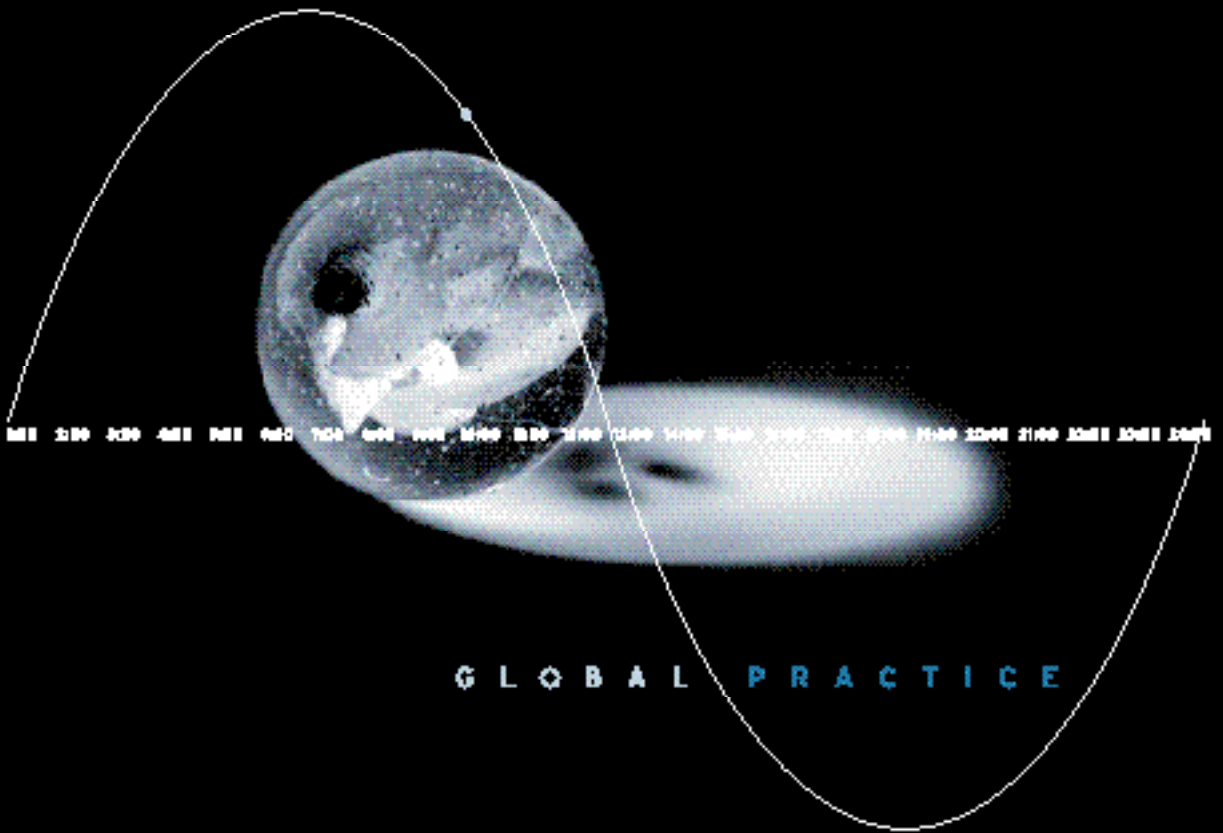


arcca

architecture california
the journal of the american institute of architects
california council

architect in the community issue

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- * The Power of a Line
 - * Foreign Routines
 - * Architecture, Society, and Social Change

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Comment

My daughter recently turned three, which is an optimistic way of saying that, until recently, my daughter was two. One of the primary Toddler Principles is Limited Choice. Never ask, “What would you like to wear?” lest you get orange sparkles and red stripes, with Barney shoes. Instead, ask, “Which do you want, the red pants or the black pants?”

Readers of *AIArchitect*, the weekly e-newsletter from headquarters, have enjoyed, over the course of the last several weeks, a series of questionnaires constructed on a similar principle. Here’s an example:

In your opinion, what is society’s perception of the greatest contribution the AIA could make?

1. *A source of trends in design and construction*
2. *Commitment to higher standards of professionalism*
3. *Responsiveness to client and public needs*

Presumably, Limited Choice is invoked here as a way to manage the responses of many, many readers. But it also weeds out other points of view. What about, for example,

4. *Advocate for the design of better buildings?*

Is that so outlandish? I don’t think so, but our organization may. Consider this doozy from the May 12 *AIArchitect*, in which reader responses were tallied:

From your perspective as an architect, what do you most need to know to become successful?

1. *Practice/project management—34 [% of respondents]*
2. *Design—9*
3. *Construction technology—13*
4. *Leadership—16*
5. *Business skills—28*

Imagine a poll by the AMA in which only 9% of doctors chose “Healing.” It would be a scandal.

The question is not, of course, as simple as the format suggests. The respondent is asked, implicitly, to answer at least two other questions: “What counts as a successful practice?” and “What do we mean by ‘design’?” Here’s what I would

mean by it: *Design synthesizes the abundance of possibilities for improving and enriching the circumstances of life—physically, emotionally, and intellectually.*

The wonder of architecture is its ability to synthesize a superabundance of possibilities. The best buildings are the ones that achieve the richest syntheses. Take Louis Kahn’s Exeter Library, where structure, view, elevation, scale, construction, materials, and the place of the individual in a monumental form all come together, inextricably.

Note that Kahn is remembered for possessing in exactly opposite order the skills ranked by the *AIArchitect* respondents. We remember Kahn for his design first, his leadership in setting aspirations second, his mastery of construction technology a close third, and his business and practice management skills a distant last.

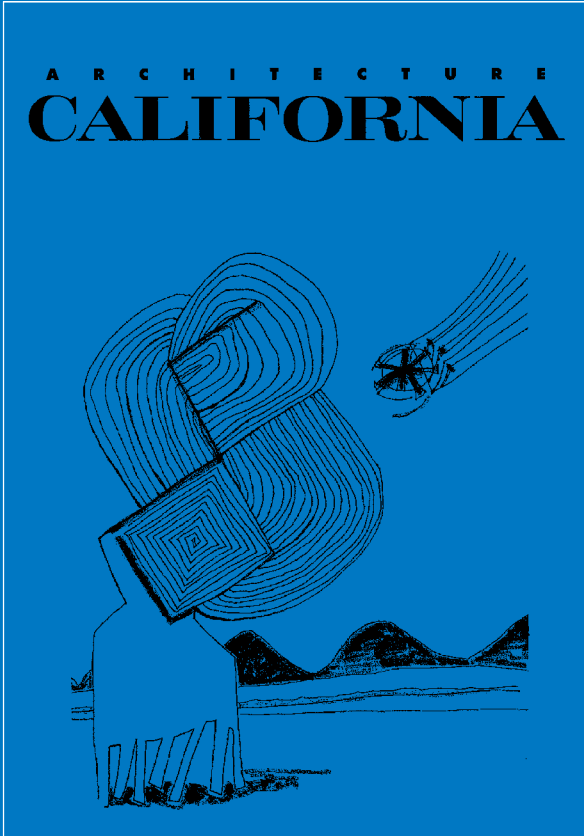
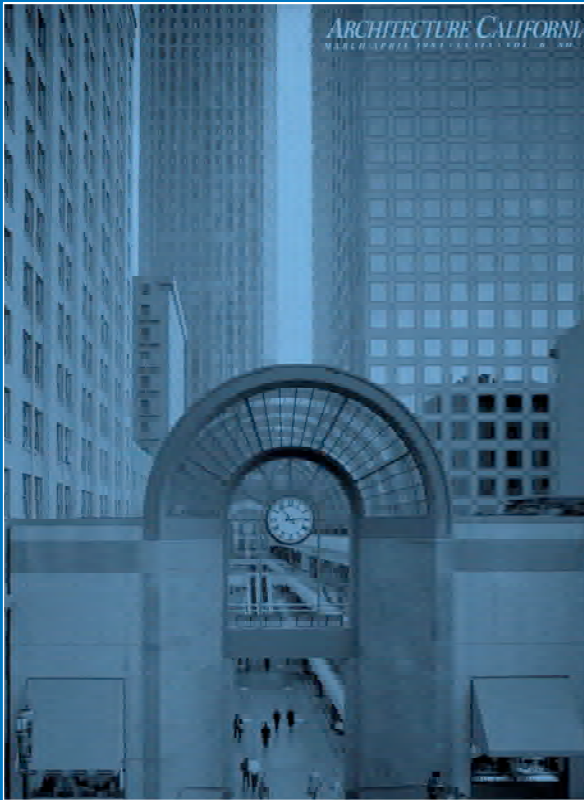
So, what counts as a successful practice? It needn’t be an either/or question; a fully successful practice produces fine buildings *and* turns a modest profit. But, if push came to shove, if leaving your practice in debt (as Kahn did) were the price of having designed the Salk Institute, would you wish it the other way around? And has history judged Kahn’s practice unsuccessful?

A related point: we grouse that Americans don’t appreciate good buildings. Well, twenty years ago, Americans didn’t appreciate good beer; now, excellent India pale ales are brewed in every mid-size city in the nation. Why didn’t we appreciate good beer then, and why do we appreciate it now? We didn’t appreciate it then because most of us had never tasted one, and we appreciate it now because we have. Which is possible because some determined brewers gave us the opportunity. Maybe the way to improve Americans’ appreciation of good buildings would be to concentrate on designing some.

The AIA deserves some credit for design advocacy—the awards programs; here in California, the Monterey Design Conference. But as long as AIA polls yield 9% for design, the many who have chosen not to join the organization will continue to suspect that the AIA is not about good buildings, but about good retirement plans.

Design is not the last ingredient of success; it’s the first. ●

—Tim Culvahouse, AIA, editor



Thanks for Chairing! the Contributions of Carol Shen, FAIA

Paul W. Welch, Jr., Hon. AIA

arcCA and the AIACC take this opportunity to recognize the leadership and devotion of Carol Shen, FAIA, chair of the **arcCA** editorial board. A member of the board since 1994, Carol has served as its chair since 1996. In this position, she has dedicated herself to improving the integrity and vitality of the journal. Her contagious enthusiasm has provided a new direction for the magazine while preserving the thoughtful and distinctive dialogue that has become the journal's signature trademark. Carol's collaborative approach has fostered a synergy among the editorial board, staff, contributing writers, and editor, making each issue more provocative than the last.

From its meager beginning in 1982 as a 32 page, black and white publication with few advertisements, the magazine has gone through several transformations. For a few years, it flirted with full color, more advertisements and more editorial pages, with six issues a year. In 1990, advertising (which had become a financial drain, rather than a resource) was eliminated, and *Architecture California* began publishing twice yearly in a modest but thoughtful, 6" x 9" format, meeting the challenge, as described by then editorial board chair, Barton Phelps, FAIA, of producing "a meatier, better written, more informative magazine at less expense." This format, with engaging articles on themes ranging from "Government and Practice" to "The California Coast," flourished for a decade.

In 2000, under Carol's and the editorial board's leadership, AIACC undertook another renovation, the results of which you hold in your hands. *Architecture California* received a new name—**arcCA**—a new look, and an increase in frequency and content. A key factor precipitating these changes was the desire for a partner for the publication. Now published quarterly by McGraw-Hill Construction, the publication is more financially stable and less dependent on dues support.

These changes came with a price. The name change gave *Architecture California* a fresh start, a new life, and a new look, but it also brought the challenge of "branding" this

new identity. The design of the publication, which has earned it numerous national awards since its transformation, requires a significant investment in design talent. To support the graphic design effort, Card and ELS Architecture and Urban Design stepped forward with a \$10,000 sponsorship, raised with \$6500 in seed money for the enormously successful **arcCA** t-shirt campaign, which Carol personally managed.

The magazine's perseverance through tough times to become an award winning publication reflects the outstanding character of the men and women whose vision of excellence it reflects. In its current form, the magazine has a publisher, an editor, and its own graphic designer, but its focus and editorial content are set by the editorial board, comprised of architects and public members from across California. Carol leads this board with determined good humor, welcoming diverse voices while maintaining the highest critical standards.

One editorial board member sums it up: "Carol Shen's effort to develop a business plan to assure the survival and long term success of the magazine has been most impressive. At the same time, she has maintained the principle that the magazine should remain scholarly, addressing often overlooked issues critical to the profession. Even the design look of the new **arcCA** has Carol's imprint and personality behind it—elegant, graphically current without being glossy fluff. The clarity, simplicity, and diversity of the editorial board and of the journal stem from Carol's pivotal role. She brings great warmth and collegiality to the effort—a great leader!"

The Chair Reflects

Carol Shen, FAIA



arcCA's Importance

This journal gives architects and others related to the profession a voice. Its mission is to promote dialogue among AIACC members, students, anyone interested in design and practice issues. Our contributing authors are encouraged to probe, raise questions, and not shy away from controversy. **arcCA** addresses the many participants, resources, and dynamic forces affecting our profession right here in California and it is extending its reach out-of-state and, occasionally, abroad. **arcCA** provides an independent platform to discuss the myriad issues we architects face, from the art of making buildings and planning cities, the education and mentoring of our

interns, the business of practice and construction, to the social and economic effects of everything we do.

There's more to architecture than the artifact. Beyond our buildings and their individual sites, what we do has greater meaning and impact on society, our culture, and the environment. I think **arcCA** is one of the best things the AIA supports on behalf of its members—**arcCA** exposes the issues, encourages the debate, explores the changing influences and context in which we practice, and documents the richness of the challenges and of our accomplishments. What better way is there to promote the profession and educate the public and each other?

arcCA's Rewards

Architects have a social responsibility for the consequences of what we do, and I believe that **arcCA** can make a difference, influencing not only our members but also the users of what we design and build—our clients, students, and other players who shape our environment. To pick up on this year's MDC theme, "Doing good doing good," what drives my efforts toward the ongoing quality (and survival) of **arcCA** are the rewards and satisfaction of "doing good."

Over the years, serving on the editorial board has also given me the chance to meet and interact with many thoughtful, talented, and inspiring architects, educators and leaders in the profession. My involvement with **arcCA** has enriched my ongoing work at ELS, where our practice is similarly multi-layered, involving community interaction, dialogue about limits and change, advocacy, design of public space, and a commitment to continuing education. I feel quite fortunate to be the beneficiary of input and reflection from both my colleagues at ELS and those involved with **arcCA**.

arcCA's Future

Since first joining the editorial board in 1994, I have watched *Architecture California* evolve from a membership-supported journal published by AIACC with two issues per year, into **arcCA** in its present form, an award-winning quarterly published by McGraw-Hill that now relies less on dues and more on ad revenues. With the continued support of our publisher and the AIACC leadership, the energy and commitment of the best minds and practitioners in California, and in partnership with others in the industry who share our values, I look forward to **arcCA's** promising future—a wider reach, a broader audience, and a more established identity and value both within and outside the profession. As the word gets out that it's a great resource, I hope **arcCA's** early successes continue for many years to come.

Contributors

Thomas R. Aidala, FAIA, provides professional services to both the private and public sectors from his studio in Kelseyville, California. His award-winning work includes Zellerbach Hall at UC Berkeley, and he has set standards for planning and urban design with his projects for communities from St. Helena to Jerusalem. His early work includes three years in Rome working with Luigi Moretti, Walter Gropius, and The Architects Collaborative. More recently, he served as principal architect and urban designer for the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, where he directed the rebuilding of Downtown San Jose. In 1996 he received the AIA's Thomas Jefferson Award, its highest national honor for design of public architecture.

Architect **Anthony Catsimatides, AIA**, practices in Marin County. In 1995 he founded Plan Net Professional Online Service (www.plannet.com), an Internet based design service that has evolved into a web-zine of resources, ideas, and articles about architecture and planning.

Lisa Findley, AIA, is an architect and architectural journalist who teaches at CCAC (California College of Arts and Crafts). She is a contributing editor for *Architectural Record*, is on the editorial board of *arcCA*, and has written for other publications, including *World Architecture*, *Baumeister*, and *Architecture Australia*. Her book, *Building New Ground: Architecture, Politics and Cultural Change*, is due from Routledge in March 2004.

Evan Markiewicz has been in non-profit practice since 1993, when he founded MakingGood, an organization that worked with social service agencies to improve conditions in homeless shelters in New Haven, Connecticut. The same year, he began working with the New Haven/León Sister City Project, developing construction programs for urban and rural communities in León, Nicaragua. In 1997, he began work on ViviendasLeón, an innovative economic development program that builds affordable housing and offers mortgages at affordable rates for working families. He continues to maintain a small professional practice in San Francisco.

Lynne D. Reynolds, AIA, is a student in the architecture program at CCAC who spent most of the previous two decades as a professional photographer of furnishings and interiors.

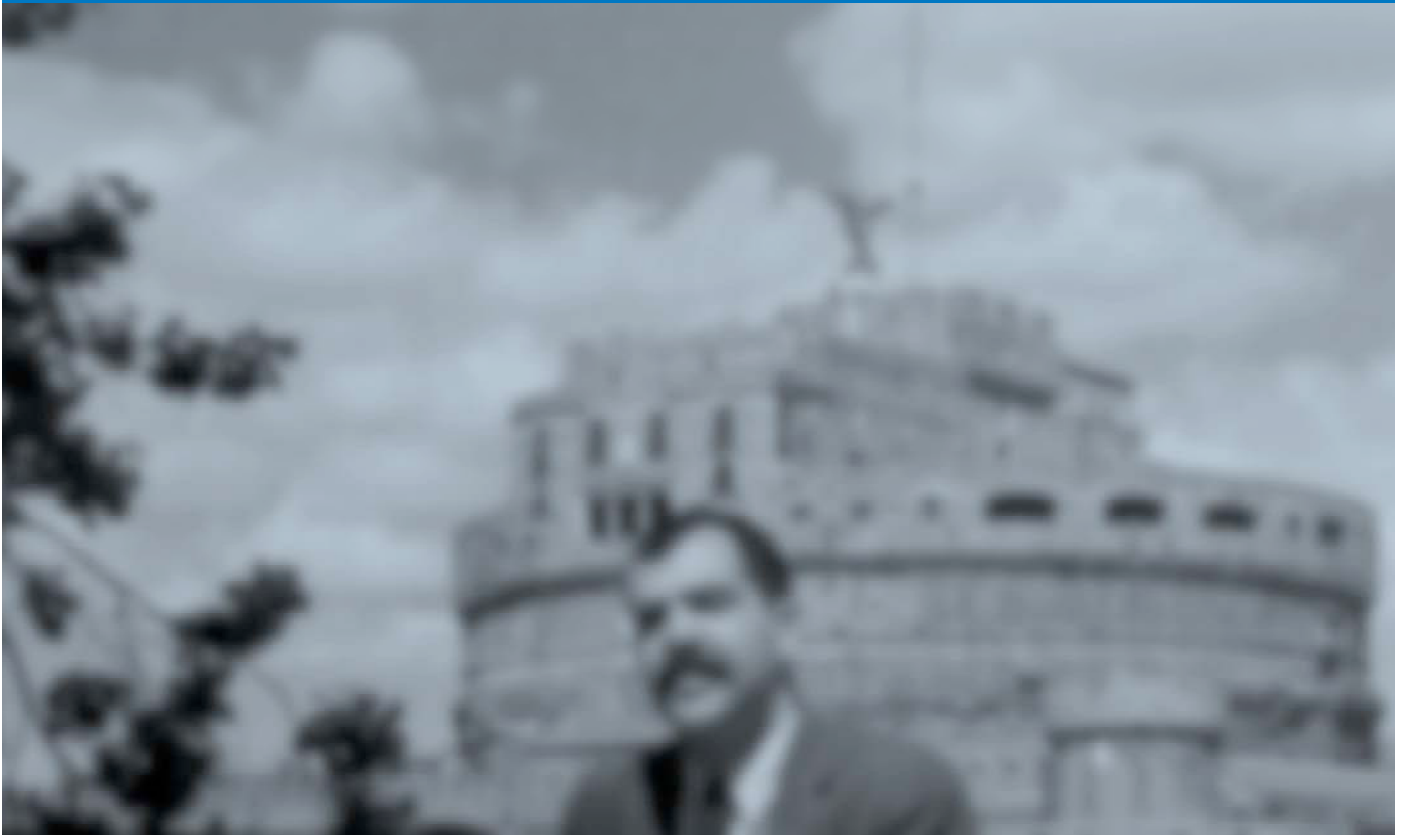
Michael Franklin Ross, AIA, is principal-in-charge and **Deeing Chu, AIA**, is a principal of HGA/Los Angeles. Mr. Ross was previously president of Wou & Partners and Ross/Wou International, which merged with HGA Architects in January 2002. He has over 30 years experience in leading design teams on major projects. His Asia experience includes serving on the faculty at Tokyo University as a Fulbright Scholar. Ms. Chu was previously a partner of Wou & Partners. She has 15 years experience in China and 20 in the United States. She has led design and management on major projects in China, including the 350-room Crystal Palace Hotel, the 870,000 s.f. Tianjin *Evening News* Tower, and the Meijiang Community Center.

Richard N. Swett, FAIA, has served in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he co-authored the Congressional Accountability Act and the Transportation for Livable Communities Act. He was subsequently U.S. ambassador to Denmark, where he was awarded the Grand-Croix of the Order of Dannebrog, the Danish equivalent of knighthood. Ambassador Swett serves on numerous boards, including the Board of Peers overseeing design quality issues for the General Services Administration. He also served as one of six panelists who helped the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation select the teams to perform design studies for the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site.

Paolo Tombesi holds a PhD in Architecture from UCLA and teaches architectural design and practice and political economy of design at the University of Melbourne. He was the Los Angeles correspondent for *Casabella* between 1990 and 1996. He is widely published internationally and is doing funded research on the changing geography of design labor in Australasia.

Paul W. Welch, Jr., Hon. AIA, has served as Executive Vice President of the American Institute of Architects, California Council for 22 years. He has overseen the development of *Architecture California* through the years as a forum for professional dialogue in California.

Thanks to Nezar al-Sayyad, Dana Buntrock, Assoc. AIA, Lisa Findley, AIA, Peter MacKieth, and Anne Zimmerman, AIA, for helping identify our "foreign correspondents."



The Power of a Line

Certain details of the following are tempered by the dimming of the memory of magical events that occurred 40-plus years ago in another country called Youth. The dialogue was reconstructed in Italian and translated. -T. Aidala

Thomas R. Aidala, FAIA

“Signore Architetto Aidala, welcome please.” He gestured to a chair before the desk. “Bruno has brought to my attention the beautiful drawing you prepared for the presentation. Before we discuss that, I want very much to apologize for not taking the time to welcome you to the studio, but affairs prevailed, unfortunately.”

“I understand, sir, no harm done.”

“Good. Now to the drawing. I would like in the future, should such creative wants descend upon you, and I hope they continue to do so, that they manifest themselves more discreetly. I would beg you to acknowledge who feeds your needs currently and reserve the use of names on drawings to the discretion of the studio director. I can assure you the client would not know nor care who you are even if they discerned your name. Till now we have felt no need for advertisement, since fortunately clients have had no difficulty in finding me. Now then, dear Aidala, to the massing and prospectives (sic),” and then the words I wanted, “I have some thoughts I pray to share with you, since you will continue now solely with Appia Antica.”



A country called Youth

With that he picked up a generously fat brush wired to a meter-long handle from among others that lay neatly on his desk. The desk was possibly a 15th or 16th-century formal dining table bigger than the Fiat I was driving. Hell, it was about the size of the apartment's kitchen we had recently rented.

The room in which Luigi Moretti had this desk was a high-ceilinged place that, to this impressionable youth, went halfway to heaven. Along the right side were alternating, decoratively stenciled wall panels and draped and shuttered alcove windows that went from sitting height to a few clouds short of the ceiling, stopping at an intricately carved string course. The double entry doors, some 3 to 3 1/2 meters high, clearly old, wooden, and intricately carved, as well, with scenes I took to be biblical.

The doors were attended to by Bruno, the Major Domo, through whom you had to go to get to them. Bruno was round, with an angelically innocent and open face. His eyes twinkled as though he were perpetually about to smile. He dressed in black (winter) or white (summer) pants and a black, collarless jacket with white pinstripes (winter) and the reverse

in summer. Winter or summer, around his neck was a silk foulard that only an Italian or a 9th-century Persian could dream up and wear. I found out in time that he was also Moretti's bodyguard and driver alternate and was always discreetly packing.

Moretti's desk was about 8 meters from the entry doors and was approached through a thicket of some 50 easels haphazardly crammed this way and that, holding a changing display of his private collection. His likes and appreciations were as ample, erudite, and catholic as he was. Identified on the first of a few times Bruno let me wander the unoccupied room at leisure were paintings by Guido Reni, Helen Frankenthaler, Giorgio di Chirico, Morandi, a Matisse, a large Sienese *predella*, and a terra cotta bust of a boy by Houdon, among other equally impressive but unrecognizable works. I had never imagined a "private" collection. Was such discernment and ability to cohere seeming opposites a disposition, a talent, or luck? Whatever, he had it.

It was the first time I had been called to his *salotto*. I had been working for him for a bit over two months. His studio was housed in the upper two floors of one entire wing of the Palazzo Colonna in Rome.

I was there because in my senior year at U.C. Berkeley I had discovered his Fencing Academy and the "Casa Girasole," two enormously seminal modern architectural works of pre- and postwar Italy. I had browsed through a few issues of *Spazio*, then and now perhaps the most important architectural publication of the postwar period, neither completely understanding the Italian nor partially understanding the math. *Spazio* was never a runway for taste or style. It offered reasoned descriptions of spatial manipulations and disquisitions on their three-dimensional consequences and how they are perceived. The analytical essays were authored by Luigi Moretti.

Arriving in Rome in the very early spring of 1958, I went straight to Moretti's studio on Via di Sant'Apostoli and applied for a job. I was interviewed by Signora Gardella, the studio director, who was impressed I think by three things: I was the first American to seek work with Moretti, I was technically proficient to a degree young Italian architects and recent graduates at the time were not, and I could sort of speak Italian and therefore communicate with the Boss, who spoke no English. I got the job and

four days later sold my wife's and my return tickets. Rome was to become home for the next three and a half years.

My acquaintance with Bruno was in hindsight a mutual cultivation of perceived exotics. He could not understand why in the blood of Christ anybody would come to Italy to work for meager wages, stand in unruly crowds for any public necessity, put up with primitive toilets and cold buildings while 7/8 of his countrymen were hoping, beseeching the pantheon of gods and goddesses, not to mention trying to bribe officials, to be given a chance to emigrate to America.

On the other hand, I was trying to get him to come clean about why the Architect would need muscle. I did eventually get him to tell me. Too much, too politically incorrect and knotted for this reminiscence. Also, it did not take long to figure out that Bruno ruled. He knew everything about everybody, knew where everything was, and had the keys to it all.

Which found me about a month later following him into the attic in which Moretti's archives were stored dustily and endlessly beneath the roof of the 15th-century palazzo, dimly glowing white like the bones in the Catacombs of Palermo. Perched on pedestals of equal height were the plaster castings of the interior spaces of the scores of buildings Moretti had analyzed in the pages of *Spazio*. Beyond them, beneath the weak yellow light of what appeared to be original Tesla bulbs, were the plaster models, interior and exterior, of every project he had done to date. On subsequent pilgrimages to my Jerusalem, I would come upon pristine, unopened sets of *Spazio* wrapped by issue, every one of them. So highly regarded was the magazine that the complete sets of issues were listed by the Belle Arte (the national watchdog of the artistic patrimony) as a national treasure and were not to be removed from Italy any longer without official dispensation.

I had to meet, to speak with him. "How," I asked Bruno, "can this be done?"

"I really am sorry, Aidala, the architect has been traveling and has been very busy. He doesn't usually meet with the colleagues unless they are assigned on a project directly with him. You have not been assigned as yet to a particular project and so don't really have a reason. However, I'll see if a way can be arranged or presents itself."

Together we came upon a ploy for me to gain entrance to the Cathedral. I was to do some piece of work uniquely of the studio and at once mine that would catch Moretti's attention. At the time I was working as a utility draftsman and renderer, filling in on projects where and when needed, usually doing the job in two to four days. I reported to the studio director, who doled out the work to me. I was an arm and hand and eye—brain was not needed. Brainwork was for an assignment to a project.

I was told to do a large presentation rendering of a site development plan for a project called "Appia Antica." Yes, that one. It was a housing development of individual though clustered villas, priced attractively for deposed monarchy and others of the black aristocracy (which included film stars, singers, and other performers, what we today call "Eurotrash" or, if home raised, "masters of our universe" or celebrities).

The important thing about the project was that it was sited on an outparcel within the newly designated National Park of the Via Appia Antica.

Gardella had asked me if, rather than the buildings delineated as roofs, would I, as she had seen in some U.S. mags, render the ground floor plans. As a bonus, I could use my brain and furnish them, differently of course. The drawings would be used in a presentation that the architect Moretti would be making to the client in a week, so I did not have much time. I was to make the furnishings "chic."

The client was very important, and a success on Via Appia could lead to an even larger project on a site he owned on the Yugoslavian coast. "Well," I assured her, "I'll take care of it." With a property in a national park, the client was, I thought, probably some deposed monarch or family appended, sent into generous exile by the very grateful sort of democratically elected slate of left-wing thugs who usurped the entitlements of the right-wing thugs of the airless, dying aristocracies of a few countries. Turned out it was King Paul and his wife of whatever that part of Yugoslavia was called before it was torqued and hammered into place by Tito.

I worked my ass off. These were drawings in ink wash and pen on elephant-sized sheets of handmade, 100% cotton paper. I worked day. I worked night. And at the end of each shift thanked Providence I had not knocked over the inkbottle or broken a loaded pen point over a wash.

I finished the drawing early by a couple of days, to allow myself time to settle my affairs before being sent packing by Gardella or who knows what by Bruno.

What I had done was to render each unit's carpet patterns or furniture shadows or landscaping so that the whole rendered project spelled out ambiguously, but there when looked at just so, **T-O-M-A-I-D-A-L-A-D-R-E-W-T-H-I-S** (In Italian, of course.)

Something
outrageous,
beautifully
crafted,
and easily
altered,
so as not to
cause him
embarrassment.
The Architect
likes that
sort of thing.

The studio director, quantity surveyor, and engineer missed it. Bruno the cool saw it. Bruno the non-architect, unblinded by expertise and immune to professional incomprehension that someone would try such a circus stunt, Bruno completely in touch with the creative energies needed for such skullduggery and intrigue carried in the Italian DNA, pointed out to Moretti the expertly crafted and quite beautifully subtle acing of the studio. I had done him proud. "Something outrageous, beautifully crafted, and easily altered, so as not to cause him embarrassment. The Architect likes that sort of thing," he had suggested.

I was at the open doors; between me and Moretti, who was standing and beckoning me to enter, were the tangle of easels and a path more felt than seen.

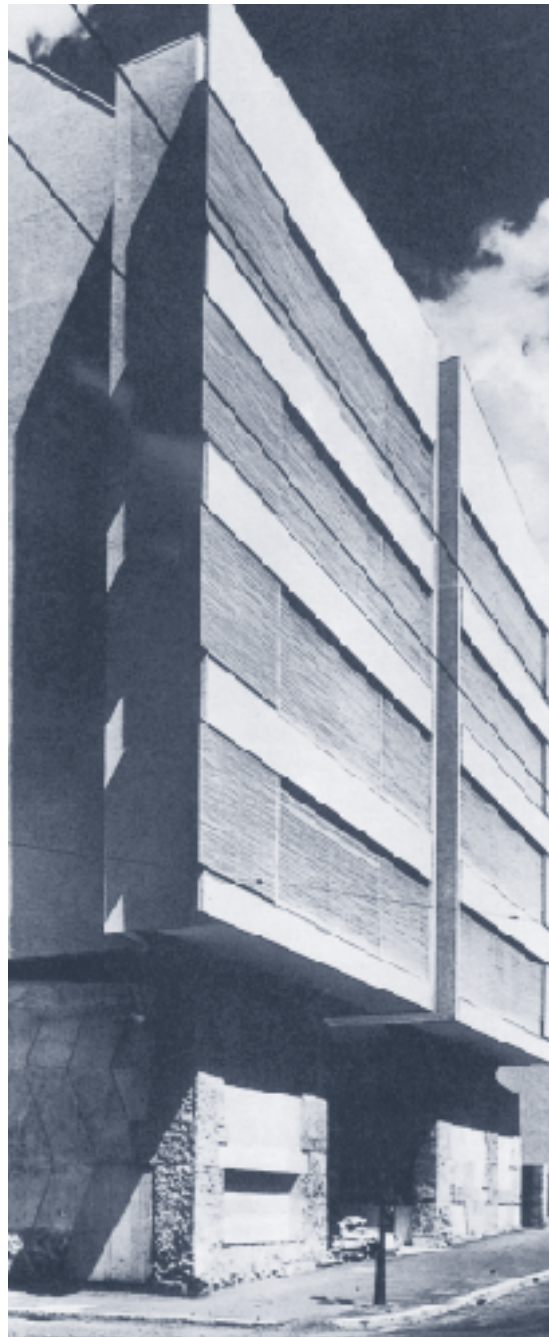
Seeing him for the first time was recognizing a familiar. Jesus, I thought, he's the Fat Man, Nero Wolfe, all 325 pounds of him dazzlingly turned out. He was wearing my yearly salary in clothes that draped about his enormous body, cloth so soft it would never wrinkle. As he sat down smiling, I wondered if he had seen a wrinkle in five years. "Signore Architetto Aidala, welcome please." Nails buffed, skin firm and glowing, he exuded the inner health of a lack of concern about money. He had rather small hands for a man his size and on his right wore a gold ring embossed with the head of a Roman emperor or governor, said to me later to be an ancestor.



C. Conrad's study for the cover of *Spazio 7* (1952)

He picked up the brush by the meter-long handle and swirled it around in a pot of water and color on the floor next to him, unnoticed and hidden by the field of schemes that was his desk. I figured out what he was doing. It was then that Bruno appeared. Behind Moretti on the wall was a contraption that held a roll of heavy watercolor paper vertically, which Bruno, by turning a crank, caused to unroll and slide horizontally to the left. The paper was held in the contraption about 18" behind Moretti. The bottom of the paper was at the level of Moretti's seated shoulders and the top about four feet above that.

Leaning left to right across his amplitude, mixing at his floor palette, he said, "Architetto Aidala, the very first instantaneous impression you have of any object seen against a background, especially the sky, is the silhouette. The plans juxtaposed against the sky and terrain from the approach road lead me to concluding the silhouette of the roof edge of the first group of villas should look like this." He lifted his arm and brush from left to right, turning his body over his right shoulder and either painted or the line leapt off the fully loaded brush onto the paper as lightning would. Thirty-plus years later, watching Montana throw that line to Dwight Clark that one time or Jerry Rice often, I would recognize the same lightning strike. That line going backward to his right over his shoulder was, I found out at my desk later, utterly accurate. Each zigzag break coincided with what I had been drawing for a week. It was, in retrospect, forty-plus years later, the best, truest, most accurate, shocking, brilliantly dazzling line I ever saw anybody draw except for Montana and Rice, and it took two of them. That line was drawn in less time than it took Montana to backpedal, and Moretti did it all by himself like Ginger, backwards.



Casa Girasole, Rome (Luigi Moretti)

I recognized and knew the power of a line as the contour of an idea, and it changed my life.

I shit you not.



In an era of globalization—
and of global misunder-
standings—we cherish the
collegiality of our
profession, which spans
political and national
borders. arc CA has asked
a dozen architects
from around the world
to tell us about the
nature and conditions of
practice in their home
countries. Their
replies not only provide
insight into their lives,
but help us put our
own joys and tribulations
into a global perspective.

€ 0,77

ITALIA

FOREIGN

Correspondents



Sydney Olympic Plaza Solar Lighting Towers, 2000,
Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects.



AUSTRALIA

Peter Tonkin is Director of Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects, a 24-person firm in Sydney, Australia, whose award winning projects have included the redevelopment of the Hyde Park Barracks Museum in 1992; the Vietnam Memorial, Canberra, 1993; the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 1996; and the Public Domain and solar-powered Plaza Lighting Towers at Sydney Olympic Park.

<http://www.tzg.com.au/index.html>

A recent and authoritative poll by the National Trust of Australia counted the 100 “Living National Treasures” of Australia. None are architects, and only five are involved in the visual arts. Dominant are sports and community figures and performers. This probably reflects the real perception of architects in Australia: as not all that important, except when to blame for the eyesore next door. A few current and historical architects stand out for their public presence; the Sydney Opera House’s (non-Australian) Utzon is a household name, while in each major city a handful of architects, alive and dead, would be recognized by most. Well-loved—or hated—built works are the foundation for a public profile, rather than critical acclaim or

published writing. Given Australia's still-present reliance on overseas opinion on many matters, international recognition is a fast-track to local celebrity, while consistent genius over a career can bring an often-posthumous fame.

Recently, however, in the booming property market, the 'branding' of apartment buildings by their designer has become common, and a largish group of architectural practices is 'marketable.' These firms share a range of prominent and successful built works, a fashionable style, and a defined image. The fact that under the gloss of the latest trend lies sound functional design, good workable spaces, and better than average built quality is unsaid, but it is the real message. These architects are recognized as leaders of taste and affect the overall quality of development in the inner city, leaving suburbia in its usual design vacuum. This trend has been confined to the booming eastern cities—Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. The other state capitals and the regional centers lag while the 'bush' sees little property investment and less focus on good design.

The Royal Australian Institute of Architects lobbies intensively the three levels of government in Australia—federal, state, and local—and is sometimes listened to. The RAI A tries to forward the role of the profession and to influence decision making on construction policy, heritage preservation, environmental standards, and the supply of housing. Individual architects find a voice in the press on issues of design and city building, generally as quick 'grabs,' not reasoned comments. There are few votes in good architecture, and the time taken for the construction of buildings means that few governments last long enough to get the credit or blame for their design choices. Australia has had a few architect politicians, but not many, and most of them at the local (city) government level. A recent prime minister was noteworthy for his passion for 18th century architecture, but it was a source of satire, not respect, and distanced him from many voters.

Relations among client, architect, and builder vary as much as the situations and personalities. As ever, good buildings rely on a shared commitment and vision and a collaborative approach. Package deals where clients are offered a firm price by a collaboration of architect and developer/builder are falling from favor due to poor built quality and low levels of control by clients; the best buildings are still procured by relatively traditional client/architect relationships, with good control of building contracts. Architectural competitions are seeing a revival, with several excellent completed results in recent years. The Sydney City Council requires limited competitions for inner-city buildings to foster "design excellence."

In summary, architects seem to be earning back some

of the public esteem lost in the mid- to late-twentieth century, by a combination of better design practice, savvy marketing, and improved public presence. The future does not look too bad.



AUSTRIA

Silja Tillner is principal of a five-person planning and urban design firm in Vienna. She received the Bauhaus Prize for her design for the URBION project for the revitalization of Vienna's 6km long Gürtel Boulevard. She has also received awards for the retractable membrane roof for the Vienna city hall and for the membrane roof at Vienna's Urban-Loritz Platz.
www.urban-design.at/silja_menu_engl_kl.html

THE COST OF BEING AN ARCHITECT

The procedure for becoming a licensed architect in Austria is similar to the US; it is required to first pass a licensing exam. After passing the test, one has to join the architects' association and is liable to subscription in the "retirement fund," the "death fund," and professional liability insurance, as well as being required to pay yearly subscription fees. These mandatory contributions are extremely high. They are calculated as a percentage of income and result, in some cases, in payments as high as 50 % of income. These fees burden especially smaller offices or younger colleagues at the beginning of their careers. There are no exceptions to these rules.

Due to European Union regulations, it is now possible for architects from any EU country to work in another EU member state. Several of the younger Austrian architects have used this rule to open up offices in Holland or Germany, where fees are very low (because there are no mandatory contributions except for administration), i.e., €500 / year compared to €12,000 / year based on a low to moderate income.

One of the big debates here among architects is how to reform the ridiculously expensive pension system. Younger architects would prefer to join the state system, which would allow for more flexibility, especially when changing jobs. The main disadvantage of the separate retirement fund for architects is the lack of flexibility, one cannot change profession or employment status without losing the contributions. This leads to the ridiculous situation that some architects who cannot acquire commissions still have to keep paying their dues.

THE ARCHITECT IN SOCIETY

Generally, architecture is a highly respected profession associated with a lengthy and demanding education and a responsible professional life full of creative opportunities. One setback has been that building contractors are now allowed to call them

selves “architect.” Residential buildings especially, are realized mostly by contractors who take over 95% of the architect’s design work, as well. Even if wealthy clients build sumptuous villas, very rarely do they consult architects.

By contrast, large public projects are always designed by architects. The public sector is the biggest client for architects in Austria, and respect for the work of architects is evident. Many responsible government officials have studied architecture or planning and value the creative contributions as well as the management qualities of architects. Lately, creative, appreciated architects also have been awarded with large projects. Formerly, only commercial, mediocre offices were trusted with large public buildings.

Architects are never elected to public office, and they are hardly ever consulted on government policy decisions with one exception—the building code—where usually one or two architects are consulted, but too little, and these are not “design architects.”

In the newspapers, architects are often portrayed as hip trendsetters, always wearing black and having a stern look on their face. They are definitely not perceived as leaders; only very few are trusted to be business people, as well. We are fighting this cliché of sushi-eating, fashion gurus, and would much rather be respected team members in all aspects of building technology and client relations. And many of us are just that!



Office Building Spittelau, Vienna 2002-, Silja Tillner Architect.

ACQUIRING COMMISSIONS

The award of contracts in the public sector is highly regulated and above a certain threshold always results in some form of competition. If the building costs exceed €5 million, the com-

petition has to be open to the entire EU. Large private projects in an urban context that are anticipated to cause discussions or need variances for approval almost always are awarded through invited limited competitions.

The open competitions are currently inundated with German participants, due to the major building slump in Germany that has arrived after a decade-long building boom. The 1990s inspired many young architects to open up new offices in Berlin and other cities; they are now out of work.

Similarly, in Austria, studying architecture became extremely fashionable in the last decade, and many young graduates opened up team offices. Now there are by far too many architects competing for work, so it has become more and more difficult to succeed in a competition. The average number of competitions an architect has to participate in before winning a contract lies between 40 and 60. Each competition can easily cost an office around €15 – 20,000.

Yet the open competition is still the only tool for inexperienced architects to win a larger contract. If carried through in a fair and correct way, a competition seems like the perfect instrument to find the highest quality design. Lately, competitions have caused a lot of public debate, due to unfair procedures in which jurors have helped their friends win a project.

Another problem is that the jury often consists of extreme personalities: client representatives who seek functionality, business executives who require economic feasibility, city officials, several architects who demand an inspired solution but often have diverging opinions. The result is unfortunately agreement on the lowest common denominator, quite often a banal solution.

COMPARISON OF URBAN DESIGN TASKS AND CHALLENGES

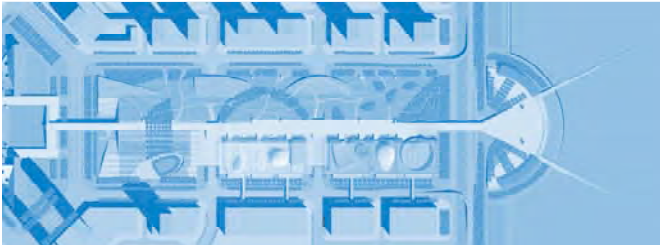
Today, in the US and Europe, master plans are no longer only product, but also process: consultation with stakeholders, public participation, project financing, and strategies for implementation have become as important as the use, height, and bulk of buildings. In US cities, the abundance of left-over space is in clear contrast to the shortage of public space, i.e. plazas, parks and left-over spaces usually become areas of conflict. The lack of communal space, combined with car-dominated streets, leads to an absence of communication in public areas. In European cities, there is comparatively much less residual space, with the exception of brownfield-sites which have become a main target of inner-city development projects in London, Frankfurt, and Vienna.

A more process-oriented work method has evolved in Vienna recently, with stronger community involvement and active citizen groups engaged in a participatory planning

process. In the US, especially in Los Angeles, my experience showed that community involvement has a much longer history and has become an integral part of any planning project.

CHINA

Duanfang Lu and Gang Gang are principals of GZ Architects, Ltd., a fifteen-person architecture and urban design firm in Beijing, P.R. China.
www.gzarch.com



Shenzhen Baoan Central Area "Green Axis" Competition,
First Prize, 2003, GZ Architects, Ltd.

Architecture is among the most respected of professions in China. Architects are admired by the public, who think they are talented, creative, artistically sensitive, and technically knowledgeable. In film and novel, architects are depicted as intellectuals, heroes, leaders, or romantic lovers. In reality, architects are well-to-do professionals compared with most wage earners. Average incomes of architects are upper middle class, better than what attorneys, doctors, and accountants earn. In particular, those who run their own design firms earn large incomes and enjoy costly lifestyles.

While, in the past, most architects worked for large, state design institutes with hundreds of employees, more and more now work in private firms. Most state institutes are interdisciplinary and offer services ranging from architectural design to structural engineering and housing technology. Small firms often need to collaborate with large institutes on making implementation plans.

Architecture in China is a powerful profession. Architects are consulted by local governments on matters of urban development; some serve on important boards and commissions and help shape space-related public policy. In most cities, at least one of the vice-mayors is from the architecture or urban planning discipline. Famous architects gain public recognition and are respected by a constituency outside the realm of architecture.

Architects play a comprehensive role in the building process. They interact with clients, make designs, prepare drawings, help clients obtain approvals from planning depart-

ments, offer guidance for the construction team, modify design in the building process, and inspect the contractor's work. Some clients are more manipulative than others they would like to select the builders, the materials, and the equipment without following the architects' suggestions. But, in most cases, architects cooperate with clients and builders to make decisions during construction.

As China is in the process of rapid economic growth, investment is vast and architects are busy. Our firm, GZ Architects, for example, is a mid-size design firm (15 architects). We have frequently received commissions for large-scale development projects, including a 3 million sq. ft. residential complex in Chengdu (2000-2002) and a 26 million sq. ft. office complex in Beijing (2002-2003). At times we could not find enough qualified designers or drafters to do the work.

Despite these advantages, architects periodically suffer from disappointments and failures. Some clients are rude and lack education. Quite a few, including some large developers, are not reliable in terms of paying service fees. Several years ago, for instance, an architect who received his training in the US and won many national competitions designed an interesting house for a very successful real estate developer. Although he asked for a very modest fee (about US\$1,000), the developer only paid half of the fee in the end. In addition, due to policy changes or financial problems, projects often start and pause abruptly. For firms with only a few commissions at hand, the risk of not having work is high.

Although many architects have the talent to do challenging work, they are frequently forced to sacrifice ideals by doing banal and architecturally unpromising projects, due to severe economic constraints. Local construction technology limitations also restrain the range of possibilities. When the expensive and monumental projects do come out, including some government-sponsored projects, clients often choose to give commissions to established Western architects in order to project a modern and prosperous image of the firm or the city, even when they can find local architects with similar talents. This gesture reveals a lack of self-confidence and the nation's persistent belief in the superiority of exports from the developed world. Frantz Fanon's classic depiction, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, of psychological violence in the context of the colonial situation could just as easily have been applied to the present mentality in China: "The look that the native turns on the settler's town is a look of lust, a look of envy; it expresses his dreams of possession—all manner of possession..." How to adjust this mindset and carve a larger space for their creative impulses is the task today's Chinese architects confront.



ENGLAND

M.J. Long is Senior Partner of Long & Kentish, a twelve-person firm in London, England.

Prior to founding Long & Kentish in 1994, she was a partner for twenty years with Colin St. John Wilson & Partners, where she was co-designer of the new British Library. She teaches regularly at the Yale School of Architecture.

www.longkentish.com

Architects are in a somewhat anomalous position in England. The British educational system has always played down the visual arts. Words and music are both taken very seriously, but visual matters are not seen as a discipline, and architects' views on matters visual are not seen as any more reliable than those of the "man in the street." Perhaps they are even seen as less reliable, because they are suspected of having been brainwashed by the Corbusian theories that are held responsible for the worst of the London housing estates and highway schemes.

There is also a traditional tendency in Britain to regard "trade," and therefore businessmen, as not quite respectable. The country was run by country squires for so long that, even now with most of the population living in cities, anyone in business is likely to be regarded with suspicion.

So, if they cannot be regarded as artists or businessmen, architects must fall into the category of technicians. And this is certainly a longstanding theme in British architecture. Paxton was an ingenious gardener, and much in Archigram, Rogers, Foster, Grimshaw, etc., comes out of that tradition.

Architects here have in recent years lost their traditional role as leaders of the design and construction process. A building of any size is now in the hands of the project manager. Increasingly in Britain, universities and public bodies go to either design build or private finance initiatives to organize construction projects.

Architects are not traditionally part of policy making in government. The exception here is Richard Rogers who has worked hard to win the confidence of the Labour Party. He is in a position now to be listened to, at least on general issues of policy. It is largely from his arguments, I believe, that the government has begun to encourage the use of brownfield sites for new housing and is willing to put public money into the decontamination that is required to do so.

One significant difference between practice here and in the US is the use here of quantity surveyors. When I first started practicing here in the late '60s almost every project followed the traditional route of a lump sum contract based upon a Bill of Quantities, measuring every nut and bolt

and hour of labor. This gave a document that ensured a detailed (and level) playing field for tendering contractors and which also established agreed rates for pricing any variations. Bills of Quantities are hardly ever done now; fast track construction, design build, and other forms of construction management have bypassed the Bill and left the quantity surveyor as general financial advisor to the design team. Many QS firms have now gone into project management.

I am a member of the RIBA, but I have also recently become a board member of the local chapter of the AIA. I am amused at the unconscious pose of cultural imperialism adopted by the local AIA members, most of whom seem to come from the ranks of the big (three initial) US firms. There seems to be an assumption that US firms can show the locals how to do it. In some ways, there is an admirable professionalism about the US projects, but, on the whole, they totally fail to pick up the quirks and local equivocations of the contexts in which they operate. British projects, by comparison, may be too quirky and equivocal, but in the long run I now feel that the attitude of responsibility for the local context (physical and cultural) breeds a healthy modesty.



National Maritime Museum, Cornwall, 2002, Long & Kentish Architects



FINLAND

Juha Ilonen is principal of Arkkitehtitoimisto

Juha Ilonen, a one-person firm in Helsinki, Finland. He is the recipient of the Pietilä prize

(1998), the Suomi prize, awarded by the State of Finland (1994), and a state scholarship for artists (1990). He is the author of The Other Helsinki, a book about the reverse face of the architecture in the city, and is chairman of the editorial board of ark, the Finnish Architectural Review.

"It's not a profession, it's a club." This is how, traditionally, Finnish architects have seen their line of work. We are few, and everybody seems to know each other. Work has been pleasure, not business, and weekends or holidays have been no obstacles for the fun. This semi-bohemian life is, however, changing. The increasing number of building regulations, the shrinking time schedules, the computers: these have all pushed the practice toward a more businesslike activity.

But still, we are far from the American way, as I understand it. Most Finnish practices, even the internationally most famous ones, are teams of five to fifteen people. There is not a hierarchy of junior and senior partners and what have you, and the practice is not firstly a money making machine, which just happens to deal with architecture. A few business-minded practices of fifty or so exist, but many practices only have one architect, who also takes care of bookkeeping, cleaning, and the like. This is how I have worked since 1989, after having worked in a handful of small practices for ten years.

Another change is felt in the wallet. The economic depression of the early 1990s hit us hard. When phones eventually started to ring, a new era was entered. A working, solid system of standard fees (so fit for a bohemian lifestyle) was considered a cartel and thus banned. As a sad result, architects found themselves competing with prices.

A Finnish architect is one of the designers in a team, each of them usually chosen by the client. The engineers involved each take full responsibility for their own designs. Yet the architect has the overall responsibility and has to see to it that the various solutions match with each other. This self-evident role of the "main designer" was recently written into a new law. Very few architects' firms include services for structural or other engineering or cost calculation.

One cherished side of the profession is the system of architectural competitions. There are many, and their true function is to choose the architect for the job, not to get PR or sponsors for the project. Invited competitions in a variety of forms are becoming more popular, but almost all major public buildings are still results of open competitions. 50 to 250 entries are submitted to each open competition, anonymously, and the jury always has at least two architects appointed by the Finnish architects' union. And there is no dirty play. Finns are known to be honest. According to a recent study, we have the lowest corruption rate in Europe. For almost every established architectural practice, this system of open competitions has been the stepping-stone to the profession and to further commissions. Many winners have been students, and they have been given the job regardless.

As professional personalities, Finnish architects

have a schizophrenic position between all-bohemian artists and strictly professional engineers, which gives us the chance to enjoy both roles. The general public is just as confused as we are. This Jekyll-and-Hyde role is seen in the way we look as some kind of a synthesis. We wear casual, black clothes. Some of us still wear the 1960s architects' uniform, the black-and-white striped Marimekko shirt. An architect wearing a business suit and a tie is almost a joke (among architects).

Speaking of not wearing a tie, Finnish women architects have over a hundred years of history behind them, and they have almost an equal status with their male colleagues. In the masculine world of construction, many of them are still called "girls," but many also turn this insult into a clever tool. And yes, there are many architect couples.



Restaurant Oasis, Helsinki, 2000, Arkkitehtitoimisto Juha Ikonen.

Architecture as a form of art has a solid status in Finland. The shadows of our great masters are long and protecting. Yet, the general public is very unaware of what we are and how we work or how to reach us, for many reasons. An unwritten law says that we may not advertise our practices. If you look at marketing in media, we are invisible. The Internet is changing a lot of this, but have a look at Finnish architects' web sites (the few there are): how uncommercial can you get?

We Finns are quiet people, Finnish architects even more so. We don't explain our work, and we seldom make our opinions heard in the media. Two architects are or have been members of Parliament, a handful have taken part in communal politics. Architects dealing with theories are extremely few. Wild or crazy "artist" architects hardly exist. We seem to

be rather down to earth and pragmatic, yet with a strong underlying sense for the basic qualities in architecture.

ISRAEL

Avigail Sachs was a project architect at Ammar-Curriel Architects, a fifteen-person firm in Haifa, Israel, from 1997 to 2002. She holds a B. Arch. from Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, where she has also taught in the Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning. She received a master's from MIT and is currently a PhD student at the University of California, Berkeley.

ARCHITECTURE AND POLITICS:

THE ROLE OF ISRAELI ARCHITECTS

The multiplicity of roles architects can and do assume is inherent in the profession and poses problems for architects everywhere. In Israel, this multiplicity of roles has added significance, because architecture, or more specifically building, has repeatedly been employed as a tool in the bitter Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Architecture can no longer be divorced from its political implications. Israeli architects have, for the most part, remained silent about this link and its impact on their professional roles. A recent controversy, in which this silence was challenged, brought the dilemma to public attention.

Debate arose over an entry to the Architecture Congress in Berlin, commissioned by the Israel Association of United Architects (IAUA) from two young Israeli architects, Eyal Weizman and Rafi Segal. It erupted when the architects presented their completed project, a catalogue of articles and photo essays entitled *A Civilian Occupation: the Politics of Israeli Architecture*. The director of the IAUA, Uri Zerubavel, protested that the initial brief had outlined a balanced and comprehensive review of Israeli planning, while the finished catalogue focused one-sidedly on the settlements in the Occupied Territories. The association angrily rejected it and cancelled the submission.

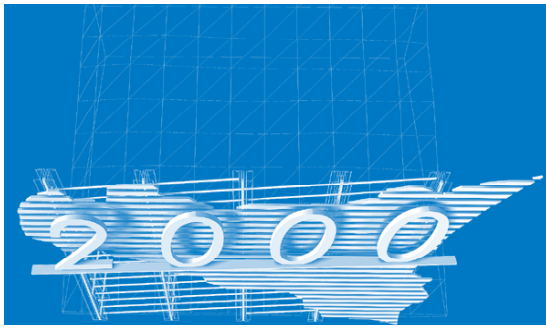
Esther Zanberg reported the rejection in *Ha'aretz*, a daily Israeli newspaper, and the story then received attention in the international press. English publication included items in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Guardian*, and the *New York Times*. The authors of these articles followed Zanberg's lead and, siding with the editors of the catalogue, described the cancellation as "harsh political censorship." This assessment avoids, however, a discussion of the opposing interpretations of the role of architects that inform both the compilation and the rejection of the catalogue.

Segal and Weizman's catalogue is not only a critique of architects and their alleged complicity in political

decisions, it is also a demand that they assume the role of critical thinkers and political activists and that, as their representative, their association should do so too. This position is obvious not only in the content of the catalogue but also in the decision to invite Gideon Levi and David Tartakover to contribute to it. Levi writes a weekly column in the daily *Ha'aretz* about the situation in the Occupied Territories, and Tartakover is well known for his left-wing political posters, among the more recent one for the refuseniks association, Yesh Gvul. Both have consistently used their professional media positions for political persuasion. Weizman, moreover, was quoted in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as saying, "The settlers have their magazines and newsletters, we think this catalogue is a kind of balance in the public debate," suggesting that their catalogue is directed at political groups as well as architects.

The IAUA was established only a few years ago in response to the marginalization of architects in the quasi-governmental Architects and Engineers Association. The IAUA founders felt they were only partially represented by this latter organization, where architects were excluded from important committees and government policy decisions. This marginalization was seen as part of a broad deterioration in the standing and viability of the profession in Israeli society. With the objective of restoring professional pride and strengthening the national standing of Israeli architects, the association has organized lectures, tours, and symposia and has gained recognition as the official representative of Israeli architects in international forums. In a society torn by politics, the taking of what would have been perceived as a one-sided position was expected to be detrimental to the association's objectives. While Zerubavel noted that he personally agreed with Segal and Weizman's political convictions, he explained to reporters that, "The association is an a-political organization whose role is to promote specialization and not to take a political position."

The positions of both the IAUA and the catalogue's editors are responses to the complex situation that Israelis, and architects among them, must confront daily. The controversy over *A Civilian Occupation* has only begun to outline the possibilities and implications of each position. In the international arena this debate brought attention to the catalogue that it might otherwise not have received. Several months after the cancellation, Zanberg reported that the catalogue had been exhibited in Berlin and New York and that the editors had been invited to lectures and discussions. It is in the Israeli architecture profession and the four Israeli schools of architecture, however, that this debate must continue, so that in the future, in what one hopes will be better times, Israeli architects can assume a responsible and meaningful role.



Millenium project, Sicily, 2000, Pierluigi Serraino



ITALY

*Pierluigi Serraino has practiced architecture in Italy and France and is currently a project designer at SOM, San Francisco. He graduated from the School of Architecture of the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', earned his MArch at SCI-Arc and his MA in History and Theory at UCLA, and is now a PhD candidate at UC Berkeley. Author of History of Form*z (Birkhauser, 2002) and Modernism Rediscovered (Taschen, 2000), his writings and projects have been published internationally.*

For centuries, Italian was the language of high culture in European architecture. This historical awareness bestows on Italian architects, still today, an undisputed aura in the public consciousness. Judgments on design issues—whether theoretical or concerning artifacts—are the prerogative of the unchallenged authority of architects, who capitalize on this national legacy. Today, architects in Italy can be consulted on national television, be columnists in non-specialized tabloids, and translate the professional *patois* in a language understandable for the general public.

The conditions of architectural practice have, however, changed since the Renaissance grandeur. Specifically, the twentieth century marked a transition in the professional status and ideological commitments of architects. In Italy, the Fascist period was the stage for the last unified expression between nation state and avant-garde. Giuseppe Terragni, Adalberto Libera, Mario Ridolfi, and Angiolo Mazzoni were some of the makers of the infrastructure of the country between the two World Wars. Post-offices, railway stations, and municipal buildings were some of the building types receiving design attention to realign the built environment to European standards, on one side, and to the nostalgia for Imperialist Rome, on the other.

With Post-War reconstruction, the climate became radically different. A more populist angle than the earlier period and an embrace of left wing principles—with occasional folk overtones—permeated the built portfolios of architects who felt unprecedented societal responsibilities for their work. A

renewed focus on the living conditions of the working class, particularly in the 1960s and '70s, produced countless affordable housing projects tailored to address the needs of those who had limited participation in the benefits of national wealth. Strategies of participation, developed to involve end-users in the design process, became mainstream practices in the professional routine of politically aware architects. With significant differences, the early work of Giancarlo De Carlo, Renzo Piano, Carlo Aymonino, and Aldo Rossi is situated in a philosophical perspective imbued with empathy for socially vulnerable groups.

Broadly speaking, the contemporary role of the Italian architect is molded on the split between the memory of a by-gone cachet and their current actual influence in public policy decision-making. Such a predicament can be partially attributed to the post-war rise of a technocratic strand led by engineers, trained to take over the technical expertise on building matters. From a legal standpoint, a licensed architect and a licensed engineer can perform exactly the same job. Engineers can sign off on architectural design, and architects can stamp structural drawings. This is not unproblematic, due also to the continuous surplus of architecture graduates and the even more numerous engineering graduates. As architects are unable to benefit from the protection of the law for their distinguished monopoly of competence and professional distinction, they have to contend with the uncertainties of an unregulated market.

When it comes to taste, architects maintain a leading voice in the public forum. Contention over courses of action are particularly frequent when interventions are located in the historic fabric of the city. The old centers of Rome, Florence, Venice, Bologna, are considered city museums occupying monumental roles in the architectural identity of Italy. Each region of Italy carries unique architectural traditions that frame the conception and collective absorption of an architectural artifact. Architecture as modification of existing structures is a disciplinary specialty that has emerged since the late '70s. Ever since, preservation is preferred to new intervention when both options are feasible. And architects do lead the process of urban modification as sensible experts on the aesthetic demands of the built environment.

The size of architectural firms is primarily geared toward the domestic market. An office staffed with 80 employees is rare in Italy and likely to be found in either Rome or Milan. If it is true that Renzo Piano is Italian, it is also true that his practice is a national exception shaped around Anglo-American models of organizational efficiency. More common are small and medium firms who often undertake infill projects in a rather dense urban tissue.

Being an architect in Italy is synonymous with being an intellectual. Sooner or later, architects with a public presence engage in literary self-reflection about the conditions of practice and broader questions of public interest. Often, writing is related to obligations in academia, but not exclusively. Renzo Piano's *Dialoghi di Cantiere* is a classic example of autobiographical accounts of architectural projects as personal adventures. In addition, as intellectuals, architects regularly get involved in the political life of their community, either as informed voices dealing with the local authorities or directly assuming political office.



JAPAN

Hajime Yatsuka worked for Arata Isozaki from 1978 to 1983 and established his own office in Tokyo in 1984. His work has been widely published; projects most familiar to overseas readers include "Tarrlazzi" (1987), "Athene Multimedia Center" (1997), and "Nagaoka Folly" (1998). Author of numerous books, he is an editor for the journal *Ten Plus One* and a regular contributor to *Shikenchiku* (Japan Architect). Mr. Yatsuka served as deputy commissioner for the Kumamoto Artpolis from 1988 through 1998, assisting the prefecture to select non-Japanese architects for projects and coordinating interactions between overseas designers and local architects.

Let me begin with an old memory from the early '80s when I had been working on the design of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles for Arata Isozaki. The *L. A. Times* came to the office of Gruen Associates (our local architect); they wanted to make a report on the work-in-progress. Unfortunately, Isozaki was not there. They asked me to stand by the model, together with the president of Gruen Associates, for the publicity photos. Obviously, they wanted to show some Japanese guy working on the project. I was impressed, because that was quite unlikely to happen in Japan, as architects were not popular figures in the mass media yet (with a few exceptions, such as Kisho Kurokawa who married a popular actress, and Kenzo Tange, who was a national hero).

Some twenty years later, this week, I saw a train-car advertisement for a popular journal offering fashionable information for urbane people in Japan. These advertisements provide us what Route 66 in Las Vegas perhaps offered the Venturis more than thirty years ago. On the advertising poster was a large image of Rem Koolhaas. This was for an issue on what is now happening in Beijing: the flying Dutch architect, who was mentioned as a "charismatic figure of the contempo-

rary architectural scene," was taking photos (of course with a small digital camera) of the central plaza in Beijing a place where students were killed more than a decade ago. Koolhaas is now involved in a huge project there. The model photo looks very exciting and very capitalistic!

This is the reality (anti-reality?) of how architects are perceived in Japan. They might be a hero at some moment, some place, on some occasion; but likely not for people in the provinces, where there is no dense network of rail-ways(!), and they are mostly overlooked by the mass media, as if they are non-existent. (Western readers might have no image of the Japanese countryside. Japan is not formed only by several metropolises; more than 60% of the Japanese population are still living in rural areas)

Another popular figure, Tadao Ando, with whom I share a client (and honestly speaking, who was even kind enough to introduce me to them) once told me an extremely illuminating episode. A potential client came to him and, after asking his opinion on the project, put the final question, "You don't seriously need a fee for the design, do you?" Architects, if as well known as Ando, are influential persons worth being associated with, but scarcely treated as professionals with skill and responsibility, of which these people have no idea—"OK, Mr. Ando, it is our honor to have your sketches or whatever, but our contractor could produce drawings. You didn't spend too much time on the sketches, which is why we actually do not understand what is the nature of the fee for architects..." That kind of reaction is still, even today, likely, even if many clients are not rude enough to give it voice.



Folly of Sky-Human-Earth, Nagaoka, 1998, Hajime Yatsuka

There used to be a rumor (before the 1980s) that a respected intellectual magazine made it a rule to feature an attack on architects when they found no better subject to deal with—although there were hardly a sufficient number of publicly known architects at that time to become targets. I do not know if this rumor held any truth or not, but it is perhaps illustrative that many of us referred grimly to it. But one memory of a piece as it was actually published was quite clear: a well

known modernist (and leftist) literature critic blamed Kenzo Tange because the knob of one of the doors of a recently completed building of his design was too easily broken, insisting this was caused because his design neglected practicality and thus showed the architect's social irresponsibility! It goes without saying that this door was for some insignificant room and not designed in a singular way. This episode illuminates the idea of the architect's social responsibility held by the left wing intellectuals. It is rather an old story, but one that could happen today.

The situation has both changed and remained unchanged. The Ando episode is based on the Japanese building tradition in which the aristocratic client, when sophisticated enough, made a decision on the design and the builder provided technical skill and labor on the site. This tradition survives in the contemporary custom in which general contractors produce shop drawings and, consequently, legally share the responsibility for the completed buildings with architects. If they do, what is the architect's role? But on the days in which architects were hardly media darlings and there were a more limited number of jobs, there was some appreciation by our clients for the work of architects. People had the choice of using the contractors' designs and did not have any other reason to give a commission to the architects than an appreciation for their work. As a selected few architects became celebrities, expectations have changed. I have elsewhere written on the Expo '70 in Osaka, the event that was an ambitious experiment by architects led by Tange. But the experiment succeeded only as a popular, mass culture event, to their bitter disappointment. This moment marked the shift from modernism to postmodernism in architecture in Japan, in which the media (e.g. advertisement agencies) took command. After thirty years, architects themselves are becoming the object of advertisement, media heroes.

Quite recently, I attended a lecture by an architect from the US, speaking in Europe. To my surprise, he showed two Japanese projects. I was surprised, because I knew both projects (but not his design). One was an open competition. I also participated; both of us failed. So viewing his scheme was no surprise. But the second one was a large complex of research and other facilities. The project—and I am not sure if it was finally built or not—was never made freely open to architects' proposals, as far as I know. By coincidence, I myself was also consulted about the possibility of being involved in it. Apparently, this architect was commissioned after I quit the project. I left it without producing any scheme at all, because I realized one of the agencies involved had no intention of building my proposal, regardless of its content. They simply wanted publicity images for raising interest (and funds) from

other investors. The actual design would be done by some large commercial firm (or contractors), with no ambition in terms of design. I do not know if my American colleague was informed of this or not, while working on the project. If not, that is our shame apparently; I was not either, but I simply had the advantage of realizing this background. I am sure he got paid, but he was paid for a marketing image, not for the substance nor the responsibility that accompanies an architect's design. Maybe our situation is not so different from the US, in reality. It is rather natural in the age of globalism.

Forgive me for only juxtaposing these examples. Your question—if architects are admired in my country—is too difficult to answer in a definitive way. So I only hope you might draw your own conclusions.

MALAYSIA

Laurence Loh is principal of a twenty-person private practice in Penang, Malaysia. His earlier working experience included work with a 150-person practice with three offices, as well as with the Penang Island local authority, architectural department. He apologizes for suggesting, by constant use of the word "he," that the architectural profession is a male domain. There is no gender prejudice intended, but what is the reality?
<http://www.lla.com.my/page/frame.htm>

When a graduate starts his working career in a Malaysian practice, he quickly discovers that the profession is regulated by law. (Terrorists take note. Don't come to Malaysia disguised as an architect.) In 1967, the Architects Act was promulgated by Parliament, and this single piece of legislation starts to shape the aspiring architect's career. So a fresh graduate's short-term mission would be to obtain a license to practice, to be sanctified to put his *dhoby* mark on plans to be submitted to the regulating authority for approval.

In order to get there, he must first register as an "architectural graduate" with the government's Board of Architects. But this can happen only after he pays his dues to the Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM) or the Malaysian Institute of Architects as a "graduate member." Why? Because the law says so. Without being a member of the Institute, you cannot be registered. Then he religiously maintains a logbook for two years and sits for an exam prepared by PAM after prior screening of his logbook. If he passes, he can then apply for his license. This process generally takes three to five years.

After thirty years of practice, I know of only two successful Malaysian architects who have gained public prominence and the respect of the profession (albeit given

very grudgingly), despite their non-conformance with the system. Both are graduates of the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London, and both have chosen not to take the conventional route for one reason or another. A coincidence? Recently, I interviewed both of them.

A contentious interpretation of the law was the initial catalyst for their rejecting the registration route. The law specified that, prior to sitting for the professional practice exam, the aspirant had to accumulate two years of working experience from the date he registered with the board as an "architectural graduate." Both had worked for several years in prominent British practices (Foster, Rogers, Grimshaw). One had even been registered with the Architects Registration Board of England. Many returnees had been caught unaware by a narrow interpretation of the registration requirements. Having failed to register immediately on completion of their respective courses, most served extra time to meet the requirement's interpretation. These two architects, however, chose not to and stayed out of the "unfair" system.

Both interviewees confirmed that, although there were initial disadvantages, the AA spirit prevailed. "The AA taught me to be street smart," said one. With partners who are registered, his firm has grown to become one of the most sought-after practices in Malaysia. To this day he maintains it is the "AA survival kit" that kept him going.

The second architect I spoke to said, "The AA doesn't brand you. You learn how to be flexible, inventive, with an edge on perception." He found that the design of individual houses ("doing the smaller projects") became the ground for "experimentation through implementation, backed by a strong theoretical base," which he then articulated in international forums and competitions. This process has kept the edges sharp in his approach to new-built work. These architects have my admiration.

Talking about admiration and the public's view of architects, I would say that the Malaysian press, which creates the myths, does not see architects as popular heroes. And if what is given credence and space in the local news is a reflection of interest, attention, and taste, then I would profile a newsworthy architect as one who owns a publicly listed company, appears in the Business Top 100 chart, is quoted in the business section of the dailies, is seen in public with the prime minister, drives the latest Mercedes Benz or BMW (the higher number series) and has aspirations of being a politician. (He would have registered himself with the appropriate political party on the same day he got his badge to practice.) I can think of two architects who are ministers in the national cabinet at the moment.

Notwithstanding the above, most architects, especially those who do not have an entrée into the privileged class, get on with their modest lives. Technically, they work with what is being promoted by the building industry, exemplified by what is displayed, year in, year out, at the local international building materials trade fairs. They eagerly await the arrival each month of the foreign architectural magazines they have subscribed to and check them out for new ideas, especially whatever is being promoted as flavor of the month. Arbiters of taste? Whose taste? Does Shanghai's skyline look different from Kuala Lumpur's or Singapore's? Architects are mainly followers.

In the Malaysian architectural profession, architects work with laws based on British models. For example, the Town and Country Planning Act and the Code of Ethics in the Architects Act impose traditional contracts and tendering systems introduced by RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) expatriates. The architect is the supremo in a system that would have worked when it was a gentleman's profession, but now every institutionalized discipline, especially project managers and planners, wants to wear the pants in Malaysia.

But wait! WTO and changes are around the corner. Two-thirds of the Malaysian architectural profession, trained in Britain and Australia, do not have a clue about American systems of procurement and marketing. So heaven help them, if China's condition is anything to go by. Get ready to welcome free enterprise, no-obligation proposals, no fixed scale of fees, aggressive marketing. The only consolation is that the word "Architect" is still a legal entity, and the term can only be used by persons registered with the Board of Architects as such beings. Having said this, nobody to date has been prosecuted for calling himself an architect when he has not registered as one.



SOUTH AFRICA

Leslie Mukwakwame Musikavanhu is managing partner of Cre8 Design & Innovation, a six-person firm in Johannesburg, South Africa.

A new revolution simmers across the African Plains. It entails that we take time to look back to our past—sometimes it is there that we will find the answers. In a trying time like this in Southern Africa, it is difficult to fully address any topic without bringing in politics. The issues of land have brought about selective amnesia and interpretive disagreement among the peoples of Southern Africa. The question is about how far we go back in time to correct the errors and omissions of the present.

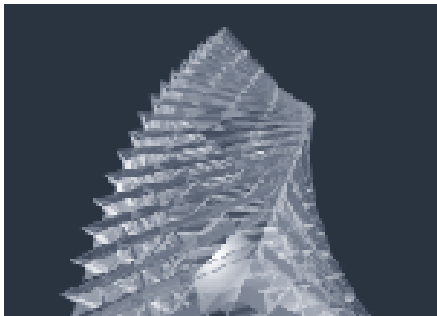
The sankofa bird (of recent past West African teachings) is a bird that flies forward and constantly looks

back to its past. It is my humble opinion that, in trying to design spaces that are purely African, one has to look back at how and why it was done back then.

The revolution is eternal
The revolution is internal.
It is also paternal and maternal,
All in the same breath.
All in the same death.
The revolution knows -
No Death;
The revolution enjoys more breath.
The revolution deploys more berth.
The revolution implores more birth.
I greet you with all the titles and totems to which
you are rightfully born.

My love affair with Architecture is one that stretches far beyond the reaches of this lifetime. Rooted in allegory and meaning—the architecture of our forebears has quickly lost its ground.

I have been fortunate, since my return, a little over three years ago, to have worked in a number of Southern African countries at the same time. A great number of them are seemingly locked in a time warp—a mere shadow of the happenings of a time gone but not forgotten. The paint peels off the walls, as if the pain has taken its toll on the buildings as well. It is history locked in structure—it is honest about its time.



Bank headquarters, Zimbabwe, in design development

A strong cultural upbringing and “The Tuskegee Experience” have gone a long way towards readying me for the many challenges of being a young, black architect in Southern Africa. It is going to take a while for the prejudices to be eradicated, if that is at all possible. It is out of the desire to have power and control that we develop the habit of prejudice. We still need to find ways to even the playing field properly. Sometimes the act of doing so comes at too high a cost. It is, however, an exciting time for architects practicing in the region. I say exciting

because of the boundless opportunities to influence the way space is perceived for generations to come.

Historically, African architecture has primarily been about mediating between defense and culture. Defense in its broadest definition possible, from the elements and would-be invaders. If ever there is a more fitting essay of the history of the people than that of the architecture of Africa, I surely hope to experience it someday. Some of the purest structures I have ever had the pleasure to experience are also the simplest. Examples are the ancient ruins scattered throughout this region.

Architecture in present day Southern Africa is caught between the most glaring and amusing clichés and the most intoxicating expressions of cultural inflection. There are those who feel that African architecture is about the random appliqué of traditional features and motifs. Then there are those who religiously mimic the trends and designs of the West. In our recent past it has been about how one mediates among all affected parties within the context of the site—inside and out. It is no surprise that the architects of yesteryear were also the mediators (vessels for translation).



TURKEY

A. Ipek Tureli is a Turkish architect trained at the Istanbul Technical University and at the Architectural Association in London. She has taught at the Middle East Technical University and has worked in firms in the UK and in Turkey, most recently the fifteen-person practice of Arthur Collin Architect in London. She has collaborated on voluntary community projects in Anatolian villages while pursuing a PhD at METU in Ankara. Currently she is continuing her doctoral studies in architectural history at UC Berkeley.

If one were to make a survey on the street, asking passersby to name a Turkish architect, the reply would be, “Mimar Sinan,” the Ottoman architect of the 16th century. Nobody would be able to cite any contemporary architect. In Turkey, architecture is not part of popular culture; construction, however, is. This state of affairs is not due solely to economic unviability or public lack of interest, but also to the self-organization of the profession.

In the Ottoman Empire, architects functioned as bureaucrats; they did not have a social standing as “artists.” The academic education of the discipline of architecture was initiated in 1847 within the Royal School of Military Engineering. The first law defining the practice was issued in 1927. The law regarding the Chamber of Turkish Architects was issued as late as 1954. The number of schools of architecture was

three in 1960, thirteen in 1990 and thirty-two in 2000. In the 1970s, the duration of education was reduced to four years, and constraints regarding practical training were loosened.

A striking aspect of the current Turkish education system is that, since the early 1980s, the Turkish Institute of Higher Education (YOK) has governed all universities and university entrance examinations. Hence, schools of architecture are not independent in administration, and they cannot choose their own students. The students are blindly placed according to the points they earn and the preference lists they have submitted. In these listings, architecture, along with medical studies and law, has been consistently in the upper middle range. Architecture is respectable, but not that popular, since it will not bring a lot of income.

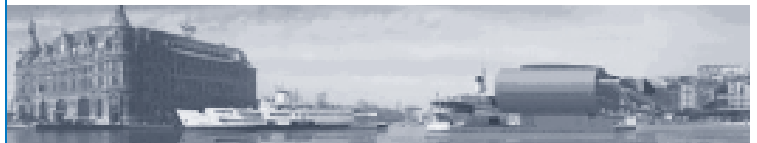
The number of architects in Turkey was only a couple of hundred in the 1930s and around three thousand at the beginning of the 1960s, according to the Chamber of Turkish Architects. As of February 2003, there are 29,164 architects in Turkey, proliferating each year, and the market demand is simply not enough. From an elite, well-respected profession throughout the early Republican period, architecture has swiftly turned into a technocratic one whose main duty is providing service. Starting in the 1960s, building became a type of investment for the middle classes. Moreover, in the early 1980s, with economic liberalization, big capital started systematically investing in the construction industry. Many development companies, which are both the client and the contractor, emerged. Small-scale commissions became almost obsolete. Refurbishments and interior decorations constituted the majority of the jobs for practicing architects. (Here, I am recording a general opinion and not an empirical finding. To my knowledge, there have not been nationwide surveys conducted on what kind of work architects are doing, how they are practicing, or if they are practicing.)

The number of non-academic architectural journals rose from three to a dozen, all of which publish relatively little of Turkish architectural practice. Newspaper stalls are filled with an ever-increasing number of "interior architecture," decoration magazines. Many people do not know what an architect does and conflate it with the draftsman. Today's equivalence of the female to male ratio in the student body is not reflected in professional practice. Yet, among the wider public, architecture is increasingly seen as a "feminine" profession, one that can be carried out from home.

Many practicing architects have been left out of the construction process and on-site project control. Architects frequently complain that the developers have altered their schemes. The legal architectural project becomes a hindrance to acquire the approval of the local authorities. Once

the construction starts on site, there are not any strong mechanisms of official control to assure the one-to-one realization of the architectural project. Because of the disastrous 1999 earthquake, people have become more conscious of where they live, but market forces dominate and even capitalize on the fear by promoting suburban developments.

In summary, market forces have re-defined the profession in a way that does not exactly match its Western counterpart. This divergence creates a big dilemma within the profession, which itself is a Western invention. In addition, its education is a Western, specifically central European concept. In schools of architecture, the curriculum privileges Western design. For example, as Gulsum Baydar writes in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (March 2003), in architectural history survey courses, "the priority of Western architecture over native histories remains unquestioned." Although with some delay, almost all the style-isms and trends are experienced deeply. Architectural practices generally operate in an amateur fashion; they do not archive their work or promote themselves in architectural journals, because commissions are acquired by personal references and not design/brand promotion. What is also interesting is that, given the large number of architects, there is little intellectual production among architects on architecture and little professional support from fellow architects or the Chamber of Turkish Architects. Finally, the pro-Western elitism of academia persists to the level of denying the "architect-ness" of the very architects they have produced, because, alas, once in the market, they do not conform to the ideal of the "designer" architect.



Competition project, Istanbul, 2001, with Gokce Kinayoglu

Despite these impediments, Turkish architects are excited about the possibilities of global practice. International and national recognition in the past two decades have fostered this view. The Aga Khan Architecture Awards (1977-) have played a special role in the reception of Turkish architecture, both abroad and in Turkey, by awarding seminal figures such as Sedad Hakki Eldem, Turgut Cansever, and Behruz Cinici. International architectural journals like *Space Design* (1993) and *Architecture & Urbanism* (2000) have opened up space for a younger generation of architects, such as Arda Inceoglu, Deniz Arslan Nevzat Sayin, and others. XXI Architecture Culture Center of Turkey has promoted young architects by orga-

nizing the "Quest For New Approaches in Architecture: Young Turkish Architects" traveling exhibition in 2000. Among the participants were Han Tumertekin, Can Cinici, Gokhan Avcioglu, Teget Mimarlik, Emre Arolat, and Semra Teber.



VENEZUELA

Enrique Larrañaga is partner of Larrañaga-Obadía, Arquitectos Asociados C.A., a six-person firm in Caracas, Venezuela. He teaches at Universidad Simón Bolívar, where he was previously Coordinador de Arquitectura.

MY TURN TO COMPLAIN

Whenever I have ventured to compare my architectural practice in Venezuela with that of friends all around the world I have come to the same conclusion: whoever speaks, wherever he or she has practiced, always endures the least respect, the lowest fees, the worst working conditions, and the most absurd regulations. This may mean that architectural practice is not all that different, however different cultural, economic, climatic, and technical contexts might be, and/or that architects, everywhere, think of themselves as more dedicated, valuable, relevant, and groundbreaking than what common people believe. If you think that no one suffers architecture more than you and are not willing to accept otherwise, stop reading, because I am going to present my case and, following the above described silent pact, demonstrate the difficulties of architectural practice in a developing country.

Let me start by raising the envy of American readers: architects in Venezuela are seldom liable for what they do, and no malpractice suits have been known. Then—and going back to my right to complain—not being liable also implies not being reliable; at no legal risk details, specifications, and even shapes and measures stated in drawings and documents become just generic indications of how things might look. With architecture schools only some fifty years old and derived from engineering schools, architects are mostly seen as estranged sons of a respectable profession with nicer taste who tend to make things prettier but also more expensive. Their opinions should always be distrusted and often ignored. This situation, of course, grants great professional alibis, for you can always claim the contractor changed whatever looks awful or argue that anyone, but you, made the wrong decisions. And this might even be not untrue.

No one seems to care much about this lack of respect. Professional organizations are weak, to say the least, and their legality is only relative ("Colegio de Arquitectos" is just an association within "Colegio de Ingenieros," the only organiza-



House in Lomas de la Lagunita, 1995, Arquitectos Asociados

tion you need to belong to in order to practice). Adding to the obvious implications of this pariah condition on the questionable value of what architects do, no official honoraria parameter has been set, and deciding on that is one of the most exhausting parts of any job. Having been as afraid of losing the project for going too high as of leaving money on the table, when you believe you have made up your mind, some just-out-of-school nephew working in mom's garage might pop out and take away the opportunity for half the price. In Venezuela (advantage, aberration, or just a condition?) your diploma is your license, and no registration exam is required to keep it valid.

But sometimes you do get work. Lucky? With inflation rates of "two low to mid digits," even the best fees evaporate in a short period of time (something you, your employees, and your consultants notice promptly but your client pretends never fully to understand). Hard as it is to work on a project when no projections are possible and "inflation clauses" are unfeasible, you just hope the uncertainties brought by inflation won't deflate your client's will (and account) while your time, payroll, and patience all keep going on and running empty.

Crisis has taught Venezuelan architects to survive and develop creative abilities. One of them is the skill to draw a project that will comply with regulations to pass official review but can later be changed without permit to answer actual requirements. Loose controls and ample irregularities make this possible, although at some cost, which the client will gladly assume as a sign of both power and shrewdness. And as a sign that you, the architect, did what he wanted and not what you pretended, as it should be.

By now, you must agree that my practice is worse, harder, and braver than any, or wait for your turn.

However, the hell I have described is also the one I know and the one I (please do not repeat this) enjoy. We architects exercise optimism to naïve heights and pretend a not less naïve transcendence, as Quixotes fighting against code windmills with CAD spears. Perhaps that is our essential tragedy: thinking that this outstanding thing we do and nobody cares about is the best and the worst possible life anyone could choose, having done so some years ago and insisting on it every morning, while putting on the armor. Another professional commonality that comes with the black T-shirt.

Modernism to China:

a Tribute to Leo S. Wou



Michael Franklin Ross, AIA, and
Deeing Chu, AIA

During the period from 1949 to 1979, the People's Republic of China experienced thirty years of Communist Party rule. Everything was owned by the government, and everyone worked for the government. Chinese architects were isolated from the rest of the world during the Cultural Revolution, and architectural education was extremely narrowly focused. Upon graduation, everyone got the same salary, regardless of talent or commitment. Hard work and creativity were not rewarded.

In the last twenty years, the role of the architect has changed dramatically. During the 1980s, the door to the West opened up, and European and American architects began to visit. By the mid-'80s, some Americans began designing new and refreshing buildings that brought modern (Western) architecture to China. Among these architects was Leo S. Wou, with his firm, Wou & Partners.

Leo S. Wou was born in Tianjin, China, in 1927. He left China in 1947 to study architecture in the U.S. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and later worked for Louis Kahn. He also did graduate work at Yale and Cranbrook, immersing himself in the modern movement.

Wou returned to China for the first time in 1978. By the mid-'80s, his firm (known then as Ross/Wou International) began designing the Crystal Palace Hotel in Tianjin, China, overlooking a man-made lake. Across the lake was the traditional National Guest House, where Richard Nixon had stayed when he first opened the door for U.S. diplomatic relations with China.

In the mid-'80s, Chinese officials still demanded traditional architectural motifs. In fact, high-rise buildings in Beijing were required to have traditional sloping roofs, totally out of character with the rest of the building. Over time and with greater exposure, this situation began to change.

Wou's design approach contrasts with I.M. Pei's concept for the Fragrant Hill Hotel outside Beijing, completed in 1982. Pei's design emulated traditional Chinese architecture, using Chinese gardens and traditional window motifs. Wou's approach for the Crystal Palace was to bring modern Western architecture to China. The parti is an L-shaped wedge cantilevered over the edge of the lake. A series of 45° setbacks culminates in a glazed atrium at the center. Beverly Russell, editor-in-chief of *Interiors* magazine wrote at the time,

The Crystal Palace Hotel offers a refreshing change from the haphazard medley of styles that characterize the new wave of Chinese architecture. From its sleek, white, seven-story structure to the furnishings in its understated, mauve and pink interior, the entire 350-room hotel is uncompromisingly modern.

Leo S. Wou was highly respected by Chinese government officials, and students of architecture in China visited The Crystal Palace Hotel to study modern architecture and detailing. The Crystal Palace Hotel opened in Tianjin at about the same time as the Great Wall Hotel, designed by Welton Beckett, opened in Beijing. Both represented the entry of the modern movement into Chinese architecture. In the years since, China has continued to open up to Western architectural ideas, and talented, hardworking architects are respected—and rewarded with success.

Foreign Routines

Paolo Tombesi

You can teach a man to draw a straight line ... and to copy any number of given lines or forms with admirable speed and perfect precision ... but if you ask him to think about any of those forms ... he stops; his execution becomes hesitating ... ; he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool ...

And observe, you are put to stern choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cog-wheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you must unhumanize them ...

— John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, 1853



Regulating Department

In the space of twenty years, convergence technologies have virtually uprooted traditional modes of professional exchange and interaction. With paper no longer an essential support to the transfer of information, the Prometheus of architectural practice has been unchained from the tyranny of place and physical document delivery. Software-induced standardization and electronic access to digital transmission channels allow architectural firms to operate beyond the old territorial limits of service transactions, building bridges spanning previously unthinkable distances. The acquisition of geographic mobility gives architectural practice the chance to overcome the historical constraints of location and catch up with the more prosaic dynamics of manufacturing.

Rather than remaining fixed in place, architectural capital can disperse according to relative production advantages. These advantages can be substantial, considering that disparities in world wealth are indeed reflected in professional remuneration levels and that labor costs reach, on average, 50% of office budgets. The starting monthly salary for an architect in India is around 5,000 rupees, the equivalent of 185 Australian dollars. Graduates with up to three years of office experience earn between 60 cents and 2.60 dollars an hour, whereas draftspersons in practice for five years can expect between 0.4 and 1.7 dollars, depending on technical specialty and location of the office.¹ By comparison, the official

minimum pay for architectural graduates and newly registered architects in the Australian state of Victoria in 1999 was, respectively, twelve dollars and fifteen dollars an hour.² In the same year, similar positions in the United States commanded, on average, hourly wages of twenty-nine and thirty-three Australian dollars.³ Given these gaps, strategic remote outsourcing could enhance firms' competitiveness or profitability.

Needless to say, opinions on the feasibility of offshore collaborations diverge: some practitioners believe in the savings that can be obtained from the strategic decentralization of selected services, while others see insurmountable problems in the resulting chain of communication.⁴ For this latter group, the design process is still too densely defined by interpersonal transactions and subjective decisions to be spread geographically and culturally. Excessive resources would be wasted in interpreting, developing, and correcting unfamiliar information, especially now that computer drafting has increased office productivity.

Yet there is little doubt that the industrial atmosphere is becoming increasingly conducive to establishing distant collaborations. In 1999, Kermit Baker, the chief economist of the AIA, noted that US firms "effectively use an international workforce to supplement staffing needs."⁵ And while the evidence of professional or business relationships involving firms from higher-wage and lower-wage regions mounts, the offer from lower-wage regions becomes

more forthcoming, with whole lists of offices advertising the possibility for service collaboration on professional websites.

The seeming development of a global market coincides with institutional acknowledgement and facilitation at an international level. The in-principle agreement for global service trade (GATS), negotiated by WTO member countries at the end of the Uruguay round in 1993, has recently come to concern, directly, the supply of professional services. Since 2000, over sixty countries have made commitments towards considering import-export collaborations in architecture, and more than forty in urban planning and landscape architecture.⁶

Perhaps inevitably, the type of exchange that the signed agreements are meant to assist or improve seems to follow a dual path: advanced economies export technical knowledge and conceptual decisions to developing (or lower-wage) ones. These, in turn, export data processing and document production activities to higher-wage countries. Such flow results in a marked geographic subdivision between conceptual work and production tasks: outsourcing firms from higher-wage areas tend to use remote offices as drafting bureaus while retaining most of the professional component at home.

In 1980, Folker Fröbel and others had articulated these traits in manufacturing, implicitly tying them to advanced economies' structural advantages in generating and sustaining knowledge: this is why some regions of the world concentrate on low-paid, routine operations while others specialize in the high-value added part of the production process.⁷ In 1991, Robert Reich, then Harvard academic and future secretary of labor under the first Clinton administration, qualified this high and low value-adding distinction in the service sector by dividing mobile workers into 'routine producers' and 'symbolic analysts.' Routine producers are those who process data by following instructions. They perform repetitive tasks and respond to explicit procedures, no matter how articulate these are. Symbolic analysts, by contrast, intervene on reality by reducing it to abstract images, manipulating these images, communicating them to other specialists, and coordinating their work. They are involved with independent problem-solving, problem-identifying, and strategic-brokering activities, and they make decisions based



on critical judgment sharpened by experience.⁸ When applied to architectural practice, symbolic analysis suggests an obvious affinity with design, while routine production connotes documentation tasks.⁹ If one accepts this association, offshore collaborations represent the geographic separation of symbolic analysis and routine production activities.

The division of international labor along such lines has been accepted—and in some cases actively supported—by local policy-makers and international agencies, including the World Bank. As the leanest and therefore ostensibly most viable form of geographic collaboration, distant data processing (traded through electronic links) is seen as an effective short-term strategy to promote, albeit in a limited way, the transfer of wealth and resources between developed and developing regions. Body-shopping and competitive wage advantages have been widely used in sectors such as IT to generate revenues and promote the inflow of foreign investment. Ireland, Korea, India, and Mexico, for example, resorted to the lending of data-entry workforce to other economies as a strategy to step a foot into the proverbial industrial door and work up the 'labor/service/product' ladder.¹⁰

A similar idea seems to prevail in professional services: drafting collaborations can contribute to the building of technical capacity in professionally developing economies (subject to strong urbanization trends and training pressures) through a market-induced trickle-down effect. Competitive wages attract work, work produces exposure to techniques, and exposure generates reusable training. The European Community, for example, funded CARIBCAD, a project that promoted drafting education in low-wage areas in Central America by setting the context

for CAD production-intensive projects to be electronically dispatched to, documented in, and retrieved from the region.¹¹

Undisputable good intentions and results notwithstanding, the actual composition of the offshore services market should be cause for pause and reflection. While technology transfer benefits may occur, and have indeed occurred under specific circumstances, the economics of the arrangement may be pulling the boat in a different direction.

At least in Australasia, we can distinguish five different ways of organizing and managing the remote supply of design routines: (1) through exclusive collaborations between vertically integrated units that belong in the same multinational organization; (2) through marketplace recruitment of remote, free-lancing professional subcontractors without any programmatic connection to the premises of their physical operation; (3) through project-based collaborations with an offshore executive architect that has a detailing subsidiary (possibly in an even lower-wage locale); (4) through international students who act as middle-persons for drafting shops located back home; and, finally (5) through IT companies specialized in the means rather than the ends of the work—generally image processing—and whose entry in the market reflects a horizontal expansion of the vocational and clerical skills available within the workforce they employ.

The passage from first to fifth category signals a change in the nature and scope of the collaboration, as well as in the cultural and economic agreements that underpin it: a social division of responsibilities progressively gives way to a detail division of production, where drawings are turned into (and turned out as) goods. Salaries and hourly rates tend to be replaced by drawing-size piecework prices and turnover time rates, while workforce training needs and profiles shift from spatial and technical understanding to workstation dexterity.

Paradoxically, it is their very detachment from architecture as a (long and cumbersome) process that makes commercial drafting and image processing enterprises theoretically more sustainable if not profitable in the short term: low entry barriers, quicker turnover, and larger horizontal economies of scale, stronger externalities in the use of workforce or equipment, shorter employment training and

replacement paths give these enterprises an edge in a volatile market characterized by simple production challenges and driven by cost-cutting objectives. This does not make them necessarily successful. In fact, stories of malpractice, unprofessional behavior, and abused trust color the experience of many firms that have chosen to collaborate on such terms. Yet, it is easier to set up a drafting shop that may not last the light of the day than maintain a structure of true professional collaboration and exchange.

So, while low-wage regions' concentration on generic routine work (such as data conversion, low-level drafting, and 3D simulation) may facilitate outsourcing from high-wage areas and spur international demand for these services, it may also end up rewarding economic subjects from encroaching sectors that have little to do with architecture or building (such as graphics, software, and drafting contractors involved in industrial manufacturing, advertising, and film and television), in turn limiting the scope, complexity, and (ultimately) transfer feasibility and relevance of the work obtained. If this were the case, global trade would be unlikely to promote, directly or indirectly—and contrary to much rhetoric—any qualitative development of building design workforce internationally.

Which is why the invisible hand of the market should not be left entirely on its own. The profession is fully entitled to pursue paths easing economic sustenance under conditions of increased competition and diminishing returns. But the opportunity for a fruitful exchange should not be lost in the process. If capacity building is indeed an objective in the world trading of architectural services, then symbolic analysis and drafting routines cannot be separated. 'Critical Internationalism' requires at least three things: (1) planning at an architects' institutional level; (2) serious attempts at establishing proper environmental (rather than just official qualification) equivalence between professional counterparts from distant locales; and (3) willingness to define the appropriate content of these collaborations—not just in order to reduce risk or transaction costs, but rather to plant seeds which can and should be allowed to grow. The risk, otherwise, is that 'foreign' will apply not only to the geographic boundaries of the contract but also to the work shipped back and forth across the world. ● [\(Notes to the text can be found on page 57.\)](#)



Shifting Power

Lisa Findley, AIA

For the past fifty years, the world has been undergoing profound cultural changes. Primary among these is the redistribution of political power and cultural agency—that is, the power to act on one’s own behalf in the cultural arena. While perhaps not readily obvious, these changes have many implications for architecture.

While globalization threatens us with a kind of homogeneity, local circumstances are becoming more explicitly diverse through the disaggregation of power. Indigenous peoples, who have been systematically sidelined in their own lands, are regaining their voices as they refuse to remain on the cultural fringes any longer. Minority peoples who have been silenced or ignored are asserting their presence and exercising their rights. Through perseverance and a record of success, small political action groups and non-governmental organizations have gained legitimacy and presence.

The broadening of power brings with it not only a redistribution of political weight, but also an opening up of who has a voice in cultural and spatial production. Politics, cultural production, and the creation and control of space are now arenas for

negotiation between these newly empowered groups and those who used to control them.

One of the most enduring activities of power—political, cultural and economic—is building. Monuments, palaces, governmental centers, corporate headquarters, temples, and even entire cities reflect the sensibilities and organization of power long after the individuals and entities that wielded them are gone. Architecture and architects are deeply embedded in this power structure. We provide our services to those who can pay us and to those who command the resources to build the expensive cultural artifacts we design.

This traditional relationship is now being disrupted in a world where the power to command architectural production is shifting, spreading out, and being actively transferred by architects themselves. In the 20th century, some architects began to use their skills to try to change the physical circumstances of those who could not afford their services. Sometimes, these efforts were supported by the government, as in the worker housing schemes in Europe in the 1920s. Other times, these efforts were initiated by architects themselves, like those who launched community design centers and provided *pro bono* services in the US from the 1950s on. Of perhaps greatest interest, however, in the past decade, architects have been repeatedly commissioned to design significant buildings for people who previously could not have afforded the opportunity. Through a series of political shifts, these people now have real cultural agency to act in their own behalf, to represent themselves in a larger context through building projects.

Examples include cultural centers and museums that have as a mission nurturing a local culture, revealing that culture to others from the global community, or reconciling aspects of cultural or political interaction. Such building programs are not, of course, as benign as they sound. Usually the projects are for institutions that explicitly address issues of inequality and historical disproportion, suffered at the hands of either colonizers or dominating cultures from Western Europe. Usually racism has been a key factor that must be recognized and addressed amid the cultural and political tensions. And usually the architects for these new places are at the very least educated in the framework of the white

Western European culture that has been the primary source of the tension in the first place.

The architectural questions these situations raise are messy and difficult. There is no way to avoid the fact that the structures that house such institutions will be symbolic on many levels. Their mere existence is political, as are their form and expression. The buildings themselves become part of the process of telling more complete histories, of giving voice to the silenced, of reconciling historical victims and victimizers. They are also, of course, part of the ongoing processes of apology, guilt, restitution, reconciliation, and profound cultural change. The selection of architects for such projects, the strategies they use in design, and the materials and techniques of construction they employ are implicated as well.

Important recent buildings in such situations include the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in New Caledonia for the Kanak people, by the Renzo Piano Building Workshop (opposite); the Inari Sámi Museum and Northern Lapland Visitor Centre in Finland for the Sámi people, by Juhanni Pallasmaa; Sinte Gleska University for the Lakota people of South Dakota by RoTo Architects; and the new offices for the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, by Erdy McHenry Architects (below).

As power continues to shift at all political and territorial scales, the demand for these kinds of buildings will increase. This demand provides a new arena for architects and, perhaps more importantly, an important, revitalized role in cultural production. As the architects who are engaged in this kind of work will attest, however, these projects are not to be taken on lightly. Just as the projects are unusual and unfamiliar, so are the client processes, decision-making systems, timelines, and values. ●



Southern Poverty Law Center

These reflections are part of a book, Building New Ground: Architecture, Politics and Cultural Change, due out March 2004 from Routledge. Research for Building New Ground is sponsored in part by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

Design Diplomacy in Denmark



Ambassador Richard N. Swett, FAIA

Design in Scandinavia is characterized by much closer collaboration with the community than it is in the United States. This tradition is a long one, stretching back a hundred years or more. There is an excellent example in Copenhagen. In 1854, the Danish Medical Association was concerned about a cholera outbreak that was threatening the lives of the city's residents. The association worked with municipal authorities and architect M. G. Bidesbøll to design housing and public spaces to minimize or eliminate factors that contributed to the disease's spread. That housing set the standard for a holistic view of design incorporating health concerns. It is still in use today.

Earlier, in 1631, the Danish king Christian IV had commissioned the world's first terraced housing development at Nyboder, also in Copenhagen (above). Originally built for naval personnel, these buildings have recently been reintegrated into the civilian community after extensive public consultation.

The guidelines of Denmark's Ministry of Environment describe a formal process for such design planning: "The process comprises political discussions, public hearings, and dialogue with numerous partners . . . An important side effect of the spatial planning process is that the involved public achieves ownership of the final plan. This ownership is felt . . . by citizens, interest groups, business, and other partners."

Architects are also playing a key role in another major design project in Copenhagen, the utilization of a massive brownfields area south of the city. Instead of disrupting the scale and architectural setting of the old city by tearing down and building anew there, Mayor Jens Kramer Mikalsen and a government architect named Anne Grethe Foss went to work on designing a new town on an island next to the airport, a mere ten minutes from the center of the old city. The new development, Ørestad, sensitively incorporates the natural environment: one half of the island—formerly a military firing range—was made into a bird sanctuary. It also continues the Danish urban tradition of combining residential, commercial, retail, and institutional space within the same neighborhood. The result is a vibrant, 24-hour city that combines high density with easy access and a close affinity to nature. This is a city that is suitable for all, for families, for children, for professionals and retirees, and even for the poor.

I should note that Denmark prepares its citizens to play the role of informed design consultant. School children are required to complete a two-week module on design and design appreciation. Perhaps as a result, nearly one of every 700 Danes has a degree in architecture, a level perhaps 10 times as great as in the U.S. And, as we all know, design in Den-

mark and Scandinavia in general is highly valued.

Corporate Denmark has a different view of design from Corporate America, as well. Big Business has a much greater social conscience, much lower executive greed factor, and a great willingness to invest in the promotion of the society's culture—not professional sports, but rather art galleries, museums, folk fairs, and the like. Executives earn only 20 times the wage of a line worker in Denmark, while in the U.S. a CEO earns nearly 85 times the average worker's wage. You have in the Danish experience a positive interpretation of the role of commercialization. Good design is viewed as an economic engine, be it in Nokia cell phones or Danish furniture. And, in Scandinavia, good design means durability, a ratcheting down of the throwaway society, the consumption of fewer resources, and ultimately more sustainable growth.

There's a lesson there for the U.S. As a people, we need to be better informed about the importance of design. We could learn something from the collaborative design process widely practiced in Scandinavia. Our system tends to pit deep-pocketed corporations against single-issue interest groups. It's an "us or them" situation, not a collaborative effort. Groups seek to block a project after its design has been announced, rather than influencing the design to include their needs. Ours is a system of adversaries, not advocacy. We resist what we dislike rather than cooperatively promote what we feel is beneficial.

I encountered a perfect example of this phenomenon during my time in Congress. The House was considering yet another highway bill. There was stiff resistance for reasons we have all heard before. The discussion was uni-dimensional. You were either for it or against it. There was no context, no holistic overview balancing our transportation needs against our quality of life. My colleagues and I eventually broke that stalemate by broadening the discussion. The result was the Transportation for Livable Communities Act, a law I helped author that ensures that community needs are considered as transportation programs are developed and implemented. It was enacted within the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1992 and is a significant step forward in dealing with urban design issues in an integrated way.

Throughout my career as an architect and public servant, I have witnessed and participated in the maze of complex systems, governmental regulations, professional disciplines, special interest groups, grass-root community organizations, and big businesses, all seeking to influence our built environment. I have found that there are few people well equipped to sort through the cacophony of competitive interests in a constructive, harmonizing way. The creative process architects use is a constructive, inclusive process—therefore

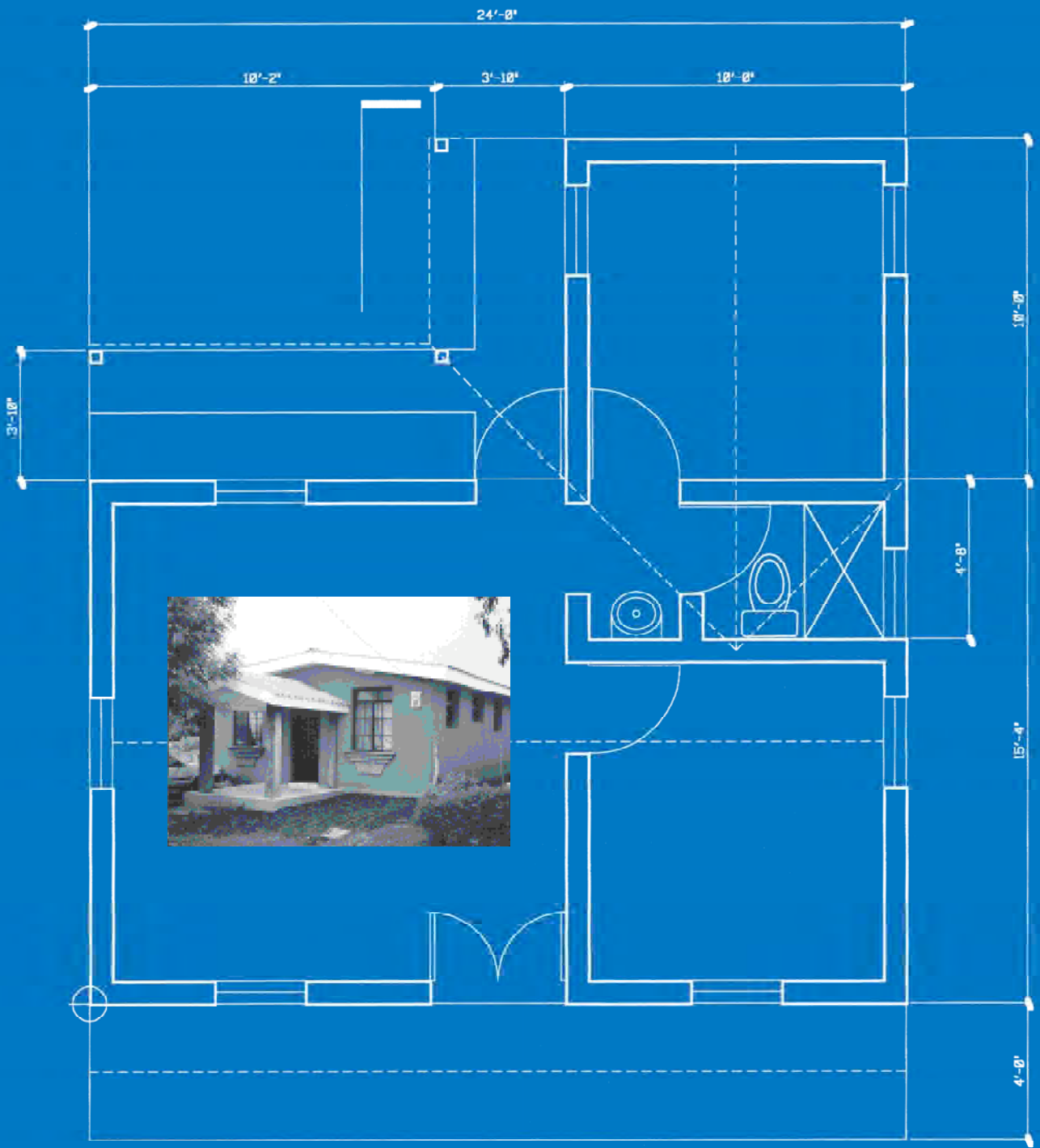
more diplomatic than the aggressive and adversarial methods of engagement in politics. By virtue of our training, skills and perspective, architects should play the role of integrators, but, sadly, we rarely do.

Instead, because of our singular focus on aesthetic design without regard to social design, because we have turned our noses up at the more "mundane" or administrative aspects of our profession, and because we have narrowed our leadership responsibilities to avoid liability rather than expand them to gain influence, we have seen our roles as leading visionaries in society follow a diminishing path. It is time to change our perspective.

That is why I held a conference in Denmark—with the help of the U.S. Embassy, the Danish Government, the Danish Architects' Federation, and the American Institute of Architects—on "Design Diplomacy: Public Policy and the Practice of Architecture." By "Design Diplomacy," I mean expanding "design" from its limited aesthetic sense to incorporate people, society, and quality of life issues, shifting the paradigm from design of buildings to "design" for solving problems in society—that is, to public policy formation.

I went to Denmark believing that the influence of design on public policy had been cultivated through the successful engagement of architects in the public arena. I inquired about the long list of architects serving as elected public officials and was surprised to find that the profession is just as reticent about running for public office there as it is here. In Denmark, however, there is much more influence exerted by the profession through other means. Relationships between government officials and designers are more prevalent. The profession has taken definitive stands on social policy that have influenced legislative policy makers.

In the design of managed communities for senior citizens, in the day-care centers for Danish children, in the sensitively restored period architecture, and in the planned, post-war suburban communities integrated into the rolling hills of the Danish landscape, Denmark provides a stellar example of a truly integrated and societal approach to architecture and public policy. Making design a social, political, and economic priority has led to a world-class role for the Danish industrial and architectural design community. The architects of the world should take note. ●



Plan Vivienda A

1/4" = 1'-0"



Architecture, Society, and Social Change

Evan Markiewicz

In 1993, I traveled to León, Nicaragua, out of a longing to put into action the idea that architecture has an important social role to play in the developing world. I began working with the New Haven/León Sister City Project to develop a program to build projects essential to the development of rural and urban communities.

For more information on the New Haven/León Sister City Project and the now independent ViviendasLeón, check in with the author at evan@ViviendasLeon.org.

The first project was a renovation for Proyecto Mujer, a non-governmental agency working with women in prostitution, young women at risk and their families. We worked with the women, side by side, for a month that summer, repairing the roof on their building and planning for additional renovations the following year. We brought two groups of volunteers from the United States, all eager to learn about life in Nicaragua and to make a difference in the lives of the people. We helped the women of the community work together as they learned to use hand tools and to mix cement and adobe plaster. The women were restoring the building as they restored their lives.

By 1995, we began working directly with rural communities that are among the poorest in the hemisphere. While details of each community vary, the level of need was characterized not only by the absence of basic infrastructure, such as potable water, electricity, and transportation, but also by lack of access to education, jobs, adequate food, and health care. The quality of self-built housing also contributed greatly to the average person's struggle to remain healthy, due to inhalation of smoke from wood fires, as well as from earthen floors that are a breeding ground for disease. This degree of poverty contributes to isolation and an inability for individuals to consider the future for their families and community, as they struggle constantly just to survive.

We created an egalitarian process for choosing which projects were of highest priority, structured to empower the community to make the final decision. It was the role of the community to identify shared problems and potential solutions. This process frequently resulted in the building of a small school as the first communal undertaking. It was substantial in scope, yet manageable, and could be funded over the course of construction. To fund the work, we made use of a great first-world resource—donated used clothing. The clothing was sold in the community to pay for construction materials.

The first school was for Los Barzones, which had a population of nearly 100 families. We worked together for two years, bringing occasional groups from North America to build a rammed-earth building. As the school was going up, we began projects in other villages. In La Ceiba, we renovated an abandoned cotton-ginning factory; in Palo de Lapa, we built a concrete block addition to an existing pre-fabricated concrete school; and in Carlos Nuñez Tellez, we created a master plan for a lower and middle school, along with a medical clinic.

THIS WORK HAS LED TO SEVERAL DISCOVERIES AND CONCLUSIONS:

Architecture is a vehicle for building communities.

The reason for beginning a development project was not because we had a project we wanted to realize, but because there was a goal we wanted to achieve: community development. A project with this as a goal is evaluated differently. The project serves as a vehicle of empowerment. It requires community members to work together, learn new skills, and become better leaders. It also more fully reflects the aspirations and achievements of the community as a whole. The chosen project is often centrally located and provides tangible evidence of the hard work and vision of the community.



Los Barzones School

The Role of a Non-Governmental Organization is one of support.

The role an NGO plays is to make available the resources needed for the project or to direct the community to an NGO that does. These resources may be financial, but most often are aesthetic and technical, such as architectural and engineering services; or material, like the clothing donations for the Proyecto Mujer project.

An architect and a rural community working together reveal the biases each has. This is perhaps most obvious in how well and with what a project is made. While I came to the communities with the intention of making earth buildings, believing they had a cultural tradition in this type of construction, they were convinced that concrete block was the best material to be used. We were both correct. There is a long history of adobe and earth plaster buildings in the region. Yet, the faster and potentially safer way to build is in concrete block.

Nevertheless, rammed-earth continued to be an important construction method. We knew that experience in earth-building techniques is widespread in the León region and that there was an abundance of unskilled labor. We believed, therefore, that the construction would be better understood than an imported building system. We also wanted to reduce the use of industrial materials like concrete and non-renewable materials like wood.

The construction process itself is a shared patrimony.

Many rural campesino families live in houses constructed of un-milled tree limbs assembled as a structural frame set in the ground, with roughly hewn lumber, plastic sheeting, or corrugated metal for siding, and unfired clay tiles for roofing. However, they understand communal buildings to be made of masonry finished with plaster, even though few have ever been involved in the construction of such a building. The result was that, by honoring their shared conception of the project and the degree of construction experience, the final projects were rough and irregular in the best sense of the word.

If the project is for the community, the community should build it.

We learned at the beginning that there was a lot of labor available, and we had to involve community members or risk losing their support. Therefore, we tended toward building methods that were labor intensive and required little or no expertise. Concrete block turned out to be an occasionally useful method, but it requires only an experienced mason and a few helpers, leaving others with little to do. Rammed earth, on the other hand, requires many people to dig, sift, mix, compact earth, and collect water from communal wells. The crew needs





Los Barzones School

no previous knowledge of construction. They can use materials and farming tools that are available on site. It is a system that can be learned in a morning's work. The rammed earth construction also allowed the delegations from North America to join in the labor and experience the work first hand.

While schools continued to be built, by 1997 we began to develop programs that bring a greater degree of economic development to rural and urban communities. While it complemented our community development work, as a process it differed fundamentally from the egalitarian methods we had employed with the rural communities. We developed two programs.



Community working on project

One is a kitchen garden program that teaches school children to plant, tend, and harvest vegetables, using organic gardening techniques. It has led to a significant improvement in the nutrition of rural families, while providing enough surplus food to sell in local markets.

The other is ViviendasLeón, an urban housing construction and loan program. It arose partly out of a response to a 1992 United Nations study that identified overcrowding

and a lack of access to credit as two of the principal barriers to development in urban León.

ViviendasLeón recognized that these problems could be overcome, given the unique circumstances in Nicaragua. In the 1980's, the government had instituted a program of land reform. All citizens were given title to the land they had lived on for generations. Therefore, they owned the necessary equity for capital investment. The missing ingredient has been a banking system offering reasonably priced loans.

The lack of access to credit goes hand in hand with a lack of access to adequate housing. Loans are needed to finance construction as well as mortgages. The result is a situation in which highly trained professionals, who are critical to the rebuilding of the country, live in substandard housing, at risk of earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes. In 1972, Managua was literally destroyed by an earthquake. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch left thousands of León citizens homeless.

It was this situation that led to the creation of ViviendasLeón, a non-profit organization that offers short-term, low-interest, equity loans and builds safe and affordable housing for working professionals and their families.

To ensure the program's success, ViviendasLeón has contracted with UNAN, the National Medical University in León, to build housing, to California building standards, for its teaching staff. In return, UNAN guarantees monthly mortgage payments by drawing directly from employee salaries. At the end of ten years, a home is paid for in full and ViviendasLeón has acquired a steady stream of capital for future development. At the current time, ViviendasLeón has the necessary infrastructure to build twenty houses a year.

The houses employ elements found in existing colonial and rural architecture in the region, where interior courtyards are commonplace. The plan is an L, hinting at a future interior or walled garden. The house has a living/dining room, bathroom, and two or three bedrooms, which form the leg of the L. Kitchens are commonly found under a roof overhang.

Like the GI bill that gave average Americans the ability to own a home and provided the engine for our own economic growth, ViviendasLeón's equity/loan/construction program is designed to significantly contribute to the growth of the Nicaraguan economy. Equity investment leads to a stable middle class, in this case the medical staff of UNAN, who can, in turn, provide a safe and secure life for their families and continue their important role in building a stable and healthy society. ViviendasLeón is, therefore, both a business enterprise and an agent for social change that has created a fundamentally unique approach to development and serves as a development model for the entire region. ●



Under the Radar

Hanjin Terminal, Berths 55/56

Architect: JWD Group

Structural Engineer: Liftech Consultants

Mechanical Engineer: McCracken and Woodman

Electrical Engineer: Silverman & Light

Civil Engineer: Ackland

Landscape Architect: Pattillo and Garrett

Associated Structural Engineer: Bello Vennari

Associated Architect: James Vann



Lynne D. Reynolds, AIAS

On October 22, 2000, when a San Francisco Bay harbor master nudged the Chinese freighter *Zhen Hua* beneath the Bay Bridge with a breath-catching clearance of just 25 inches, the vessel carried four super post Panamax cranes—each one a startling 22 stories high and capable of lifting 65 tons. The delivery of this massive cargo signaled that an important piece of the audacious Oakland Port Authority Vision 2000 Plan was being fit into place.

A capital expansion plan, Vision 2000 was devised to give the port of Oakland more play in the competitive maritime container shipping industry by greatly increasing the number of TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units, the standard measurement for quantifying shipping containers) that could be moved through it annually. Currently ranked fourth behind the ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and New York, the Port of Oakland recognized the need for the Plan's improvements not so much to surpass the top three ports but to maintain its ranking above increasingly aggressive West Coast ports, such as Tacoma and Seattle. The Hanjin Terminal, situated on the 530-acre site of the Fleet Industrial Supply Center of the former Oakland Army base, is the first major terminal in the Vision 2000 plan. Designed by JWD Group, an architectural, engineering, planning, and graphics firm based in Oakland, the Hanjin

Terminal is a central component of the Oakland plan. (The new terminal was not JWD's first project for the Port of Oakland; they are the designers of the administration center for Berth 30 and the Ben E. Nutter Terminal, as well.)

The JWD Group, with its companion firm Liftech, has made a specialty of designing for the maritime container industry and providing allied services by going beyond the nuts-and-bolts of container terminal master planning and facility design and construction. Employing an approach that reflects their belief that "facilities must be specifically designed to accommodate safe, secure, efficient, environmentally sensitive, and cost-effective movement of cargo and equipment," their role is integral to the overall success of the Oakland Port Authority Vision 2000 Plan. Although their contribution to the master plan for the Port of Oakland has been comprehensive, including operations analysis, site planning, structural engineering, and civil engineering, among other services, it is the architectural work that they have done that has almost single-handedly changed the appearance of container terminal design and raised the bar for the entire field.

In the not too distant past, one could expect buildings in these industrial/maritime settings that blurred into the drab sameness of crude function, unleavened with the lightness of creativity. Indeed, the very concept of *design* in this setting seems both effete and contradictory. But then you come upon JWD's administration center for Berth 30 and are, at first, a bit startled because it sits, gleaming white and pristine, a Richard Meier-like construction, in the midst of the hulking gray equipment of maritime commerce. Yet the structure not only succeeds there, it delights; instead of imparting a sense of being out-of-place, it creates place. Beneath the vast, uninterrupted blue skies of the shipyards, poised atop a charcoal ground, it becomes a gleaming yacht at anchor. For that success, the American Institute of Architects in 1995 presented JWD Group with a National Honor Award.

The JWD Group followed their victory at Berth 30 with the Hanjin Terminal at Berths 55/56. Not surprisingly, it went on to win a 2001 AIA Design Award. The various buildings that comprise the Hanjin Terminal—gatehouse, administration, marine, and maintenance and repair—share a common visual vocabulary that creates the unified appearance specified by their client, Hanjin Shipping Lines. It is also true to JWD's holistic, boundary-breaking approach.

Reduced to simple geometry, the buildings of the Hanjin Terminal are a series of articulated boxes in various configurations that, on their own, are interesting, but in aggregation become more wonderful. Unlike Berth 30's satiny white panel cladding, the materials of Hanjin Terminal are entirely

homogeneous with those of their industrial surroundings, while standing apart simultaneously. The corrugated steel siding replicates the storage containers that are seen everywhere, the concrete blocks reverberate with the notions of factory and manufacturing, and the long, aluminum-framed ribbon windows revisit the horizon lines of the ocean just outside of them. The choices here are basic, industrial, and economical; their execution is strong, clean, and fresh.

Inside the Hanjin Terminal's administration building, a sophisticated palette of neutral colors is consistently offset by the blue ribbons of sky visible from most rooms. The same steel siding is used on some interior walls, and door and window frames are aluminum; the metals cast a soft gleam. Exposed steel columns, stairs, and rails keep the industrial aesthetic active. Throughout, the choice of materials is simple and well done.

The buildings' design vocabulary is formal, early modernism, with allusions to the work of Mies and Gropius, and is of the same ethos that is seen in the work of such distinguished contemporary modernists as Miller/Hull Partnership, Vincent James, and Daly, Genik Architects. As Frank Dobson, JWD's project architect for the Hanjin Terminal, modestly put it, "there was no reason not to try to do something that looked great." Nevertheless, and despite the established presence of Berth 30, one doesn't initially expect to encounter high design on this type of site, and when one does, it is a convincing revelation. The Port of Oakland may not be the current leader in gross container tonnage, but they are certainly in the position of authority when it comes to distinctive, well-realized architecture. ●



arcCA welcomes submissions for Under the Radar. To be eligible, a project or its architect must be located in California; the project must not have been published nationally or internationally (local publication is OK); and construction must have been completed within the last twelve months or, for unfinished projects, must be 60%-70% complete. Architects need not be AIA members. Submissions from widely published firms (as determined by the arcCA Editorial Board) may not be accepted. Please send your submissions to the editor by email at tculvahouse@ccac-at.edu, attaching three to five JPG images with a combined file size of no greater than 1.5MB. Describe the project in fewer than 200 words in the body of the email, providing a brief caption for each image, keyed to the image's file name. (If you don't have the capability to submit by email, you may send the equivalent information by regular mail to: Tim Culvahouse, AIA, Editor, arcCA, c/o AIACC, 1303 J Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, California, 95814, Re: "Under the Radar.")

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NOTES TO PAOLO TOMBESI, "FOREIGN ROUTINES," PP. 34-37.

- 1 Tombesi P, Dave B, Scriver P, "Routine Production or Symbolic Analysis? India and the Globalization of Architectural Services," *The Journal of Architecture*, vol. 8, no. 1 (Spring 2003).
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- 5 K. Baker, "Architects and the 'New Economy,'" *AIArchitect* (September 1999).
- 6 World Trade Organization. *Architectural and Engineering Services: Background Note by the Secretariat* (Geneva: WTO, 1998); **Government of Canada**, *Canadian Architectural Services: A Consultation Paper in preparation for the World Trade Organization General Agreement on Trade in Services* (2001) (<http://strategic.ic.gc.ca/SSG/sk00034e.html>); **WTO Services Database**, *Opening World Markets for Services* (2002) (<http://gats-info.eu.int/gats-info/swtosvc.pl?&SECCODE=01.A.d>) (<http://gats-info.eu.int/gats-info/swtosvc.pl?&SECCODE=01.A.g>).
- 7 F. Frobel, J. Heinrichs, and O. Kreye, *The New International Division of Labour*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). The book describes the relocation of manufacturing operations to Third World countries, which gathered momentum in the 1970s and was facilitated by new technologies and better transport. According to its authors, multinationals used the shift to respond to intensified competition in world markets, reduced rates of economic growth, and lower profitability. Relocation, however, only affected basic manufacturing processes involving low level of skill.
- 8 R.B. Reich, *The Work of Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991).
- 9 The simplification must of course be taken with a grain of salt. There can be no clearcut distinction between design and design documentation tasks. Yet, it is still possible to separate architectural workers into those who prevalently make decisions and those who prevalently document them. For an expanded discussion, see P. Tombesi, "The Carriage in the Needle: Building Design and Flexible Specialization Systems," *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol. 52, no. 3 (1999), pp. 134-142. Hillier and Hanson make a similar distinction between what they call 'professional' versus 'procedural' knowledge in bureaucratic organizations, but with a view to the programmatic organization of architectural space rather than the structure of architectural work that we discuss here. See B. Hillier and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
- 10 R. Heeks and B. Nicholson, "Software Export Success Factors and Strategies in Developing and Transitional Economies," *Development Informatics Working Paper Series* (Manchester: Institute for Development Policy and Management, 2002). See also S. O'Riain, "The Flexible Developmental State: Globalization, Information Technology and the Celtic Tiger," paper presented at the "Global Network, Information and Regional Development: the Informational Region as Development Strategy" Conference (Santa Cruz: University of California, 1999).
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Coda



Nave Lanes, Novato, California

Gordon Phillips, Architect, 1959

Anthony Catsimatides, AIA

William J. Nave, a community leader and prominent businessman in Marin County, commissioned the Nave Lanes bowling alley in Novato in the late 1950s. The building was designed circa 1959 by architect Gordon Phillips, whose objective was to make reference to the style of his mentor, the late Frank Lloyd Wright, with whom he spent a brief period of time as an apprentice and whose now world-famous Marin County Civic Center was under construction less than 10 miles south of the bowling lanes.

By making overt reference to the Marin Civic Center's distinctive shapes and decorative motifs, Phillips was attempting to bring the language of this new architecture to Novato, a town that, prior to the bowling alley, had no modern architecture of note. In addition to this important association, the building has significance on its own: its clear, organic plan, its strongly composed volumes, and the very fact that it is a high style design applied to a commercial enterprise such as a bowling alley confer upon it special status.

The building's massing is a clear set of geometric volumes. Along Nave Drive and facing Highway 101, the western entry elevation is essentially a long bar with a series of circular forms defining the public spaces. The skylit circular atrium is at the center, with taller brick cylinders to either side. Entry is through an arcade with tapered columns reminiscent of Wright's Johnson Wax Company headquarters.

On September 12, 1999, Nave Lanes closed its doors to business. The Nave family sold the building and property to Albertsons, the new owner of Lucky Supermarkets. The building, according to Michael D. LaTourette, a representative of Albertsons, was to be demolished to make way for a parking lot for a brand new Albertsons supermarket. Efforts to convince Albertsons to preserve the building have so far been unsuccessful. The status of the fate of the building is presently unknown.

For further information on the campaign to save Nave Lanes, please email the author at anthony@plannet.com. ●