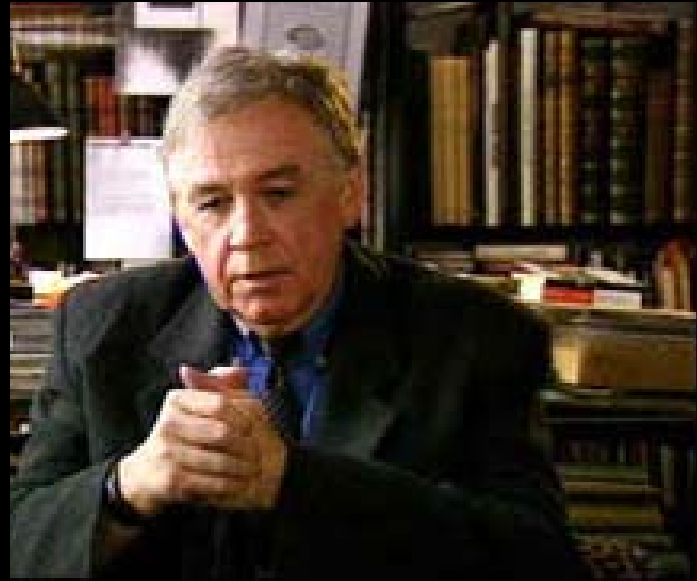


Venturi & Corrigan

Stuart Harrison, 2009



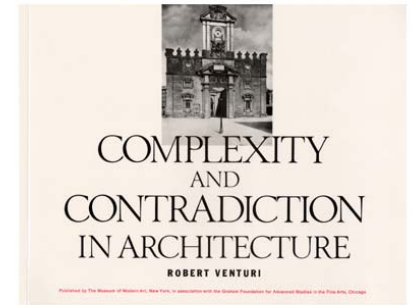
Venturi & Corrigan



COMPLEXITY
AND
CONTRADICTION
IN ARCHITECTURE

ROBERT VENTURI

Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, in association with the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Chicago



Note to the Second Edition

I wrote this book in the early 1960's as a practicing architect responding to aspects of architectural theory and dogma of that time. The issues are different now, and I think the book might be read today for its general theories about architectural form but also as a particular document of its time, more historical than topical. For this reason the second part of the book, which covers the work of our firm up to 1966, is not expanded in this second edition.

I now wish the title had been *Complexity and Contradiction in Architectural Form*, as suggested by Donald Drew Egbert. In the early '60's, however, form was king in architectural thought, and most architectural theory focused without question on aspects of form. Architects seldom thought of symbolism in architecture then, and social issues came to dominate only in the second half of that decade. But in hindsight this book on form in architecture complements our focus on symbolism in architecture several years later in *Learning from Las Vegas*.

4. Contradictory Levels: The Phenomenon of “Both-And” in Architecture

Contradictory levels of meaning and use in architecture involve the paradoxical contrast implied by the conjunctive “yet.” They may be more or less ambiguous. Le Corbusier’s Shodhan House (11) is closed yet open—a cube, precisely closed by its corners, yet randomly opened on its surfaces; his Villa Savoye (12) is simple outside yet complex inside. The Tudor plan of Barrington Court (13) is symmetrical yet asymmetrical; Guarini’s Church of the Immaculate Conception in Turin (14) is a duality in plan and yet a unity; Sir Edwin Lutyens’ entrance gallery at Middleton Park (15, 16) is directional space, yet it terminates at a blank wall; Vigino’s façade for the pavilion at Bomarzo (17) contains a portal, yet it is a blank portico; Kahn’s buildings contain crude concrete yet polished granite; an urban street is directional as a route yet static as a place. This series of conjunctive “yets” describes an architecture of contradiction at varying levels of program and structure. None of these ordered contradictions represents a search for beauty, but neither as paradoxes, are they caprice.

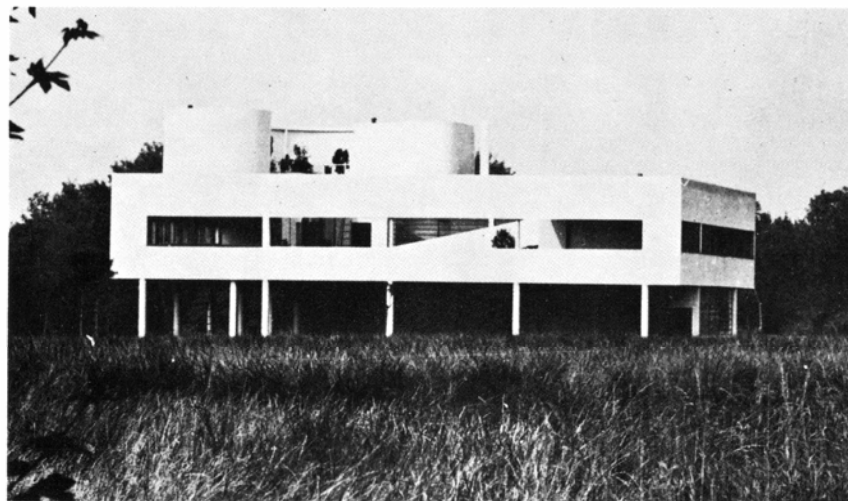
Cleanth Brooks refers to Donne’s art as “having it both ways” but, he says, “most of us in this latter day, cannot. We are disciplined in the tradition either-or, and lack the mental agility—to say nothing of the maturity of attitude—which would allow us to indulge in the finer distinctions and the more subtle reservations permitted by the tradition of both-and.”²¹⁶ The tradition “either-or” has characterized orthodox modern architecture: a sun screen is probably nothing else; a support is seldom an enclosure; a wall is not violated by window penetrations but is totally interrupted by glass; program functions are exaggeratedly articulated into wings or segregated separate pavilions. Even “flowing space” has meant being outside when inside, and inside when outside, rather than both at the same time. Such manifestations of articulation and clarity are foreign to an architecture of complexity and contradiction, which tends to include “both-and” rather than exclude “either-or.”

If the source of the both-and phenomenon is contradiction, its basis is hierarchy, which yields several levels of meanings among elements with varying values. It can include elements that are both good and awkward, big and little, closed and open, continuous and articulated, round and square, structural and spatial. An architecture which includes multiple levels of meaning breeds ambiguity and tension.

Most of the examples will be difficult to “read,” but this architecture is valid when it reflects the complexities



11. Le Corbusier. Shodhan House, Ahmedabad



12. Le Corbusier. Villa Savoye, Poissy

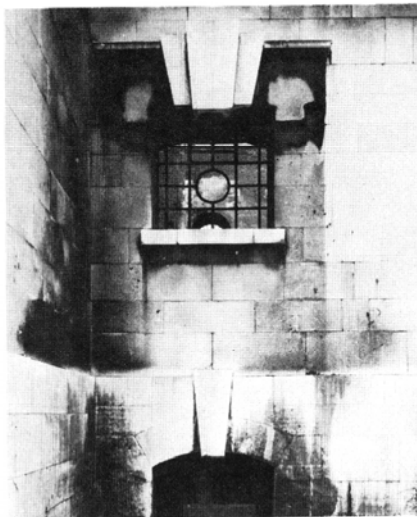
and contradictions of content and meaning. Simultaneous perception of a multiplicity of levels involves struggles and hesitations for the observer, and makes his perception more vivid.

Examples which are both good and bad at the same time will perhaps in one way explain Kahn's enigmatic remark: "an architecture must have bad spaces as well as good spaces." Apparent irrationality of a part will be justified by the resultant rationality of the whole, or characteristics of a part will be compromised for the sake of the whole. The decisions for such valid compromises are one of the chief tasks of the architect.

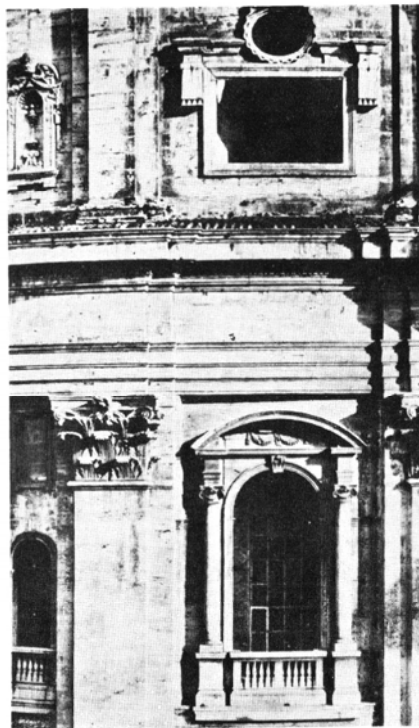
In Hawksmoor's St. George-in-the-East (18) the exaggerated keystones over the aisle windows are wrong in relation to the part: when seen close-up they are too big in relation to the opening they span. When seen farther back, however, in the context of the whole composition, they are expressively right in size and scale. Michelangelo's enormous rectangular openings in the attic story of the rear façade of St. Peter's (19) are wider than they are high, so that they must be spanned the long way. This is perverse in relation to the spanning limitations of masonry, which dictate in Classical architecture that big openings, such as these, be vertically proportioned. But because one usually expects vertical proportions, the longitudinal spanning expresses validly and vividly their *relative* smallness.

The main stair in Frank Furness' Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia (20) is too big in relation to its immediate surroundings. It lands on a space narrower than its width, and faces an opening narrower than its width. Furthermore, the opening is bisected by a post. But this stair is ceremonial and symbolic as well as functional, and it relates to the hall immediately beyond the opening, to the whole building, and to the great scale of Broad Street outside. The outer thirds of Michelangelo's stair in the Laurentian Library vestibule (21) are abruptly chopped off and lead virtually nowhere: it is similarly wrong in the relation of its size to its space, and yet right in relation to the whole context of the spaces beyond.

Vanbrugh's end bays in the central pavilion of the entrance façade of Blenheim Palace (22) are incorrect because they are bisected by a pilaster: this fragmentation produces a duality which decreases their unity. Their very incompleteness, however, reinforces by contrast the center bay and increases the overall unity of this complex composition. The pavilions which flanked the château at Marly (23) contained



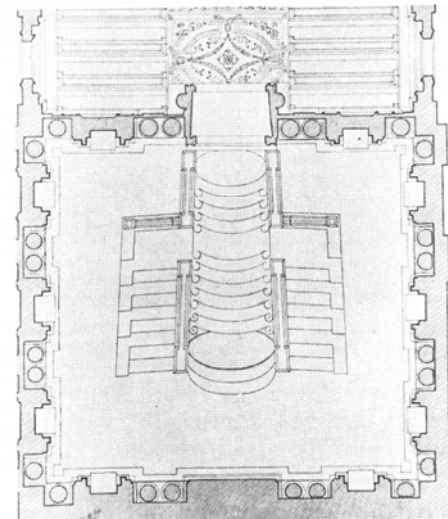
18. Hawksmoor. St. George-in-the-East, London



19. Michelangelo. Rear Façade, St. Peter's, Rome



20. Furness. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia



21. Michelangelo. Laurentian Library, Florence. Plan



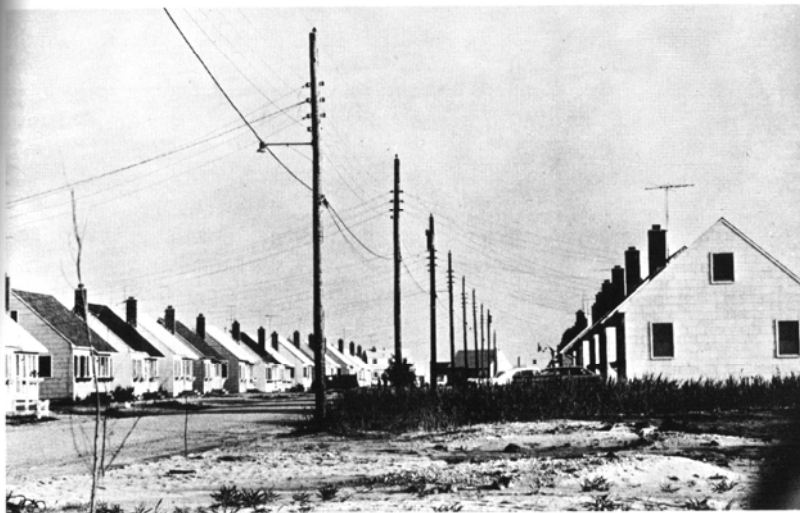
Venice



York



88. Highway, U.S.A.



89. Developers' Houses, U.S.A.

4. Headquarters Building, North Penn Visiting Nurse Association, Venturi and Short, 1960. (272–277)

Economy dictated a small building with conventional construction. The setting suggested a bold scale and a simple form to compensate for the large buildings around. The program dictated a complex inside, however, with varieties of spaces and special storage accommodations. Level parking for five staff cars on the steeply sloping site necessitated a retaining-walled auto court up front. And a pedestrian entrance with a minimum of outside steps similarly dictated a building immediately on the street.

The resultant building is a distorted box both simple and complex. Because they are adjacent and similar in area, the court and the building set up a duality. The prow of the building acts as an inflection toward the court to resolve the duality, yet this distortion of the boxlike building simultaneously enforces the duality by complementing the curved wall at the opposite side of the parking court and by making the court more symmetrical and, therefore, independent of the building. The building at this point is more sculptural than architectural. Outside spatial forces dominate the interior forces, and it is designed from the outside in. The “awkward” interior created here is a subordinate space—merely the dentist’s dark room.

Distortion works in the open side of the duality too: the slight curve of the retaining wall of the essentially rectangular court acknowledges and resists the pressure of the earth behind. The building box is distorted further by the east wall being parallel to the property line on this half-urban site. The surface of this originally plain box is also distorted. The windows on the front eat into it to provide integral overhangs toward the south. They also work integrally with the interior storage cabinets along that wall parallel to the roof framing.

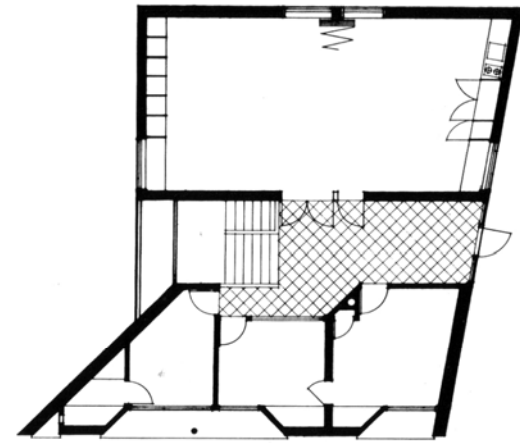
The window indentations become large and few, sometimes coupled as well as set back, and they increase the scale of the small building. On the outside the scale of the lower windows is increased by the device of an extended frame—in this case, an applied wood moulding which accommodates the contradiction between the inside and outside scales. The complex positioning of the windows and openings of this façade also counteracts the simplicity of the box. They are not random but rather an originally regular rhythmic series distorted by interior complexities and circumstances.

The entrance on the court side at an intermediate landing is similarly complex in composition and bold in scale. It is made up almost equally of rectangular, diagonal, and segmental elements juxtaposed in a manner similar to some Renaissance doors. The rectangularity of the overall opening results from the block and plank structure of the building. In contrast the arch derives not from the nature of the materials and structure of its wood frame but from its symbolism as an entrance. Furthermore, and more important, as a circumstantial exception to the general order of the composition, it becomes a focus. The diagonal posts are expediencies similarly eventful: they shore up the center beam which supports the exceptional span of the roof planks at this opening, and they contrast with the post, which is vertical in the large window opening in the front, and more analogous in its position to the rectangular composition of the building. The big opening of the arch, appropriate in scale for a civic building, is juxtaposed upon the man-scaled doors, which are sheltered. There is a juxtaposition here of scales as well as shapes.

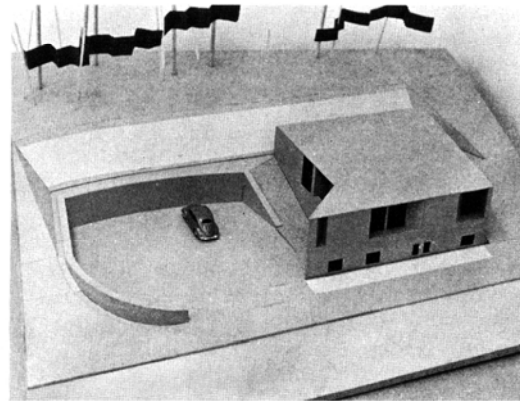
As for the program complexities of the interior, a hint of the storage intricacies is confirmed in the alternating recessions of windows and closets in the front. Another manifestation is the diagonal wall in the plan of the hall—another expedient distortion to accommodate the program complexities, which are squeezed inside their rigid enclosure.

The inconsistent floor and roof structure is similarly accommodating to the bearing walls of the rigid perimeter. The first floor front is a two-way slab accommodating the irregular interior bearing walls. Steel and wood joists for the floors and roof otherwise run variously parallel with the walls containing window storage combinations. Here, as in the entrance opening, the span is wood planks, which permit openings and windows to reach the thin cornice line and make the box look more abstract. I have already mentioned the expedient post, vertical or diagonal, used when these surface spans become exceptionally long.

To emphasize thinness of surface and contradict the plasticity of the form of the box, the stucco surface is detailed with a minimum of corner-turnings by means of the wood-surfaced window reveals. I have “destroyed the box,” not through spatial continuities but by circumstantial distortions.



272



273



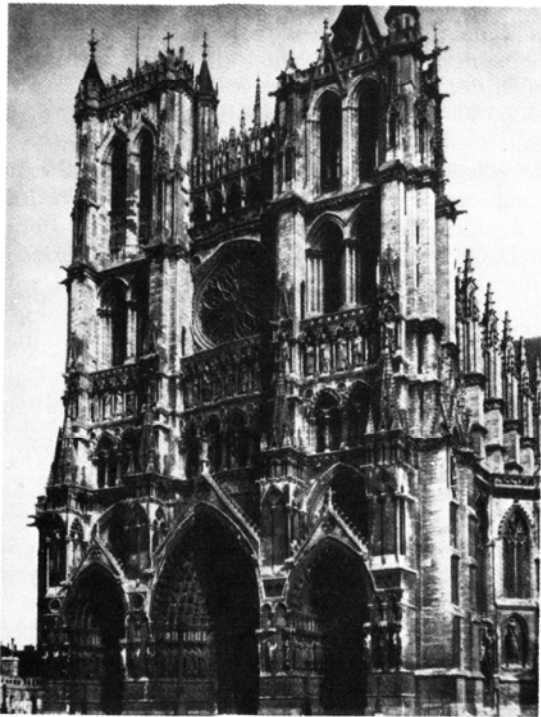
LEARNING FROM LAS VEGAS

Revised Edition

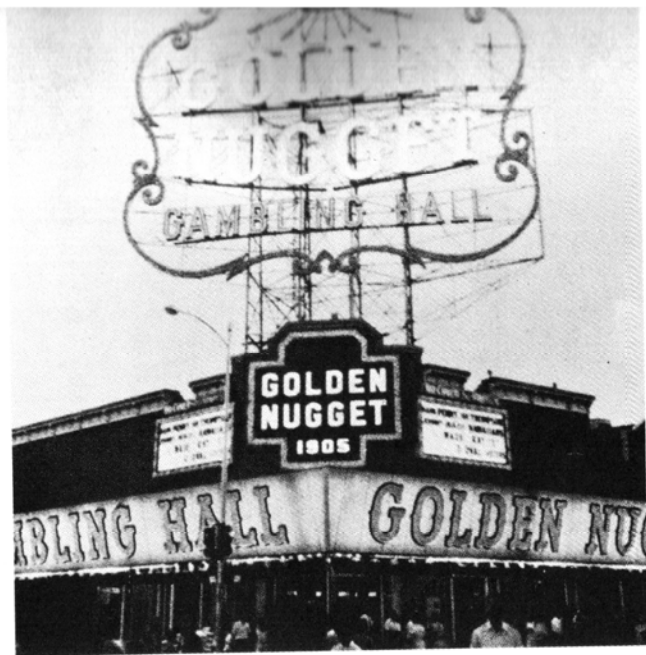
Robert Venturi Denise Scott Brown Steven Izenour



87. Metropole Cathedral, Athens



88. Amiens Cathedral, west front



89. Golden Nugget, Las Vegas, pre-1964



90. Golden Nugget, Las Vegas, post-1964



you don't come to Caesars Palace
to play solitaire...

Caesars Palace
The pleasurable experience of spinning wheels, turning dice and
flipping cards is only Caesars Palace Casino.

1. Caesars Palace tourist brochure



OLD
monumentality

The nave

The big

- ① HIGH
- ② LIT and WINDOWED
- ③ OPEN
- ④ SPACE
- ⑤ UNCLUTTERED

for communal crowds

- ① High for monumentality
- ② Lit and windowed: natural & simulated daylight falls on walls to clarify the great architecture
- ③ Open: to let natural light in and lately to integrate the inside & outside
- ④ Space: spaciousness for communal crowds
- ⑤ Uncluttered: don't clutter up the great architecture

NEW
monumentality

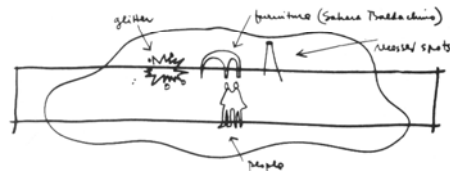
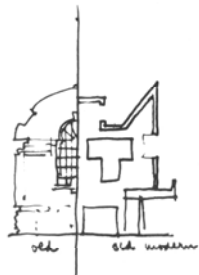
The chapels without the nave

The big

- ① LOW
- ② GLITTERING-in-the-DARK
- ③ ENCLOSED
- ④ MAZE of
- ⑤ ALCOVES and
- ⑥ FURNITURE

for separate people

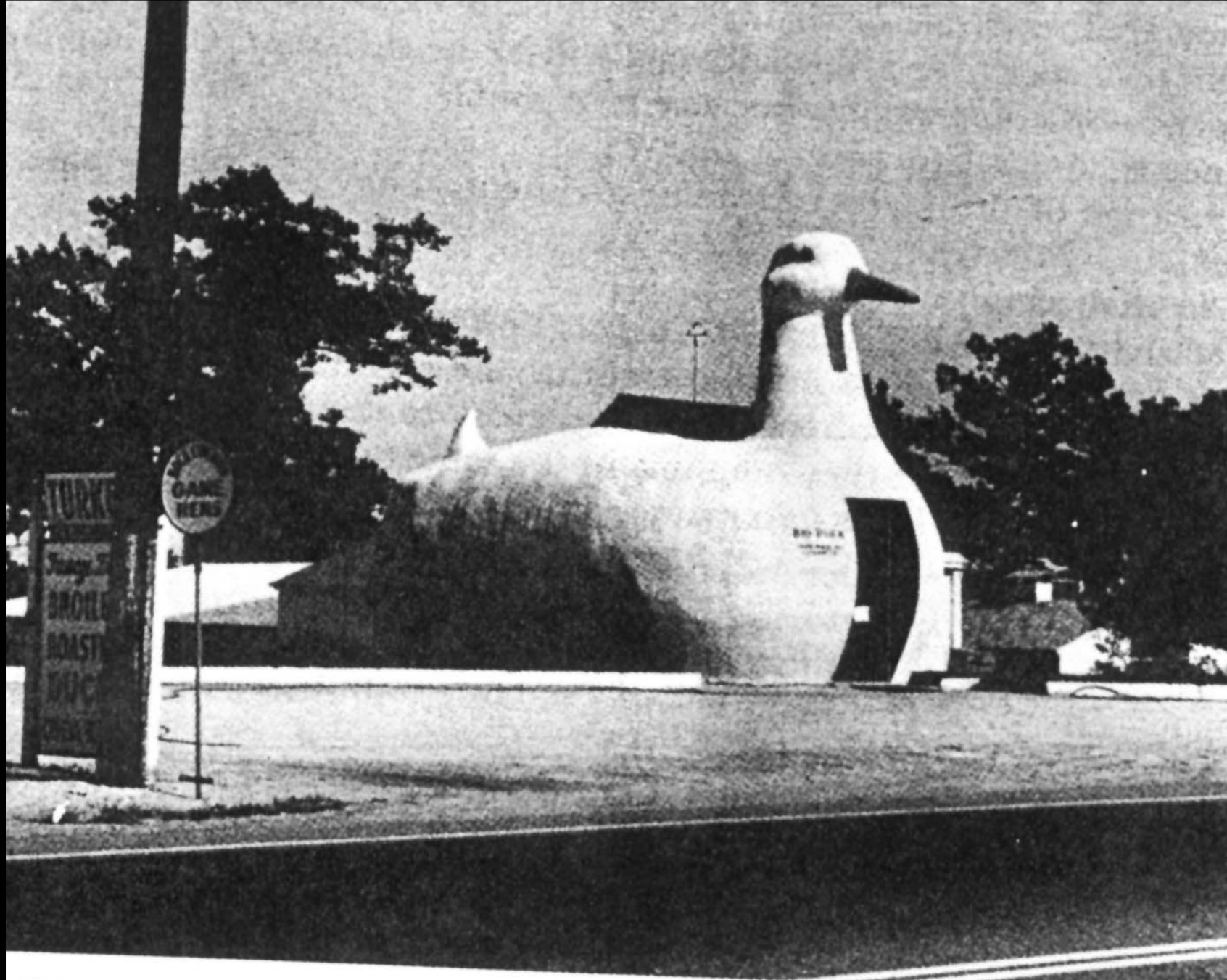
- ① Low for economy of air conditioning
- ② Glittering-in-the-Dark: perimeters dark in value, absorbent in texture to obscure context and character of the architectural enclosure. Glittering light sources - mainly ornamental - and recessed ceiling spots to light people and furniture and not architecture.
- ③ Enclosed to exclude the outside to engender a different style and role inside
- ④ Maze for crowds of anonymous individuals without social connections with each other
- ⑤ Alcoves: people are together and yet separate
- ⑥ Furniture: objects and symbols dominate architecture.



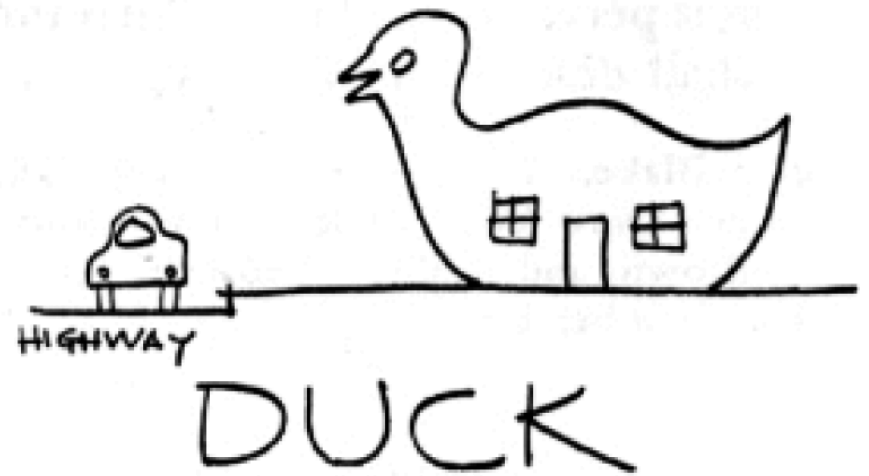
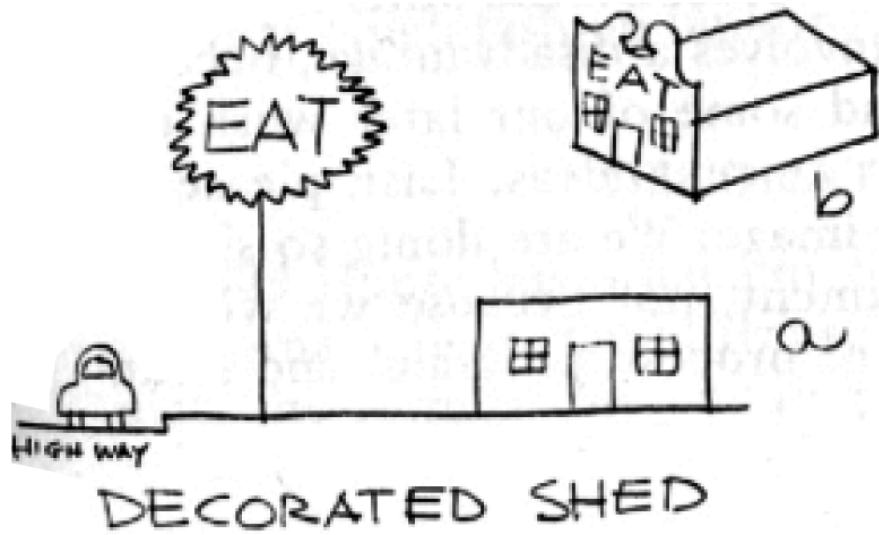
part of Topic 8 (Building types)

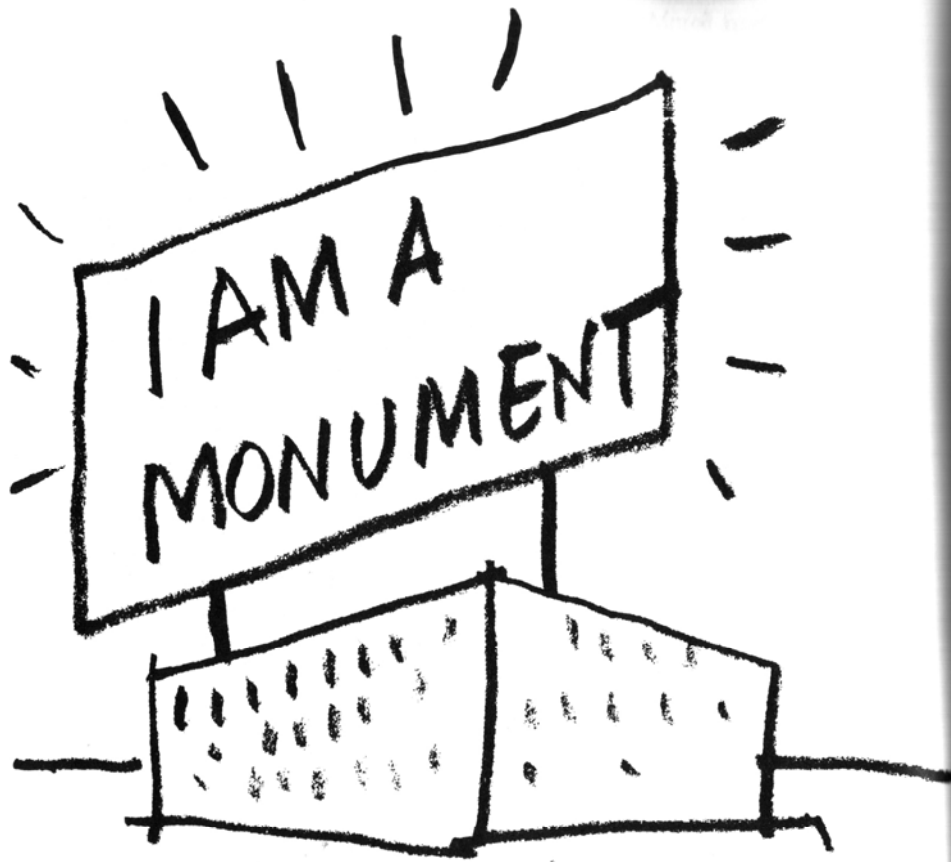
THE ROADSIDE INTERIOR

Architectural monumentality and the roadside interior

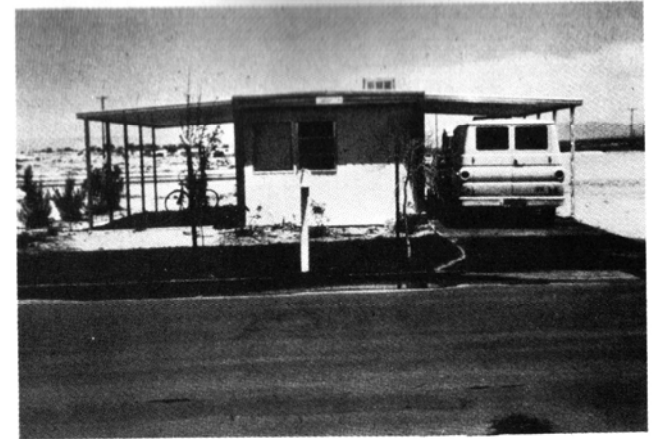


“Long Island Duckling” from *God’s Own Junkyard*

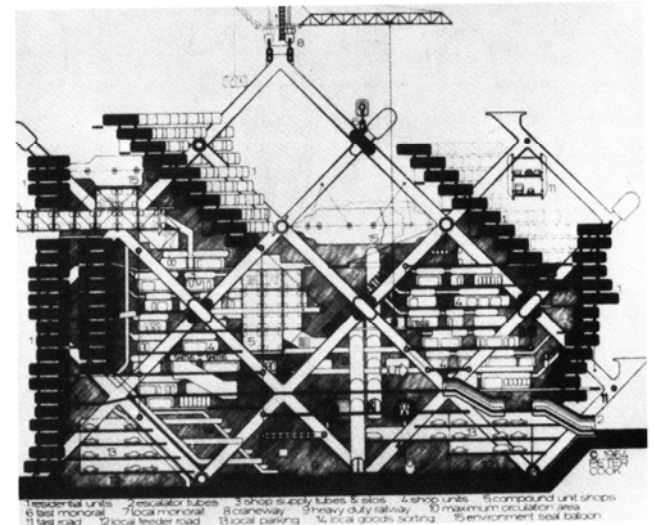




139. Recommendation for a monument



140. Mobile home, California City, California

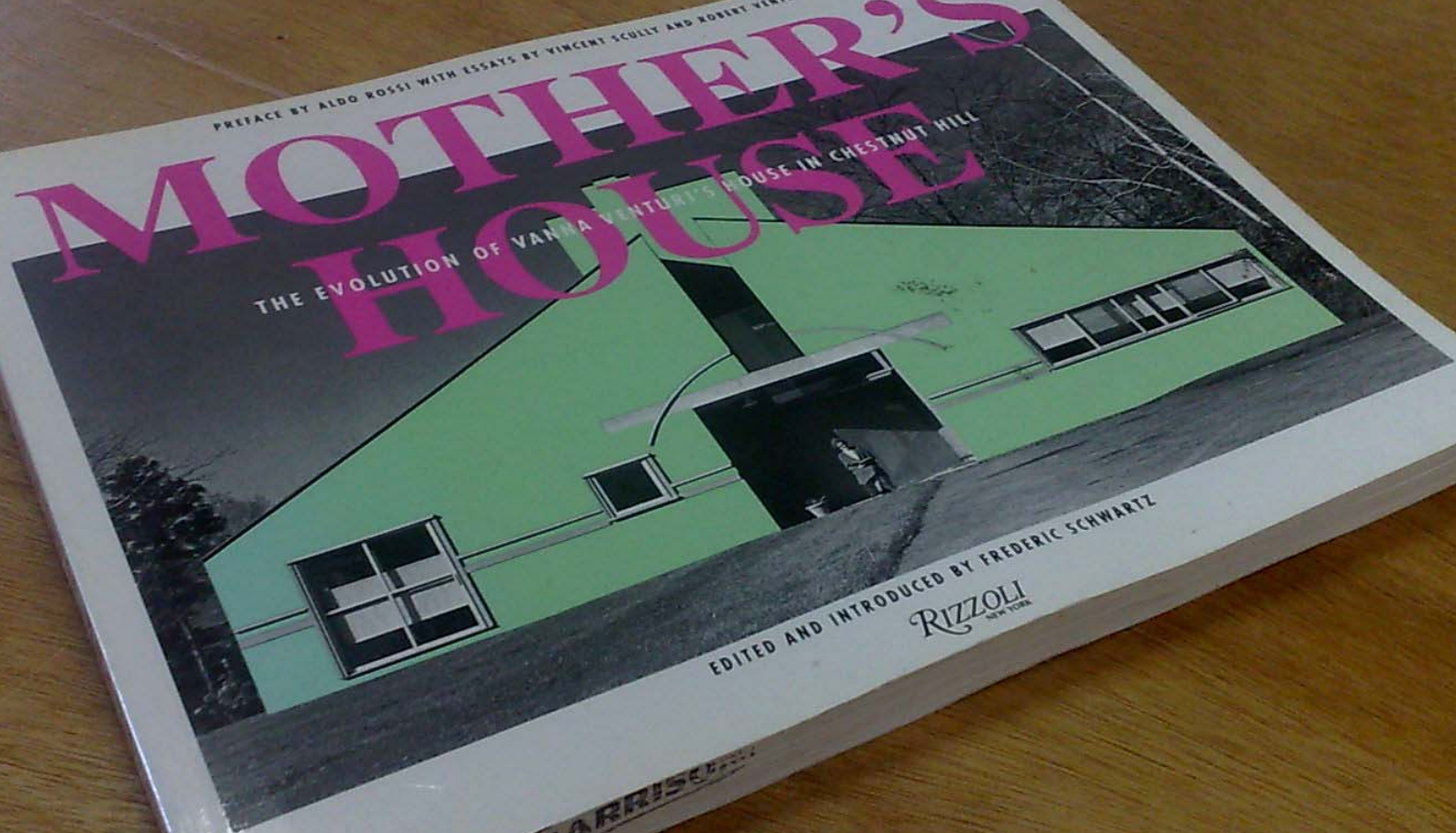


141. "Plug-in City," 1964; Peter Cook

PREFACE BY ALDO ROSSI WITH ESSAYS BY VINCENT SCULLY AND ROBERT VENTURI

MOTHER'S HOUSE

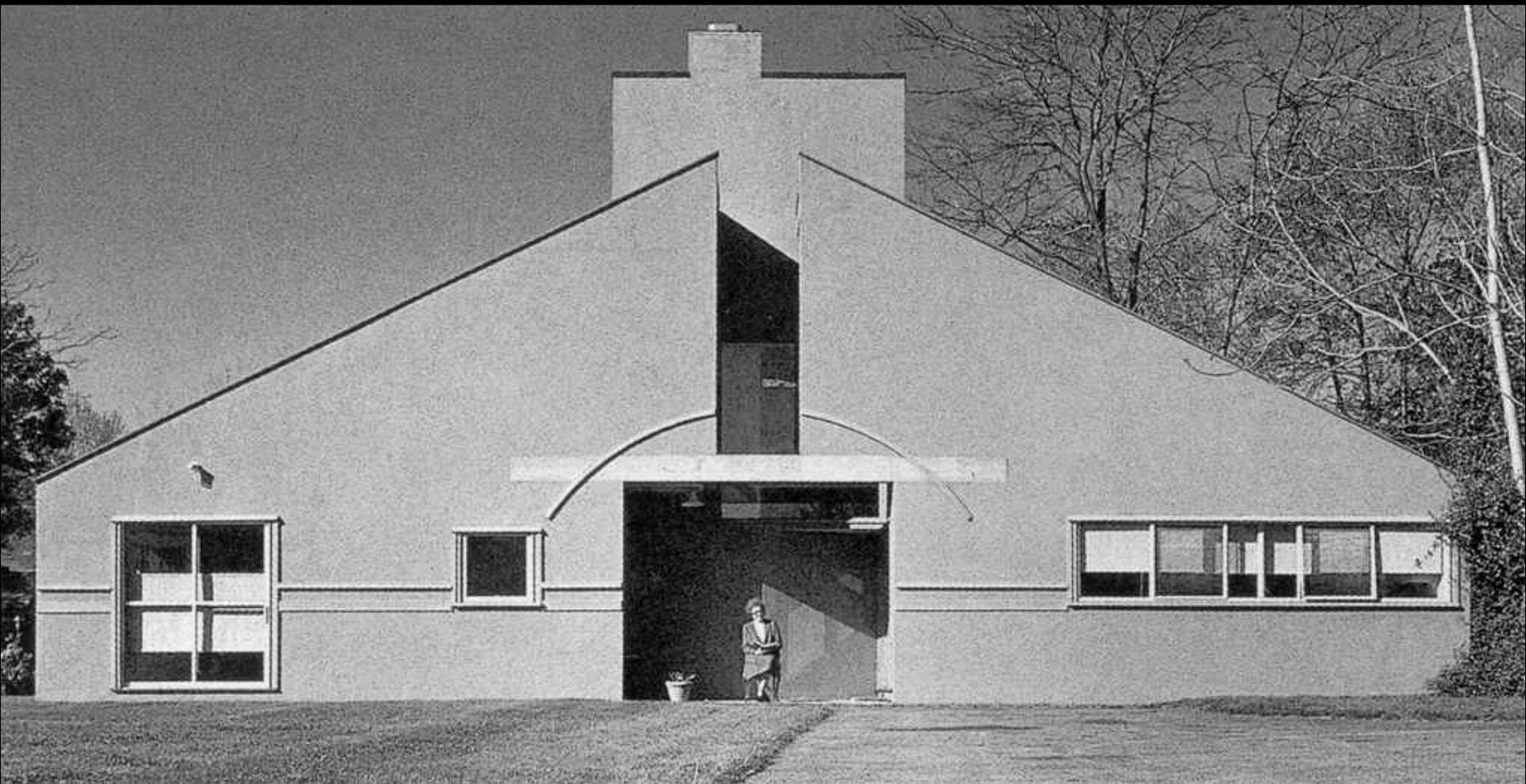
THE EVOLUTION OF VANNA VENTURI'S HOUSE IN CHESTNUT HILL



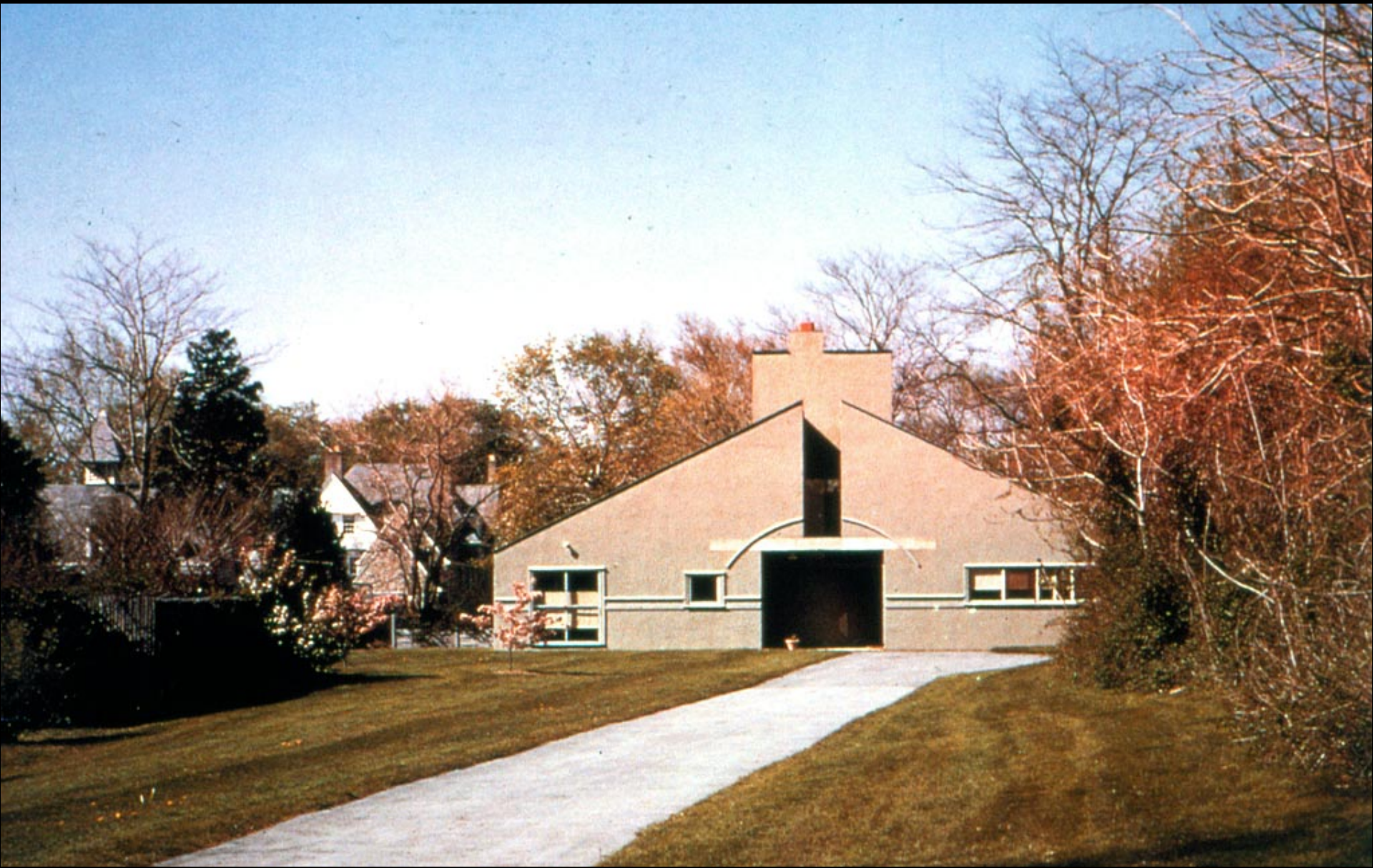
EDITED AND INTRODUCED BY FREDERIC SCHWARTZ

RIZZOLI
NEW YORK

STUART HARRIS



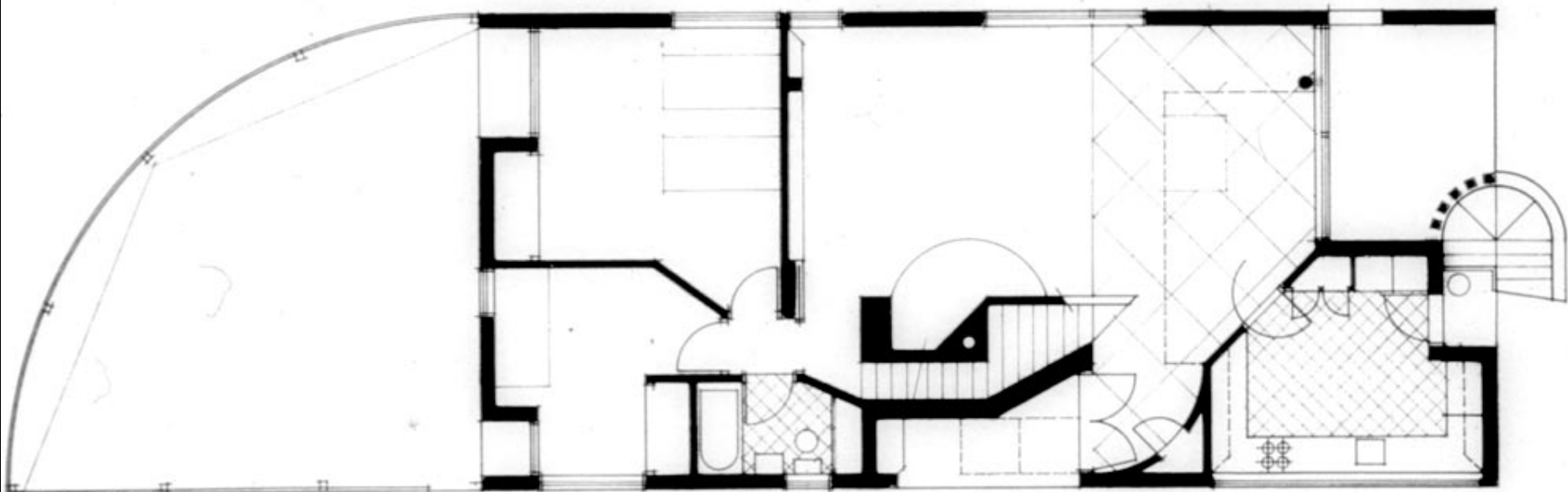
Vanna Venturi House, 1962



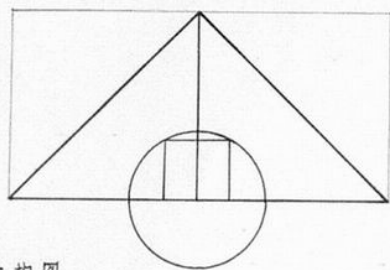




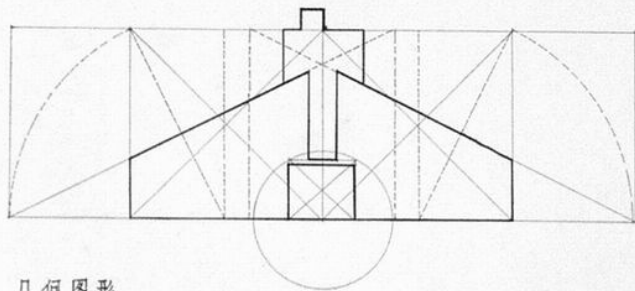




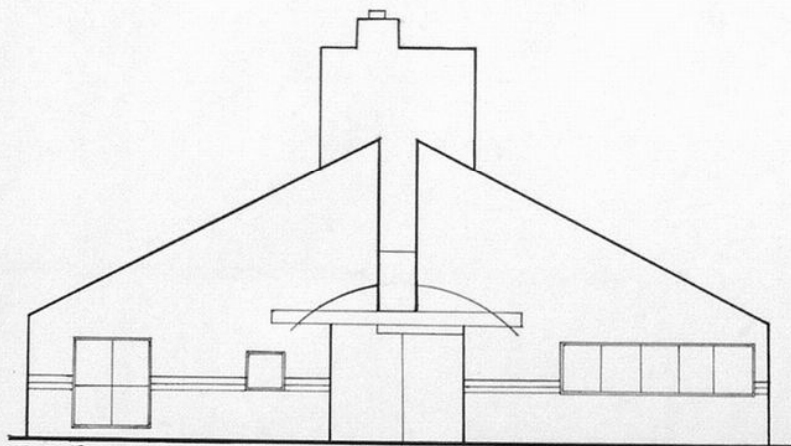
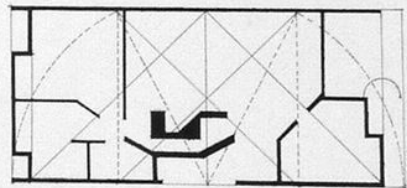
范例分析 母亲之家



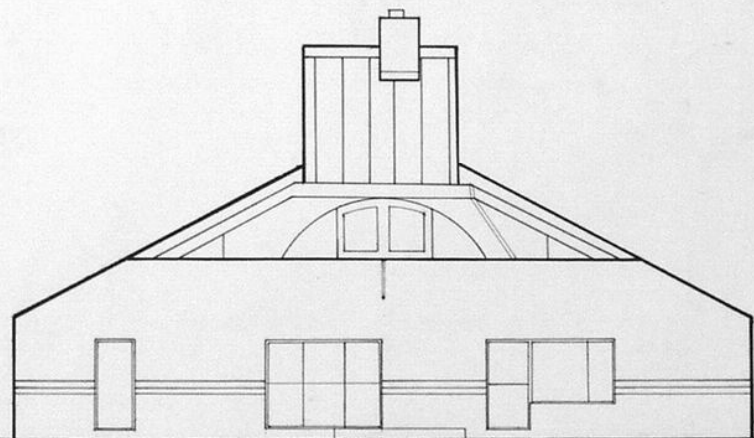
基本构图



几何图形

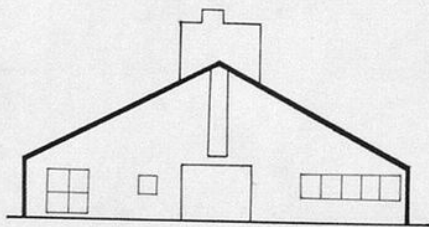


正立面

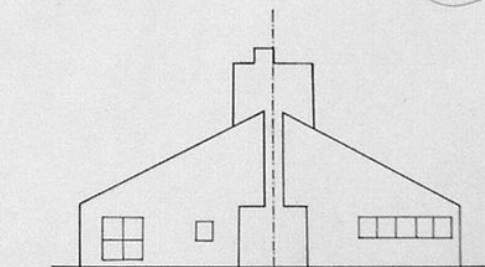
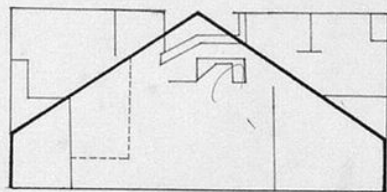


背立面

1:60



立面到平面



对称和平衡



Guild House, 1963



VSBA

WHO WE ARE

POINTS OF VIEW ON THE BOARDS

TIMELINE

A-Z LIST

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SEARCH

PROJECTS

VENTURI, SCOTT BROWN AND ASSOCIATES

TIMELINE PROJECTS

1980

1975

1970

1965

1960

ACADEMIC

CIVIC

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

GROUP

SINGLE FAMILY

STUDIES

PLANNING

PROGRAMMING

DECORATIVE ARTS

EXHIBITIONS

SOME MILESTONES



USE IN Y CREEK, CT



COXE-HAYDEN HOUSE



HOUSE IN BERMUDA



HOUSE IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY



SCHOOL HOUSE



MOTHERS HOUSE



ALESSI LIBRARY



HOUSE IN DELAWARE



SIGNS OF LIFE



HOUSE IN GLEN COVE



ECLECTIC HOUSE PROJECT



HOUSE IN GREENWICH



HOUSE IN WAINSCOTT, NY



HOUSE IN VAIL

TRUBEK & WISLOCKI



SEARCH

KEYWORD





Dixwell Fire Station, New Haven 1974



CO.3





Fire Station No.4, 1968



FIRE STATION
4





Frist Campus Center, Princeton, 2000

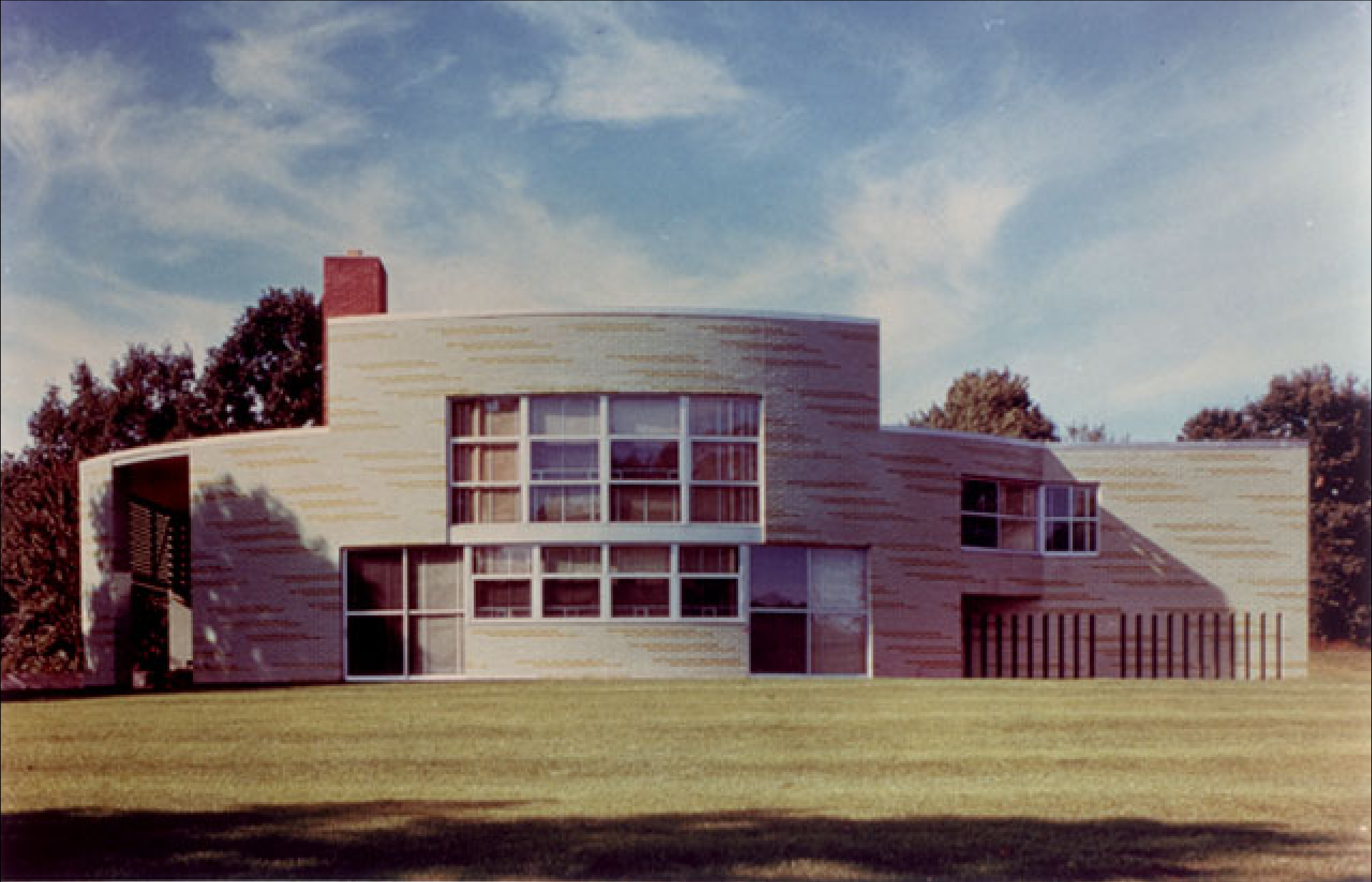






TRENTON

TRENTON FIRE DEPT.



House in Greenwich, CT, 1974



BEST





Institute for Scientific information, PA, 1974

A photograph of a modern building facade. The building features a grid of square windows, some of which are filled with blue or red panels. A central sign reads "INFORMATION" in large, orange, 3D letters. A young tree is planted in front of the building, and a car is partially visible on the left. The ground is covered with dry leaves and some greenery.

INFORMATION



Gordon Wu Hall, Butler College, Princeton University, 1980



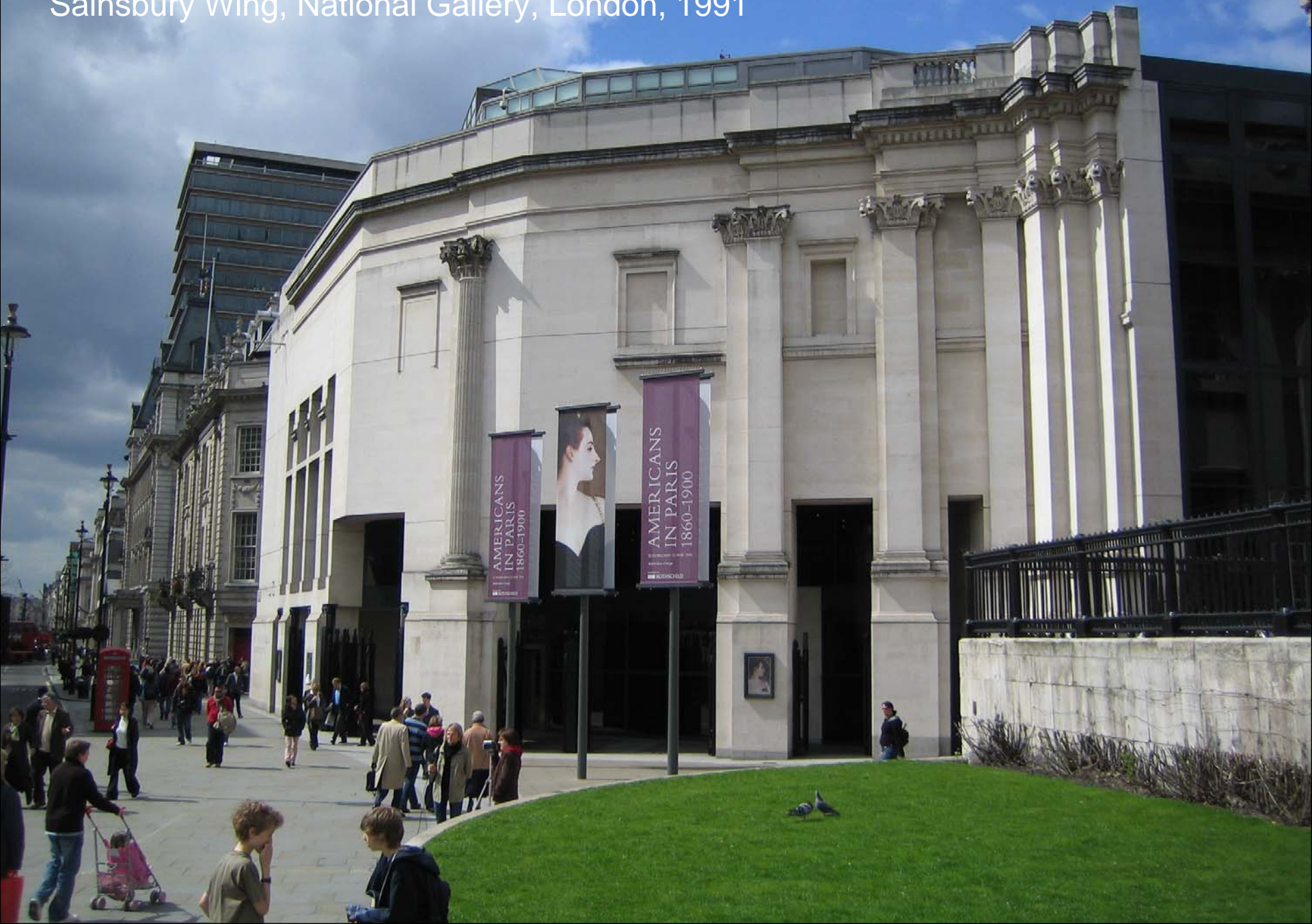








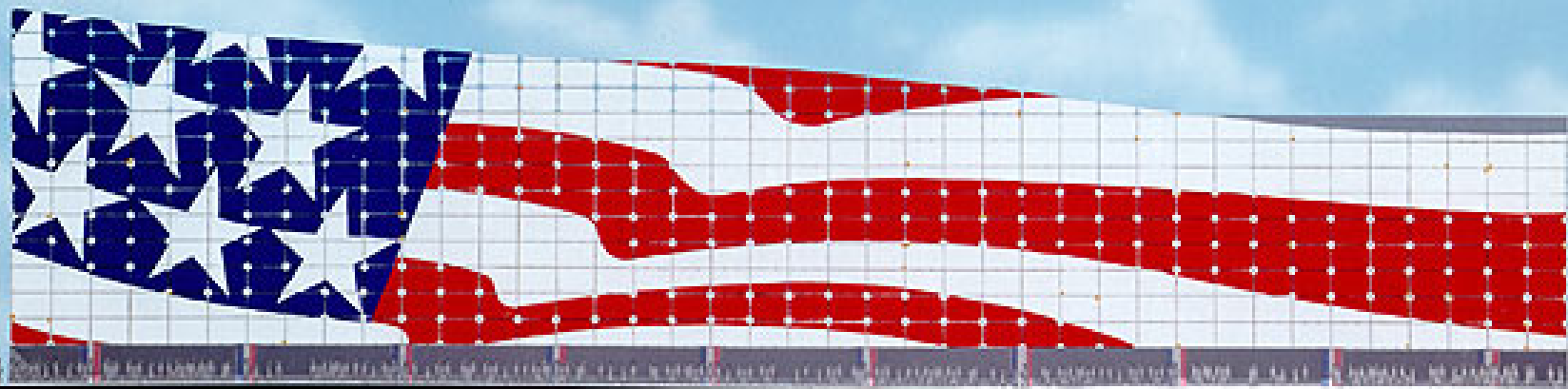
Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery, London, 1991





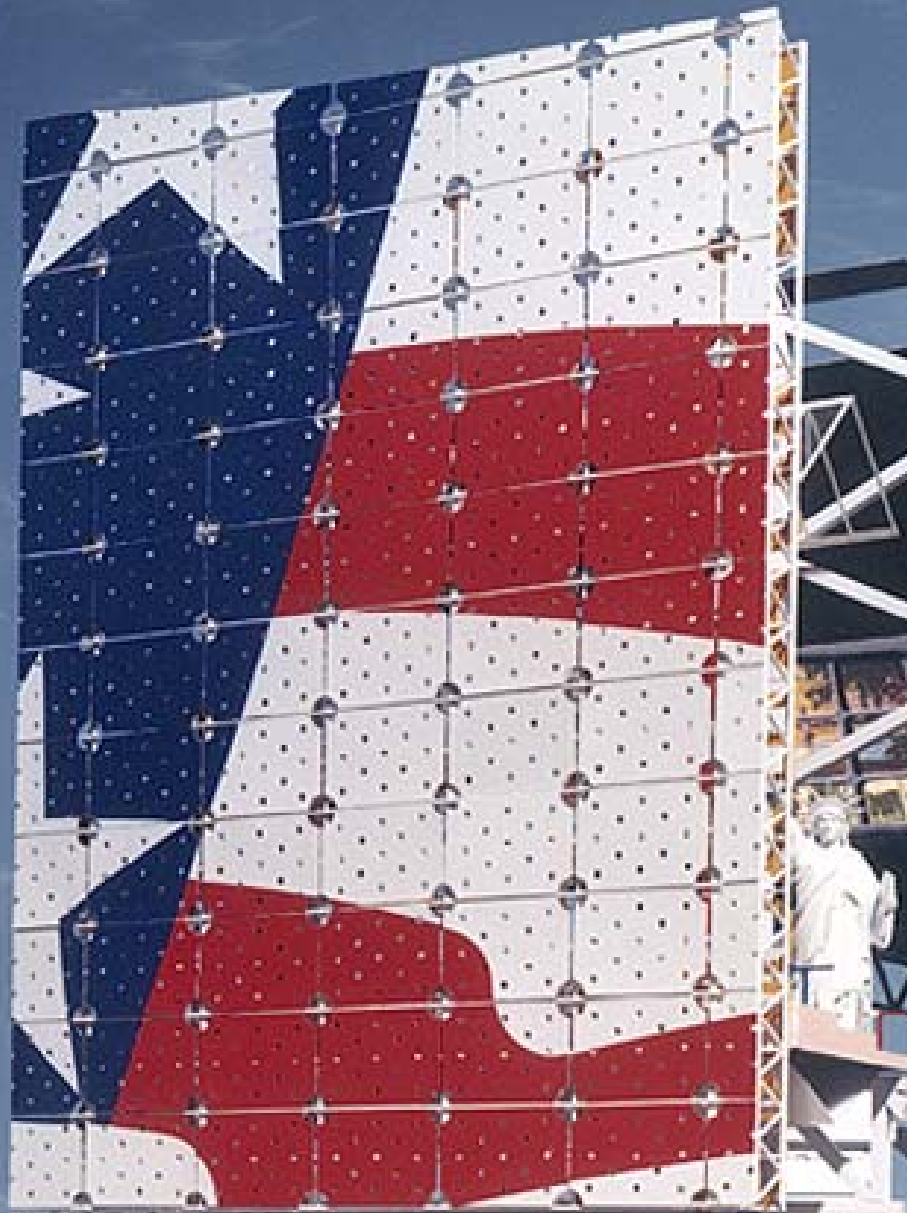
WELCOME TO THE MUSEUM





ELEVATION
UNITED STATES PAVILION - EXPO '92

SEVILLE, SPAIN
VENTURI RAUCH AND SCOTT BROWN
APRIL, 1989





JANUARY 8, 1979

\$1.25

TIME

IRAN
Violence and
Chaos

U.S. Architects

Doing
Their Own
Thing

Philip Johnson



POST MODERN



the renewal of style in architecture
by philip drew

A QUESTION OF INTERPRETATION

Post-Modern architecture is symptomatic of a crisis of architectural sensibility in a period of transition. At the heart of the current crisis of sensibility is a pervasive anti-

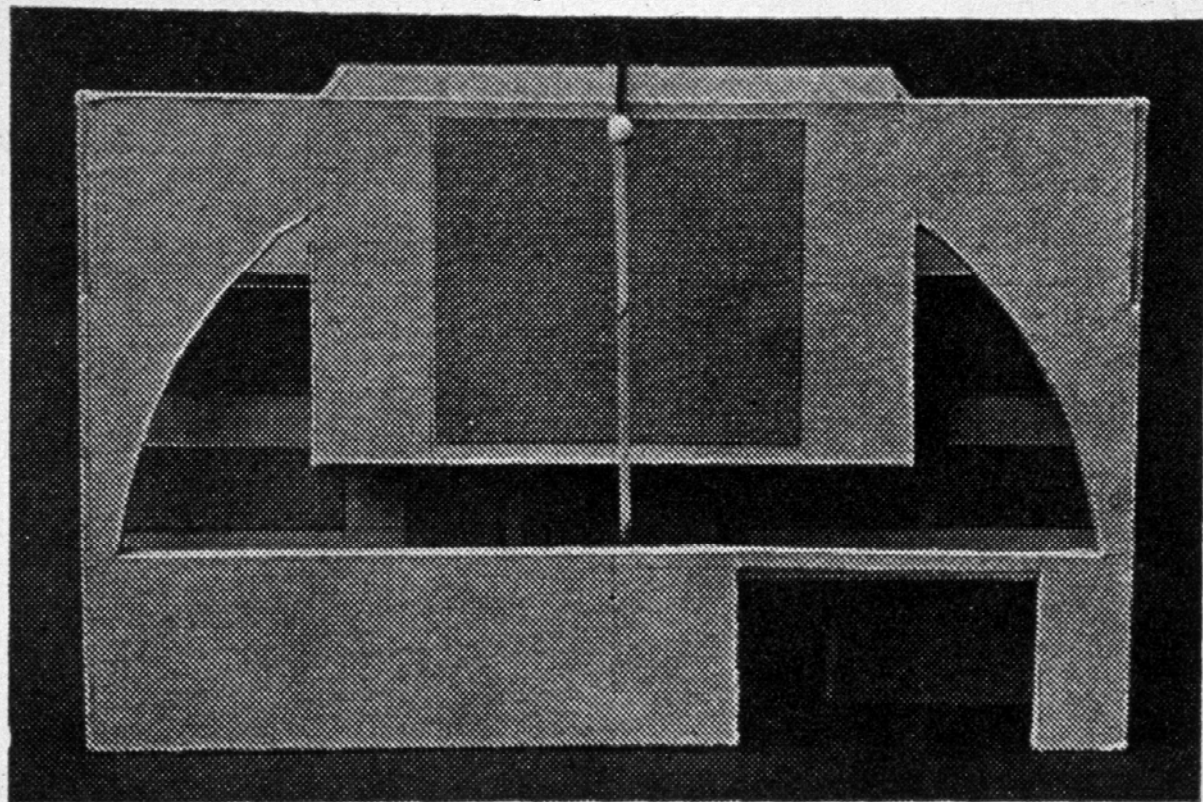
two strands of meaning or codes, that is, to use Jencks' term, a pluralistic language. I consider that Post-Modern architecture is essentially anti-classical and has many qualities in common with Mannerism. Jencks' highly specialised interpretation reflects his preoccupation with semiotics, and in turn leads him to force Post-Modern architecture into a mould so it agrees with semiotic

*"So the term 'Post-Modern' has to be clarified and used more precisely to cover, in general only those designers who are aware of architecture as a language — hence one part of my title."*¹

Here he seems to be saying that designers must be aware of Post-Modern as a **language**, not that they treat architecture as a language, it is enough for them to be aware of

architecture stuff. I haven't really sat down and thought about it so I can argue about it, and be articulate about it, it just doesn't interest me.

Photo: George Pohl



"That bloke . . . with the eyebrows".

"Any time because I th

so how can I sort of unload on other people?
If I do that sort of thing, I'm regarded as
uppity or some such thing as that. I don't know
how you write about that, I think I probably
should say things like that but I don't want
those sorts of hassels.

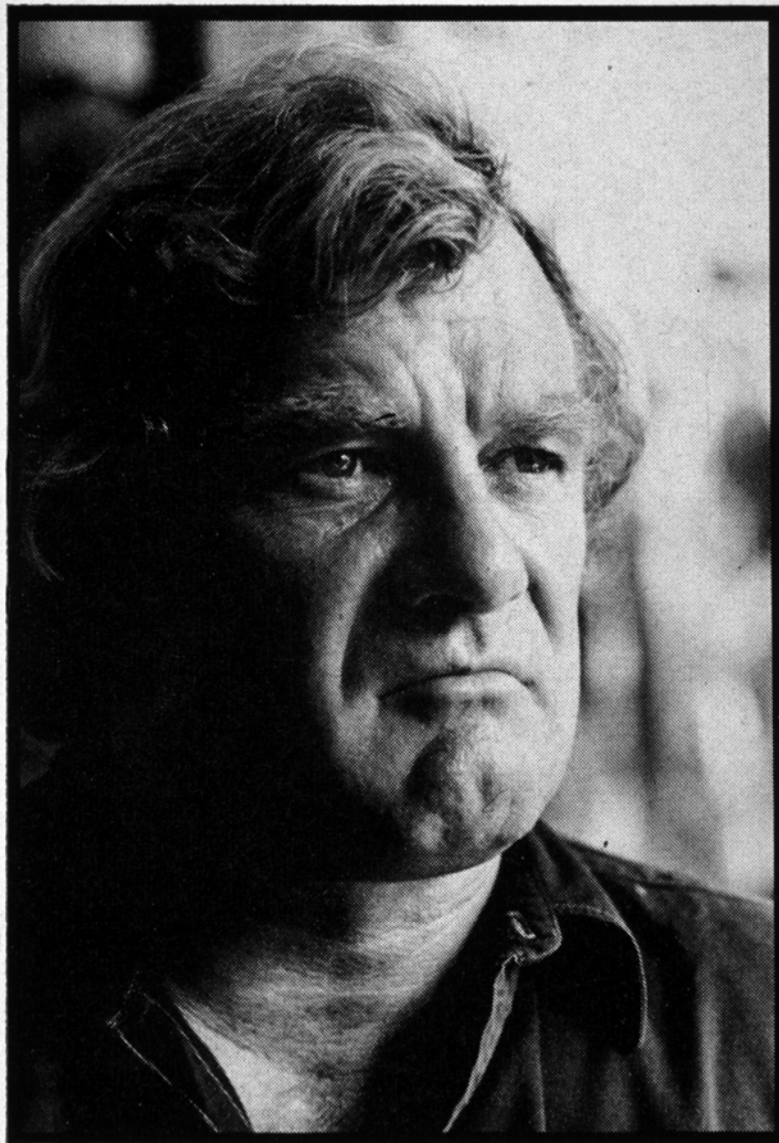


Photo: John Stewart

"I'm always bloody worried".





buildings

GLAZED IDYLLS / IDOLS?

A look at some Antipodean versions of the American skyscraper—by Howard Tanner.

Imagine yourself as a company executive with one of Australia's leading corporate bodies . . . sitting in your private jet, glancing up from some papers and spying through the porthole window the city of Melbourne. The plane is descending into Tullamarine, and you can see the mass of suburbia spreading to the south, a multitude of red roofs and conventional bungalows, and rising out of this low architecture the pyramidal massing of the central urban district, a great build up of masonry, steel, concrete and glass, and this build up dominated by one tall black glossy building, your company headquarters, which rises, cathedral-like, above all the other structures. The plane lands at Tullamarine . . . one leaves one pressurised air-conditioned capsule for another, the company limousine, and speeds down a six lane freeway with the tall black building providing a focus as the road penetrates the city fabric. Leaving the car in the company car park, one ascends in a fast executive lift to the fortieth floor, to relax in another air-conditioned capsule, one's comfortable office, and take in the expansive views out over the city, to the distant hills and to the bay. One might reflect had the company/helicopter been available that the complexities of getting into the city and into the office would have been simplified, for the heliport one floor up would have provided easier access. This kind of cityscape closely relates to the early twentieth century futurist visions of the city. Designers, such as Sant' Elia and le Corbusier, were planning the perfect city, linked by park-separated freeways and dominated by elevator-serviced tower blocks. The car would be king, with trains, aeroplanes, and even dirigibles tying into the efficient transport grid. These visions of the city were expertly translated into reality in America in the 1950's by firms of architects such as Skidmore Owings & Merrill and road engineers such as de Looze Cather. Machine technology was used to full effect to make a simplistic architecture of structural forcefulness yet detailed with almost classical restraint. Beautiful craftsmanship and design provided an ultimate standard in mechanised comfort and facilities. This was the contemporary American vision of the dream city with freeways feeding the far-flung suburbia into his office and providing a protective, isolated environment all the way,

post World War II planners held to be of paramount importance. The urban neuroses that developed out of this inhuman separatist environment are now well known. Henry Miller's novel "The Air Conditioned Nightmare" comes to mind. Jane Jacobs rallied with "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" to show the important function of the urban neighbourhood unit. However, Australian cities have not had this part commercial/part residential flavour for almost a century, so the pattern of live-by-day/dead-by-night urban quarters is accepted here with the exception of a few mixed function areas on the periphery of the central urban area. The confusion between social ideals and the combination of glass, metal and bureaucracy that was revealed in the new office blocks of the 1950's is well explained by Charles Jencks in "Modern Movements in Architecture", Penguin Books Ltd., England (1973): ". . . the social Utopianism which existed in the work of Le Corbusier, Gropius and the CIAM Architects became deflected just as their modern aesthetic—the International Style—triumphed around the world in the fifties. In effect, what was known popularly as 'Modern Architecture' became accepted by most national governments as well as the leading international corporations and it was most importantly stripped of its social idealism. As a result of this mixed success, modern architecture became identified with the bureaucracies that commissioned, inhabited and sometimes even designed it." (It is interesting to note BHP's request for a building to have "a fundamental structural integrity expressed in the overall design and not influenced by transient fashions or stereo-typed design", and to provide "as much public space as possible at ground level . . . It must be a significant landmark and at the same time blend with the city skyline" . . . it can be taken then, that the clients required a building conveying symbolic qualities of honesty and dominance.) To resume with Jencks: "The ambiguities that this could produce were extraordinary since much of the International Style had previously been associated with progressive social institutions. Perhaps to take on some of this Welfare State flavour, the big corporations accepted the modern movement in its glass clad package form. This started its final development with Lever Building (by Skidmore Owings and Merrill) on Park Avenue in New York City, 1951,

seven years later, across the street with the Pepsi Cola and Seagram Building. But two questions emerge. Is it more important that the curtain wall develops aesthetically from a light close mesh pattern to a heavy articulated one, or the fact that Mies van der Rohe and some of the best American architects spent their greatest energies in refining the exterior wrappings for monopolies which produced soap, whiskey and soda-pop? "Secondly, is this repeated use of a curtain wall sufficient to articulate the rich and diverse content which occurs behind them? "As Park Avenue became a street lined with such anonymous expressions of Corporate America, the International Style became equated with the Bureaucratic School of Architects that produced it. This contradiction between technical and visual excellence on the one hand, and the undeniable banality of the building task on the other, became so obvious by the early sixties (in the US) that the curtain wall and its related aesthetic fell into disrepute to be replaced by other approaches" . . . notably precast solidarity and sculptural forms.

S.O.M. Lever Bros. Bld., New York City



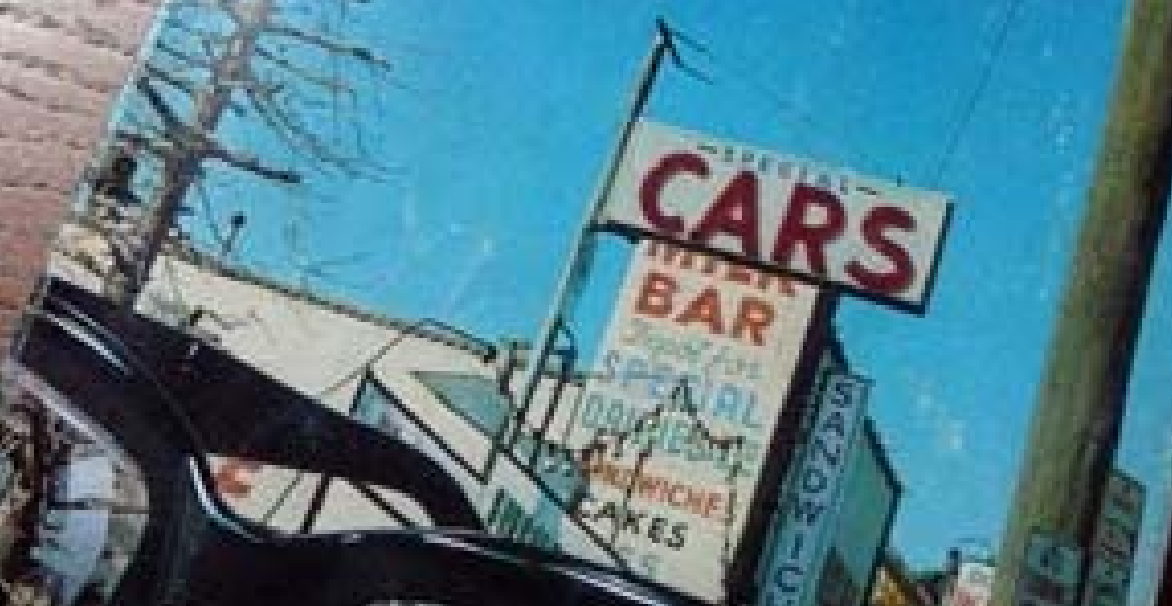
Photograph from Modern Movements in Architecture.



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Robin Boyd



SMUDGES

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An Agonizing Reappraisal

Mr. J. KENNEDY: INAUGURAL SPEECH TO NATION

In March, 1952, the last issue of SMUDGES as a broadsheet limped on to the local scene. A Mr. Peter Burns announced with fervour comparable to the Second Coming of the Messiah, that a new publication entitled "Smudges — ARCHITECTURE AND ARTS" (always a curious distinction) would now be presented in magazine form containing approximately twenty-four pages. With admirable restraint and due modesty he disclosed the new editorial policy.

"Without wishing to appear pedantic, the publication will endeavour to give a general view of the past, present and future of cultural achievement in Australia." Mr. Burns concluded, flushed and optimistic with reference to "a great future".

It is not the wish of this edition of SMUDGES to detract from Mr. Burns' grandiose display of egoism and highly commendable student naivety; as the actual history of this mink student publication is under a cloud. However, this final ringing call, followed by the subsequent croak is indicative of the sad decay of the fine ideal that once was SMUDGES. It is not surprising that the Student mouth has been full of beer and not protest for over ten years. On investigating "SMUDGES and the young Architect" (the new schizophrenia), September, 1951, the end is portended. The expectant reader is confronted with a Film Review . . . concerning an eighty-year-old Countess Raneoshaya (Edith Evans).

"Who by selling her soul many years before obtained the secret of winning at cards."

But a Captain of Engineers (Mr. Anton Walbrook)

"Determines to wrest it from her. With the help of the Countess's young companion, he manages to enter the Castle, and tries to obtain the secret at pistol point. She dies — of fright."

The review concludes with

"The delicate symbolism of the escaping birds in the final scene is equally restrained and really ingenious."

The reviewer (Peter McIntyre) leaves no doubt as to his sincerity in dealing with this film. (Obviously written by Mrs. Radcliffe for Barry Humphries.) But one could have been more suitably deposited in a Farrago. Some of these last SMUDGES make grey reading in retrospect.

The FORMULATIVE years, 1937-1941 (Robin Boyd), were awash with enthusiasm and causes. The £3,000 libel case of 1941, with its sparing and final settlement out of court. The Toorak Village under fire.

" . . . a rotten row . . . an aborted, wormy slut . . . a hot bed of Architectural corruption . . . that maudlin riot of half timbered, crenellated erections . . ."

The edition on housing, a copy of which was sent to Canberra to the Minister for Labour and National Service, Mr. Holt; a sympathetic reply being received in time to be added to the final copy.

The immediate post-war era, 1946-1949 (that Laughing Cavalier, Neil Clerchan), leaves an impression of Jewelled Journalism and true militancy. A Committee convened to investigate architectural education (Professor Lewis to the new Chair of Architecture). The Beaufort Prefab. versus the Myer House wrangle with the subsequent muscle flexing in the down-town press. This post-war

era of students produced for world consumption "Victorian Modern" (written by Robin Boyd), at 12/6 a copy. Funds were raised by issuing debentures among the V.A.S.S. Committee. It took twelve months to collect the material, to have two hundred photographs engraved, to write the book. A quote from SMUDGES, July, 1947:

"It is not a History Book, nor a text book, nor a magazine. We believe it is a rather different and entertaining combination. It tells the story in words, photographs and drawings, of the Victorian Building, as it has grown through one hundred and eleven years."

Graham Bell was launched at the 1946 Bule Print Bacchanal.

For ten years now SMUDGES has existed only in the memories of the rearguard idealists as the oscillated through "life" in the "Profession". V.A.S.S. did provide a newsheet in the 50's to co-ordinate the many facets of its social life (but this yellow paper did little else). Then "Slate" rose . . . like a phoenix from the ashes of SMUDGES".

Except for articles by Don Fulton on Architectural education and Philip Sargeant on "New Brutalism", the entire series came to nothing but pedantry and pomposity in the realms of "Truth" and "Beauty", with an odd shout from an occasional architectural Osborne. "Slate" will be ruefully remembered for the sheer banality of its architectural expression and its wilful failure to promulgate standards of design.

e.g. "Bouquet to LE JARDIN CAFE in the basement of the Austral Buildings, 117 Collins Street.

Concrete vaults have been left unrendered and painted light green." "Slate", Vol. 2, No. 4 — 1957.

By 1959 V.A.S.S. had succumbed to a scandal, and its overloaded feet of clay. All this in an era of vulgarity and building that could be compared with the feverish civic pride of the bonanza years.

However, in this Year of Grace 1961, the M.U.A.S.C. Committee (having avant-garde tendencies) has decided in its wisdom to rake over the old coals — and make History. (The Committee is aware of the problems and pitfalls associated with resurrections.) It seems fitting that this New Millennium should be commenced with some soul searching in the form of a clarification of principles; rather than beating the tub for bright new programmes to "bridge the gap of public awareness", and other similar badly bruised causes. It is with a certain humility that the following is presented in relation to the hopes and aspirations for "SMUDGES", 1962.

"Criticism is the prerogative and stimulant of Art. Today, despite unprecedented dissemination of news and culture by the radio and the press, criticism is practically denied the Mother of the Arts. The building columns of our daily press do not fulfil this want. They associate indiscriminately the good with the bad, their descriptions and remarks are often trite, and misleading, invariably flattering, and (is it ethical to admit?) generally composed in the Office of the Architect responsible!

"Maybe the quietly smug tendencies of the profession and the affections of so many buildings erected in the name of art, are due to just that lack of public criticism."

"SMUDGES", Vol. 1 — No. 1, 1939.

Aa

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Cities

Of

Hope

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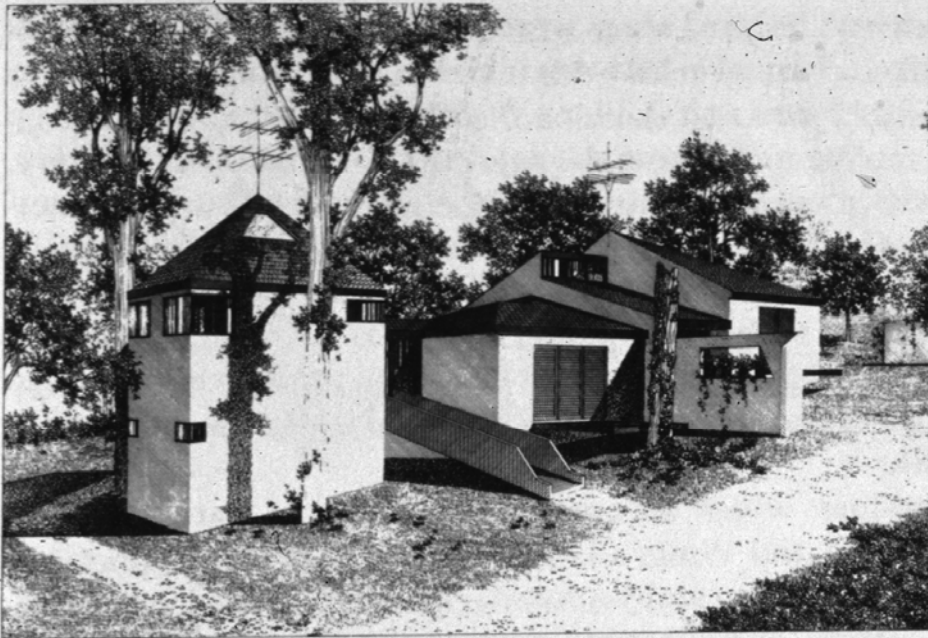


Figure 16
Peter Corrigan: Jon and Maureen Kenyon House, Croydon, 1964, exterior, perspective rendering

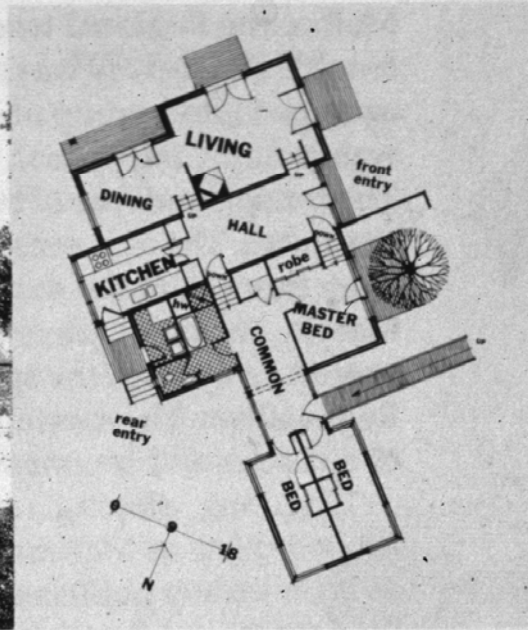
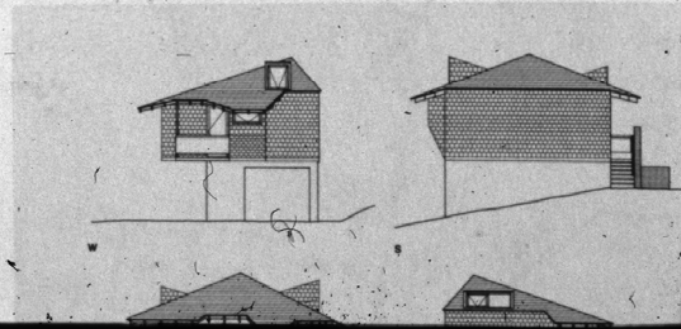


Figure 17
Kenyon House: plan

have been deliberate, and a comment on suburban conditions: Some of the scale changes, handled so well in later designs, are done awkwardly here, and the placement and shaping of areas in the plan are uneasy, as Corrigan strained to fit them into the two pavilions. Finally the intended fascias and rendering were left off. The perspective rendering, as with all the early Corrigan designs, looks better than the completed building.

Another university friend, Don Hume, wanted a bungalow and lounge, also in his parents' garden, this time in the densely treed, inner-suburban area of Kew. Corrigan moved in another direction here, acknowledging nearby houses of the Federation and Bungalow periods, and producing his first clear response to urban surroundings (figs 18-19). This shows in the corbelled bays, projecting pointed rafters, and redwood walls of the first design. The elevations vary dramati-

Figure 18
Peter Corrigan: Don Hume Bungalow, Kew, c.1965, elevations and plans, first version





**Greg
Burgess**

**Maggie
Edmond**

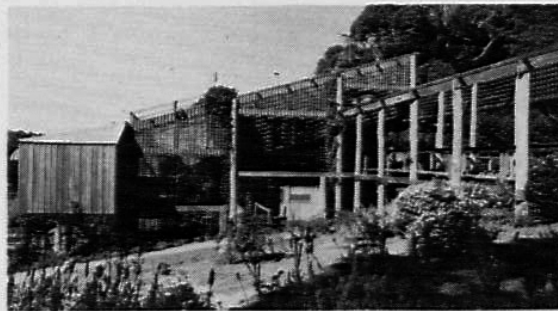
**Peter
Crone**

**Norman
Day**

**Peter
Corrigan**



Colvin House
Lawrence Court
Warrandyte
Kevin Borland
1975



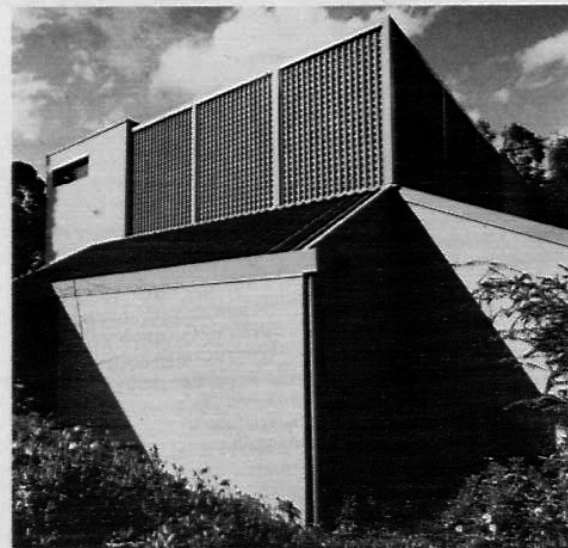
Jackson House
Shoreham
Daryl Jackson Pty. Ltd.
1979-1980



Carmichael House
Sandringham
Cocks & Carmichael
1979-1980



Resurrection School Hall
Corrigan Road
Keysborough
Edmond & Corrigan
1979



Scroggie/Clair House
Kensington Road,
South Yarra
Gunn Hayball Pty. Ltd.
1977-1979



Porritt House
Mount Martha
Peter Crone
1978



House
Toorak
Max May Pty. Ltd.
1977-1981

Australian Architecture and the Stage, 1979

by Peter Carrigan



St Joseph's Church Surrey Hills

Floating World — set 1975



ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH: PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER CARRIGAN, 1979

Figure 141 (see pp. 89, 100)

**The Pleasures of Architecture conference, Sydney,
1980: the Completion of Engehurst exhibition design,
general themes and proposals**



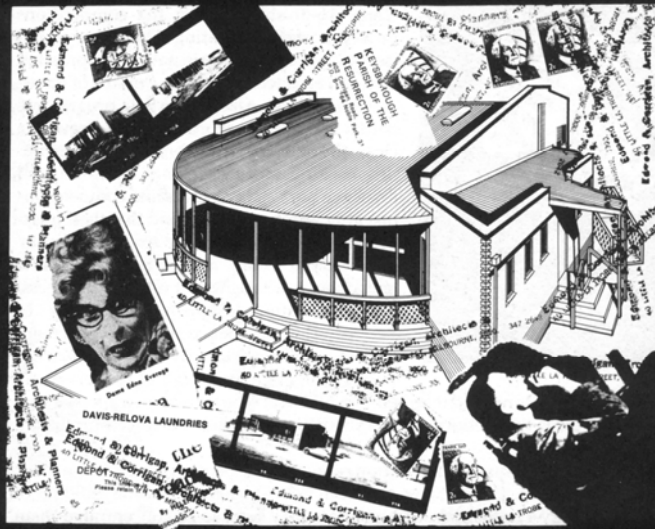
FOUR MELBOURNE ARCHITECTS

Greg Burgess

Peter Crone

Norman Day

Edmond & Corrigan



EDMOND & CORRIGAN

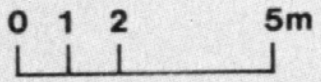
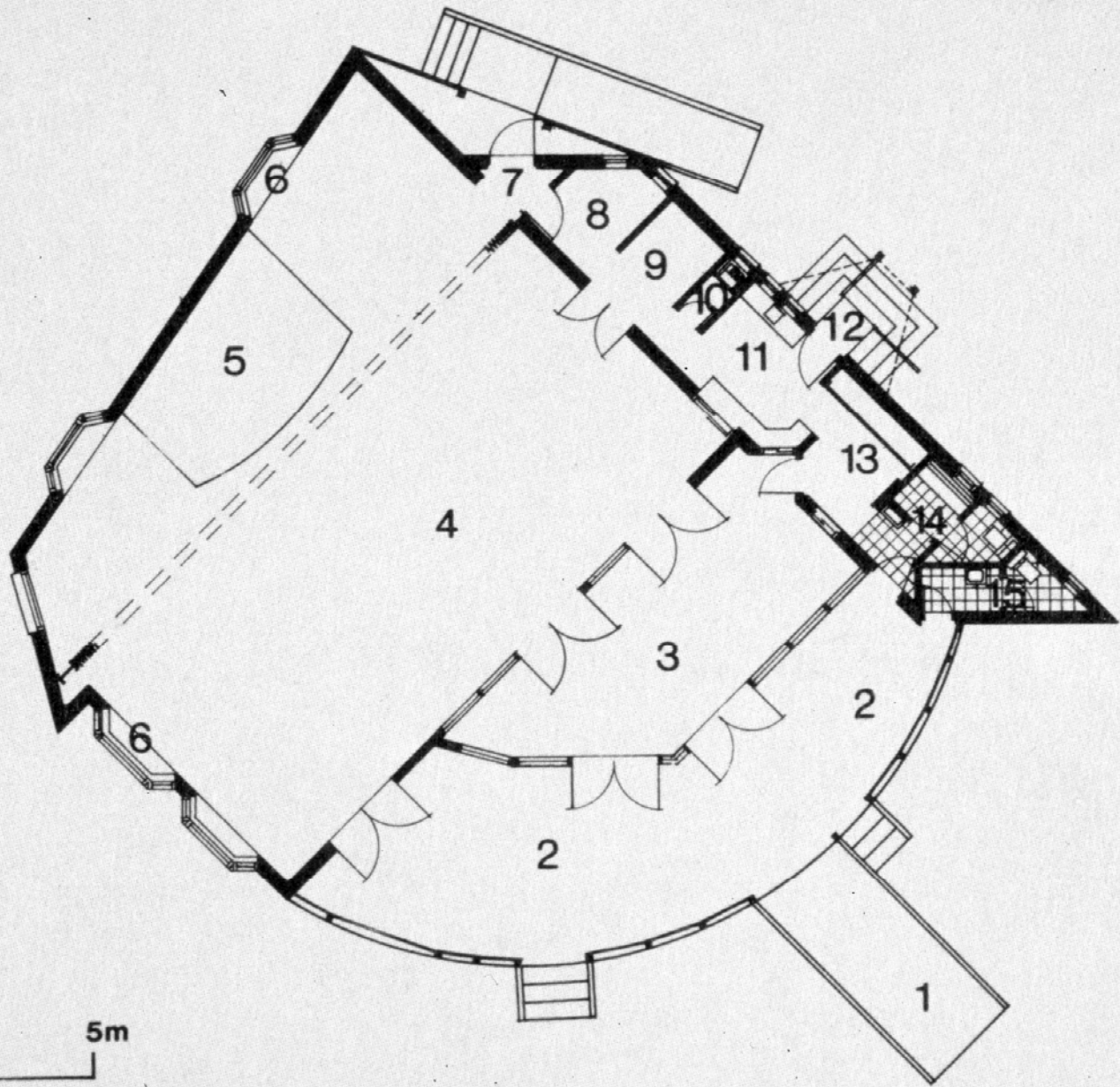


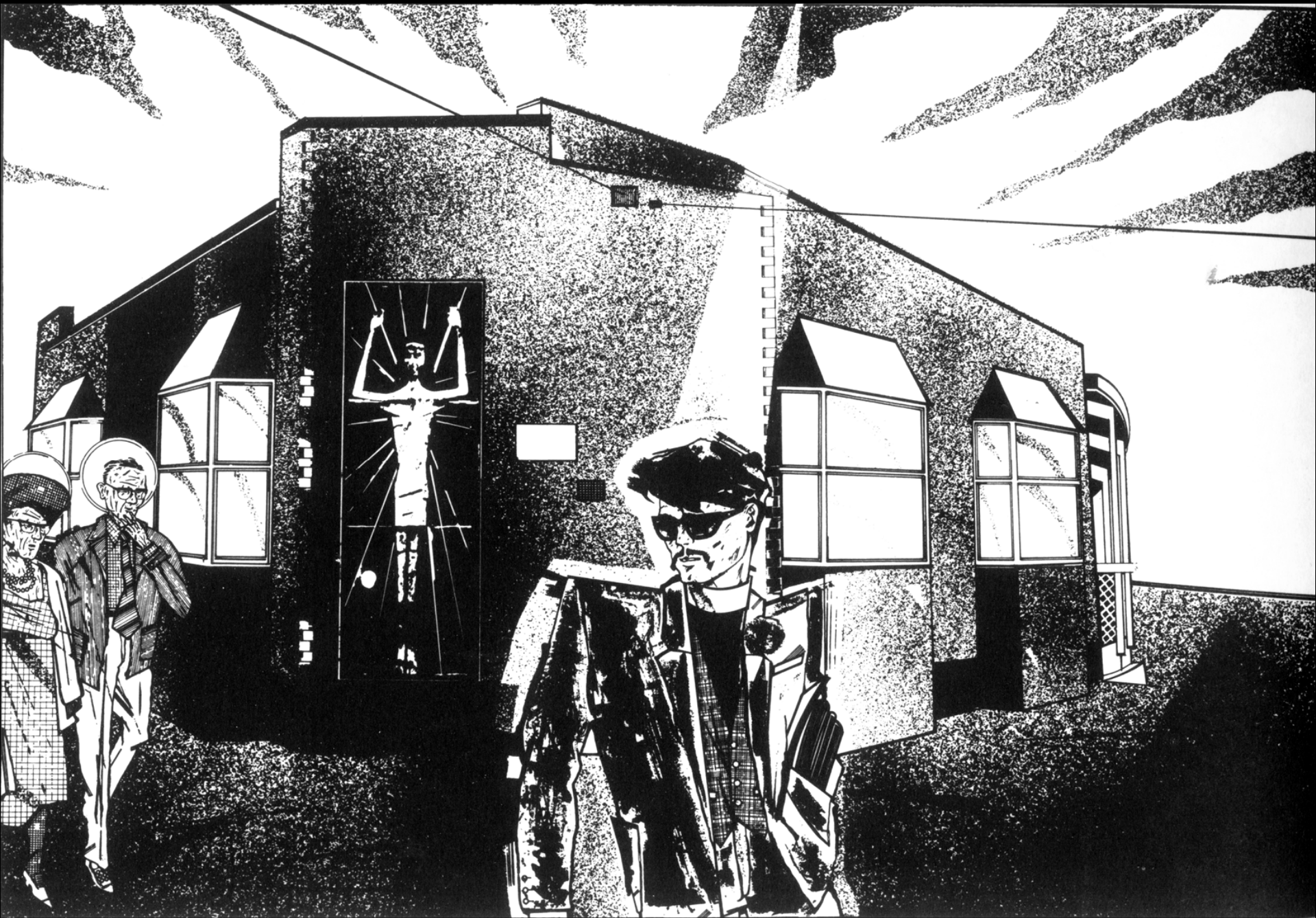
Edmond & Corrigan. Exhibition. 1979

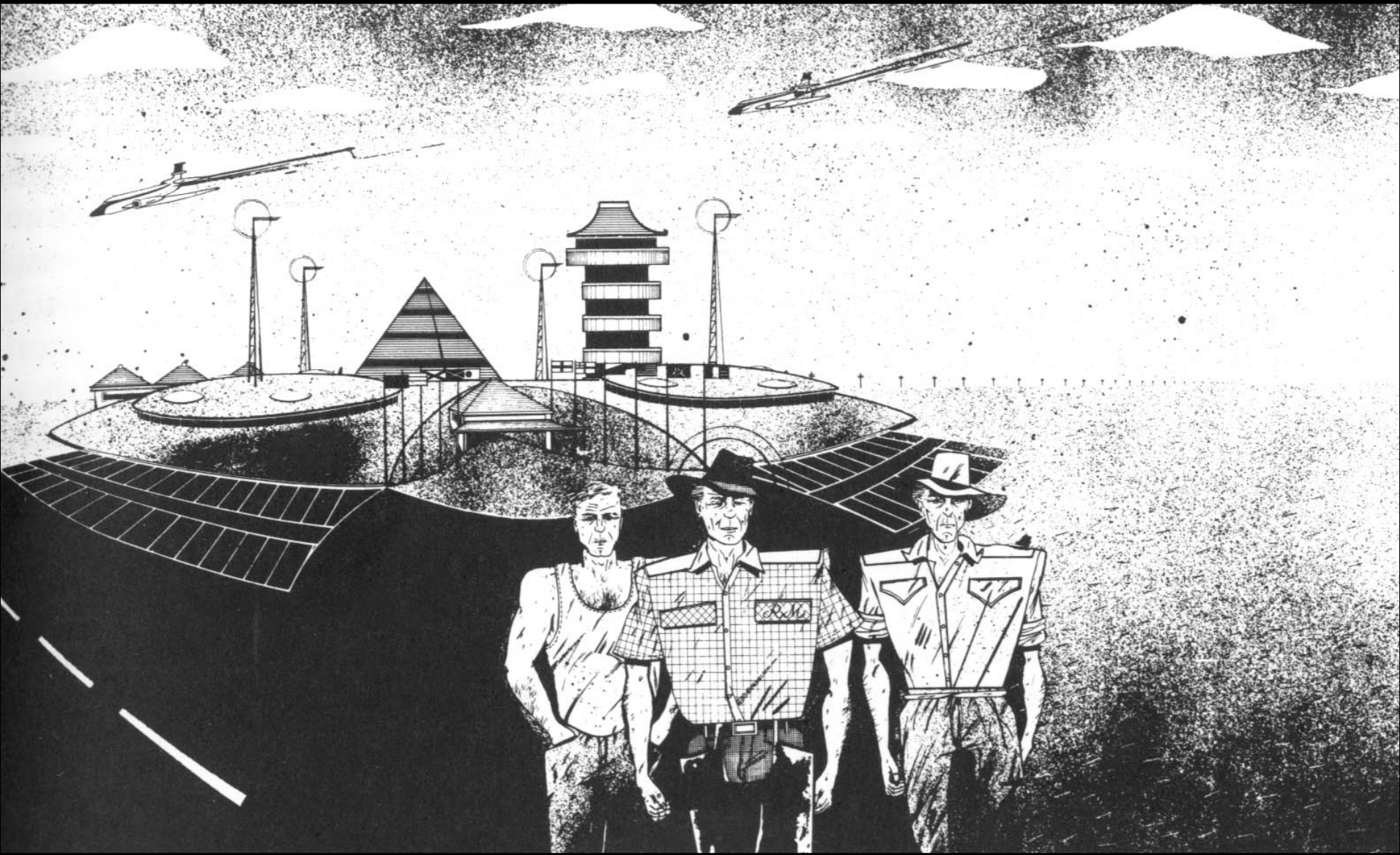


Kesborough Church of the Resurrection, 1976

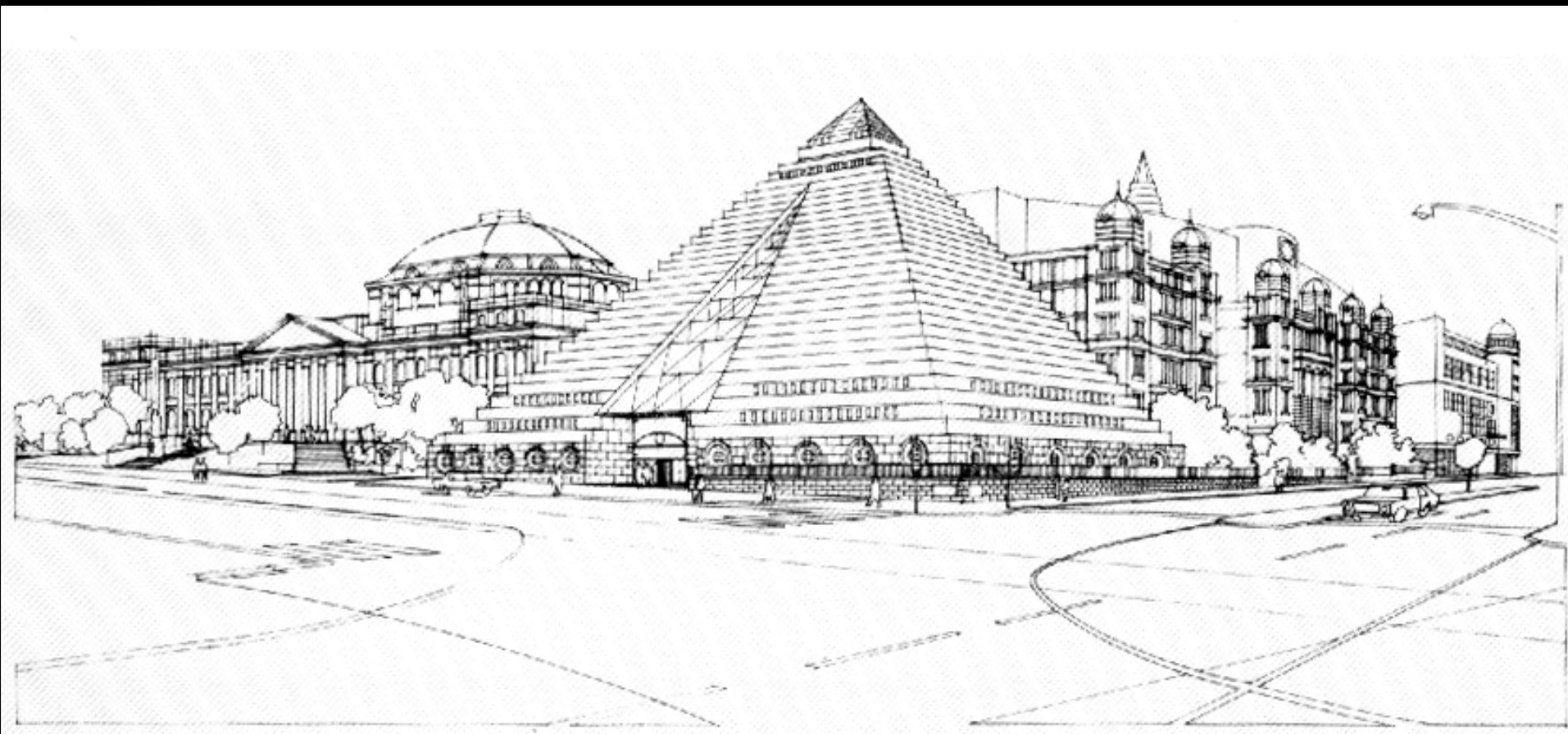




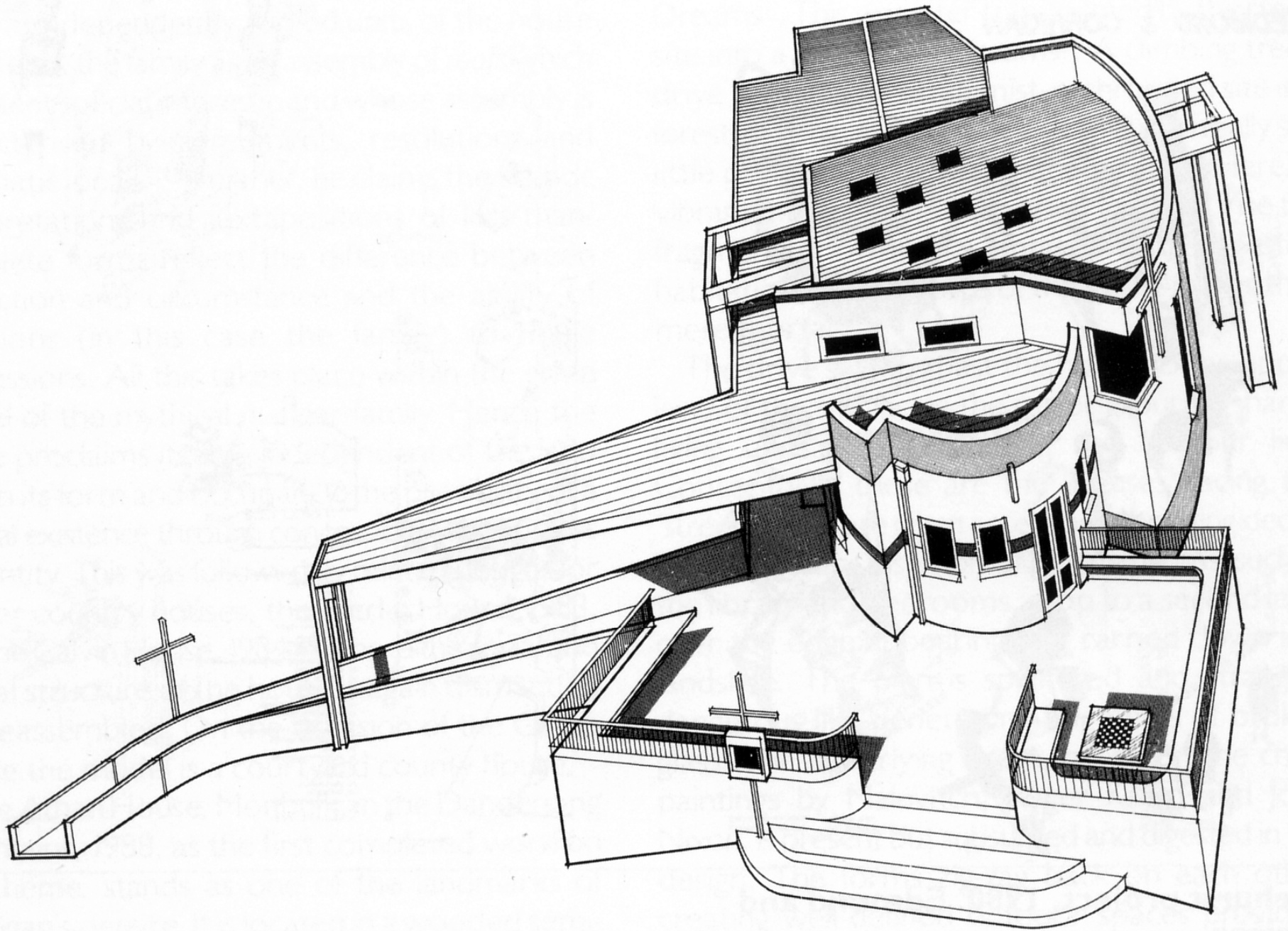




Stockman's Hall of Fame, 1980



State Library and Museum of Victoria scheme, 1985



Chapel of St Joseph, 1978

St Joseph's, Box Hill North



St Joseph's, Box Hill North





Figure 74 (see p. 65)

KPR, School, Stage 2: cloister, south end

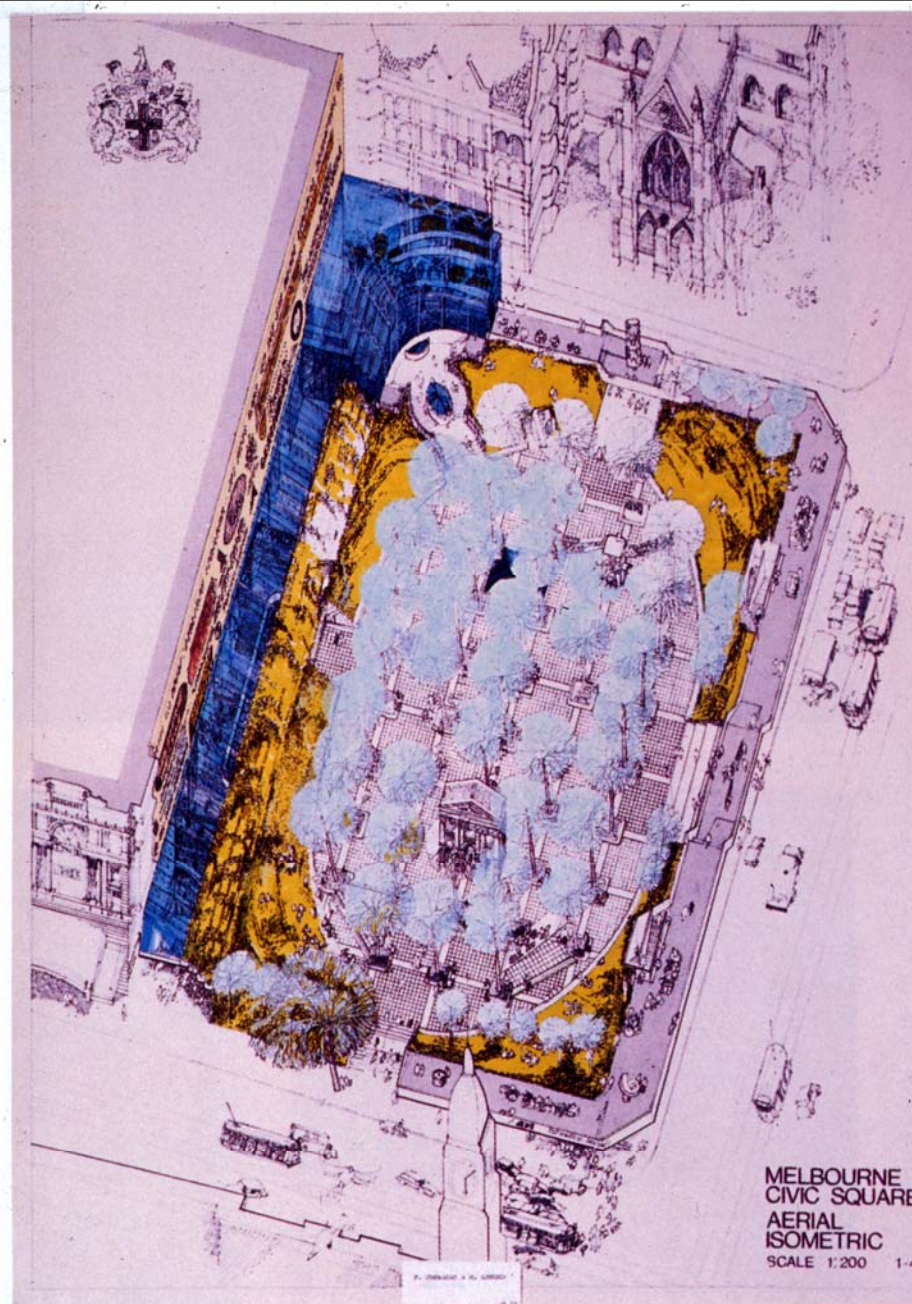
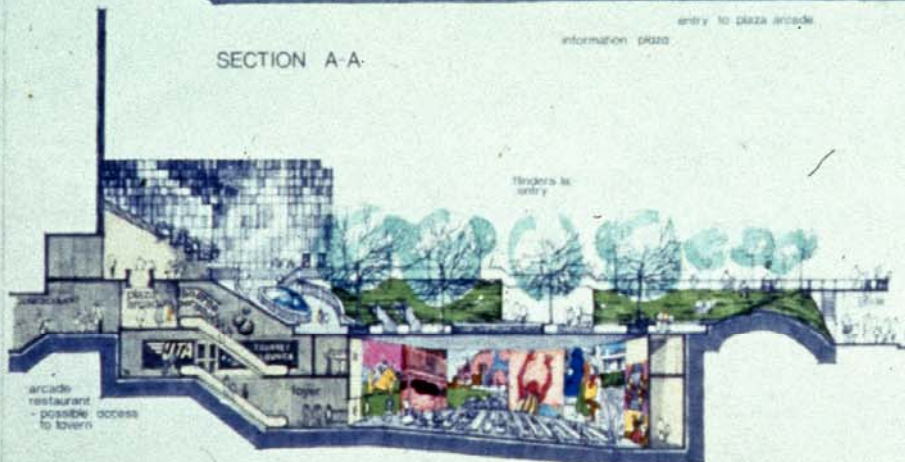
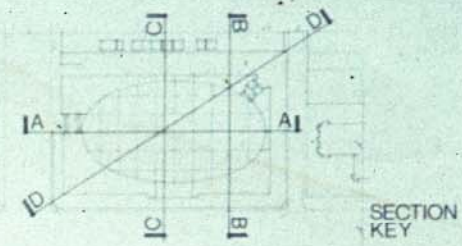


Figure 92 (see p. 78)

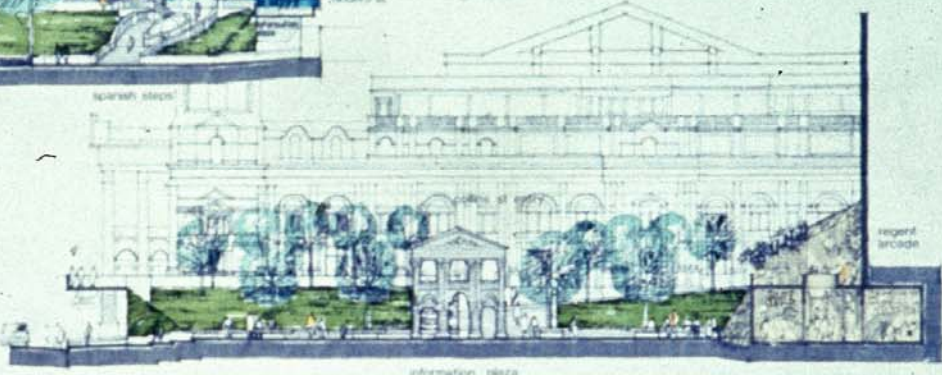
Melbourne Civic Square competition: aerial projection



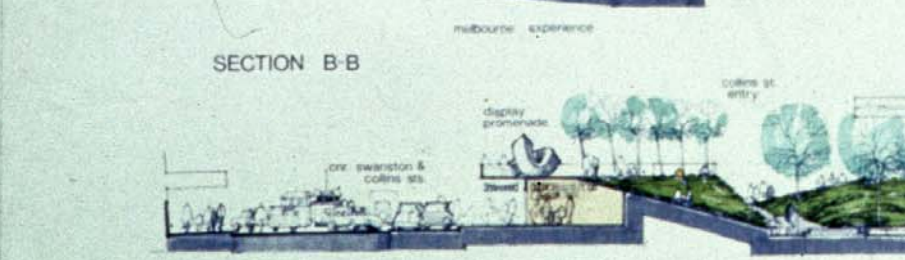
SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B



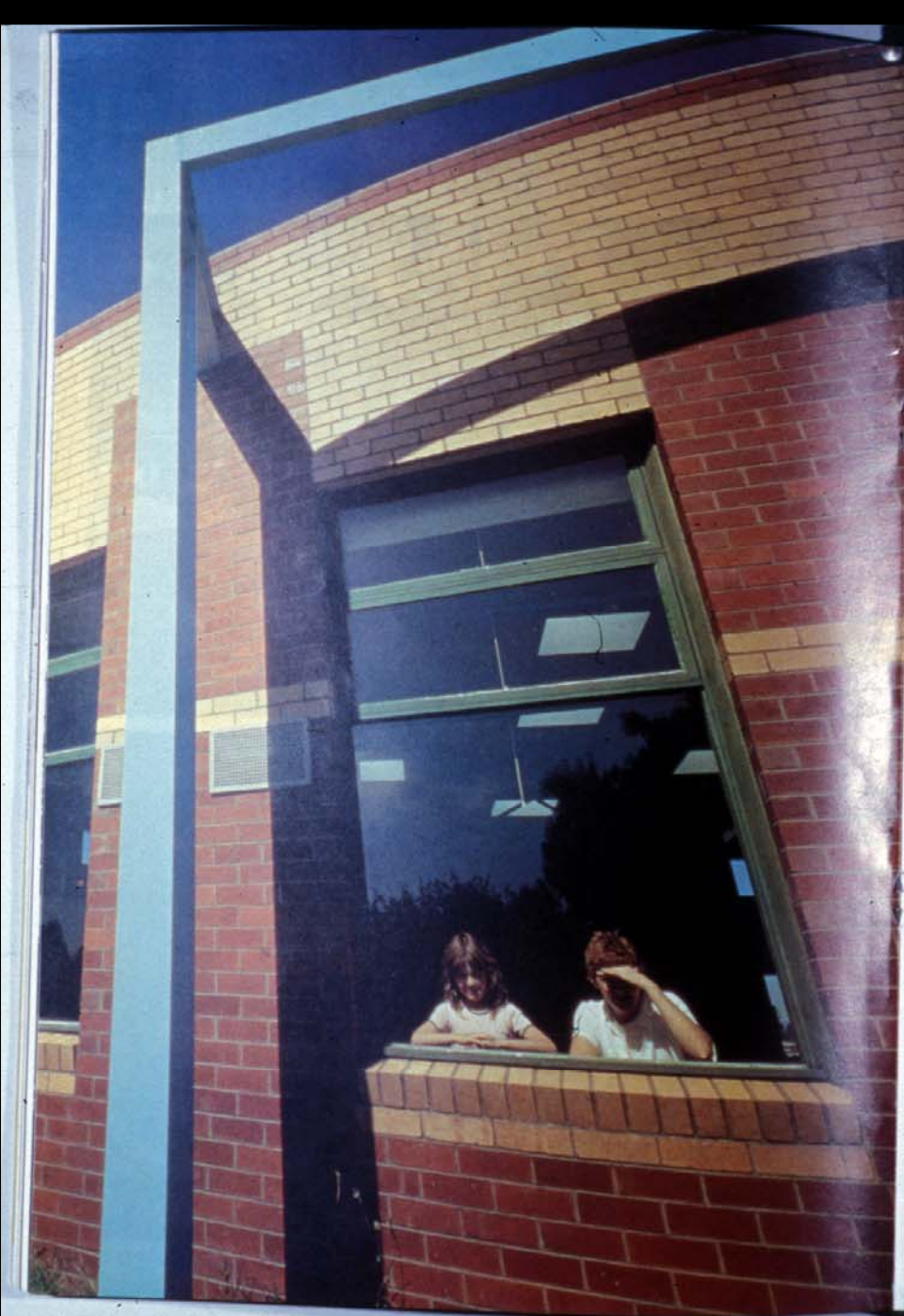
SECTION C-C



SECTION D-D



MELBOURNE CIVIC SQUARE



Facing page: St Joseph's, Box Hill North

Jennifer Taylor

Jennifer Taylor, Department of Architecture, The University of Sydney

Suburban passion

More passion in the suburbs

The church of St Joseph is a small, strangely sensitive building in the Melbourne suburb of Box Hill North. It comes from the office of Edmond and Corrigan, principal designer Peter Corrigan, and was completed in 1976. Corrigan speaks of the building as being vulnerable and the word is appropriate. Vulnerable is an unusual adjective to apply to architecture but it provides the clue to the gentle and moving quality of this uncommon building. St Joseph's warrants close attention as a successful work from a serious theorist.

Corrigan's counter-establishment stand has generated a level of critical debate that was aroused by Richard Munday's somewhat colourful "Passion in the Suburbs" article on the Resurrection Church at Keysborough in 1977¹. In recent years his work has been given considerable coverage both in Australia and abroad. Despite this, Corrigan is not always understood. The intellectual content of the work suffers from overinterpretation, and his non-conforming ideas, and sometimes behaviour, have brought a level of notoriety that counters credibility. He is correctly known as a talented showman and a highly involved designer, but not always recognised as one of the most incisive and inventive minds in architecture in Australia today.



Sit. Resurrection Church, Keysborough



Sit. Resurrection Church, Keysborough

The theory


Corrigan's thesis is well known but stands repeating. He is seeking an identifiable, unpretentious Australian architecture to be achieved within the limited economic scope accorded the average building. This he believes can be accomplished by respecting the everyday life patterns of the majority of the Australian people, those who live in the belts of suburbia, and by drawing on those inexpensive elements of their world for the imagery of architecture. Given his background at Yale under the tutorage of Robert Venturi, this attitude is not surprising. What is surprising is that he has been virtually alone in Australia in his adherence to this contention as the philosophical basis for design.

The influence on Corrigan from his North American experiences in the late sixties and early seventies is clear in his

concepts. In spirit the Box Hill church is closely related to Venturi's restrained early works, and evident are parallel means such as the delineating steel frame of the church and Venturi's steel frame outline of the Benjamin Franklin House in Philadelphia. On the other hand, Corrigan's intensity about his architecture sets it apart from the sophisticated and often contrived essays of his American mentors. The complexity of his work does seem to arise from the intentional irresolution of the relationships of the particular spaces rather than from artifice and contrivance for its own sake. The constructed works lack the ironic overtones that contribute to the American projects' appeal to the intellectual elite.

It is common parlance and practice today to aim for visual integration of new work by adapting motifs and materials derived from existing adjacent buildings. On evidence, this in no way guarantees success. Corrigan's words may seem to support this idea although this is not the kind of compatibility for which he is looking. He uses forms and textures that are familiar, while not necessarily local in origin, in the hope that this familiarity will make the users feel comfortable and "at home" in the new buildings. When applied to institutional buildings this is also debatable. It represents an aim for the antithesis of the awesome or exciting environments of the church, opera and movie house of other years. Nevertheless, it is the basis for the development of St Joseph's church and Corrigan's complex of buildings at Keysborough. Yet the architecture of both is anything but commonplace. For all of Corrigan's sincerity, the buildings do not quite fit the polemics and are better because of it.

Keysborough is the more self-conscious and the far more clever solution. Here the bold forms and strong colours of the church group contrast with the uniform standard houses of the surrounding suburbia. The loosely structured complex of vigorous buildings provides contrast and stimulation rather than accord and harmony. Its success comes not from banality but from the freedom afforded by the drama and causal ad-hocism of the architecture.



The theory

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The influence on Corrigan from his North American experiences in the late sixties and early seventies is clear in his



Figure 163 (see p. 114)

Kay Street Housing: south-side units

The ACI Architecture Award 1983

Ministry of Housing, Victoria

1 Kay Street,
Carlton
Edmond and
Corrigan

2 Nelson Road,
South Melbourne
Project architect,
Robert Pierce

3 Station Street,
Carlton
Peter Crone

4 Caroline Chisolm
Terrace, Keysborough
Edmond and
Corrigan

5 St Georges
Road, North Fitzroy
Norman Day

6 Emerald Hill
rehabilitation
Project architects,
Adler and Engel



1

2

3

4

5

6



Belconnen Youth Centre, 1988



MOUNTAIN HOUSE

EDMOND AND CORRIGAN MAY '88



Figure 193 (see p. 122)
**Dandenong TAFE wing,
1985-8: north-east exterior
and Stud Road entry**
(photograph: John Gollings)

Figure 195 (see p. 123)
**Dandenong TAFE wing:
entry doors (photograph:
John Gollings)**



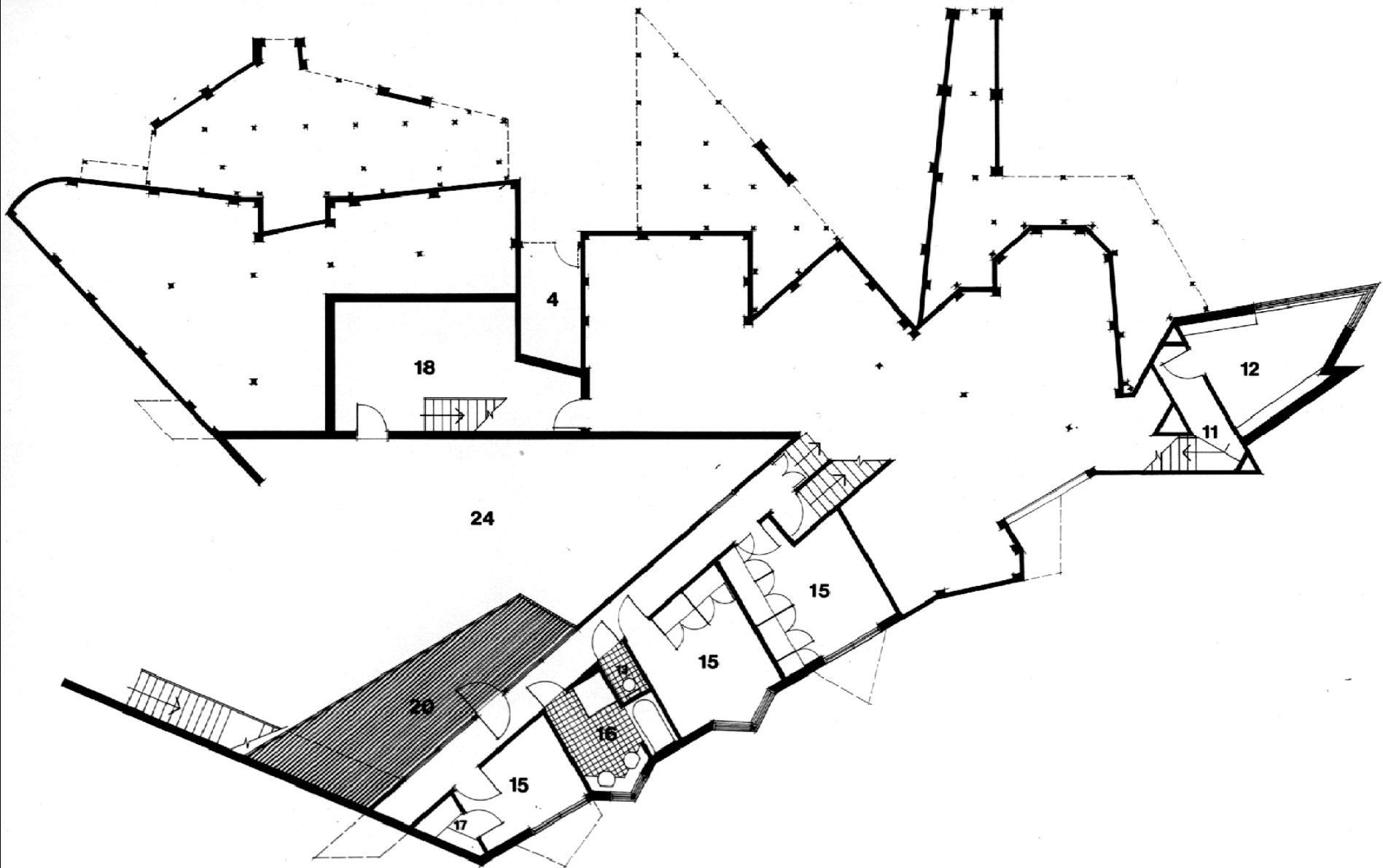
Figure 196 (see p. 123)
**Dandenong TAFE wing: stair handrail in
Hair and Beauty section (photograph:
John Gollings)**





Edmond and Corrigan, *Athan House*, Monbulk, 1989. Photograph: Ian Davidson.





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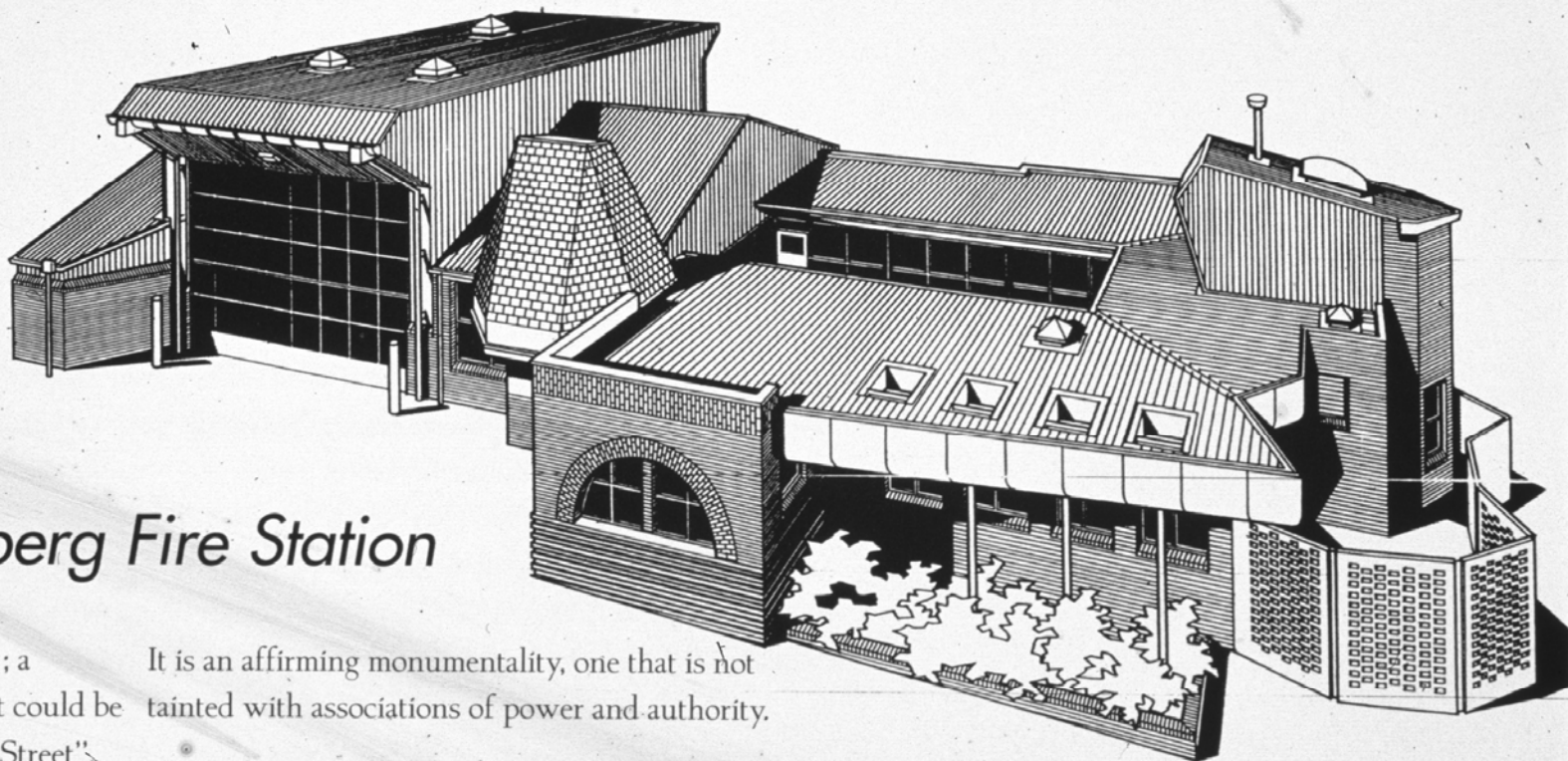
Drone

FIRE SOCIETY & ASSEMBLY



MILLIA PARK
ENTRANCE





Heidelberg Fire Station

located on Bell Street; a
four-lane arterial road. It could be
seen as a version of "Main Street",
one of an erratic series of car
public building responds to
the need for an "anchor" for the

It is an affirming monumentality, one that is not
tainted with associations of power and authority.

Internally, the building conforms to the strict M.F.B.
functional brief. Privacy and light were a high
priority on this exposed site, and a serene garden



Ringwood Library, 1995



Australia's Leading Magazine of Architecture and Design

MONUMENT

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corrigan pawson solomon house leura house styles exhibition

shops from around the world milan furniture fair '95

richard goodwin: public works art: macdonald cooley cruz



Photo: David Reynolds for Architecture Australia