany looked to the future with the hope of pursuing nationalistic, but still futuristic dreams. The dream of a transformed society, where the “superman” existed as the bridge between the imaginative power of Art Nouveau and the search for new materials and social context of functionalism. This was the collective environment that organized many expressionist architects into a common existence.

As in the other arts, the tendencies of the expressionist period in architecture came to an end in the late twenties. The years from 1923-1928 are a period in which expression of the function of the building was the ultimate goal of the designer. The projects represented in this time span are particular, but they demonstrate how diverse this individualistic time frame was. Each structure has an intense effect on the viewer who has had the chance to experience them. We can see the expressive meaning of each building through the perceived function and rich material selection. These built forms are the embodiments of emotions and ideas which, for a
brief period came to life in a force that resulted in a new individual form of architecture.

There were several notable initiatives in solving the new problems of the late twenties. Far from being a unified approach, they present a series of contradictory solutions. What they have in common is a desire to escape from what became known as the international style. Walter Gropius (1883-1969) was the figure head for the Bauhaus, which was founded in March 1919, in Weimar, with a exhibit of housing. Gropius followed a line of approach which was inspired by expressionism. However, he lost sight of the creative spontaneity architecture could have, if it could go beyond the methods born out of the Machine age. The Expressionists aspired toward something that went further than the use of unknown materials and techniques; they were not caught in the race to keep up with the industrialization of society. They would rather apply all these variables in what would be a synthesis of the arts; an architecture that would strive for a collective meaning.

The expressionist ideas of the twenties were also concerned with exploring new symbols of life. The first in Germany to explore the crystal as a mythical space in brick was Peter Behrens (1868-1940). The brick crystal is first used in his own house of 1901, and reoccurs in 1924 in the interior of what would be his last substantial work, the administrative building of the I.G. Farben Dye works in Frankfurt. The Farben Dye works is much different than anything Behrens had done in his career. The space is an amazing display of brick work. The four story hall is about 50 feet in height and is lit by three crystal-like skylights. Described by Kenneth Frampton as an "interior of cosmic crystal, faceted and corbelled brick which descends from its crystalline roof, is surely sufficient evidence of a desire to return to the mystical religious space." What Behrens was able to create was an emotional space of light, color and form. The final product achieves effects seen only in Gothic architecture.

The Chilehaus of 1924 in Hamburg, designed by Fritz Hoger (1877-1949), is often compared with the work of Hans Poelzig (1869-1913), and clearly ties into the tradition of Northern German brick architecture. Hoger, unlike Poelzig, was not involved in the expressionist groups of Berlin and practiced most of his life in Hamburg.
The Chilehaus (a shipping office headquarters), is placed on a corner site and comes to a point symbolic of the prow of a ship. The exterior, a wonderful display of the potential of brickwork, is most striking in the way it forces the eye to move in vertically. The building is covered with symbols and every detail clearly leads up to the expression of the prow. It is interesting to compare this project to that of J.M. van der Meij's shipping house in Amsterdam, done some ten years prior. Hoger must have been familiar with this work since it was widely published and of a similar building type. It was the need for a variety of surface effects that kept the expressionist architects, like Hoger, coming back to brick as the primary material. He preferred the use of irregular bricks that were of second or third grade because he felt they added animation to the wall texture.

With expressionism coming to a close in the late twenties the work of Hugo Haring (1882-1958) stood out in terms of its contribution to the future of architecture. Haring used the Gut Garku Farm of 1924 as the proving-ground for his theories, and he considered it to be one of the first examples of functionalism. This project is one of only a few completed by Haring during what would be regarded as an unproductive career in terms of built work. With this farm he sought to find a building shape that would be suitable for the function it served. He wrote; "We want to search for things and let them unfold their own design. It goes against the grain to determine their shape from the outside, to subject them to a set of derived laws." It seemed that this could only happen if what he called the "natural" process of architecture were to occur.

Haring planned a farm complex, but only a barn, cowshed and vehicle shed were completed. The barn is of interest primarily because of its lamella roof, a form of construction using a number of short interlocking timbers following the line of thrust, which produces a Gothic arch shape. The use of this type of roof eliminates the need for cross struts and ties and reflects Haring's feeling for using the most form-determining structure, using the most direct construction method. The cowshed is by far the most interesting and complex. The inside was arranged in a pear-shaped layout so that the forty-two cows could
feed around a central point. Haring talked about the importance of this shape in an interview he gave in the fifties. His explanation for the plan follows:

First I asked my farmer client what is the natural feeding pattern for cows, and he told me they gather around their food in a circle. But a circle of forty-two cows, too much space is lost in the middle, so an oval is more efficient. Then a place has to be made for the bull, hence the pear shape. 6

Haring’s methods is an organic version of building. His ideas were the inspiration for architects like Hans Scharoun, Alvar Aalto and Ralph Erskine who became organic functionalists. Aalto and Scharoun were both in an impressionable period when the work and ideas of Haring were published. Scharoun was more intrigued by Haring’s theories, while Aalto saw more in his built forms. There is an obvious link between the town hall at Saynatsalo, completed in 1950, and the Gut Garku Farm. This must have been in reaction to a desire to turn away from the white-skinned buildings of the pre-war international style, the style originated by Le Corbusier, Gropius and Mies. Byker Housing Development in Newcastle, England, designed in the sixties by Erskine, is another example of a return to the form-determining structure that Haring used. Erskine searched for a building shape that unfolded from its specific function, a building as a “wall,” protecting and buffering its inhabitants.

The Grundtvig Church (1913-1940) in Copenhagen, represents one of the most expressive projects in Scandinavia. Its designer, P.V. Jensen-Klint (1853-1930), was a painter turned architect, who began to practice architecture in 1905 when he was already over fifty. He was a follower of N.F.S. Grundtvig’s philosophy and his roots were in the Grundtvig Folk High School. It was this Folk High School background (which was an important Danish spiritual movement) that led to his concern for not repeating old buildings; instead he attempted to create new ones by blending new with old traditions. It is hard to imagine that the work of Jensen-Klint was not in part influenced by other Northern European architects. The German expressionist movement must have caught his eye, especially with his
painting background. But to understand his work one must understand him. He would never have wanted to be considered a part of this group. Jensen-Klint's work appears to be influenced by the ideas instilled in him during his studies of building engineering. He wanted to continue the craftsman tradition of construction, where the materials would show their true expression. He had no interest in architecture that came from academic architects. Instead, his interests were in architecture for the common people.

The ideas of the utopian architects of the expressionist period were essentially individualistic, and the period followed no formal doctrine. The aesthetic poetry that these architects searched for was to conclude almost as fast as it grew. Although these architects cannot be lumped into a common movement, they all had a common aim: to create a building with complete freedom of expression. Unfortunately, expressionism fell to the demand for an architecture using the new technology available. Architects like Le Corbusier in France and Oud in Holland had revolutionary theories about using new materials; namely reinforced concrete, metal girders and glass. They wanted to create logical architecture that would solve social problems of overcrowding, poor living conditions, and a changing industrialized society. These ideas were too logical to ignore and soon expressionism gave way to a concern for social awareness. The changing scene demanded a means of producing buildings that adequately applied the practical notions of the forthcoming period known as new "rationality".

The future of expressionism is best told in a letter Eric Mendelsohn (1887-1953) wrote after visiting the Amsterdam School in Holland:

Oud is functional, so, as to talk with Gropius, Amsterdam is dynamic... The first sets ratio before everything; perception through analysis. The second sets perception through vision. Analytical Rotterdam refuses vision; visionary Amsterdam does not understand objectivity... If Amsterdam goes a step further towards reason and Rotterdam's blood does not freeze, then they may unite. Otherwise, Rotterdam will pursue the way of mere construction with deadly chill in its veins, and Amsterdam will be destroyed by the fire of its own dynamism! ?

Mendelsohn was right; the Amsterdam movement was stopped in its tracks with the early death of Michel de Klerk in 1923. The functionalists of J.J.P Oud’s Rotterdam School won out.

The functionalist movement led to the disuse of the brick vernacular in Northern Europe. Elaborate detail in brick gave way to veneers of brick that represented nothing but an exterior skin. The work of Mendelsohn, at the Universum Cinema, which was completed in Berlin in 1928, was among the last attempts to create architecture that was both "functional plus dynamic." The cinema is expressive of its purpose, and dynamic in the power the form evokes. Mendelsohn was forced into exile in 1933, when he left Germany for England, and finally the United States. With his departure came the collapse of the expressionist organization. Under the rise of the Third Reich, it was practically impossible for him to work. The Nazi authorities saw the expressionist ideology as extremely dangerous and systematically suppressed all ideas that did not fit into their nationalistic ideology.

It is sometimes hard to find these architects listed in the history books, since their work does not always fit neatly into the premises of a specific movement. But their work continues to exist, something which was often
forgotten by the modern movement, because it challenged the basic foundation on which the movement rested. The utopian plans, brave attempts at form, and richness indicative in material selection, are what make these projects landmarks of the dawn of the modern movement. They remain today in as good as condition as the users would have originally seen them. Perhaps by experiencing these relics again, one can truly understand the setting in which expressionism came to life.

Notes on Text:
4 Frampton, p. 252-3.
5 P. Blundall Jones, from an article in AA Files, No. 13 (June, 1985), pp.30-43.

"like in every work of art, art by definition is purposeless, useless."
In a career spanning more than 25 years, Austrian architect Hans Hollein has earned international recognition for designs that have been characterized as brilliant, elegant, erotic, outrageous, jewel-like, eclectic and ritualistic. His honors include the coveted Pritzker Prize. Lawrence Von Bamford is a doctoral candidate at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan and teaches at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. He is compiling a catalogue raisonné of Hollein's work. In conjunction with this project, he conducted the following interview with Hollein in Vienna during the summer of 1986.

Lawrence Von Bamford: The architectural critic Joseph Rykwert has written that you think of yourself as an American designer. Is that true?

Hans Hollein: I think that’s right. I have a strong affinity for America. I don’t think of myself as specifically Austrian. I’m a native Austrian, of course, having experienced all the influences of this culture but have never made a point to refer to myself as Austrian.

LVB: What made you decide to come to the United States to study for your second architectural degree?

HH: I studied architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna from 1956 to 1958. After completing the work in Vienna, I worked briefly in Stockholm, Sweden. In late 1958 I decided to go to the United States for two reasons: One, to
get to know the United States in general—the architecture, the people, everything. Two, I had a fellowship to study in the United States. I had the option to study at Harvard, Yale, or at several other distinguished universities. However, I decided I did not want to be in an Ivy League, ivory tower atmosphere. Also, I wanted to know the everyday life of people in a large city. Because of this and because of my interest in the work of Mies van der Rohe, I selected the Illinois Institute of Technology to attend, and Chicago as the city in which to live. I stayed there for a year and then decided to go to California where I enrolled at the University of California, completing my masters at Berkeley.

I traveled a lot during my first two years in the United States, covering about 60,000 miles by car. I traveled for a variety of purposes: on some occasions just to get to know the country, and on other occasions to study specific architecture. I saw most of the buildings that Frank Lloyd Wright had designed. Then, I did some special research on Rudolph Schindler, who at that time had not been covered at all by the publications. I also was very interested in the buildings of the American Indians, especially the Pueblos, and I did a study on them, visiting the American Southwest several times. I have an interest in the country, not only the way of life, but also the landscape. To me landscape is a very evocative element in terms of generating architectural ideas. This phase was very important for my growth as an architect.

LVB: It seems that you formulated your ideas on architecture very early. For example, as a student you were writing manifestos concerning personal design philosophies and theories related to the order of architecture.

HH: I had made up my mind about architecture by the age of twenty-two. Between the age of twenty-two and twenty-five, I established my attitudes, my position, and my ideas. Everything I have done since is really based on those decisions. I have grown older and possibly have gotten wiser but haven’t deviated from my direction. I’m not an architect who says: "What I did twenty years ago was terrible; I don’t want to see it anymore." I am on a completely different trip. I’m still on the same trip. I can look at something that I did twenty-five years ago and can appreciate what I did then. Sometimes I can continue on sketches or projects today that I started twenty-five or thirty years ago.

LVB: One of your early statements intrigues me. Would you comment on the declaration that “architecture is without purpose” and “what we build will find its usefulness”?

HH: The statement has to be seen in the context of my ideas at a particular time: my projects, what my emphasis was. What I wanted to say is that architecture is basically a statement. Like in every work of art, art by definition is purposeless, useless. Some of the more important factors or ideas, important basic elements, come forward in a situation where they are reduced to a certain degree of absoluteness. I think you can create an example of architecture which you do not use, and you still can say this is architecture. If you are able to do such a building, then you know what architecture is because you have come to the essence of architecture. The essence of architecture is not the
solution of a specific problem but is the architecture statement. When I said “what we build will find its purpose, once you have the architecture statement,” it finds its physical use and its physical function. People have a tendency to look for a variety of physical features having to do with materials and cultural influences. To me, a heap of stones in the desert is a statement, where you know this is man-made. It is marking something; it is a sign; it is a sacred spot. It was done with architectural means, but it isn’t a shelter. In this instance, it clearly comes very close to sculpture.

I think that architecture, for a short definition (which I know has its drawbacks and may be thought of as too simple an explanation) is on the one side, a literal architecture, free from embellishment, and on the other side, the preservation of a picturesque or extravagant architecture. Between these two poles, all architectural activity goes on. The designer’s personal direction is influenced by looking at cultural situations and geographical situations. The Eskimo is probably the designer par excellence. He creates the most ingenious inventions from the boat to the harpoon—all kinds of objects for survival. This is a main part of his life, physical survival during life. The other part of the man is devoted to survival after death. An enormous effort throughout the history of mankind has been aimed at this objective — to manifest survival after death. The Eskimo has very little possibility in time to create ritual buildings, to create coptic statements. However, an islander in the South Seas, sitting in the sun where coconuts are dropping in his lap, can work on rituals, complicated dances, and complex structures for religious purposes. Throughout history you can see this tendency by examining different cultures and civilizations.

LVB: You gave the Charles Eames Memorial Lecture at Harvard in 1985. In that lecture you said that “architecture is a total encompassing entity without strict borders and walls.” I know that you do not believe there should be barriers between the disciplines of art, design, and architecture. How do your thoughts in the 1985 lecture coincide with your 1963 pronouncement that “all is architecture”?  

HH: The “all is architecture” proclamation was a consciously provocative statement to promote a certain discourse. What I meant included several things: architects have different tasks, not only to design buildings. In designing a house, for instance, I think that you can clearly see that the architect is not just concerned with the structure, but with the furniture and other environmental issues. This has shifted over the centuries. During the Renaissance, an architect was also responsible for doing military designs and fortifications. Today, the architect has branched out in many different directions with his interests and concerns. In a metaphoric context you might say that Abraham Lincoln was the architect of the new America. We use the term “architect” in many different ways. Architecture is not for buildings only.

LVB: Do you consider some of your architectural designs to be architectonic sculpture which people inhabit?  

HH: No, I have no borderline between architecture and sculpture. Some architecture is really sculpture you take into possession. There is useless architecture, and sculpture, of course, is also useless.
LVB: Joseph Esherick, your former major professor at Berkeley, stated in the periodical Art and Architecture in August, 1963, that “Architecture today is not in the hands of the architects; the real architecture is almost entirely anonymous building and the architects who are building are decorators not addressing the real problems of architecture.” Has this situation changed in a couple of decades since Esherick’s article; is it more encouraging today?

HH: Joe’s article stated a specific aspect of our life which I think is also relevant today. This statement was first printed in the forward of the catalog of one of my exhibitions. He was saying that a lot of architects have stepped away from architectural issues and that some of the best examples for addressing architecture have been done, not only in anonymous building, but seemingly with other priorities in directions such as technical buildings or military buildings. I believe that this situation has probably changed slightly now, but architecture as manifestation was very clearly not considered. In this case you address not the central but the side issues.

LVB: An architectural critic recently said that you were preoccupied with the concept of “illusion and reality.” Is that an accurate statement and could you explain what these terms mean to you?

HH: I have been concerned with the question of illusion because it is another part of reality. I think the illusionistic aspect of architecture is a very real component. In the creation of space, it isn’t necessarily the question of building. You have very simple means of creating illusions. I demonstrated this in my very first built work, the Retti Candle Shop, by the use of mirrors. You have real space and you have illusionistic space. The mirrored space is altered space which you see, but, of course, cannot walk through. In the candle shop, the combination of the real space and the illusionistic space give you the complete entity, the whole. A planned illusion in the candle shop occurs when you come in the front and experience a cylinder in front of a mirror. What you see is half a cylinder; one-half is real and one-half is an illusion because of the mirrors. You comprehend the whole.

I have long been interested in using non-building media to create space. I think sound can create space. To me, one of the most interesting experiences I’ve had was at an underground pharaoh’s tomb in Egypt. I passed through a dark corridor, and experienced the reflection of sound. Suddenly, there exists a completely different sense of acoustics, and you sense this enormous space; you don’t see it because it’s dark. Only after several minutes do your eyes adjust, and you discover that you are in an enormous crypt chamber. An architect
can change the perception of space. Our senses are conditioned to the way we perceive space.

**LVB:** Do you mean that you capture the spirit of what exists and not the form?

**HH:** Yes, of course certain things then take a form in your own mind. For instance, look at excellent Austrian Baroque architecture. I think people normally think of the Baroque as surface decoration. I am very much interested in the spatial concepts of the Baroque which occur in southern Germany, Austria, Italy, and Spain. If you take all the decoration away, there are fantastic spatial solutions. If you examine a German Baroque castle and remove all the decoration, you have a simple block, a basic idea.

**LVB:** What about historical references and influences and the effect they have had on your architecture?

**HH:** For me, it's not a question of historic references from art history. It's also not a question of classification. I don't want to continue in a classical mode or use Modernist or any other influences as a basis for my architecture. History should be understood.

You should learn history, digest it, and come up with something of your own. Originality is important with me.

I have been influenced by many periods and many excellent works of architecture. I learn from history because I see that something in the past has been done in very specific way to achieve a result of high caliber. In this I'm interested, no matter which period it is and no matter which culture or civilization it is. In my architecture I rarely quote. Well, sometimes, like the palm trees from the kitchen of the Royal Pavilion at Brighton where I made a direct quotation at the travel Bureau. But I'm not interested at all in these art history games, to quote this or that, to use a pediment or to not use a pediment. I learn from history that there are certain standards of performance which I want to achieve. So this is where the historical reference lies, and of course you do not reinvent the wheel every day. If something has been done in an excellent way, you don't have to copy it, but you can look and see how it has been done, and you depart from this in your own way.

I believe that future architects need to know not only the history of architecture but history in general. I think this is something that is absolutely necessary for everybody to know. Unfortunately, far too many people do not know about history. I feel that there are a lot of problems in the world that could be avoided if people knew the facts of what had happened under certain circumstances in the past. We could avoid repeating history in a negative way.

In terms of architectural history, you need to know what has been done in architecture and building from the earliest periods and also from different civilizations. I don't feel it is necessary to study specific periods of architectural history in order to practice architecture today. The present state of emphasis on using certain aspects of architectural history as inquiry for quotations and architectural motives is not a very good idea. This concept of using historical references may be overdone.

**LVB:** Both you and I teach at Universities. I find that many students are not self-motivated and lack an innate curiosity to discover the essentials of design. Others want to become successful immediately. What has been your experience as an educator in attempting to inspire students?
HH: Yes, this is a problem. You cannot teach a student how to become an important architect. It is stupid. A lot of students come because they think you have a special secret. If you can only give them the secret or the formula, it's like the medieval masters where a young person would apprentice for many years, and at some point the master would give you the secret formula. There is no secret; it's work and it's ideas, both.

I prefer to teach at the academy in Vienna in small groups, and I don't give lectures. I try to be specific with each student and try to help them to generate their own ideas and to define his or her own departure point. This is different for each person. I like to work with good students; I hate to work with bad students. By your own example, you may get students excited about design. Many students are potentially good students, and they need help to channel their energies in a positive direction.

LVB: How do you work through a typical design problem? What sort of ideation process do you use? What thought processes do you use to achieve your goals?

HH: Well, I think each time is different. It depends on what the project is. Basically, I don't feel that architecture is the solving of problems. I think architecture is making statements. Many architects start by trying to solve the problem, trying to define the problem. The design statement is made by a clear philosophy you have about something. If you have this philosophy it can be applied to certain tasks.

There are tasks in architecture which really are a solution to a problem, like building a hospital. There you have a lot of problems to be solved, a lot of criteria to consider for a solution. This is a very specific task.

There are other areas in architecture where the solution of a problem is not the main question. You and I have talked about the Pueblos in the Southwestern United States. Why is a kiva round, and the living quarters rectangular? Since you no longer have to make a cosmic statement, it is not like you have to make a little assembly hall. Look at two thousand years of Christian church building. The problem is very simple; you have a community and you have an altar and that's it. You have a basilica; you have the central building. There are a lot of different statements which are all related to the same function. So, the material function is unimportant, not the generating factor, not the generating cause.

LVB: You have been described as a "Renaissance man," designing in many different areas which include architecture, interior design, furniture design, exhibition design, product design—even jewelry design. This seems to underscore the fact that you believe that an architect has multiple responsibilities. Would you comment on this?

HH: Architects have the right to become involved in the areas which affect human needs. We transform materials in ways that make our clients' lives more comfortable, aesthetically pleasing, and interesting.

LVB: You pay more attention to the interiors of buildings than other acclaimed architects. Writing in Domus, June, 1980, James Stirling paid you a supreme compliment by referring to you as "the greatest interior designer anywhere." What design methodology do you use for the integration of the exterior/interior considerations?
HH: I think there is no difference between exterior and interior architecture. The interior of the building is as important as the exterior. You must consider the exterior and interior equally while you are designing a building. The interiors are the spaces in most areas of this world where the people live and spend most of their time. The creation of the interior and the mood which you have created are of utmost importance. And of equal importance is the facade and the urban setting, the exterior considerations. I know that in the United States, for a long time, to consider interiors was frowned upon and architects did not take care of this significant aspect of building. I remember about ten years ago in the United States when I gave lectures, Richard Meier said to me, “Hans, show buildings, but don’t talk about and show slides of interiors, because interiors here in the U.S. are for interior decorators.”

Today, the situation has changed completely. All the famous American architects—Michael Graves, Richard Meier and others—want to design interiors, furniture, tableware, and so on. I have designed interiors for many years as a matter of fact, just coinciding to what my understanding of what human environment is. It was not a decision to follow what was acceptable as a fashion or fad.

To me, the question of the interior is an important matter to be addressed by the architect. I do not think of interior design as the act of having an interior decorator come in and add a few frills and funny ideas to jazz up a space.

Museum of Modern Art (under construction).
The Erlebnis Principle
Towards Realizing Potent Environment

by
Paul Sattelmeier

Habits guide daily life. When a habit is suddenly broken, the new freedom may be disconcerting, even overwhelming. The gardener who discovers a new way to handle his hoe may enjoy such an excitement.\(^1\) The sudden revision of mental habits is referred to by psychologists as the “Aha! Erlebnis!” experience.\(^2\) Erlebnis derives from the German verb ‘erleben’, which means to live through. In a psychological context, its meaning is slightly altered, becoming: to live through something; an entirely new way of experiencing.\(^3\) The astonishment, the wonder, the excitement that accompanies an Erlebnis experience attests to the importance of a mental reorganization. Once the new understanding—the insight—is achieved, it rapidly passes into the habitual texture of the mind. The previously unimaginable becomes the simple and obvious.\(^4\)

Habitual ways of thinking influence perception of the built environment. These mental habits—preconceptions/expectations—may be examined in isolation, and explored as a means of generating Erlebnis. For example, a preconception which accurately describes a building will cause the building to seem typical and easily grasped. An inaccurate preconception will make the building appear strange and strikingly unusual. If the preconception is simultaneously accurate and inaccurate, the qualities of the building which contribute to the inaccuracy must either be ignored, or absorbed into the preconception. The moment of adjustment, when the preconception is significantly expanded to include the previously incongruous, generates the involuntary exclamation, “Aha!,” a precise indication of Erlebnis.
The following is an exploratory foray into the potential of the built environment to generate Erlebnis. Several types of preconceptions concerning buildings (buildings is used here as meaning anything built; the physical environment) are examined in isolation. These preconceptions are:

**Exegesis**
- The metaphysical interpretation of a building.

**Element Development**
- The manifestation of a building component.

**Laws of Nature**
- The effect of natural laws on a building.

**Promenade Architecturale**
- The movement through a building.

**Exegesis - Erlebnis**
- A metaphysical interpretation of the physical may change significantly when vital new information is introduced.

Reinterpretation of the inanimate as animate is prompted by artist Charles Ray. His narrow black line [fig. 1] “looks at first sight like a glossy plastic cord, passing cleanly through floor and ceiling. Clean, taut, and polished, spare in its use of materials and expressive content, the piece looks like a classic Minimalist statement.”

But as a visitor approaches, he discovers that the line is actually **ink**, falling from an aperture in the ceiling through another in the floor. “Next thing, you realize how radically the terms have shifted from the moment when you saw the work as an object, now that you recognize it for what it is. It mocks your a priori assumptions and changes, before your eyes, from a passive object into an edgy, provocative presence.”

An interpretation of the world as dangerous displaces a more pleasant reading in a story told to John Hejduk by an Indian architect: “There are two people on a ship looking over a calm ocean. Just at twilight, the still ocean parts and the fin of a shark comes up. Maybe for only two seconds. Then the fin drops down. Both men are terrorized.”

In both cases, the preconception—the existing exegesis of the physical—alters considerably with the introduction of new information.

When the observer realizes that the line is ink, the inert cord becomes suddenly a living, moving entity. As a shark fin slices the ocean surface, the benevolent countenance is replaced by a treacherous mask. The shift of understanding required to replace the existing interpretation with a new, conflicting interpretation, creates Erlebnis.

**Element Development - Erlebnis**
- A building component (i.e., wall, floor, door) may be realized in an unconventional manner. A component may contradict itself, or the narrow definition of a component may be broadened.
An element's definition is broadened by blurring the distinction between it, and another, dissimilar element. Gunnar Asplund fuses two disparate elements at the Woodland Crematorium, where the wall tears away from the floor (rejecting its support) to become a bench [fig. 2).

A definition may be extended by exploring an element's interaction with other elements. The relation of a door to the surrounding walls and floor is one example. The conventional swing/slide-to-the-side door prepares one to be astonished when confronted by a door in Carlo Scarpa's Cemetery Brion-Vega. To pass through the doorway, the visitor must push the door down, into a vat of water, and step over. Marcel Duchamp addresses a similar issue in the corner of his Paris apartment where there is “a door that serves to close either the bathroom or the main entrance alternately [fig. 3] and can therefore be open and shut at the same time.”

The narrow definition of a wall or door is broadened in unexpected directions. Wall is merged with chair; the common side-moving door is rendered instead as moving vertically. A door, normally the master of one opening, is developed as the servant of two. The replacement of an element's definition with a widely extended definition, leads to Erlebnis.

An element may contradict itself by appearing to be one thing when it is, in fact, the opposite. The floor of a Luis Barragan dining room is divided into two areas, each surfaced by a slightly different material. One area seems strangely empty until close inspection of that section reveals the floor to be constructed of water [fig. 4].

A wall may present a similar contradiction between solidity and instability. Seen from the interior, the windows reveal the wall of Asplund's Lister County courtroom to be very thick, undoubtedly very solid, and appropriate to the permanence of the law [fig. 5]. But the substantial wall depth is created by an insubstantial box, wrapped around the window and applied to the building's exterior [fig. 6].
Knowledge of a wall or floor's actual constitution strains against perceived reality. The two contradicting qualities co-exist in one element. A floor is both permeable and impermeable. A wall is concurrently thick and thin. The acceptance of two contradicting qualities, the perceived and the actual, in one element, results in Erlebnis.

Laws of Nature - Erlebnis

Violating the laws of gravity and perspective is not physically possible, but the illusion of violation is.

Gravity appears reversed at the baldachin of Alvar Aalto's early church remodeling in Viitasaari [fig. 7]. The extremely slender steel columns which support the heavy blue canopy suggest tension rather than compression; the canopy is being pulled upward and is restrained by the filaments. An analogous reversal of gravity occurs at Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater canopy [fig. 8]. Again, the slender steel filaments, but this time on only one side of the canopy.

Gravity appears weakened (key vertical supports are eliminated, or repositioned) by Wright at the Hillside Home School, by first rotating a square balcony opening within the square assembly space [fig. 9], then placing glass at the corners of the balcony (where support would normally be positioned). Aalto similarly weakens gravity about the portico at his parents' home in Alajarvi [fig. 10] and at the Polytechnical Institute in Otaniemi [fig. 11], where the corner (critical) columns of an implied colonnade are left out.

Gravity is weakened further by leaving out vertical supports altogether and relying entirely on the cantilever. Extending too far from its support, the carport roof of Wright's Groetsch-Winkler house must hover to stay aloft [fig. 12]. The balcony in the La Roche entrance hall is also virtually unsupported [fig. 13]. The cube is barely held from drifting away.
Perspective is reversed by causing the distant to seem near, the near to seem distant. Both devices are used simultaneously in Robert Venturi's Guild House [fig. 14]. The en echelon planes fluctuate in depth due to the square windows. Although similar in appearance and placement, the near plane windows are smaller than those on the far plane, reversing the normal perspectival diminution of identical windows.

Perspective is accentuated by causing the near to seem nearer, the distant to seem more distant. John Thomas realizes both effects by manipulating the dormers of the Dugan house [fig. 15]. The near dormer is enlarged, and brought close to the edge of the roof. The distant dormer is made small, and pushed back up the slope of the roof. By actually changing the distance between the two dormers, and then perceptually increasing the distance by altering the dormer sizes, the expanse of the roof increases.

The effect of actual perspective/ gravity on a building is replaced by an effect of altered perspective/ gravity. Perspective, the relatively reliable gauge of depth and distance, becomes a perspective reversed or accentuated. Uniform and constant gravity becomes a gravity weakened, inclined, or reversed. The realization, when confronted by a building that distorts laws of nature, that there need not be a direct effect of natural laws on a building—that a building may, by its very existence, seem to alter these laws or respond to different laws without actually doing so—constitutes the Erlebnis.

Promenade Architecturale - Erlebnis

While moving through the built environment, a person continually formulates expectations concerning the situation ahead. These expectations may be incorrect. The actual experience may be similar to the one expected, but offset. The new experience may be entirely unrelated to, or contrast sharply with the projected experience.

An experience like the one expected, but offset, is offered by the Hotel de Matignon. The symmetrical front and rear facades are shifted, which requires the person proceeding from front to back to undergo, midway through the building, a shift of axis [fig. 16]. The shift reminds Rudolf Arnheim of “what musicians call an enharmonic modulation, that is, the almost imperceptible shift from one
key to another, in the course of which certain tones act as bridges by fulfilling different functions in the two keys and thereby display a double allegiance. The transitional moment generates a slight sensation of seasickness, unwelcome or exhilarating depending on the listener’s disposition, because the frame of reference is temporarily lost."

A related effect may occur in section. In a student project by Ann Ma, two identical rooms are placed adjacent, but offset. En marche, we step from the floor of one room (with a vast expanse above us), to a bridge very near the ceiling (with a vast expanse below us) in the next [fig. 17]. Virtually the same room is suddenly perceived, by stepping through a doorway, from two entirely different vantage points.

An experience in Wright’s Affleck house is unrelated to the one expected. The wall of closet doors in the entry hall conceals a generous amount of storage space. However, one closet door opens, not to a closet, but to a narrow passage which leads to a toilet room.

An experience that strongly contrasts with the one expected is developed by Aalto at Saynatsalo Town Hall. As the visitor approaches, he is impressed by a monumentality of massing appropriate to the building’s civic function [fig. 18]. But during the climb of the grand stair to the courtyard, the monumentality dissipates [fig. 19]. The courtyard is informal, even rural. Realized a year later, the progression to the courtyard of Aalto’s Muuratsalo House is roughly similar; the exterior monumentality of a great white prism [fig. 20] conceals the comfortable disarray of the court’s red brick walls[fig. 21].

Asplund attempts the inverse contrast at the Woodland Chapel. "From the rough, shingled exterior of the chapel [fig. 22] one envisions a folksy, dark, brooding wooden interior in the manner of the country churches." But when the visitor moves inside, he discovers a pure white, celestial dome [fig. 23].

The anticipated in a promenade architecturale is replaced by the unexpected. The experience of symmetry on axis becomes, by stepping through a door, the experience of symmetry from off axis. A closet door leads, not to a closet, but to a toilet room. An interior doesn’t mirror the rough exterior but is, instead, pristine and pure. In each case, a moment of reorientation occurs, when moving directly from the first experience to the second. The necessary reorientation produces Erlebnis.
Conclusion

A person's reaction to the mental excitation that accompanies erlebnis may vary from giddiness, to ecstasy. A specific emotion is not necessarily linked to a single Erlebnis-type. A shark-fin (Exegesis), and the Barragan floor (Element Development) both may disturb. Thomas' dormers (Laws of Nature), and the Woodland Chapel (Promenade Architecturale) may both charm. In each example, the exact emotional result is difficult to determine, and varies with the individual observer. However, the strength of the emotion is readily gauged by the fervor of the gasp—"Aha!"

Notes on Text:
3 Peckham, op. cit.
6 Ibid.

Fig. 1: Charles Ray. Ink Line, Los Angeles. 1987.
Fig. 2: Gunnar Asplund. Woodland Crematorium, Sweden.1935-40.
Fig. 3: Marcel Duchamp. Door, 11, rue Larrey, Paris. 1927.
Fig. 4: Luis Barragan. I. PizzaroSuarez House, Mexico City. 1937
Fig. 5, 6: Gunnar Asplund. Lister County Courthouse, Sweden.1917-21.
Fig. 7: Alvar Aalto. Viitasari church, Viitasari, Finland. 1925.
Fig. 8: Frank Lloyd Wright. Fallingwater, Bear Run, Pennsylvania. 1935.
Fig. 9: Frank Lloyd Wright. Hillside Home School, Wisconsin. 1887.
Fig. 10: Alvar Aalto. Aalto home, Alajarvi, Finland. 1918.
Fig. 11: Alvar Aalto. Polytechnical Institute, Otaniemi, Finland. 1960-67.
Fig. 12: Frank Lloyd Wright. Groetsch-Winkler house, Okemos, Michigan. 1939.
Fig. 13: Le Corbusier. La Roche house, Paris, France. 1925.
Fig. 14: Robert Venturi. Guild House, Phil., Penn. 1960-63.
Fig. 15: John Thomas. Dugan house, Berkeley, California. 1915.
Fig. 16: Jean Courtonne. Hotel de Matignon, France. 1722-24.
Fig. 17: Ann Ma. Student project, University of Michigan. 1988.
Fig. 18,19: Alvar Aalto. Saynatsalo Town Hall, Saynatsalo, Finland. 1952.
Fig. 20,21: Alvar Aalto. Aalto home, Muuratsalo, Finland. 1953.
Fig. 22,23: Gunnar Asplund. Woodland Chapel, Stockholm, Sweden. 1920.
Mario Botta
A Study in Ascetic Neo-Rationalism

by
Rick Yaffe

The Canton of Ticino in Switzerland is located at the crossroads of northern and southern Europe, on the southern slopes of the Alps. The terrain is cut by streams and rivers which flow down steep valleys into dozens of Alpine lakes. At lower elevations, in the meadows and plains below the nearby mountains, the landscape is lush and verdant. This setting is home to the architecture of Mario Botta, a native of Ticino. In a career spanning nearly three decades, the 45-year-old designer has drawn international attention for a body of work which lies almost entirely within a 50-mile radius of Mendrisio, the Ticinese village where he was born.

A sense of place is crucial to Botta’s work. His buildings seem rooted in the landscape of Ticino. But his work is not an example of man’s conquest over the serenity of nature. Rather it is an interpretation of the proper form with which to complete the landscape. His work does not sit quietly on the site, it is a statement of the potential of the site.

Perhaps more than any other quality in his work, Botta’s “pride of place” has attracted wide comment. Charles Jencks refers to his architecture as simple yet sensible in capturing the essence of the rational Tuscan vocabulary. Takefumi Aida cites Botta’s work as achieving a “hard harmony” with its surroundings. Christian Norberg-Schulz credits Botta with a sense of “genius loci.”

Toshio Nakamura, editor of Architecture and Urbanism, said that Botta’s architecture “does not make an impression because of the beautiful landscape in which it stands, but the landscape is beautiful because of the architecture.” It is
important to notice that Nakamura said “in which it stands,” rather than “on which it sits.” Botta’s architecture is every bit part of the site as are the trees and rolling hills.

Common to all these statements about Botta’s work is the respect for local traditions and a desire to enhance the local environment. Botta designs with an emphasis on the age-old masonry traditions of Ticino. Yet his ideas concerning the harmony between built forms and the environment appeal to an international audience as well.

For example, his house in Viganello (1980-81) is constructed of inexpensive concrete block. But, Botta creates atypical effects by laying the blocks on angle, which results in a striking pattern of light and shade. Botta creates a dialogue with the masons who realize his designs, inviting them to explore their craft in a manner rarely seen. The house is set into the steeply sloping site with the entrance on the downhill side. This requires a visitor to walk past the house before entering, getting several views of the structure and its surroundings. For these and other commissions, Botta has garnered a reputation unusual for an architect his age.

Mario Botta was born April 1, 1943. A prodigy of design, Botta dropped out of school at age fifteen to begin his apprenticeship as a draftsperson for the firm of Carloni and Camenisch in nearby Lugano. By age eighteen, Botta received his first commission through the firm: a stone Parish house in the town where his parents were born. His desire to create and passion to design surmounted any trepidation he felt about taking on such an ambitious assignment at such an early age.

As a youth, Botta had already shown the independence that would become central to his development. He hated to be pigeonholed by labels of any kind. In 1983, an interviewer asked him how he felt about being classified as a Neo-Rationalist. He replied, “I believe very little in these labels. . . . I love freedom too much to be grouped. I like to leave schools, not establish them.” Prefering to teach himself, he began blending the influence of three major architects whose work shaped his own philosophy: Le Corbusier, Carlo Scarpa and Louis Kahn.

By the summer of 1965, he had left his first job, completed art school in Milan and had begun attending the
Instituto Universitario di Architettura (IUA). As a student in Venice, he worked with several partners of Corbusier on designs for the Venice Hospital. After Corbusier died in August, Botta was invited to Paris, where he helped dismantle Corbusier’s studio.

Botta’s dedication to the master he never met is visible in a single-family house he designed in Stabio in 1965-67. The three-story cast concrete structure exemplifies Corbusier’s vocabulary of the open plan, free facade, and large windows. Like Corbusier’s Villa Savoye in Poissy (1929-31), the Stabio house links the internal plan and the external garden with a bold stairway. While Botta may not always strictly adhere to Corbusier’s notion of the plan being the generator of the design, he exercises a rationale in keeping the plan harmonious with the building form.

Botta was also influenced by Carlo Scarpa, with whom he did his thesis in 1969 at the IUA. He revealed in a 1984 interview:

I believe in my mission to practice architecture as a ‘craft’, recognizing the pleasure of doing things well. This is Carlo Scarpa’s greatest teaching. Scarpa is a dominator of materials; certainly he didn’t let himself be dominated by material. . .

Scarpa’s use of detailing to express a material’s textural qualities was an important inspiration to Botta. The influence can be seen in Botta’s use of brick, stone, and quite notably, concrete block. Through articulate use of these materials, Botta creates a new aesthetic. Jencks wrote that Botta’s use of materials invests them “with an almost sacred quality, as if they were marble and not industrialized material. And he draws, and thereby controls, the placement of each one.”

In his house in Morbio Superiore (1982-83), the concave southern facade has alternating bands of silver-painted concrete blocks laid at 45-degree angles. As the sun’s rays are collected onto the wall’s surface, different patterns of the blocks are accentuated. The wall is split down the center, revealing a loggia, which allows light to pour into the living room.

If Botta’s use of materials causes many observers to compare him to Scarpa, it is also apparent that he owes debts to another master of materials: Louis Kahn.
If he owes his sensitivity of plan to Le Corbusier, and his sensitivity of materials to Scarpa, then Botta owes his sensitivity of form to Kahn. Botta met Kahn in Venice in 1969 after graduating from the IUA and collaborated with him on the preparation of exhibition drawings of the Palazzo dei Congressi. Kahn certainly had the greatest impact upon Botta’s work. Botta’s buildings, like Kahn’s, are cubic masses of masonry which convey a strong sense of underlying order. Further, Botta’s facades, like Kahn’s, frequently are cut by large panes of glass or pierced by dramatic openings. There is usually a contrasting play between the form of the building and the shape of the opening sliced into the facade.

But Botta was impressed by more than the forms of Kahn’s buildings. He said of Kahn: “(He) had an almost messianic predisposition to focus on man’s primary needs.” Kahn was concerned with the formalization of space, the articulation of structure, and with employing materials with honesty. The same concerns appear in Botta’s work.

Aside from his intellectual roots in the work of the three masters named above, Botta has often stressed the importance of context and locale. In 1983, Botta told an interviewer from *Interior Design*:

*The nature of the building is to take root where it is built. Architecture is not an instrument for building any site but for that particular site. Architecture needs its site in order to have stimulation and information, and the site needs its architecture in order to qualify itself as being organized by man.*

Botta prides himself on acknowledging context in his designs. His emphasis on communicating with the built environment is visible, for example, in his house in Ligornetto (1975-76). He punched a small round window in the kitchen to frame a view of the bell tower of a local historic church. The window’s sole purpose was the visual pleasure caused by linking the house to an important local icon.

Historian Kenneth Frampton states that Botta’s sense of contextualism is an attempt to create a new regional style, in opposition to the products of homogenized international modernism. Frampton wrote in 1985...
that Critical Regionalism is an attempt to “identify those recent regional ‘schools’ whose primary aim has been to reflect and serve the limited constituencies in which they are grounded.” Botta captures the essence of this regionalism by designing buildings which seem to have a traditional root in the vernacular of Ticino.

Frampton continues: “Critical Regionalism emphasizes the tactile as much as the visual. It is aware that the environment can be experienced in terms other than sight alone.” Different materials cause different involuntary reactions in people. One can easily run one’s hand across smooth metal panels, but must be more careful when doing the same with coarse stone. And even stones vary in texture, relative to their aggregate content and grain formulation. Materials deliver sensations through their touch, aroma, how they reflect and absorb light and heat, resonance, etc.

Botta’s buildings express this essence of active participation thoroughly. He encourages people to physically and visually explore his sculpted facades. He designs for the hand which will be stimulated by the wall’s texture, and for the eye which will see the wondrous play of shadows on his work. Aware that as the earth rotates and revolves, producing an infinite number of shadowing possibilities. He can evoke sentiment upon the viewer as the day progresses, and as the year progresses.

Botta places importance in how his buildings are seen in light. Of this concern, Francesco Dal Co wrote:

*Light is the first inhabitant of the architecture of this Ticinese designer. The play of light and shadow produces mutations through the built figures and apparatus, which render palpable the details and which reveal the developments of the interior promenades.*

Botta rarely includes typical windows, rather he excavates the volume, allowing natural light to bathe the interior. He believes that since it reflects the sun’s rays, glass does not achieve his intentions of exhibiting an appreciation of the sun. He wants the sun to penetrate his walls, revealing their splendor, because the only difference between two surfaces is the intensity at which light reacts to each.

All the themes of Botta’s work—sensitivity to context, materials, light and building form—are evident in Ransila I, an office building finished in 1985 in downtown Lugano, Switzerland.

This building is to be experienced from many vantage points—from close enough where one can touch the facades, to far away where the building blends into its context. When viewed from a hilltop in the distance, the presence of a tree on the roof fits right into place with the forest in a distant park. In fact, it is difficult to distinguish the tree on Ransila I from the trees in the distance. Whether or not this was deliberate, Botta intended the tree to create an interaction of the building with nature.

Emphasizing the subtraction of forms, rather than the addition, Botta carves into the original primary form, giving it new meaning and expression. These incisions “occur along the geometric axes at the center of the composition, with the intent to gather the interior spaces around a single center...” In Ransila I, Botta wanted to express the importance of the corner. Instead of simply adding a traditional free-standing tower, he cut away the facades in a stepped fashion, leaving a solid form at the corner. It is as if he took a sharp pair of scissors...
and began cutting across the facade, then down, then across and so on. These incisions allowed the definition of a strong shape, which hugs the corner.

The tower designates a public portico, which fully embodies an urban European tradition. The building complies with the essence of the European city; i.e., open air markets, places to gather, places to sit and stare. The enclosed plaza inside the corner tower invites people to congregate for no other reason than to see and be seen.

Along with designing contextually, Botta emphasizes the different textures red brick possesses when positioned in various ways. Botta wants to “extract the maximum expression from whichever material I’m using.” The facade is divided into three main parts traditional for a tall office, the base, middle and top.

The base section is largely carved away to provide the enclosed plaza behind the building’s massive corner. The top is defined by a row of porthole windows and modest cornice which casts a band of shadow, terminating the composition. At the mid-level, Botta shows off the potential richness of brickwork in a massive grid...
of deeply recessed windows. The vertical columns between the windows are surfaced with horizontal stretcher coursing. The horizontal spandrels are surfaced with vertical stretcher coursing. Where the two brick courses meet, Botta draws them together to create a diamond pattern.

By altering the coursing of the bricks, subtle outlines are emphasized in how light hits the bricks. Not only does the texture change, but the perception of color differs. The detailing of the brickwork successfully exploits sunlight to create a composition that changes from morning to evening. Botta believes in the transcendental quality that architecture has, provided architects respect the environmental conditions that affect people. Because the sun influences our perception of the world, it becomes an important form-giver.

In Ransila I and many other buildings, Botta has created new ways of using materials that were once (and, reluctantly, still are) used with mundane results in public schools, and other budget-minded structures. Botta shows the elementary beauty in earthen materials.

Much architecture today seems processed and dominated by the influence of multinational corporations. Local traditions are bastardized, stifled or bulldozed. Botta has been able to overcome these tendencies, creating an architecture which upholds his local heritage. At the same time, he isn’t limited by the past or by his roots. His work exemplifies such a powerful alternative to the international cult of homogeneity and blandness that it has earned him the right to be called a master.

Notes on Text:
2 Architecture and the Urbanism: Extra Edition (September, 1983), pg. 5.
3 Interior Design (June, 1983), pg. 205.
6 Stuart Wrede, Mario Botta, pg. 66.
7 I.D. (June, 1983), pg. 206.
9 Ibid. pg. 327.
"A strong commitment was made that there would be ongoing concerns about diversity, in particular, about minority rights, and particularly about understanding minorities." Mitch Rycus.
Words from the Top
An Interview
with Department Heads,
Mitchell Rycus and Kent Hubbell

Dimensions conducted a joint interview with Mitch Rycus and Kent Hubbell, respectively the Urban Planning and Architecture Program chairmen, to obtain insights on some of the issues that concern students in both programs. The following questions and answers are excerpts from this interview.

Dimensions: After being in your positions as administrators for some time now, what would be the one thing this college doesn’t have or avail itself of that you would want to see here if you were again a student?

Kent Hubbell: As a student I would want a situation where the best possible teaching and education would occur; that the college and programs made a commitment of resources to insure that the best possible learning experience can be had by most students here. That’s really what we’re about first and foremost. We are a research institution, there’s no doubt about that, but that also feeds teaching.

Mitchell Rycus: Kent did point out something that does bring (an issue) to mind. I know going through as a student, traditionally (meant) that you went to classrooms, you did your stuff out of books, you had lectures, you may have had recitations; it was straightforward. Now, there seems to be a whole lot more in the way of learning experiences available to students. There’s a lot more in the way of seminars, gaming, fieldwork, and things like that; different approaches to education, and different approaches to the learning process that just didn’t exist when I was going through as a student. There’s a belief that education doesn’t have to be
somebody standing up lecturing from notes that are seven or eight years old, students copying everything they say and then reverting it back. That process has come and gone. You have to augment lectures today and part of that has to deal with television. When I went to school television existed, but it wasn’t as pervasive in the sense that everybody had to be entertained. Attention spans are about as long as that thirty-second commercial spot, and if you can’t capture somebody for more than that they’re either going to be asleep or you lost them. In some sense that’s challenged educators because now we’ve got to get up there and entertain you as well as educate you.

Dim: This past January, on Martin Luther King’s birthday, the University cancelled all classes. In honor of King and what he stood for, Diversity Day was created, a day during which students and faculty can come together to recognize, discuss, and overcome racial, cultural, and ethnic problems. What are your opinions on the results of Diversity Day?

KH: I thought things went well. It’s a nice idea that the whole College take a day and consider important issues, such as diversity. The one thing I felt we might have done better is to provide guest speakers with more time. This issue of diversity must be dealt with continuously.

MR: Maybe we shouldn’t have called it Diversity Day. Maybe we should have said this is a day to discuss black-white relations as these are the issues right at the surface now, here at Michigan, and these are the ones that are causing anxieties, problems, and they are issues we should understand. What really came out of it is that it’s not a one day deal. It’s got to be an ongoing thing. A strong commitment was made that there would be ongoing concerns about diversity, in particular, about minority rights, and particularly about understanding minorities — in terms of blacks, women, etc., and that we would continue doing that throughout the rest of the year.

Dim: Some concern resulted from the percentage of students who did not take part in the day’s events. Are the departments making any plans to improve student participation?

KH: We will definitely have to do that if we want participation to build rather than dissipate. There’s no doubt that a significant minority of students saw this as a holiday and didn’t come at all. I don’t believe that the faculty did that, but the last three of these events, first called teach-ins, clearly point to the need for more preparation.

MR: I think we’ll keep the same model, but I agree with Kent, I think that even though we had a good turnout (66% of the planning students participated) from a program point of view, we won’t be happy until it’s one hundred percent.

Dim: Do you feel that there have been improvements at any level in cooperation between the two departments, architecture and urban planning?

MR: From our perspective, we have been blessed to have somebody as supportive as Kent for Planning. There have been times when I think the Planning program felt insignificant next to this big College of Architecture and Urban Planning. We have never
had that difficulty with Kent as chair. (Still) we don’t do as much as we’d like to. Kent and I have talked about this a number of times and one area where we have a lot in common is urban design. We’re depending more and more on architecture for an urban design component in the Planning program. Another area, just starting, is about geographic information systems which will be on a college-wide basis. G.I.S. may be a major technical component of architecture and planning in the future, and the College sees it as facilitating greater cooperation.

KH: (One aspect) that’s worth mentioning is that the College is organized as programs and not departments, so that the faculty appointments are made in the College, that there is a lot of interweaving of faculty between the two programs allowing for greater cooperation. One thing which concerns the both of us is that there aren’t many dual degree students between the two programs.

Dim: Are there any attempts to involve Planners in the social functions (A.I.A.S., Alpha Rho Chi, happy hours) of the Architecture school? On one level, our entire exposure to the Planning /Architecture department is because of the fact that we are working on Dimensions.

MR: Sixty students get spread very thin when they’re mostly in Planning courses and don’t come in contact with architects until they take courses taught jointly. The social functions; that’s tough. I’ve seen the happy hours and I’ve never felt like we weren’t invited, but I think what happens quite frequently is that planners, due to their small numbers, feel intimidated. As a result they’ll sit in the corner by themselves saying, “who are all these people, I never saw any of them before and there’s this big activity going on.” It’s definitely an intimidating experience. I don’t know how you can force a greater socialization between the two. If you come up with any suggestions, I’d like that.

KH: The only thing I can think of right off the top of my head would be a combined course that would be taken as a requirement by our students and your students. It’s not uncommon for architecture schools in this country to require one semester of planning; we don’t, currently. The other thing we could do is require planners to take a design studio.

MR: There is a problem with studios between planners and architects. Planners are coming in at the masters level with zero studio, whereas the architects are coming into the masters program with two years of studio. So the discrepancy is enormous. That has to be overcome first. We have to work something out, I’m not sure exactly how. There are some ways to handle it, I think planners could have their studio at the undergraduate level, even though it would be a graduate course for planners, because they have to learn some of those basic skills.

Dim: Mitch, is any special effort being made to help planning students find jobs once they graduate? And are there any specific plans to help international planning students procure internships?

MR: We used to have a little office strictly for jobs where we kept things posted. That sort of fell apart. We
now have the 'Planning Job Mart' come in regularly, and an excellent alumni network. Our students are not having difficulty getting jobs, in fact, if anything, there's usually more jobs than students so we haven't had to put in a concerted effort to help students. We find that international planners who go back to their country, also get excellent jobs. As for internships we haven't gone and said "look, here's international students, let's get them internships". I suspect we could probably put something together relating to the kind of internships that would be best suited for international students, and maybe start looking at a variety of organizations that would hire them.

**Dim:** U.T.E.P., the Urban, Technological and Environmental Planning Program for Ph.D. candidates is presently located on Central Campus and is totally detached from the College of Architecture and Urban Planning. What are the concerns regarding its pending integration into this college?

**MR:** The critical issue, of course, is budget. There is a finite budget, and if the Doctoral Program comes in, it might take from, or diminish, the current Masters of Urban Planning resources, and we want to be very careful that doesn't happen. We've put together a document which is essentially the budget. If the University approves that budget, then we could lay out a program that could come into the College based strictly on that budget and no other resources. I think it's going to happen soon.

**Dim:** Planning students feel that they should be provided with some form of work space such as study carrels. How are you addressing this issue?

**MR:** Space. That's a perennial problem because of the way Planning works verses Architecture in the studio. Kent always gave us as much studio space as we ever wanted. Any year I can go up to Kent and say "Give me n-hundred spaces," and Kent will say "here, they're yours," but because planners don't work in studios for long periods of time, by the middle of the first semester, when you go up there, what used to be Planning space is gone. So we have asked for locked space, and we've got it. It's not big, it's not much; it's a start. It would be very nice to get some carrels, too, and that's a potential that we should look into.

**Dim:** Kent, there is now an architectural student advisory panel to the Program Chair. Could you describe it's function and what issues have been raised?

**KH:** The panel is made up of representatives from the undergraduate and graduate program. We meet monthly, or more frequently, to discuss matters arising in the program. We actually got the idea from Mitch. I'm very comfortable with it because when I was a student in the sixties there was a tremendous amount of student activism. I think that the best schools are the ones in which the students have some way to benefit from their own initiatives. We're currently talking about lab fees and teaching assistants (T.A.'s), to determine what is a fair and equitable work arrangement. Also, we have discussed the need for two spray booths to be installed at either end of the studio so that we can control the life-threatening, noxious spray chemicals that are all over the place.

**Dim:** Other than the spray booths, how are the other two problems, teaching assistants and the lab fees, going to be handled?
KH: Well, my feeling is that the lab fee was an experiment which has not succeeded. We are going back to an arrangement which is not unlike what we had before where only the costs of copying are covered by the lab fee. In some situations in the past, students weren’t sure that they were getting their lab fees’ worth of hand-outs. We’ll make every effort to make it a fair arrangement. With regard to T.A’s, right now we have T.A’s and S.A’s, or instructional aides, and in some cases they work together. Some students have questioned whether the work of the T.A. in that situation is not all that dissimilar to the work of the S.A. On paper, I think you can argue there is a distinct difference, but what you can’t get around is that a twenty-five percent appointment T.A. gets a full tuition waiver, which is a substantial sum of money. A student assistant only gets paid hourly, with no opportunity for a tuition waiver. We’re looking at possibilities of changing the percentage of the T.A. appointment and ways to award the waiver fairly.

KH: I don’t see why, for example, students shouldn’t be aware of the program faculty initiative to create a three plus graduate program in architecture, where any student with a prior degree, with the necessary prerequisites will enter the professional program as a graduate student and go through a curriculum that is about three and a half years long, to receive their first professional degree. This arrangement allows the core program in architecture to be available to students of different ages. We think it will create a more diverse student body and increase the number of well qualified students coming into the program. We’ve got a Spring half-term already. We’ll also plan to have a Summer half-term. If we can get the faculty approval, we’ll have school year-round starting this year, with the three plus program. There is the whole business of faculty search; we must hire a rather large amount of faculty every year; the quality of the school really depends on the quality of the faculty and the students. The more we work together the better it’s going to be, and I don’t mean it’s not just for the “here and now.” We, the faculty, are here for what can be an academic career, you are here for four to six or seven years, and you’re part of the Michigan experience, right? There are Michigan families in State, in the Country, and all over the world that all share a common experience, and you become part of that group, that cohort of Michigan people. Right now it may not seem like that way to you; you just happen to be at Michigan; you might have been some place else. It becomes increasingly important as you become older. You have children and you start wondering, “should I send them to Michigan?”
Sketch by Mark Melchi (MArch. 1985) while participating in the 1988 Vienna Exchange Program.