

**With and Without Walls: The Southern California Institute of Architecture and a New  
School of Los Angeles Architects in the 1970s and 1980s**

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
(Architecture)  
in the University of Michigan  
2016

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Doctoral education is a rare gift because of the professors, classmates, friends, and family who make it possible. Time and again University of Michigan faculty showed their generosity and collegiality. In particular, my advisor, John McMorrough, has been more helpful than he could ever know. So many times I relied on his advice, support, and expertise. John's commitment to architecture's history, theory, and criticism through intellectual rigor has taught me the power of scholarship to shape discourse. In addition to my advisor, I had the pleasure to work with Daniel Herwitz as my cognate. Our conversations on aesthetic analysis, with a broader understanding of architecture's cultural impact, opened up new territories in my thinking and in my writing. Daniel's ability to listen, while reacting with insight, always gave me confidence to seek out nuanced aspects of my research with direction for its resolution. Committee member, Linda Groat, showed me that it is not only what we do but also how we do it that matters. Linda's dedication to the dissertation's progress with guidance for clear research motives invaluable contributed to its methodological approach. Discussing my dissertation with committee member, and The Ohio State professor, Jeff Kipnis, always refreshed my perspective. Jeff's talent to reveal my preconceptions gave balance with objectivity; evolving how I thought about the research with an enlarged understanding of its context.

I also want to thank the people at SCI-Arc, both from its past and its present. Ray and Shelly Kappe, who warmly invited me to their home to discuss my research on multiple occasions, provided an atmosphere to dig deeply into SCI-Arc's history and give it a fresh perspective. The Kappes' commitment to the school, and the stories they shared, were beyond appreciated. A special thank you goes to Terrence Glassman, Coy Howard, Ahde Lahti, Robert Mangurian, Thom Mayne, Eric Owen Moss, Mary Ann Ray, Michael Rotondi, William Simonian, Glen Small, and James Stafford. The time they each gave to speak with me about this subject brought the material to life through their personal accounts and diverse perspectives. Thanks must also go to Eric Owen Moss, Hernan Diaz Alonso, Todd Gannon, and Marcelyn Gow, who created a welcoming environment for me to engage this research through a teaching and research fellowship at SCI-Arc. And also, it has been an honor to discuss this work with Coy Howard, a teacher and friend who has fostered my love for architecture in many ways.

Completing this work could not have been possible without my family. My parents have shaped my commitment to the creative exploration of education. My mother, Mary, inspired my early learning that has continued through tireless conversations that took place in each chapter of the dissertation. My Father, James, encouraged my curiosity to find new opportunities for expression. My wife, Erin, not only edited what I wrote, but, more importantly, created an atmosphere in our personal lives that strengthened my desire to never stop learning. Erin's ability to keep me focused through the many challenges of doctoral education can only be described as an act of grace. My daughter, Margot, moves me every day to re-see the world as I watch her learn to tackle new experiences. When Margot smiles, everything becomes clear.

You have all made me a better scholar and academic. Thank you.

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## ABSTRACT

The Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) was created with the premise that in providing freedom through self-study, it would be possible to produce both architects and architecture. Founded in 1972, after separating from the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly) amidst feelings of bureaucratic and ideological oppression, SCI-Arc was self-described as a school “without walls.” From an academic context with roots in the profession, the interests of the faculty straddled social pragmatism as well as formal invention that balanced design techniques and aesthetic sensibilities. Ray Kappe, a Los Angeles-based architect and professor, proposed the formation of SCI-Arc and was the school’s first director. The style that emerged under Kappe’s directorship evoked fusion, which positioned the school with methods to develop ideas for developmental progress. Without offering tenure, SCI-Arc’s faculty, which varied consistently, created a flexible curriculum that became a tactic to promote personal directions for discourse, providing students, and the architects who taught there, a platform to respond to a postmodern architectural climate. SCI-Arc’s institutional culture adjusted over time, and it increasingly relied on the versatility of the institutional framework to forge its pedagogy. The trajectory of SCI-Arc from the early 1970s to the late 1980s revealed not only how an alternative approach to education impacted architectural production with an emerging Los

Angeles architectural culture but also occurring more generally in the period, in a shift from the idealism of the 1960s to the neoliberalism of the 1990s.

**CHAPTER 1:**  
**INTRODUCTION—CONTEXT AND METHODS**

This dissertation centers on the disciplinary evolution of architecture through pedagogical developments in education with a focus on the impact of advanced practices in architecture. To work on this subject the dissertation provides a first study of the co-development of the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) and the architects who taught there [Figure 0.01]. With observations embedded in the balance of design techniques and aesthetic sensibilities inherent to architectural production, design, theory, and history articulate architecture's motivations and its results by exposing the instrumentality of pedagogy.

I know SCI-Arc from three very different perspectives, as a student, a faculty member, and a scholar, but also through the clear differences of SCI-Arc's identity relative to who was in leadership roles throughout its history. A goal for the dissertation uses SCI-Arc as a mechanism to think about how to engage practices in architecture, and how a school gives ideas for architecture shape, to reveal a set of values demonstrating architecture's consequence.

“With and Without Walls: The Southern California Institute of Architecture and a New School of Los Angeles Architects in the 1970s and 1980s,” revealed a pedagogical model rooted in the profession. SCI-Arc was founded in 1972 amidst feelings of ideological oppression and broke away from university bureaucracy forging a college without walls concept that catalyzed



architectural experimentation [Figure 0.02]. At a school where faculty battled social pragmatism against formal invention, the prevailing style that emerged at SCI-Arc evoked diverse fusion, giving the school a distinct, postmodern, voice. The dissertation constructs a historical narrative of the school following institutional progress.

The mythos surrounding SCI-Arc is a school and faculty that revoked conventions, who acted as a fringe group resistant to the status quo, projecting an outsider mentality compared to other models of architectural education and discourse. The SCI-Arc pedagogy sought a curriculum that fostered young architects' creativity and intuition by encouraging self-direction and reducing hierarchical and bureaucratic structures. The faculty at SCI-Arc during this time often described themselves as advanced learners who asked as many questions as the students they taught. This research recounts the history of the school from its formation and focuses on the initial pedagogical strategies and the evolution that took place as faculty matured and changed, and includes the transition between the first two directors in 1987, from Ray Kappe to Michael Rotondi.

Although, it is not inaccurate to say that SCI-Arc originated as a progressive outlier, it is more precise to view SCI-Arc as an institution of progress—an institution that sought to continue architecture's development toward advanced architectural practice. As the school matured, distinct personalities in the faculty became evident and its characterization of rebellion and associations with avant-garde practices began in the late 1970s and continued through the 1980s.

The school embraced experimental formats of education, but students having complete freedom and autonomy to pursue their own curriculum rarely occurred. SCI-Arc's curriculum was nimble and flexible, but quickly had an identifiable structure. The freedom of exploration

and experimentation was embraced more fully within the work and teaching of the faculty. At times this same attitude of freedom was met with discomfort by the students.

To construct SCI-Arc's narrative I rely on a number of primary sources. These include personal interviews with the original faculty core board as well as the first two directors, the Getty Research Institute Archive, the SCI-Arc Archive, and articles from the *Los Angeles Times*. These materials are chronicled and interpreted. They are also connected to secondary sources from Reyner Banham, Charles Jencks, and James Steele, historians and theorists whose texts occurred contemporaneously with the time period of the research. The dissertation's findings connect to contemporary historians' scholarship on this time period as well, such as Todd Gannon's book for a retrospective exhibition, *A Confederacy of Heretics*, and Stephen Phillips collection of interviews with Los Angeles architects, *L.A. [Ten]: Interview on Los Angeles Architecture 1970s-1990s*. The dissertation research is also guided by framing discourses from multidisciplinary texts in pedagogy and aesthetics.

Tracking the *Los Angeles Times* articles that featured SCI-Arc, its students, and Los Angeles architecture provided a schematic to begin meshing together the school's history. These articles relay significant events, projects, conferences, lectures, exhibitions, and sentiment. As these are gathered and organized into a cohesive set a timeline of the architects' and the school's advancement and progress took shape.

The Getty Research Institute Archive operated similarly, but was used to collect a focused set of materials by using Ray Kappe's archive that contained such documents as the original school catalog and application, and a brief unpublished history of SCI-Arc that Kappe had written. Between Kappe's archive at the Getty and the SCI-Arc Archive, which I also used

extensively, I discovered most of the course catalogs for the time period of my research. Materials in the archives included sketches and diagrams for the organization of studio, seminar, and public spaces within the 1800 Berkeley Street campus; many photographs and documentation of student work; a diagram showing SCI-Arc's pedagogical structure; letters from faculty and students; by-laws; a document from Michael Rotondi titled "SCI-Arc Objectives," concerning his views as director; minutes from numerous faculty meetings in the 1980s, including the director search in 1987, as well as many other documents.

Working on a living history offered opportunities and challenges. I was fortunate to interview or correspond with all of SCI-Arc's founding faculty and the founding faculty core board. What became apparent was how different everyone's memory of a place can be and that a responsibility of my work was to assemble and curate the differences that existed into a coherent narrative. One example of this was the terminology that different people from SCI-Arc's history used to claim their roles in its development. The term "founder" needed more precision. To articulate the distinctions of founding director, founding faculty, and founding student grew significant. My attempt has been to construct an as-accurate-as-possible account of the school's history with the information available to position the school and its faculty within a context of architectural production at the onset of global postmodernism.

Since beginning my dissertation SCI-Arc created an online media archive, spearheaded by SCI-Arc librarian, Kevin McMahon, to showcase events from SCI-Arc's past as a genealogy. The media archive includes hundreds of videos recorded at SCI-Arc that date back to 1972. These videos include lectures, symposiums, conferences, student/faculty meetings, promotional

videos, and television broadcasts showcasing SCI-Arc. In addition to videos, this online archive has scans of many lecture and event posters.

Los Angeles architecture from this time period has been written about but tends to remain in monographs, coffee table books, anthologies, and exhibition catalogues. Several critical accounts do exist as secondary sources. One text that tackled the subject in a holistic way was Charles Jencks' text, *Heteropolis*, published in 1993. Jencks introduced the term "LA School" 10 years earlier in his review of the 1983 exhibition "Los Angeles Now." In *Heteropolis* Jencks examined the identity of Los Angeles in the 1980s, questioning if it was modern or post-modern, asserting it as something self-constructed, fake and real. A succinct description of an *LA style* (a term also introduced by Jencks in his review of the "Los Angeles Now" exhibition) was his 25-page description about the quality of en-formality, or "calculated informality." Jencks described en-formality as "a basic attitude towards the world, of living with uncertainty, celebrating flux and capturing the possibilities latent within the banal."<sup>1</sup> He explicated this term through the work of Frank Gehry, Morphosis, Eric Owen Moss, and Franklin Israel through juxtapositions of bold flat forms, mixtures of moods and temperaments such as hedonism and melancholia, contradictory layerings, and systematizing the natural.

Another text that grappled with the subject of architecture in Los Angeles in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s was James Steele's text *Los Angeles Architecture: The Contemporary Condition*, also published in 1993. The chapters of Steele's book work their way up through Los Angeles' history asserting a genealogy by keying into significant architectural moments such as the early 20th century architecture of Neutra, Schindler, Wright, and Greene; the Case Study

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Jencks, "The L.A. Style is Forged En-formality," *Heteropolis*, London: Academy Editions, 1993, 52-77.

Houses; and LA School architects, which expanded Jencks' list by adding Hodgetts and Fung, Coop Himmelblau, and Moore, Ruble, Yudell. A point Steele made claimed that Franklin Israel and Moore, Ruble, and Yudell were "outside the SCI-Arc orbit." Both Israel and Charles Moore were faculty at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Two pivotal figures among this group of architects not discussed with great length in *Heteropolis* or *Los Angeles Architecture* were Coy Howard and Robert Mangurian, who straddled both SCI-Arc and UCLA in the late 1970s and 1980s, solidifying their places at SCI-Arc by the mid 1980s. The omission of Howard and Mangurian by Jencks and Steele may be due to their oscillation between SCI-Arc and UCLA during this time as well as how each architect did not provide easy compartmentalization based on their ranging aesthetic pursuits.

The dissertation also builds on existing 20th century scholarship that focuses on institutional developments in western architecture schools. Alexander Carrogonne's book *The Texas Rangers: Notes from the Architectural Underground*, published in 1995, covered the disciplinary progress at University of Texas, Austin (UT Austin) in the 1950s, which explained the pedagogical goals of Bernhard Hoesli, Colin Rowe, and John Hejduk that ushered in a movement of American neo-modernist formalism. Following in the tradition established at UT Austin were two books showing the evolution of Hejduk's pedagogy through his deanship at The Cooper Union Union; *Education of An Architect: The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture of The Cooper Untion* by John Hejduk published in 1988, and *Education of An Architect: A Point of View, The Cooper Union School of Art and Architecture*, by John Hejduk published in 1999. A 2013 dissertation by Irene Sunwoo from Princeton University tackled the pedagogy of Alvin Boyarsky at the avant-garde Architectural Association through the 1970s and 1980s.

A fourth text covering institutional scholarship was Mary McLeod's essay, "The End of Innocence: From Political Activism to Postmodernism," which briefly discussed SCI-Arc in the book edited by Joan Ockman, *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America*, published in 2012. In her text, McLeod regards SCI-Arc as a school "driven by formal experimentation."<sup>2</sup> A distinction McLeod made was that SCI-Arc began, as Kappe had intended, as a school "developing a regionalist Modernism that integrated architecture, landscape architecture and urban planning with ecological concerns to create a synthetic form of environmental design."<sup>3</sup> In addition to McLeod's essay, the collection of essays in Ockman's book provides a broad resource for understanding key developments in pedagogical and institutional formation in North American architecture.

The lack of material that accounted for the origins and progress of SCI-Arc sparked the dissertation to uncover and position its contributions as another prominent architecture school that emerged at the onset of Postmodernism. The research efforts collected the diverse fragments that exist, which mostly comprised primary source materials, which were then composed into a chronological narrative. The dissertation assembled historical elements from SCI-Arc and its faculty to describe the time, the pedagogical approach, reveal the methods and types of architectural work pursued, and provide an aesthetic analysis through close-readings of specific projects.

"Chapter 2: A Pedagogy of Progress (1972-1978)," concentrates on the decisions of faculty and students who left the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, to

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<sup>2</sup> Mary McLeod, "The End of Innocence: From Political Activism to Postmodernism," *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Education Architects in North America*, ed. Joan Ockman, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012, 180.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

create a new school. The chapter's examination of SCI-Arc leading to its professional accreditation in 1977 concludes with an argument about the accommodating nature of NAAB in the 1970s.

“Chapter 3: Coming of Age—A Faculty Growing Separately (1979-1983),” addresses a maturing faculty with growing ideological differences. Speculating discursive impacts on architecture at large, this chapter exposes the influence from social and environmental sciences, artistic expressions, and technologies that permeated the design culture at SCI-Arc.

“Chapter 4: SCI-Arc Established—New Directions (1984-1987),” explains Kappe's response to Postmodernism as well as the changing institutional makeup that was influenced by new faculty, NAAB recommendations, and the conditions contributing to Michael Rotondi's appointment as the school's second director in 1987. With its focus on internal politics, this chapter observes how changes in leadership roles affected education.

The final section of the dissertation projects outward from the context of education at SCI-Arc and speculates on the impacts of its pedagogy and politics. These concluding pages address frameworks of communication and freedom to assert creativity in ideas with an assertion about learning self-reliance to empower students' connection to discourse. The afterword relates methods for design instruction to accommodate alternative approaches for production.

Using SCI-Arc as a case study to observe architecture and the culture of its production revealed that design does not happen in a vacuum, but neither does it rely on the past for

validation. The promise in finding balance between the past and the present is through the production of something new. Education in architecture should engage the discipline's past with a rigorous theoretical conversation that influences present concerns through design. Design education instigates vision. Analysis provides critique. The synthesis of vision and critique establishes domains of value that architecture addresses. The faculty and students at SCI-Arc offer perspective through the growth of an institution that shifted approaches during the 1970s and 1980s for progress.





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**Illustration 0.01** SCI-Arc exterior from educational materials pamphlet, SCI-Arc Archive, c. 1970.



**Illustration 0.02** First year class, spring 1978, "Projection Sphere," *L.A. Architect*, July 1978.

## CHAPTER 2: A PEDAGOGY OF PROGRESS (1972-1977)

### Exodus from Cal Poly and the Origins of a New School

Ray Kappe was the founding director of the Southern California Institute of Architecture [Figure 1.01] and was the 1990 recipient of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and American Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA)'s Topaz Medal for Excellence in Architectural Education.<sup>1</sup> He is an architect that was born in Minneapolis and grew up in Los Angeles where he attended a junior high school designed by Richard Neutra. He studied briefly at UCLA before joining the Army and completed his B.Arch at University of California Berkeley in 1951.<sup>2</sup> At Berkeley, Kappe recalled taking design and urban planning studios at the same time, and described the type of education as not being overly authoritative. "The method at Berkeley, when I was there, was that you really got to know who you were and what you were because you didn't realize much of what your instructor was. . . . You were more on your own."<sup>3</sup> Kappe also described review formats at Berkeley from that time that seem strange by today's standards. The students handed their work in, four critics evaluated the work without the students

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<sup>1</sup> AIA/ACSA, "Practicing Architecture: Awards," *AIA (Website)*, accessed October 5, 2015, <http://www.aia.org/practicing/awards/aiab089453>.

<sup>2</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

present, and the projects would be ranked from best to worst in a line.<sup>4</sup> It is noteworthy that Kappe's professional work is by and large identified as being late Modernist, though his own training at Berkeley in the late 1940s was the tail end of a Beaux Arts curriculum with little emphasis on the inherited styles of Modernism circulating in American architectural culture. Shelly Kappe commented that Kappe's instructors were "barely modern architects."<sup>5</sup> As a student, Kappe began to work at Anshen & Allen where he designed early Eichler homes.<sup>6</sup> These experiences impacted Kappe's sensibility and informed his own practice in 1953 that continued a tradition of California Modernism exemplified in his residential architecture in Los Angeles.

After 15 years of professional practice Kappe was approached by California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly) to head their new architecture program. In 1968 the new architecture program joined the existing 11-year-old landscape architecture program and the three-year old urban planning program. Cal Poly sought to unify the three disciplines and create the School of Environmental Design to "maintain a true environmental design interrelationship."<sup>7</sup> A friend of Kappe's, Bernard Zimmerman, introduced the Cal Poly administration to Kappe. Kappe recalled that Cal Poly was looking into architects from all over the country to chair the new program, but due to the newness of the program local architects

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Eisenman described a similar method of evaluation at Cornell in the 1950s in a lecture he gave at Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, on November 6, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Shelly Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013. Shelly Kappe is Ray Kappe's wife and one of the founding faculty members of SCI-Arc who taught architecture history courses and ran public programming for the school.

<sup>6</sup> Anshen & Allen was an architecture firm hired by the real estate developer Joseph Eichler to design Mid-Century modern homes that became known as Eichler Homes.

<sup>7</sup> Cal Poly Department of Architecture Historical Development, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1970).

became more viable options. Ultimately, Kappe described that it was between Neutra and himself to become the new chair, and Neutra was too old at that time, so he was hired.<sup>8</sup> Kappe's practice was flourishing and he had planned to stay at Cal Poly for only five years—to create the organizational structure of the department and see it through its first accreditation.<sup>9</sup> In line with Cal Poly's mission, Kappe sought to integrate the architecture, urban planning, and landscape architecture departments [Figure 1.02]. This integration was due to his belief that architecture should take a role in urban issues, implement advancing technologies, and recognize the benefits of interdisciplinary learning.

Kappe's mission for the school was clear. In handwritten notes he outlined the pedagogy based on its relevance for the students and for the profession of architecture.<sup>10</sup> Listed in bullet points, Kappe wrote:

- All study must be relevant/related to the real world (today/tomorrow)
- Students must understand present methods of practice
  - A. Small office
  - B. Medium office
  - C. Large office
  - D. Collaborations/total environment
  - E. Consultation
  - F. Education/advocacy
  - G. Related industries
  - H. Government agencies

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<sup>8</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ray Kappe's Notes, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, undated).

- Student must prognosticate future directions
- Student must honestly evaluate capabilities and desires (goals)
- Education system must provide exposure, methodology, and synthesis understandable to the student, relevant to the practice of architecture today, and preparing for the directions of tomorrow
- There should be few voids as possible in order to alleviate anxiety
- Student needs all tools of profession
  - A. Design process
  - B. Interrelated systems
  - C. Social sciences and understanding of man
  - D. Professional administration and practice methods<sup>11</sup>

There are three general areas that Kappe addressed: to use education to train a student for the profession by exposing them to the varying responsibilities of an architect, to use other disciplines to resolve architectural problems, and to promote a self-motivated learning environment that anticipates architecture's advancement. These points provided a basis for Kappe to evaluate and make decisions within his program at Cal Poly, but also provided the necessary backbone to structure the origins of SCI-Arc. A corresponding diagram from Kappe's notebook demonstrated how the students' curriculum would ebb and flow relative to its focus on interdisciplinary, structural, environment and behavior, and architecture courses [Figure 1.03]. The pedagogical framework outlined a relationship between design courses and their counterparts within an academic year. The first 1.5 years were focused on environment and behavior in design and interdisciplinary courses rounding out the curriculum. In years two to five students' design courses focused on issues in architecture with increasing programmatic

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

complexity. Structures became the focus in their other courses in years three to four.

Interdisciplinary courses returned at the end of a student's degree along with more courses in structures, but with less emphasis than in the earlier years.<sup>12</sup> Kappe's diagram proposed breadth in the beginning of the architecture student's education. Learning worked toward concentrations in specific areas.

As the architecture program grew there was interest to create a master's degree program. In a letter proposing the program, the Master of Architecture would still fall under the Department of Architecture under Kappe, but chaired by Bernard Zimmerman, with Richard Chylinski and Glenn Small filling out the graduate committee.<sup>13</sup> Kappe described the need for the graduate program.

Although the Undergraduate Program in the Department of Architecture is structured in a manner to prepare the student for employment in the architectural profession, as it is presently practiced, the Master of Architecture is the degree their profession and the licensing boards will primarily be accepting in the future. This additional two-year period allows the student the opportunity to engage in areas of concentration, do independent research, and become a more valuable participant in the architectural and related fields.<sup>14</sup>

These remarks by Kappe suggest his desire for architects to receive broad training, yet develop skills honed by a specific concentration of research that demonstrated an evolved expertise. His unfolding pedagogy offered a high degree of pragmatism due to certain language regarding employment yet also suggested the need to advance architecture through applied research by implementing subjects from other fields. The Architecture Department catalog c.

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<sup>12</sup> Cal Poly Department of Architecture, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1970).

<sup>13</sup> Ray Kappe's Notes, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1970).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

1970 posited a changing attitude toward architecture's autonomy. Once characterized by the "hero" architect, the catalog asserted how architecture began to evolve into a collaborative discipline among the environmental sciences [Figure 1.04]. "Emphasis within the profession was once upon the individual practitioner and on the individual building project, today architecture is enmeshed in the fabric of growing urbanization and advancing technology. To meet these challenges an interdisciplinary teamwork is required."<sup>15</sup> In this statement from Kappe's document for the department at Cal Poly he advocated for horizontal management in architecture by resisting a top-down autocratic approach to address contemporaneous demands in urban contexts. A collaborative model evident in teamwork recognized the need for expertise with different backgrounds and points of view to solve complex problems. Though not listed in bullet points, the following description of requirements encompassing the training for future architects, outlined in the catalog, reads like a manifesto.

The architect must be aware of the contribution technology can make and understand modern methodology. He must understand the design process and be able to quantify as well as qualify. He must develop a meaningful social concern and learn to relate physical solutions to man and his environment. He must comprehend how geophysical factors influence his design, and he must have a broad liberal education with a sense of historic perspective.<sup>16</sup>

This critical statement of an architect's abilities to quantify and qualify their work provided architecture with a mechanism to evaluate how they could alleviate societal problems by acting as a bridge that coupled the social sciences with new technologies through formalized configurations impacting human environments.

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<sup>15</sup> Cal Poly Department of Architecture, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, c.1970).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. This methodological approach based on analysis became essential to the pedagogy in the early years of SCI-Arc with its roots in a modernist paradigm.



As the curriculum solidified so did the number of students entering Cal Poly's architecture program. Within two years Kappe's department grew from 25 to 200 students. Kappe did not believe the department should grow much larger, which began a series of confrontations with the Dean of the Division of Environmental Design, William Dale, eventually resulting with Kappe being asked to resign from his position as chair on April 14, 1972.<sup>17</sup> The disagreement between Kappe and Dale stemmed from Kappe's belief that Cal Poly's program was growing too large and going in the wrong direction. In 1971 Cal Poly admitted an additional 150 students, increasing the size of the architecture school to 350 students.<sup>18</sup>

These issues, related to the growth of the department, became evident as early as the 1970/1971 academic year in a memo from Kappe to Dale. Kappe suggested that in fall of 1971 the department should only accept 48 incoming students, rather than the 125 students that the Division of Environmental Design requested. According to the memo, complications regarding the faculty/student ratios arose. Kappe stated, "In the memo dated November 16, 1970 from Drs. Kramer & La Bounty, I see a total of six additional faculty members allocated to our entire division. Architecture will require a minimum of eight new faculty members independent of the other two departments of [Landscape Architecture] & [Urban Planning]." Kappe goes on to say, "A college administration committed to a school of environmental design must meet its faculty load commitment. As chairman of the Architecture Department, I refuse to accept this lack of support for our program."<sup>19</sup> The antagonism that Kappe felt toward his department signaled a

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<sup>17</sup> William Trombley, "Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman," L.A. Times, April 26, 1972, B1.

<sup>18</sup> Ray Kappe, "SCI-Arc History" (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

<sup>19</sup> Ray Kappe, Memo to William Dale, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, c.1971).

growing divide between ambitions to manage the pedagogy being established and the needs of the university. These challenges for effective development reach a crossroads where one side must give way so that growth did not stifle the strategies for learning.

Though it is unclear how many faculty Kappe was able to hire for the 1971/1972 academic year, he did hire three young instructors that became instrumental to the development of SCI-Arc: Thom Mayne, James Stafford, and Bill Simonian, all three became founding faculty of the new school. Bill Simonian had been working for Kappe in his architecture practice and he was brought in to teach architectural history classes and coordinate first-year design.<sup>20</sup> Kappe remembered Mayne and Stafford from having taught as a guest instructor at USC when they were students of Ralph Knowles. Kappe stated Knowles' abilities at research and how Mayne and Stafford "were pretty well versed. I said, 'Well, let's give design problems to second year, but don't make buildings; let's make it how you would exist on landforms, and so forth. Talk about the issues you guys know about; how water plays, sun plays.'"<sup>21</sup> At this time Mayne and Stafford had not formalized their own practices yet and after graduating from USC had been working in offices such as Gruen Associates and the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency on low-income housing projects. Stafford recalled first meeting Kappe through his relationship with Bernard Zimmerman, who was a consultant for the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency.<sup>22</sup>

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In a follow up note to William Dale Kappe continues to question the allocation of faculty to his department and stresses his concern that "without the aforementioned administrative support we cannot arrive at a synthesis."

<sup>20</sup> Bill Simonian, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 10, 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013.

<sup>22</sup> James Stafford, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 11, 2015.

Michael Rotondi, a student at Cal Poly during Kappe's chairmanship and future founding SCI-Arc student and SCI-Arc's second director, echoed Kappe's sentiment regarding the number of students and lack of faculty. Rotondi stated there were too many students in a class, with "90 people broken up into about 6 sections."<sup>23</sup> Surprisingly, the numbers that Rotondi remembered do not appear that remarkable, considering design studios often run with an approximate 15:1 student to faculty ratio. More significant, is his description of the atmosphere in the design studio. Rotondi recalled the energy of the school and that the instructors were young, but that there was coherence in the curriculum.<sup>24</sup> He felt particularly connected to his classmates saying, "it was a good time for some of us because of the friendships that we had and running with the pack. We were hoodlums that were basically working around the clock. There was no other place I wanted to be and nothing else I wanted to do. It was a shock when they got rid of Kappe as chairman."<sup>25</sup> These relationships to the context at Cal Poly reveal the varying impressions on a person's memory. Students, largely unaware of the political disagreements brewing behind the scenes of their coursework still feel a sense of mounting pressures, though in Rotondi's case his focus remained on the quality of an environment that allowed him to engage his ideas with a supportive network of designers.

The Cal Poly administration did not shy away from discussing their disagreements with the architecture department faculty and Ray Kappe. Cal Poly President Robert Kramer's point of view was documented in a *Los Angeles Times* article on April 26, 1972 that stated he "removed Kappe because the architect was not on campus every day, because he changed the architecture

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<sup>23</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

curriculum ‘without the appropriate approvals,’ because he switched class hours without permission and for other violations of ‘administrative policies and procedures’” [Figure 1.04].<sup>26</sup> Without knowing the contractual agreements between Kappe and the university, one might surmise a conflict of personalities that instigated a clash of leadership styles. When Kappe was asked to resign from his position, the division vice president, Hugh La Bounty, who Kappe described as an ally of his in the division, was in Greece on sabbatical. The acting vice president was from engineering who Kappe felt was against him, due to Kappe’s taking “[architecture] courses out of engineering because [he] thought they should be taught in conjunction with the design class.”<sup>27</sup>

Disrupting the status quo of what Kappe believed were dormant learning practices to invigorate a new pedagogical framework in the school irritated colleagues in other departments and damaged his relationship with the institutional hierarchy. Kappe’s embrace of new ideas were met with skepticism by the dean, who had the support of the university president, and appeared frustrated by the apparent freedoms allowed to students and faculty in architecture. These growing tensions, coupled with Kappe’s unflappable opposition to the strict protocols of knowing his place, created a rupture between himself and the college that could not be reconciled.

Kappe observed that the attitudes of the architecture faculty did not match with the academics in the other departments. Kappe believed that Kramer “[did not] like our program being as free-swinging as it is’ and that the ‘unconventional faculty . . . [were] a little bit

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<sup>26</sup> William Trombley, “Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman,” L.A. Times, April 26, 1972, B1.

<sup>27</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013.

threatening to the president.”<sup>28</sup> In discussions with Kappe he affirmed that he “established both the curriculum [and] schedule and hired all of the faculty [and that they] lived within the prescribed curriculum but were also doing experimental projects.”<sup>29</sup> In a field like architecture, part of the architect’s responsibility should be to see what other opportunities exist. Teaching by prescribed methods can reduce the profession to a service industry by disregarding its affective contributions to shape a discipline. How Kappe embraced architecture’s evolving discourse is evident in his quote in a 1972 *Los Angeles Times* article, where he stated “we have a nonstatic curriculum . . . we set up problems for the students and then switch them if they are not working out. This means you move hours and people around. It is the only way to have a viable program in architecture.”<sup>30</sup> What remained unsaid and should be added to his quote is the necessity for architecture to test new methods with objectives that reveal consequences for defining what the discipline is.

Bill Simonian remembered a growing discomfort among the architecture faculty within the division’s administration.

Being locked out of the mailroom. We couldn’t use the Xerox machine. . . . We’d be teaching a class and all of a sudden we [would] get a call that the students’ attorney wants to meet with us, or the school’s president or vice president wants to meet with us. Every week. . . . It wasn’t comfortable anymore. Then Ray [Kappe] was taken out of position of chair of the architecture program.<sup>31</sup>

Simonian’s account offers a pragmatic assessment for how the architecture faculty began to feel displaced from the greater university community. With ranging distractions from the administration that likely came with pressures surrounding job security and the day-to-day

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<sup>28</sup> William Trombley, “Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman,” *L.A. Times*, April 26, 1972, B1.

<sup>29</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J. Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>30</sup> William Trombley, “Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman,” *L.A. Times*, April 26, 1972, B1.

<sup>31</sup> Bill Simonian, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 10, 2013.

challenges of course prep, Simonian's remarks identified challenges taking time away from the work they were hired to do, teaching. Recalling that the internal conflicts in 1972 became too damaging to continue working, Simonian was the first faculty person to resign from Cal Poly.<sup>32</sup>

Some of the arguments between the architecture faculty and the Cal Poly administration appeared to emerge from disparities regarding opinions about the academy and the profession. Kappe was fully engaged in his professional practice and the faculty he hired mostly comprised practitioners. His attitude surrounding the role of the profession was clear. Kappe told *Los Angeles Times* writer, William Trombley, "he recruited professors with experience in the field, not a group of theorists."<sup>33</sup> In a certain way, Kappe contradicted himself in this statement. His pedagogy at Cal Poly proposed a theoretical stance toward architectural education. The people he enlisted to teach may not have been trained theorists, but they actively theorized how architecture should be taught. Most of the architecture faculty spent one to two days per week in private practice; Kappe too was only on campus three days per week. These schedules were permitted through verbal agreements Kappe had with Dean Dale.<sup>34</sup> President Kramer suggested a different attitude regarding the emphasis the architects placed on professional practice.

[Kramer said] we have more rigidities and inflexibility than some other institutions of higher learning. . . . These people in architecture believe that being in the profession of architecture is the most important thing in the world. I don't think they realize the obligation they have . . . as members of the college community.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. After Simonian's resignation and discussions between Kappe and the other faculty, he started to look for the future SCI-Arc building and began researching what it would take to start a new school of architecture.

<sup>33</sup> William Trombley, "Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman," *L.A. Times*, April 26, 1972, B1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

Dale's tone revealed his opinion about education. Because that is what he believed did not make it true, or mean that the teaching methods were wrong. For his opinion to become a veridical claim evidence needed to demonstrate his argument.

Although removed as the department chair, Kappe was to maintain a tenured faculty position at the school, however, many Cal Poly students felt differently than the administration and pushed for Kappe's reinstatement as chair. Over 500 participants staged a protest, more than 300 students signed a petition,<sup>36</sup> and t-shirts with Kappe's photograph were worn [Figures 1.05-1.07].<sup>37</sup> At the tail end of the American countercultural revolution student voices escalated with greater emphasis. This instance at Cal Poly demonstrated the students' agency to affect their own lives by standing up against what they felt was bureaucratic oppression that impacted their immediate context with a clear message. Michael Rotondi described repelling from the roof of the architecture school and covering the building's windows with high contrast photo silk-screens with Kappe's face [Figure 1.08].<sup>38</sup> A student and faculty fact finding committee was created to investigate the matter of Kappe's removal and it was determined by them that "there was no substance to the charges against Kappe and that Kramer was 'unjustified' in dismissing him . . . and said he [Kappe] had 'the unanimous support of his faculty and the near unanimous support of students in his department [Appendix 1].'"<sup>39</sup> With the identity of the architecture department strengthening between faculty and students the decision to form an alternative model for education at a distance from university bureaucracy became a viable opportunity.

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<sup>36</sup> Art Seidenbaum, "In Case of Firing," L.A. Times, May 03, 1972, F1.

<sup>37</sup> David Weinstein, "Playing with Space," Eichler Network, accessed January 30, 2013, <http://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/playing-space?page=0,0>.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>39</sup> William Trombley, "Dismissal of Cal Poly Pomona Architect Hit: Student-Faculty Group Charges President Erred in Ouster of Department Head," L.A. Times, May 29, 1972, C8.

With support from a California professor's union and being respected in the Los Angeles professional community through his involvement with the AIA, Kappe produced convincing counterarguments to Cal Poly's administration.<sup>40</sup> Three documents that supported Kappe included the Cal Poly Environmental Design School Fact-Finding Committee report, from April 14, 1972; a letter from California State Senator Alfred H. Song, from May 9, 1972; and a report from the United Professors of California Local 1601 (UPC), from May 25, 1972. Each of these documents speak to the lack of due process afforded Kappe and address the illegal nature under which Kappe was removed from his position as chairman. The Cal Poly Fact-Finding Committee, which included faculty and students from the division, the faculty senate, and the United Professors of California [UPC], showed that the dean and the president of Cal Poly disagreed with the student project Community '72 and that it had been used for habitation, which, according to the committee was an "idealistic, dynamic, interdisciplinary project consistent with the philosophy of the school dean and other college administrators."<sup>41</sup> Other factors contributing to Kappe's demotion according to the fact-finding report were the growing numbers of students and escalating need for more faculty, which created an "emergency situation."<sup>42</sup> The three-day work week Kappe had arranged with Cal Poly "received no official rebuke or censure"<sup>43</sup> Changes Kappe made to the physical environment of the school had been done "through all appropriate channels."<sup>44</sup> The report found that the division had "a myriad of problems. . . . No one is blameless. . . . But the administration was unjustified on the basis of the

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<sup>40</sup> Nearly everyone I interviewed for my research remarked on Kappe's preternatural skills in diplomacy that contributed to the respect he was given in Los Angeles, politically and professionally..

<sup>41</sup> Environmental Design School Fact-Finding Committee, report, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.



allegations presented to this committee, in dismissing the very man who's leadership had done much to implement and insure the very success of the program."<sup>45</sup>

Following this report was a letter from Senator Alfred Song sent to Cal Poly President, Robert Kramer, requesting more information from him regarding the allegations of having denied due process to Kappe [Figure 1.09].<sup>46</sup> A third report from the UPC found Cal Poly in violation of Section 24308 of the California State Education Code which stated "demotion must be accompanied by 1) specific statement of charges, and 2) 'a statement of the employee's right to answer within twenty days and request a hearing before the State Personnel Board.'"<sup>47</sup> The report from UPC echoed the conclusions from Cal Poly's Fact-Finding Committee. The UPC observed that Kappe was a vocal spokesperson for his faculty who "supported him unanimously . . . and his dismissal [was] an unmistakable warning to them to shut up."<sup>48</sup> After a request from the UPC to reinstate Kappe was denied, their attorney Jack Levine filed a Writ of Mandate in Los Angeles Superior Court.<sup>49</sup> A hierarchical message expressing the sentiment "shut up" undermined the latitude an educational environment should offer. Oppression, through positions of power, promoted indoctrination, not learning.

As the atmosphere soured at Cal Poly, Kappe, a group of faculty, and a number of students began informal meetings during the spring semester in 1972 to decide how to move the program forward amidst conflicts with the administration. They met outside of the architecture school at

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Alfred H. Song, Letter to Robert Karamer, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, May 1972).

<sup>47</sup> United Professors of California Local 1601, "UPC Position on the Kappe Case," from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, May 1972).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

Community '72, the experimental rhombic dodecahedron structure built on campus by freshman architecture students [Figure 1.10]. According to a discussion with Kappe, after several meetings it was suggested that the group should start their own school, prompting the formation of the Southern California Institute of Architecture.<sup>50</sup> Michael Rotondi recalled the questions he wrestled with as a student during this time.

How much time will it take to change the president's mind? And then, how much time would we have left over to do what we really want to do? . . . It was such a joy in working that it didn't make sense trying to change anybody's mind. Somehow, it popped up, 'Well, why don't we just start another school?' . . . The next thing I knew, we were all running in every direction. It never entered my mind that I only had a year left to get my degree.<sup>51</sup>

Rotondi's statement speaks to the kind of spirit being fostered under Kappe. An atmosphere for learning that provided the kinds of engagement with architecture that made students excited to learn through their work outweighed the culture of meritocracy associated with obtaining a degree. The self-conscious reaction of students to assess qualities of education beyond accolades signified an environment for active learning where self-initiative provided the means for achievement.

Speaking with Thom Mayne, a founding SCI-Arc faculty member and principal of Morphosis Architects, he recalled that starting the school, "was definitely Ray's idea. . . . I remember he brought us up to his house and we talked about it and he [said], 'let's start our own school.' And I [said], 'OK.' I look back now and it was beautifully naive."<sup>52</sup> Mayne went on to recall that the initial ambitions were vague, except that the school was meant to be experimental,

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<sup>50</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>51</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>52</sup> Thom Mayne, interview by Benjamin J Smith, July 25, 2012.

diverse, and minimally administered.<sup>53</sup> Glenn Small, an assistant professor at Cal Poly was clear with his motives to leave and with his support of Kappe. “[Ray] had hired me and I was loyal to his needs. . . . I did not think twice and went with Ray to start SCI-Arc.<sup>54</sup> James Stafford shared a similar sentiment as Small.

I was there because of Ray, and I was not really aware of all the issues that were going on with the administration and the kinds of battles that he was fighting. . . . It was pretty easy to just say, ‘I really respect and like this guy,’ and I had no connections to the university besides him . . . so when we found out what was going on, it was an easy transition.<sup>55</sup>

The dedication to Kappe is evident from these statements. Without his support at Cal Poly coupled with the exuberance to follow their intuitions afforded seemingly easy decisions to leave one institution and create another.

Ray Kappe, Ahde Lahti, Thom Mayne, Bill Simonian, Glenn Small, and James Stafford all resigned from Cal Poly and became the founding faculty at SCI-Arc. Shelly Kappe, who did not work at Cal Poly, also became a central figure to the school’s original formation. Later in the summer of 1972 faculty met with students at the future SCI-Arc facility.<sup>56</sup> “The faculty who were willing to leave Cal Poly met first to make sure everyone was on board with the move. Later we met with the students . . . and made sure they were ready to go ahead with the move.”<sup>57</sup> It was estimated by Kappe that 150 of the 350 students at Cal Poly would leave with them to start SCI-Arc. By the middle of the summer in 1972 only 50 students had officially enrolled. A group of these students travelled around California to announce the beginning of a new

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Glen Small, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, October 21, 2015.

<sup>55</sup> James Stafford, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, November 11, 2015.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

architecture school. These efforts encouraged 25 additional students from the United States and Canada to join them. The inaugural class began with 75 students.<sup>58</sup> The pedagogical impetus for starting SCI-Arc experimented with “how an architectural program could evolve with diminished constraints and a great deal of freedom.”<sup>59</sup> What inspired Kappe to start SCI-Arc was that he “thought it would be fun.”<sup>60</sup> Kappe recalled that he did not take notes in preparation for the schools opening, and that the only documentation occurred after the first two weeks of operation.<sup>61</sup>

The exclamation point on the exodus from Cal Poly came in August of 1972. Kappe’s demotion was brought to trial in the Los Angeles Superior Court just over a month before SCI-Arc opened. A *Los Angeles Times* article published on September 14, 1972 [Figure 1.11] focused on the opening of a new school in Santa Monica but explained that Judge Robert A. Wenke

ordered Kramer and the trustees of the California State Universities and Colleges either reinstate Kappe as department chairman or hold a hearing where the reasons for his demotion could be aired. . . . Kappe said he could have won his chairman’s job back in a second court action but did not try because ‘I do not think one can operate if the administration doesn’t support you . . . it’s hard enough to make a program work if you have everything working for you.’<sup>62</sup>

Kappe’s words speak to the nature of conflicts emerging through different approaches in higher education and the damage caused when amenable agreements become impossible.

Oposing philosophies for education should be encouraged instead of getting in the way of

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> William Trombley, “Ex-Cal Poly Pomona Architect Director Will Open New School,” *L.A. Times*, September 14, 1972, C1.

students' experiences with learning. Assembling diverse viewpoints to enrich architecture became a goal for Kappe when he started SCI-Arc.

### **Formation of an Alternative Pedagogy: 1800 Berkeley Street and the First Semester**

The Southern California Institute of Architecture, also called The New School in its early years, set its pedagogical ambitions toward attitudes of freedom through self-study. Ray Kappe proposed the formation of SCI-Arc and was the school's first director. SCI-Arc opened in the fall of 1972 in a leased Santa Monica warehouse for which Kappe supplied the rent deposit.<sup>63</sup> The school sought an alternative approach for educating future architects, an approach that favored individualism and horizontal social structures. SCI-Arc's pedagogy distanced itself from large-scale university regulations and encouraged personalized design methods from the faculty and students. SCI-Arc fostered strategies for architectural production with an educational model of disciplined looseness guided by founding director, Ray Kappe. These considerations allowed the founding faculty at SCI-Arc to embrace novel approaches for teaching architecture. Qualities such as these, as well as its turbulent pre-history, allowed Kappe, the founding faculty, and founding students to establish pedagogy that provoked an academic environment to challenge architectural discourse in the 1970s.

As the first semester got under way Kappe did not worry about failure or worry about the lack of a defined curriculum. Enthusiasm and excitement was channeled into what could be tried out. If ideas about how to do work did not pan out, or if a new direction was proposed that

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<sup>63</sup> Glenn Small, "SCI-Arc Illusionist," *Small at Large* (blog), accessed August 25, 2012, <http://www.smallatlarge.com/2012/08/illusionist>.

seemed fruitful, the curriculum changed. The lesson from this method for studying architecture paralleled how design decisions are often made in a professional architecture practice. The architect makes decisions, some stay, some go, the solution gets revised. This process gets repeated until a sufficient solution is realized. This kind of cycle is something most architects are comfortable with. Kappe's dual interests in human behavior and the pragmatics of preparing young designers for the profession established a learning environment for creative exploration with architecture, but even more important was learning how to become flexible with creativity. This meant students had to be comfortable with a curriculum that could change on the fly. By experiencing this kind of approach to education, students fostered their understanding of design through a combination of patience, versatility, and rigor. Like a building project, the curricular development did not solidify immediately, but through iterative approaches evaluating outcomes the learning environment came into focus.

In the early summer of 1972 Ray Kappe and Bill Simonian began their search for a building to house the new school. Due to most of the faculty living on the West Side, as well as Kappe's own practice and home residing there, the building search primarily focused in the Santa Monica area. After looking at several buildings they decided on an old warehouse, formerly a production site for LSD, in an industrial neighborhood in Santa Monica [Figure 1.12]. By comparison to the other options, the building they decided on required the least amount of work to make it operational. Though renovations of the derelict warehouse mostly relied on student labor over the summer, nearly everyone that was interviewed about the studio spaces remembered how it developed differently. Most recalled having a high degree of responsibility in the ways it was created. To be fair, it was an exercise that the entire school worked on, which included divisions of labor ranging from conceptualization, material procurement, and assembly.

How SCI-Arc used its first building demonstrated one way that the school attempted an alternative approach to architectural education. The relationship between the students and faculty shared in the process of institutional development, literally and figuratively, from the ground up. Renovating the building was the first design project for the school [Figure 1.13]. This design challenged the school to define how an existing building could adapt to serve the collective needs of their nascent community. This task became an important pedagogical exercise that demonstrated how students and faculty engaged decisions regarding the origins of a new institution where anything was possible—with the caveat that there were inherent limitations due to a tight budget, material restrictions, and the politics of use. This included creating design studios, seminar rooms, a library, and a space for all-school meetings and lectures. The design and execution of these physical features made the building an instrument to provide a trajectory for learning within the school [Figure 1.14].

The primary space of the school was subdivided in ways to accommodate the open environment they wanted. Three unrestricted bays eventually served as the primary work spaces. Two studio bays flanked the middle space, which always remained open. This open space became known as the “Main Space.”<sup>64</sup> Two types of studio spaces were constructed. One was the rhombic dodecahedron structure that migrated from the Cal Poly campus, the other was a pipe and scaffolding system developed by students and faculty. Making use of a division wall that ran longitudinally, the school split the informal nature of the studio spaces from self-contained seminar rooms. The upstairs became an administrative office with a library stocked primarily with the Kappes personal collection of books. The top story, named the “Penthouse,” was leased

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<sup>64</sup> The naming convention, “Main Space,” followed SCI-Arc to each of its three locations. After a donation to SCI-Arc from the Keck Foundation, the Main Space is now referred to as Keck Hall.

to a film production company. The school's relationship with the film studio was instrumental to the school's use of film as a medium of record beginning as early as 1972.<sup>65</sup>

On October 2 the mechanical systems at 1800 Berkeley Street were turned on, the students moved in, and the Southern California Institute of Architecture officially began. When SCI-Arc started there were no formal classes or design studios. The idea was that students would develop projects on their own with guidance from faculty mentors. The first project for the 75 students was a five-week problem to develop a space-plan for the school that embraced the students' ideological attitude toward architectural education. The limitless opportunities to define what the school could become proved difficult. In Kappe's personal archive in his home studio he shared a document titled "Notes On the New School." These were his only records from the first semester. Kappe's first entry:

Due to the quantity of demolition and lack of voice in decision making, the students tired of working on the facilities during the summer. It was decided to call a halt two weeks before the semester began and an all-school 5-week problem was handed out one-week before the fall semester. Day 1: Only two students had given any thought to [the] problem."<sup>66</sup>

Amazingly, the school lasted the week. The immediate lack of responsibility is troubling. This group of students who left their former university to start a new school free from the bureaucracy, free from any limitations they experienced in a mainstream model of higher education, free from everything that seemed to be getting in their way, were given the opportunity to create an environment to do whatever they wanted, and by and large ignored the very first assignment. Eleanor Roosevelt's adage from *You Learn By Living* couldn't be more

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<sup>65</sup> Many of these early film reels have been digitized and are viewable on the SCI-Arc Media Archive website ([sma.sciarc.edu](http://sma.sciarc.edu)).

<sup>66</sup> Notes On the New School, from Ray Kappe's personal archive (unpublished document, c. 1972).



appropriate; “Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. With freedom comes responsibility. For the person who is unwilling to grow up, the person who does not want to carry his own weight, this is a frightening prospect,”<sup>67</sup> On the first day the pedagogy shifted. The question, what kinds of freedoms precipitated motivation had to be mirrored to first address what kinds of motivations precipitated freedom?

By and large the students’ were left alone to define the goals for the environment constituting their education. When you don’t know what you don’t know this becomes a challenge for anyone, but the students had just come from another building where they had been working on design projects. This kind of situation exemplified the productive value of failure through experimentation and echoes Buckminster Fuller who said, “Every time man makes a new experiment he always learns more. He cannot learn less. He may learn that what he thought was true was not true.”<sup>68</sup> This situation raised the difference between naiveté and ignorance. Creativity can channel naiveté by trying to understand what is not yet known by actively engaging the problem. In opposition to this kind of creativity is ignorance, which ignores trying to understand what is not yet known. On one hand, there is an attempt, though it may be wrong, on the other hand, you can’t be wrong if an attempt is never made.

The first day continued with discussions about the facilities. The collective understanding of the students and faculty agreed to generate a space planning solution that “should be inexpensive, have the ability to be recycled, and be flexible.”<sup>69</sup> The day concluded with faculty

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<sup>67</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt. *You Learn by Living*. New York: Harper, 1960.

<sup>68</sup> Buckminster Fuller, *Operating Manual For Spaceship Earth* (1969), The Estate of R. Buckminster Fuller, 2015.

<sup>69</sup> Ray Kappe, “SCI-Arc History,” unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012.

introductions and their areas of interest, and a presentation by Chrysalis.<sup>70</sup> Chrysalis was a group of British students at UCLA who had worked with Peter Cook and Ron Herron, two members from the British architectural group Archigram. Kappe knew both Cook and Herron from inviting them to Cal Poly while he was Chair. The students commented to Kappe later that the faculty presentations were too similar, suggesting that the variety they had envisioned was not present.<sup>71</sup> During the next two weeks there were more faculty presentations, two of them included Bill Simonian discussing graphic communication and Glenn Small discussing slides from Munich. In these first days the school continued to be renovated and cleaned, students formed study groups, and there was a review of several students' work.

Students continued to struggle with the liberties of directing their own education for the first six weeks. This idealistic model was revised in the sixth week and classes started to form. The classes did remain non-traditional, by being relatively ad-hoc. The ad-hoc nature of courses continued through the first year. Core faculty taught design studios that integrated students from every year in the program, including graduate students. This model was referred to as the Vertical Lab. These courses intended to foster diverse perspective by having mature students working alongside younger students.<sup>72</sup> The inherent freedom in the SCI-Arc curriculum allowed

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<sup>70</sup> Notes On the New School, from Ray Kappe's personal archive (unpublished document, c.1972).

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> This model still exists at SCI-Arc today but in a modified form and is now called vertical studios. vertical studios occur in the two semesters before thesis for graduate students and in the three semesters before thesis for undergraduate students. Vertical studios tend to be design studios that offer a higher degree of specialization relative to the instructor's interests and body of research/professional work that give the students an in depth experience that contrasts from the core studios that have a more prescriptive curriculum addressing necessary skills, techniques, and objectives.

students to take multiple studio courses during the same semester.<sup>73</sup> For example, one studio might focus on programmatic issues relative to an architectural typology, whereas the other studio could focus on urban design. This was something Kappe experienced when he was a student at Berkeley in the 1940s that he enjoyed. Although this was offered, students rarely took on this kind of schedule and the option was eventually dropped.<sup>74</sup> Many options for design education were tried, most were met with resistance from the students, but what became evident was that Kappe was seeking alternatives to the recognizable authoritative strategies in design education that adhered to styles, isms, or a formal language.

Michael Rotondi commented on the environment at SCI-Arc in 1972 from his perspective as a fifth-year student at that time.

There was no structure intentionally. Ray [Kappe] probably remembers it differently, but there was no structure, no curriculum, no classes. You showed up and you had to decide for yourself what you wanted to do. Very little was going on in terms of formal education. There was a lot of psychological education going on. You'd show up and you'd say, "OK, what are we going to do today?" "I don't know. What do you want to do today?" "I don't know."<sup>75</sup>

Without a priori outcomes prefigured by the pedagogy, a robust methodology that provided actionable feedback for learning became critical for students to perform. The methods being developed at SCI-Arc did not have the same kind of clarity that something like John Hejduk's 9-square grid exercise had to get young students at Cooper Union exploring formal invention.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> In the context of architectural education this is a rare situation. Given the typical time commitments of design studios that usually last for 12-15 hours per week, taking two design studio in the same semester could easily become overwhelming to most students.

<sup>74</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>76</sup> John Hejduk. *Mask of Medusa*. (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 37. The Nine Square is a didactic exercise Hejduk developed at the University of Texas at Austin with Colin Rowe in the 1950s, which used a matrix of nine squares organized by 16 columns. Hejduk proposed this kind of problem to be used by architecture as a way to become familiar with a specific set of elements and conditions of architecture,

Comparing the qualities of engagement with subject matter the two pedagogies were radically different. The Cooper Union model was exteroceptive, understanding resolved relationships between objects external to the body; whereas, the pedagogy at SCI-Arc, at least in this first semester, was much more interoceptive by the ways that a student's understanding worked to resolve internal principles that constituted design to themselves. What complicated an interoceptive methodology of learning was that the SCI-Arc students still had to negotiate their reality relative to the 75 other students, who were interrogating their own ideologies. The spatial puzzles that SCI-Arc students worked through were behavioral in nature, a design education trying to solve the problem of the commune, or an isolated urban microcosm.

What became clear in Kappe's notes on these first weeks was a growing sentiment of unease among the students out of a desire for an identifiable structure to define the educational process. In Kappe's short, daily entries he paid attention to the school's environment and assessing it. At the end of the first semester he noted, "Students desire positive information passing—yet a structure that permits freedom. I would say this should be the essence of our program and as we begin semester 2, I will stress the importance of this type of approach to the faculty."<sup>77</sup> Even with the development of identifiable classes and a clearer structure emerging, the SCI-Arc philosophy of individuality remained, as stated in the 1973-74 school catalog, which explained

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giving those elements stakes. Hejduk described 16 elements that the Nine Square can consider—he does not limit this list to these 16 elements—but these elements are: *'grid, frame, post, beam, panel, center, periphery, field, edge, line, plane, volume, extension, compression, tension, and shear, etc.'*

<sup>77</sup> Notes On the New School, from Ray Kappe's personal archive (unpublished document, c. 1972).

“the opportunity for individualized instruction and guidance and a maximum degree of flexibility to respond to the continually changing need within the school environment.”<sup>78</sup>

An educational environment marked by freedom required a consistent and perpetual reassessment to determine the success of its curriculum. The opportunity afforded to the faculty and students of SCI-Arc established grounds from which they could determine not only what they were doing, but what they should be doing. This was the challenge. To identify a proper trajectory for development when anything is possible became a responsibility for the faculty to make the students comfortable with a pedagogy in process. John Dewey remarked that in progressive models of education where experience is a critical component to the learning process, teachers must utilize “the local community, physical, historical, economic, and occupational [conditions] . . . as educational resources.”<sup>79</sup> All of these qualities became resources in the formative moments of SCI-Arc. Dewey observed what can complicate this kind of learning environment, which he referred to as the “gulf” between mature adults and adolescent learners. Even at the college age, students likely cannot assess what they need to know when they do not yet have the breadth of experiences required to make autonomous decisions regarding what and how they should learn.

Students were rightfully concerned about the structure and the value of their education, but in this model, that established an active co-creation of pedagogy, how it evolved was a discussion between the students and the faculty. The early work for the students was to come

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<sup>78</sup> SCI-Arc Catalog, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1973).

<sup>79</sup> John Dewey, *Experience & Education* (New York: Free Press, 2015), 40.

prepared with an agenda. This exploratory approach continued. After the first two weeks Kappe described the atmosphere.

There is a general inability to deal with the scale of the problem. Students are doing minimal work other than on required days. Good energy expended on MWF, however about 1/2 the students do not spend [the] entire day. Desire by many for fundamentals. . . . Keeping students together for the beginning weeks has been positive. All can participate with every instructor. . . . May influence decision to keep seminars open to studios—could provide freer participation rather than fixed choice.<sup>80</sup>

The experiment to let the students determine their own course of study was dispelled with by the fifth week of the first semester and it was decided to create classes due to a feeling that the students lacked “self-determination.”<sup>81</sup> On the day that students signed up for classes Kappe observed the students conveyed “generally good spirits and [a] cooperative feeling.”<sup>82</sup> In SCI-Arc’s application to become a degree granting institution dated December 1, 1972, 10 courses were listed and they were simply titled. The courses included: Design, taught by Ahde Lahti; Design Process, taught by James Stafford and Thom Mayne; Architectural Design, taught by Bernard Zimmerman; Building Science, taught by Gary Neville; Urban Design, taught by Ray Kappe; and Professional Practice taught by Bill Simonian.<sup>83</sup> The first two Special Project courses resembled coordinated design studios by furthering the initial exercise to renovate and inhabit the school. These courses were Community 72: Construction, Exploration Evaluation, and Testing of an Experimental Living Community, taught by Glenn Small; and Research of Modular-Factory Produced Housing Systems, Prototyping, Testing, and Evaluation, taught by James Stafford and Thom Mayne. The other two special project courses were Photo Silk Screen as a Graphic Communication Media, taught by Ahde Lahti; and New School Publication

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<sup>80</sup> Notes On the New School, from Ray Kappe’s personal archive (unpublished document, c. 1972).

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

Involving Writing, Photography, Layout, Printing Processes, Graphics, and Public Relations, taught by Shelly Kappe.<sup>84</sup>

In conversations with faculty about the origins of structured classes, no one seemed to remember a decisive moment when that happened. Everyone recalled a more organic development that continued, in essence, over the first two years. If there were courses they were informal in their structure by comparison to a conclusive set of objectives that had to be addressed. Based on those conversations, the listing of courses appear more as a formality to satisfy the State Education Board than articulating a de facto schedule.

British architectural theorist Reyner Banham, who was in Los Angeles teaching at UCLA visited SCI-Arc during its seventh week, on “Day 20” in Kappe’s notes, and gave a talk on megastructures and education.<sup>85</sup> In December 1972, Banham published an essay in *New Society* about SCI-Arc, which at that time was colloquially referred to as the New School [Figure 1.15]. Banham described the space of the school.

Two huge bays of clear industrial floorspace, under shallow pitched glazed roofs with doors . . . big enough to shunt an articulated truck in and out. And across the street front there are two storeys of very plain office space, under a flat roof (some kind of pent-thing lurks behind the parapet) with strip windows running right across, and a very slightly projecting doorframe round the front door.<sup>86</sup>

This description precipitated the argument for his article, titled “Big Shed Syndrome,” which emphasized that SCI-Arc’s building served as a tool for pedagogy. Banham recognized an attribute of the SCI-Arc space that promoted an environment for architectural thinking that was “architecture-free.” He remarked that architecture schools could signify their pedagogy through

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<sup>84</sup> Course Offerings, in School Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, c. 1972).

<sup>85</sup> Notes On the New School, from Ray Kappe’s personal archive (unpublished document, c. 1972).

<sup>86</sup> Reyner Banham, “Big Shed Syndrome,” in *New Society* 22, no. 533 (21 December 1972), 702.

their design, referencing Rudolph's Art and Architecture building at Yale, which had been "described as a 'a curriculum in situ.'"<sup>87</sup> Banham's one-page essay used SCI-Arc to exemplify, raise suspicions, and critique the shed concept as a learning environment for architecture. His article marked an architectural utopia due to the inherent freedoms for inspiration, devoid of competition from "somebody else's aesthetic ego trip."<sup>88</sup> A point Banham raised for an architecture school to successfully reside in this kind environment was "the interior must always be in a state of existential flux. Thus, if a partition is not moved from time to time, then the school community is not exercising its collective responsibility to growth and change."<sup>89</sup> Banham's point signaled the pedagogical importance of this in two ways. The first was political, by the ways that change disrupted a dormant status quo. The second was spatial, configuring and reconfiguring meant that architecture was not static, but evolved with dynamic response. He also presented a caution, that even in this typology power relations do emerge when slight modifications occur, suggesting that authorial control is a nuanced balance.

Banham noted that SCI-Arc had not yet succeeded with the opportunities afforded by their space. His criticism stemmed from the school's inability to capitalize on the diversity of outcomes the environment allowed. He recognized alternative social models could be tested through space, but were largely unexplored.

The new School doesn't really make significant use of its own Big Shed. Instead of spontaneous seminars and autonomous works groups camping out all over the Shed and colonizing its expanses of uncluttered floor, the state of play when I was there appeared to be that most of the drawing boards had been squashed into the old offices

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.



on the street front, and seminars tended to happen on a small gallery hard up under the roof.<sup>90</sup>

Determining a fair assessment of occupancy relative to his formal reading would require a longer study than spending an afternoon at the school. The school had only been open for seven weeks when he visited, and according to Kappe's notes during this time, was still very much in a state of growing awareness for how to occupy their new space. But what Banham raised is significant. An outsider's eye can trigger alternatives for use that are clouded when a situation becomes myopic due to a lack of distance.

The freedom to experiment within an "architecture-free" building was what allowed SCI-Arc students and faculty to construct two types of studio spaces in the school. One studio space was an evolution of the rhombic dodecahedron structure, Community '72, started at Cal Poly by Ahde Lahti, Bill Simonian, and Glenn Small was transported to SCI-Arc's Santa Monica campus where it was completed as a special project [Figure 1.16]. The first SCI-Arc application announced that this project was "the opportunity to live in prefabricated stacking modules and study the behavioral, social, and political patterns."<sup>91</sup> A second studio space was proposed and developed by Thom Mayne, Jim Stafford, and Ray Kappe with advanced students Dean Nota and John Souza—a cubicle system that incorporated drafting tables, lighting, and graphics [Figure 1.17].<sup>92</sup> Michael Rotondi described making his cubicle space that incorporated the scaffolding system after becoming disgruntled by the "ghetto" aesthetic that was emerging in the school. He decided to build his studio space in the tallest location of the building. Standing 14' off the

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> SCI-Arc Application, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>92</sup> Ray Kappe, "SCI-Arc History" (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

ground, Rotondi constructed an 8'x8' cubicle that required using a ladder to get in. He described that other students asked if they could build below him and eventually more and more students continued to build onto the scaffolding.<sup>93</sup> These considerations for the environment, coupled with Kappe's distinct approach to embrace a "college without walls"<sup>94</sup> concept offered the formation of physical and ideological aspirations. The school became a laboratory for experimentation.

Due to SCI-Arc being funded by tuition, which was \$500 per semester in 1972, each student paid an additional \$50 for the materials to construct and own their studio space inside the school. Kappe's idea to implement student ownership of the studio space was meant to foster greater care for the school's spaces, offer a lesson in the economics of owning and selling, and contribute to a student's understanding of making things.<sup>95</sup> Eventually this system created a problem due to incoming students feeling that spaces were being inflated beyond their value. The school bought back the spaces and distributed them equitably among the students.<sup>96</sup> From this pedagogical framework that could be nimble and change easily, the mixture of opportunities and the ability to use the building as an armature to design with, build in, and use daily was an experiment in learning that contributed to the ethos of the institution.

The students and faculty built the spaces and the politics of the institution themselves from inside the shell of a rundown warehouse in Santa Monica. Within the context of architectural education, their ideas explored economies, materials, fabrication, and the socio-political forces of space, form, and organization. The activities during the first semester of SCI-Arc were at a 1:1

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<sup>93</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>94</sup> Ray Kappe, "SCI-Arc History" (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

<sup>95</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>96</sup> Ray Kappe, "SCI-Arc History" (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

scale and grounded directly within physical and social experience. These exercises sought to limit the school's expenses that operated with a small budget and create a bond between students and faculty through the shared work of building the school together. The strategy that emerged offered play as a method for architectural production; whether it was the pedagogy, a studio environment, or a formal design project. This attitude for exploration proposed one way to develop, articulate, and understand what architecture is. Defining architecture by designing pedagogy established territories for creative solutions with value that impacted the collective reality of those involved. The first semester at SCI-Arc witnessed architecture through the structure of a complex game that signified expressions of space, form, and experience. Conceiving architecture in this way allowed design to take on difficult questions that were testable by organized experimentation. Setting conditions with established parameters, architecture can create a system for interpretation that achieves clarity through diverse expressions.

SCI-Arc students and faculty, orchestrated by Kappe, were given the challenge to unravel architectural education. They were free to develop pedagogy alternatively, but constrained by arriving at the necessary skills required for a young architect entering the profession. The task set before them was to work through the design of an educational model that addressed the following parameters: foster individual desires for design, create a sense of community, and provide a sufficient work environment [Figure 1.18]. In most models of education the expected results are pre-figured, prior to the execution of the work. At SCI-Arc, everyone learned together as the work unfolded. Defining what SCI-Arc was going to be played out like a game of capture the flag. The objective was clear, but the means to get there were numerous and oftentimes

elusive. A balance between the boundaries established by the administration, coupled with testing multiple strategies provided ways to unite efforts with a posteriori discipline.

### **“An Institution in Process”**

SCI-Arc’s first catalog described the school as an “institution in process.”<sup>97</sup> This quality asserted value in discovery and experimentation within the processes of working, rather than having an a priori solution for an architectural problem. The malleability within this ambition teaches students to be creative, flexible in their thinking, and learn to follow their ideas through. This learning experience embraced Kappe’s desire for architects and architecture to have “the freedom to become.”<sup>98</sup> The self-discovery inherent to an environment embracing *freedom to become* marked an ideal for young designers to challenge themselves by determining their own motivations for architecture. However, self-discovery alone is insufficient to make valuable work in architecture. The process of “becoming” required guidance for a student to understand how to calibrate their initiatives relative to contemporary discourse, or other prevalent discussions in their field. Without that guidance results can easily fall into solipsism. This created an atmosphere to define, and redefine, architecture’s territories for engagement. The impact of this approach tended to favor the faculty to develop strong perspectives and would often leave the students having to negotiate the ideologies of their instructors relative to their own interests in design.

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<sup>97</sup> SCI-Arc Catalog, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>98</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

For Kappe, the attribute of an institution in process was important to maintain throughout his directorship. His belief was that this gave SCI-Arc a unique identity within architectural culture, one that he continues to find important for SCI-Arc today.<sup>99</sup> From an institutional perspective this freedom also gave the pedagogy great agility. Without adhering to the dogmas of a strict definition of architecture, the school could adapt to changing attitudes and influences.

During the first semester, faculty were only at the school three days per week. The curriculum was set up so that each of the instructors could remain engaged in professional practice at least two days each week. This kind of schedule established a precedent for the school where the core faculty were not only encouraged, but expected, to work professionally. The SCI-Arc faculty were not academics in the classical sense. The only responsibility for faculty at SCI-Arc was teaching by addressing the individual needs of the students at the school.

In 1974 the faculty core board formed that included the six founding faculty as well as two additional faculty members, Terry Gassman and Eric Owen Moss. The core board established the curriculum for the school. SCI-Arc never instated a policy of tenure due to Kappe's belief that a dynamic institution needed the ability to remain flexible and responsive to enrollment, curricular, and economic factors.<sup>100</sup> At the time of SCI-Arc's formation there was an unwritten understanding that the founding faculty would all have lifelong positions. The fact that this was a verbal agreement, with no legal documents produced, became a point of conflict in later years with the change of directors.

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ray Kappe, "Tenure," from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, undated).

Kappe resisted the idea of tenure at SCI-Arc. His strong point of view on that subject came through in an interview. “If you go to any university, [there is] a bunch of tenured faculty. . . . It's hard to make the adjustments and changes with that process, particularly if they are stubborn about what they do and don't want to change. So you can only do so much at those schools. But at SCI-Arc you can do whatever the hell you want.”<sup>101</sup> The nature of Kappe’s sentiment is double-edged. It makes it possible for ideas to spark fresh directions among faculty who could develop ideas without the pressure to produce peer-reviewed publications, but it also meant that being hired did not come with much security, especially if a faculty member’s courses lost favor, for whatever reason.

SCI-Arc’s system of employment in higher education drove a different kind of competition among faculty than at other schools. It also required a particular mindset from the person leading to embrace diversity equitably. Latent in this approach surrendered core principles of academic freedom to a popularity contest without advancement occurring through scholarship and established research projects. The danger in this becomes the value of trends to lead discourse by being fashionable rather than evaluated merits of substance. Both can be rigorous; however, the strength of a loud voice can often become more persuasive than demonstrable evidence. Regardless, the best evidence for faculty at SCI-Arc was whoever built.

An institution in process also meant that the school was forming its identity as an institution. On July 1, 1972, the State of California endorsed the Articles of Incorporation of Southern California Institute of Architecture [Appendix 2], which stated: “The specific and primary purpose is the establishment and operation of an educational institution providing a professional

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<sup>101</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, February 22, 2015.

architectural education for students desiring to become architects, or work in related design professions.”<sup>102</sup> This document outlined the powers of the corporation to include buying, leasing, and renting property; borrowing money; to carry out contracts; and to have and exercise all powers of a general non-profit corporation in the state of California.<sup>103</sup> The document named five directors to oversee and make decisions for the corporation and included, Ray Kappe, Bernard Zimmerman, William Simonian, Rochelle Kappe, and Jack Diamond. It described that its directors were not financially liable and could not profit from the corporation. If the corporation ceased operation it would donate any remaining assets to an educational foundation. It could not endorse politicians or influence legislature.<sup>104</sup>

The five directors acted as the school’s board of regents who made and controlled the legal operations of the institution. By-laws were produced and submitted in the application to the state and outlined the overall organization and management of the school including the powers of the directors, meetings, the designations of officers appointed by the board of directors including a president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary. The board stated they would meet annually on the first Monday of September. They received no salaries. One of the by-laws, Article III, Section 5, explained the removal of directors. The dissolution of the entire board or an individual director required the “unanimous vote of the remaining directors.”<sup>105</sup> These legal measures prevented unilateral decisions for the overarching mission of the school, but day-to-day operations were by and large made by the school’s director.

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<sup>102</sup> Articles of Incorporation of Southern California Institute of Architecture, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Article III Section 5, in By-Laws of Southern California Institute of Architecture, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, undated).

To become a degree granting institution SCI-Arc also had to submit an Application for Approval of Courses to the State of California. The document prepared for this application listed the officers of the corporation of SCI-Arc: Ray Kappe, President; Bernard Zimmerman, Vice President; and Rochelle Kappe, Secretary/Treasurer.<sup>106</sup> Zimmerman's role in SCI-Arc's inception in 1972 was critical, but he never fully committed to joining SCI-Arc full-time. In discussions with Kappe, the fact that he had just received tenure at Cal Poly coupled with familial pressure, he decided to remain at Cal Poly.<sup>107</sup> In October 1972 Ray Kappe submitted the application to the California Department of Education for approval of courses under Education Code Section 29007.5 to become a degree granting institution. In Kappe's application he listed the official name of the school as Southern California Institute of Architecture and a second name as The New School. At that time a three-year lease for the school's building at 1800 Berkeley Street in Santa Monica, California, owned by the California Canadian Bank, had been secured and would run through July 30, 1975. The total value of instructional equipment that the school owned listed at \$33,000, which included "90 drafting boards and storage units (\$10,000); materials for experimental projects (\$10,000); 2 slide carousel projectors (\$500); 2 photo enlargers (\$500); silk screening equipment including 1 silk screen washing sink, 1 light table (contact printer), 40 slot drying rack, 1 Omega enlarger, screens (34x46, 52x42, (2) 26x42, 36x48) (\$5,000); office furnishings and equipment (\$2,500); library (\$2,000) shop equipment and tools (\$2,500)<sup>108</sup> for 75 enrolled students.<sup>109</sup> By comparison, Yale University's endowment

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<sup>106</sup> Application for Approval of Courses, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>107</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013.

<sup>108</sup> SCI-Arc Application of Approval for Courses, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>109</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.



in 1972 was valued at \$595,000,000.<sup>110</sup> With a total student population of 9,219 students,<sup>111</sup> the per student value of Yale University's endowment in 1972 was nearly double SCI-Arc's entire inventory of assets.

Running parallel to the sentiment of an institution in process was another phrase embraced at SCI-Arc, "a college without walls."<sup>112</sup> A college without walls was a concept that SCI-Arc adopted early that spoke to the freedoms being encouraged. The ethos of this concept created bridges between ideas, rather than boundaries. This methodology operated from the pretense that understanding permeates with reciprocating influence from diverse connections. Without walls embraced lateral thinking instead of top down information gathering.

A "school without walls"<sup>113</sup> was a concept becoming popular in the 1970s. A focus at the International Design Conference Aspen (IDCA) in the summer of 1972 was alternative pedagogical structures [Figure 1.19]. One of the speakers was John Bremer, author of *School Without Walls*. Some of the founding SCI-Arc faculty, including Ray Kappe, attended this conference. Session topics included Students on Learning, Experimental Urban Schools, Education and Politics, Conversations: School Programs, and The City as a Classroom.<sup>114</sup> Speaking with Kappe about the influence this conference had on shaping SCI-Arc's pedagogy,

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<sup>110</sup> Pierson, George W. "F-2.14 Endowment Funds, 1946-1980," in *A Yale Book of Numbers: Historical Statistics of the College and University 1701-1976* (Yale University, 1983), 613.

<sup>111</sup> Pierson, George W. "A-1.8 Statistics of Enrollment, 1955-1976," in *A Yale Book of Numbers: Historical Statistics of the College and University 1701-1976* (Yale University, 1983), A-1.8.

<sup>112</sup> John Dreyfuss, "Mundane to Mile High: Architecture in the Halls of Lively," *L.A. Times*, March 10, 1976, F1.

<sup>113</sup> John Bremer. *School Without Walls, Philadelphia's Parkway Program*. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971).

<sup>114</sup> Mildred Friedman, ed. "International Design Conference in Aspen: The Invisible City." *Design Quarterly*, no. 86/87 (1972).

he recalled that the proceedings did not change his opinions about pedagogy, but reinforced what he was planning for SCI-Arc.<sup>115</sup>

In *School Without Walls* Bremer outlined five aspects of the curriculum at the experimental public school called, The Parkway Program, which he formerly directed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and began in 1969. All of the aspects that Bremer outlined are directly relatable to philosophies considered valuable at SCI-Arc; freedom, responsibility, social organization of a community, students engaged in the complexity of urban life, and even the outlier, the catalogue, which held a critical place within both schools by the way it announced programs, gave an explanation of school objectives, and provided details about curriculum and faculty.

At the 1972 IDCA conference, Bremer suggested the importance of a school's climate in regard to effective teaching. He stated, "there is an invisible and private curriculum which is the social structure of the school."<sup>116</sup> Bremer went on to say that, "you spend more energy maintaining the system than you do in doing the work that the system was set up to achieve."<sup>117</sup> Speaking with Kappe about the functioning of SCI-Arc along similar lines he responded to how he viewed research and committee work among the faculty at SCI-Arc and how those responsibilities compared to the expected time commitments of teaching. "We did not have anything expected of faculty other than teaching. . . . [There were] no committees. [There was]

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<sup>115</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>116</sup> Warren G. Bennis, John Bremer, John Sullivan, Alan C. Green and John Holt. "Critics Look at the System," *Design Quarterly*, no. 86/87 (1972): 58.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

one faculty meeting per year, but . . . [there were] several all-school meetings when there were grievances or information to be shared.”<sup>118</sup>

In a typical tenure track position it is common that a professor’s workload is divided between research, teaching, and service. The three parts, among others overseen by administration, maintain what Bremer might call the “system.” With SCI-Arc’s faculty solely committed to effective teaching it created an imbalance of accountability. The administrative personnel largely performed committee work such as enrollment, outreach, and staffing. Architecture is a difficult field for many academic contexts to evaluate with respect to a research agenda. With SCI-Arc’s resistance to establishing that need, instructors’ professional activities supplanted research and offered criteria from practice to evaluate their contributions for advancing architecture.

One way that SCI-Arc sustained a “school without walls” concept was the response to some of the rigidities they had experienced at Cal Poly. In the first school catalogs it stated “studios and seminars may be added to or deleted from listed courses of study based solely upon their relevance to the needs of the educational community and not upon unnecessary administrative processes. Since we are of a manageable size this responsiveness is possible.”<sup>119</sup> The tone of this statement reflected a direct opposition to points of disagreement and the eventual decision to leave Cal Poly.

SCI-Arc employed an unconventional grading system. In 1972 the evaluation criteria was a “pass/no pass evaluat[ion] by his mentor and a committee of professors. He will be awarded a

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<sup>118</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J. Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>119</sup> 1972 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

degree if the committee is satisfied that the student has fulfilled all requirements for graduation and is capable of entering the profession of architecture.”<sup>120</sup> Without being accredited by the National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB), the skills of the students entering the profession in the early years of SCI-Arc had great liberties by only needing to satisfy the faculty. The school catalog described the portfolio as the means to measure progress and evaluate the student’s development in lieu of letter grades and grade point averages. The reasoning behind this decision was that the portfolio could more adequately represent the student’s development and growing skill sets emerging throughout their academic career. The portfolio offered sensible criteria to mark progress. Often, in architectural education, skills do not stop and start in one class, but are more dynamic with respect to an accumulated knowledge marked by fluid continuation from course to course and project to project.

The catalog stated, “The New School does not recognize failure, but instead encourages that projects be repeated and improved upon until a successful conclusion is reached.”<sup>121</sup> Placing a high regard on the social environment of the academic community rather than academic achievements or shortcomings, the application stated that grounds for dismissing a student would be determined relative to the following code of conduct: “a student is required to conduct himself in a manner which will not reflect in a negative manner on the school or other students or faculty.”<sup>122</sup> The application to the Board of Education also addressed that a student’s “previous record of attainment” was not the predominant factor determining whether or not they would be admitted to the school. Prospective students were expected to have graduated from high school

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<sup>120</sup> SCI-Arc Application of Approval for Courses, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>121</sup> 1972 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>122</sup> SCI-Arc Application of Approval for Courses, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

prior to enrolling, but that was not a deciding factor. After an interview with Kappe, an applicant without a high school diploma could enter the program if it was determined that they demonstrated adequate qualifications. Those qualifications were outlined in the first school catalog as “Drive and determination, the capacity for hard work.”<sup>123</sup> Drive and determination often outweighs talent in architecture due to the need for rigorous commitment to push through obstacles while generating creative solutions.

Kappe remarked that his ambition for the school was to “understand how a pedagogy would change if you had an open system. . . . When I first started we tried to open the students up the first year by having problems that would be more engaging in a different way for them, that would make them look at design, architecture, and living differently than they were used to.”<sup>124</sup> This open system meant that students were expected to develop individualized approaches to their education based on experimentation and experience. This suggested that the pedagogy was not fixed, but would adapt and embrace diverse styles. The difficulty in these types of educational environments is maintaining consistent progress. It can easily become a defunct system if there is a lack of consistent effort to understand goals and a framework or rubric that offers a means to reach them.

Many students grew uncomfortable with liberties of an uncoordinated curriculum. Kappe remarked in 1976, “except for the 5% of the students who were extremely self-directed, it didn’t work. . . . The theory was that students should want to learn; should want to get turned on to an

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<sup>123</sup> 1972 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>124</sup> Ray Kappe, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, February 24, 2015.

issue and follow that issue through.”<sup>125</sup> When most learning practices focus on the consumption of factual knowledge from information, shifting the focus to an exploratory process requires a high degree of initiative on behalf of the students. From accumulation through dissemination to invention through determination became the challenge. Asking Kappe to speculate on why the students desired more structure in the curriculum by resisting a model of education that gave them more freedom he said, “it is difficult for most people to establish their own programs. It is always easier to respond.”<sup>126</sup> He suggested that it is similar to thesis, but “even more difficult for younger students.”<sup>127</sup> An open, without walls, system takes commitment coupled with time to grow abilities that can embrace its working methodology. Because this teaching method gives latitude for pluralistic results, the outcomes tend to not happen as quickly because of the amount of trial and error required for a student to understand how they work. One strategy that can foster this kind of pedagogy is to set goals with multiple timelines. For example, setting daily goals for a particular studio project, semester long goals for the project to address, and farther-reaching goals that establish a line of enquiry of continued study. This simple strategy empowers people with the understanding of self-directed accomplishment. When results occur, the nuances of discovery compel the learning experience, giving it direction.

After the first semester 40 more students joined SCI-Arc. Six students left after the first semester. Kappe noted the decisions to leave were mostly financial. Appearing relieved that the first semester ended on an upbeat and the direction for the school was coming into focus, Kappe wrote that “we are over the hump.” In attempting to remove the “rough edges” of the program,

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J. Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

new objectives became finding the appropriate balance between freedom and instruction while maintaining a vibrant communal environment in a single space, working with the faculty to become more sensitive to student needs, and distributing the faculty workload more equitably.<sup>128</sup> The lesson being learned in this formative period was the social enterprise of space planning and that a functioning learning environment approximated an urban microcosm. The education occurred through experience, a curriculum where successes and failures were not abstractions explained at a distance from lived reality. The effort of Kappe, the faculty, and the students was a design project to create an infrastructure robust enough to accommodate diversity and sustain the growing ecology of attitudes [Figure 1.20].

Significant developments changed in the language of the school between the first and second year. Originally SCI-Arc was referred to as The New School and most school literature reflected that naming convention. In the 1973/74 school catalog that had changed to Southern California institute of Architecture and the loose acronym SCI-ARC was adopted. Kappe described how SCI-Arc's name was meant to reflect its geography and a relationship to science.

I wanted the name of the school to denote its location geographically. Since it was not a university, I felt that Institute was the proper manner to describe a school devoted entirely to architecture. . . . SCI-ARC was meant to be construed as the science of architecture which is the primary way that I thought architecture can be learned. It was also branded as an all caps acronym in order to give equal importance to science and architecture.<sup>129</sup>

The school philosophy initially stated “Students can progress at their own rate. The course of study will be a six-year professional degree program.”<sup>130</sup> That had been dropped by 1973 and the degree requirements became more formalized, though still maintained the polemic “we have

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<sup>128</sup> Notes On the New School, from Ray Kappe's personal archive (unpublished document, c. 1972).

<sup>129</sup> Ray Kappe, “What's In a Name,” (unpublished manuscript, March 10, 2015), Microsoft Word File.

<sup>130</sup> 1972 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

moved away from the concept of a school being a place to fulfill endless lists of a pre-established and often unrelated requirements. Instead, students will be individually counseled into those courses required by them to understand the wholistic and comprehensive nature of architecture and its related fields.”<sup>131</sup> While the language of maintaining relationships to active professionals remained, what was also dropped by fall 1973 was the claim “we will develop ties with professionals to provide an on-the-job type of educational experience for all students.”<sup>132</sup> Initially, there was a similar interest as the Boston Architectural College to include internships within the curriculum. Editing out that language suggested a changing attitude and that instead of coordinating internships for credit, all matters regarding obtaining the degree would be controlled internal to the curriculum of SCI-Arc.

With the student population gaining roughly 90 new students in the second year, Kappe recognized a changing attitude in the school. Without the same sense of ownership due to not being founding students, these new students had a different relationship to SCI-Arc. The difference of having left one school to create another, which many of the returning students had only done a year before, made the students’ perspectives on their own education divided.

The character of the school has changed. The searching that existed has diminished. There is a desire among the faculty for product. There seems to be a desire among the new students to find their relationship to architecture. The old students continue to search and float, but without the same sense of urgency. There is a desire for the original freedom, but I sense a large void in the material covered and the students’ ability to cope with architectural problems and schedules. Without overreacting I will attempt to set up a number of smaller scale problems to teach plan, organization, and form. I have allowed too much program flexibility. . . . My only concerns . . . are making sure our credibility remains. We maintain an adequate student body and the material is properly taught. What is our philosophy other than support of the individual and freedom? Do we attempt to have all information reach all students? Do we

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<sup>131</sup> 1973/74 SCI-Arc Catalogs, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1973).

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.



speculate in attitudes? Use, technology, energy crisis, megastructure? Is there [a] need for [a] traditional approach to design solutions?<sup>133</sup>

Kappe's self-conscious assessment of the state of the school reflected his understanding that attitudes toward learning were changing. Kappe wrestled with how to move forward, struggling with the philosophy of freedom, recognizing that if it was not harnessed, could undermine the entire school. When it became clear to him that the students were unable to tackle the work with the inherent looseness, Kappe's most sobering statement questioned the value, and perhaps, necessity, of traditional approaches to design. Kappe was not a radical architect and was never antagonistic toward traditional approaches. His interest at SCI-Arc became an experiment for him and the people that started the school to test what else might work for learning about architecture and revise their own strategies as they grew to understand what was and what wasn't effective.

In 1973, the desire and expectations did not seem to coincide with the results. The optimism of attitudes and the growing need for clarity amidst the third wave of new students established new priorities for a delicate ecosystem that relied on tuition for SCI-Arc to remain operational. When the second year began, it opened with informal lectures and seminars from Bob Williams on polyhedra and natural structures, Giovanni Brino discussed found space, and a student lectured on pyramid power structures. Faculty mentors provided material adding to the discourse. From Kappe's perspective "it was about the most exciting 5 weeks that I have spent in education. The faculty loved it."<sup>134</sup> However, it remained too loose for the students who continued to push for organized courses and called an all-school meeting to address the state of the pedagogy. After the

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<sup>133</sup> The First Ten Weeks of the Second Year, from Ray Kappe's personal archive (unpublished document, 1973).

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

meeting the program “began . . . as it had been spelled out in the catalogue, using the vertical lab and the two studios options, the Monday morning all-school seminar, and the Wednesday night design forum with the usual accompanying pot-luck dinner.”<sup>135</sup> The beginning of the second year marked the clearest point of course definition. Kappe’s admission to implement the program according to the catalogue implied that until that point it had worked to maintain the initial motives for self-directed architectural study.

What became evident in these early attempts at a purely open educational model is that students did not know how to structure their schedules effectively and that a more defined program needed to be explored. Herbert Kohl, author of *The Open Classroom: A Practical Guide to a New Way of Teaching* was published in 1969 and explained a similar conceptual framework as what Kappe wanted to develop at SCI-Arc. Kohl pointed out that in “an open classroom . . . the role of the teacher is not to control his pupils but rather enable them to make choices and pursue what interests them. . . . A pupil functions according to his sense of himself rather than what he is expected to be.”<sup>136</sup> Echoing Kohl, was the type teaching that Terry Glassman embraced at SCI-Arc. Glassman studied at UC Berkeley as an undergraduate and taught there during the last two years of his undergraduate degree. Before his M.Arch at Harvard and MIT he taught at University of Colorado Boulder. He began teaching at SCI-Arc in 1974. Influenced by Louis Kahn, Richard Neutra, Buckminster Fuller, and Jean Piaget, his intellectual interests centered on an environmental sciences approach for architecture. “What I was looking at and trying to understand is, what is this ecology of human development. If we can understand that . .

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Herbert R. Kohl, *The Open Classroom: A Practical Guide to a New Way of Teaching* (New York: A New York Review Book, 1969), 20.

. how do we create environments which are appropriate, which nurture the development of human potential.”<sup>137</sup> His approach to architectural education had a foundational principle that worked toward that ambition: “you should never do something for someone that they're capable of doing for themselves.”<sup>138</sup> Two reasons this kind of learning mattered can be understood by considering its opposite. Doing the opposite of what Glassman proposed does not encourage the exploration of potential and it creates dependence on somebody else. Glassman was critical of the word “teach,” and preferred strategies that liberated learning.

Advice from Kohl’s *Open Classroom* provides context for the students’ concerns. “Just as one has to suspend expectations with respect to individual students so with respect to rules and routines one must suspend one’s fear of chaos.”<sup>139</sup> An equally useful counterpoint raised by Rudolph Weingartner in his book *Fitting Form to Function: A Primer on the Organization of Institutions* is his first “maxim.” Weingartner writes, “In academic institutions, the forces of nature are centrifugal; organizational art must be used to create propensities toward coherence.”<sup>140</sup> Although these positions contrast they do not necessarily contradict, chaos can be a form of coherency if the results obtained reflect the ambitions. The dialectical balance between chaos and coherency was an identifiable ethic under development at SCI-Arc. In an interview with Thom Mayne a clear goal for SCI-Arc emerged, that it worked to “remove a huge amount of the roadblocks that jam up thinking in the architectural environment.”<sup>141</sup> This observation

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<sup>137</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 19, 2015.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Herbert R. Kohl, *The Open Classroom: A Practical Guide to a New Way of Teaching* (New York: A New York Review Book, 1969), 20.

<sup>140</sup> Rudolph H. Weingartner, *Fitting Form to Function: A Primer on the Organization of Institutions* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011), xv.

<sup>141</sup> Thom Mayne, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, July 25, 2012.

from Mayne suggested education should not be a filter but an amplification of new ideas, creating alternatives to work on complex problems of architecture. But those problems need to be identifiable. They need to yield discourse. Architecture and education have the ability to offer a twofold approach that is centrifugal and centripetal. Being centrifugal and centripetal means that work not only exceeds its boundaries, but grows new coherencies. Re-directed methods offer an alternative approach to focus on its subject matter. Architecture and education have the capacity to expand understanding while directing attention toward a clear goal.

One area of focus that provided optimism remained the development of the building itself, which was a source of collective effort that students and faculty productively contributed to. In the second year Banham's model of colonization amidst dynamic openness and collectivity appeared prophetic. New power relations emerged. Decisions from the majority affected the entire community. In Kappe's notes after the first 10 weeks of the second year he remarked that the scaffolding system was becoming the dominant space planning implement to house the students' studio spaces and the "minority [of students] who could not accept this . . . opted for the rhombic dodecahedron system, or set up their areas of self expression at the fringes of the regular system. However, these squatters had to move as the system expanded. We had a microcosm of typical urban development with the organized system manipulating individual freedom."<sup>142</sup>

In an academic environment based on individual freedom, where certain voices might stand out, it was critical to establish community-oriented initiatives. In 1975 there was a student meeting at SCI-Arc discussing performance criteria of the school for accreditation by NAAB. In

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<sup>142</sup> The First Ten Weeks of the Second Year, from Ray Kappe's personal archive (unpublished document, 1973).

a video of this meeting, a student, Jerry Compton, tried to organize consensus between students and faculty regarding the “creative community” [Figure 1.21]<sup>143</sup> At this meeting Compton suggested that the school needed to establish a collective identity. He proposed that there be “social interactions with the teachers.”<sup>144</sup> He explained what Kappe proposed.

Having a break at 6 o'clock everyday and going upstairs and having a wine social, or ya know, a pot-luck thing . . . where the instructors are gonna be there . . . so we can relate to them. When we first started the school the idea was that there would be ten instructors and that every student would have as much interaction [with them as they needed], but that doesn't happen<sup>145</sup>

The comments from Compton reflect an expectation of the faculty from the students that did not exist. The impression from the students who migrated from Cal Poly had a misplaced understanding of the community development that believed faculty were responsible for fostering intellectual *and* social relationships. The difficulty in this proposition for faculty, regardless of the learning methods, becomes a power relationship that has ambiguous boundaries. It also suggested that the only thing in the life of the faculty was the school. This was not all together unexpected. One of the school's that SCI-Arc looked at as it formed was the art school, Black Mountain College, in North Carolina. At Black Mountain College faculty lived on campus. A compromise to the daily socials that Compton described was likely the eventual weekly social organized by the student union. It was called Friday's at Five and became a time within the school when students and faculty would socialize in a relatively casual manner.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Stephen Albert, Roland Coate, Jerry Compton, Shelly Kappe, Bill Simonian, Glen Small and Arnie Stalk. September 07, 1975. "Accreditation Meeting Roland Coate Stephen Albert." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/accreditation-meeting-roland-coate-stephen-albert/>.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Fridays at Five was a SCI-Arc tradition that continued until 2014.

Within the first two years several pedagogical models had been explored. These included an independent studio with a student working directly with an instructor, a more typical design curriculum of studios and seminars, and an alternative program that focused a group of students and faculty on a common theme or theoretical topic. The alternative program did not last a full year. Another program that did not last was an evening program established for community college graduates working during the day who would take night classes and work toward a Bachelor's Degree. The initial announcement of this program listed Bernard Zimmerman as director.<sup>147</sup> In the second semester of the first year Shelly Kappe was running it. It ran several studios and drawing classes but was dropped after several years.<sup>148</sup> By the 1974-75 academic year a more structured curriculum emerged resembling the courses Kappe created at Cal Poly. A design studio sequence was established for the first four years beginning with fundamentals and gaining programmatic and urban complexity as students advanced in the program. Kappe taught the forth-year studio which was a "large scale architectural and urban design problem [with results] based upon research dealing with social, economic, political, and physical systems."<sup>149</sup> The faculty had grown from seven to seventeen, and included new design faculty members Ina Dubnoff, Terry Glasman and Eric Owen Moss, Ched Reeder, Ron Rezek, and Steve Selkowitz. Dubnoff was the first female studio instructor at SCI-Arc teaching with Glassman and Simonian in Architectural Design 2, a studio focusing on small-scale human habitation. Glassman and Moss would become pivotal faculty members in the coming years and joined the founding faculty on the core board of the school. In 1974 Moss taught third year design with Jim Stafford. The studio coordinated multiple architectural systems in a fixed typology.

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<sup>147</sup> 1972 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1972).

<sup>148</sup> Ray Kappe, "SCI-Arc History" (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

<sup>149</sup> 1974 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1974).

Terry Glassman and Eric Owen Moss both joined SCI-Arc in 1974. They shared nearly identical educational backgrounds, but had different ideologies. Both studied at Berkeley and then at Harvard at the same times. At Berkeley, Moss resisted the countercultural revolution that was taking place on campus feeling that it was a new conformity masquerading as ideological individuality.<sup>150</sup> Moss had been working at SOM on large-scale corporate architecture prior to coming to SCI-Arc. Moss' intellectual background gravitated toward esoteric subjects that could be played out through audacious forms. Glassman embraced the antiwar protests at Berkeley, participating in demonstrations.<sup>151</sup> He had been working with Project Head Start and was involved with a pioneering study called the Preschool Project in the School of Education at Harvard which addressed early childhood education. In the Harvard study, Glassman's research perspective from analysis of the physical environment evolved the breadth of the project, which had previously mostly focused on social, political, and economic factors.<sup>152</sup>

Hiring these two faculty in the same year became a pivotal moment at SCI-Arc, and represented the kind of diversity Kappe had imagined could be possible. In the mid 1970s at SCI-Arc these two faculty exemplified the two directions for how SCI-Arc would progress. Both ushered in an alternative to modern principles that split on form and social responsibility. Moss embraced new methods at formal invention for architecture. Glassman embraced humanistic methods from the social sciences to affect environments through architecture.

In an interview with Eric Owen Moss, he related that SCI-Arc was “a residual consequence of a movement,” referring to the cultural and political movements of the 1960s in America,

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<sup>150</sup> Eric Owen Moss, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, July 26, 2012.

<sup>151</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 5, 2015.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

“whatever its beginnings, whether it is Marx or Marcuse . . . Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, or Bob Dylan.”<sup>153</sup> As a student at Berkeley in the 1960s he described not wanting to choose a side, not being a fan of “caricature cartoons”<sup>154</sup> of contagious ideologies. Moss felt that a remarkable characteristic of the 1960s was the era’s ability to absorb novelty. Moss recalled that sentiment by stating, “so when one guy said, ‘I am outside the box,’ every schmuck selling vacuum cleaners is now outside the box, and not realizing the box they are outside is just another box that they are inside. . . and it struck me and I remember that. It was so striking.”<sup>155</sup> Moss suggested that the merits of starting SCI-Arc, the commitment, energy, and conviction were what made its inception in 1972 credible, not its intellectual foundations, which he claimed were borrowed. He explained that most people “belong to something,” that it is unusual for people to begin something.<sup>156</sup> Moss’ remarks indicate his awareness that non-conformity can easily become a new conformity [Figure 1.22]. At a school like SCI-Arc this is an important message. The image of being unconventional can easily supplant actually being unconventional. Challenging the status quo must include understanding how difference becomes mediated relative to a particular context.

SCI-Arc had a goal that students and faculty shared responsibilities in fostering the quality of the academic environment. This quality became as much a design issue as what occurred in the school’s studios. The 1975 all school meeting also included a discussion about the formation of a student organization that would disseminate school information and attend faculty meetings. Some faculty felt that students should not be allowed to attend all of the faculty meetings due to

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<sup>153</sup> Eric Owen Moss, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, July 26, 2012.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.



the sensitive nature of some of the conversations, which dealt with problems of some of the students. A student, Arnie Stalk, did not disagree with that point of view but contested that when there are changes in classes, seminars, design hours, and tuition fees, students needed to be part of that decision making process [Figure 1.23].

If the student body, let's say there [are] 200 people, and there is a designated faculty and an administration, and the administration is raising issues and the students have no feedback, no response to those issues at all, or have no feelings, and these things are just passed along with the thought that 'well, they know what they're doing, we'll let them do it.' I just think that is a really poor situation.<sup>157</sup>

Bill Simonian and Ray Kappe countered this point by asserting the values of mutual trust and raised concern regarding the seeming paranoia, respectively. Another member of the meeting described that what was clear to him was that the social structure of the SCI-Arc community needed to be designed.

If it's done well, soundly, then it will solve a whole lot of problems, and if it isn't, then it's going to create a whole lot of problems. The time has to be taken to do that, and interestingly [it] is a very important part of our project, a design project for the school and very related to accreditation, because it has to do with the individual's relation to the community. If we can't get our community together then we can't relate to the outside community. So, I think we should take the time to do that.<sup>158</sup>

The meeting appeared difficult. It raised the issue of autonomy and freedom while still being accountable to the character of a group. The struggle was how to accommodate the unique personalities of individuals, allowing them to flourish, and still offer a productive learning environment that could make decisions and move forward as an institution. The atmosphere suggested a lesson that echoed the school philosophies, which posited SCI-Arc as an

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<sup>157</sup> Stephen Albert, Roland Coate, Jerry Compton, Shelly Kappe, Bill Simonian, Glen Small and Arnie Stalk. September 07, 1975. "Accreditation Meeting Roland Coate Stephen Albert." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/accreditation-meeting-roland-coate-stephen-albert/>.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

environment of self-study and self-evaluation founded on the principle of flexibility.<sup>159</sup> The shared involvement between students and faculty to address concerns in the school provided a setting to communicate their various points of view and discuss them publicly.

A program that did grow successfully early on was the graduate program. When SCI-Arc began there was no division between graduate and undergraduate students relative to coursework. This integration was part of the initial spirit of the pedagogy, but perhaps also occurred because of numbers. There were only three graduate students who were part of SCI-Arc in 1972. The fall 1974 school catalog asserted “graduate students will relate to a mentor but are expected to function more autonomously in the development of their theses. They shall become involved in advanced research of an independent nature.”<sup>160</sup> In 1974 the graduate student population grew to 12 students and Thom Mayne acted as the graduate design studio instructor.<sup>161</sup> By 1976 the language regarding graduate students changed and stated that the school now offered three “graduate programs of study at SCI-ARC, each responsive to specific educational need, and each leading to a Master of Architecture or Urban Design degree.”<sup>162</sup>

A document titled Graduate Degrees outlined the required courses for three graduate degrees, Grad Program 1, Grad Program 2, and Grad Program 3, for students entering in the spring 1976 onward. Grad Program 1 was a 3.5-year program for students with non-architectural backgrounds that included a design studio and four additional courses each semester until the last semester which was a concentrated thesis semester. Only one elective seminar was allowed.

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<sup>159</sup> SCI-Arc Catalog, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1973).

<sup>160</sup> 1974 SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1974).

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> 1976 School Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1976).

Grad Program 2 was a two-year graduate program for students with a BA in architecture and included only design studios and a year long thesis.<sup>163</sup> Grad Program 3 was a one- or two-year program that was individualized with specialization only through the development of a thesis.<sup>164</sup> A note in the catalog regarding both two-year and one-year graduate programs stated “other requirements may be individually assigned,” suggesting that a student’s design interest could necessitate further training in specific subject matter.<sup>165</sup> A tighter course sequence within the two-year and 3.5-year graduate programs came into focus, providing a structure that SCI-Arc could develop toward degrees that satisfied NAAB accreditation.

Thom Mayne coordinated the curriculum for the graduate students but he did not have a graduate degree. Feeling pressure from NAAB desiring coordinators of graduate programs to have a graduate degree, Mayne took a one-year sabbatical and enrolled in the one-year M.Arch program at Harvard University, graduating in 1978.<sup>166</sup> When Mayne was on sabbatical Daniel Herren, a Swiss architect teaching at SCI-Arc, took on the role of director and was assisted by Michael Rotondi. By 1978 Herren had returned to Switzerland and Rotondi was asked to head the graduate program.<sup>167</sup>

As SCI-Arc developed, the decision to receive accreditation signaled a direction for how the school aimed to progress. Founded with clear ties to developing students for professional practice the move toward accreditation is not surprising. To become a licensed architect in the United States it is almost always the case that an architect must receive a professional education

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<sup>163</sup> Graduate Degrees, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1976).

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Thom Mayne, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, July 25, 2012.

<sup>167</sup> Ray Kappe, “SCI-Arc History” (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

from a school accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board. SCI-Arc began the accreditation process in 1975.

As stated on the NAAB website, “NAAB is the sole agency authorized to accredit US professional degree programs in architecture.”<sup>168</sup> NAAB was founded in 1940 through a joint venture between the ACSA, the AIA, and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) to help school’s develop individualized curriculums that sought to meet the specific needs of the schools.<sup>169</sup> The founding mission of NAAB was stated in 1940.

The . . . societies creating this accrediting board, here record their intent not to create conditions, nor to have conditions created, that will tend toward standardization of educational philosophies or practices, but rather to create and maintain conditions that will encourage the development of practices suited to the conditions which are special to the individual school. The accrediting board must be guided by this intent.<sup>170</sup>

In the language of this mission statement, NAAB comes across as an advisor for curriculum development rather than an overbearing mandate for what architectural education required. Today this process has become formalized with strict guidelines for subjects constituting a professional degree. In 2004, NAAB outlined “Thirteen Conditions of Accreditation,” which included wide ranging topics. The topics included program response to the NAAB perspectives; studio culture; human, physical, information and financial resources; administrative and curriculum structures; and student performance criteria.<sup>171</sup>

Ray Kappe opened a conversation on the subject of accreditation at SCI-Arc in the fall of 1975 to discuss this process with students and faculty. Kappe stated that what NAAB had given

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<sup>168</sup> NAAB, “About NAAB,” accessed March 1, 2013, <http://www.naab.org/about/>.

<sup>169</sup> NAAB, “NAAB History,” accessed March 1, 2013, [http://www.naab.org/about/naab\\_history.aspx](http://www.naab.org/about/naab_history.aspx).

<sup>170</sup> NAAB, “NAAB Mission,” accessed March 1, 2013, <http://www.naab.org/about/naabmission.aspx>.

<sup>171</sup> The National Architecture Accrediting Board, “NAAB Conditions for Accreditation: For Professional Degree Programs in Architecture,” 2004 Edition.

the school to consider was an “ultimate education development and plan, which states where you are, where you intend to go and how, and do you have the resources to do it.”<sup>172</sup> In notes from Kappe’s archive he listed several reasons under a heading “Why Accreditation.” From Kappe’s perspective accreditation would give the students a head start on completing time toward licensure, half of the exams could be eliminated, and federal loans and more scholarships would become available.<sup>173</sup> Most students and faculty felt that becoming accredited was the proper direction for the school to take. SCI-Arc faculty member, Terry Glassman, offered his opinion that the school needed to evaluate how well accreditation fit with the ambitions of SCI-Arc.

[Glassman queried if] the ultimate goal is to get accredited. . . . it seems to me that there are some other issues that may preclude the notion of our fitting in to some of the parameters of being accredited that may override the importance of getting accredited at this point. I think we should look at it after we have more or less defined what we want to be, what our program should be. How are we going to satisfy our needs and goals as a group?<sup>174</sup>

The issues that Glassman raised are important relative to some of the initial tenets of the school. The inception of SCI-Arc, only three years prior to this meeting was to get out from underneath bureaucratic structures that seemed to get in the way of experimental and creative architectural practices. He also proposed that the institution needed to understand what its motives were that made accreditation the right decision. When asked about complying with NAAB standards, Kappe revealed the mythos surrounding SCI-Arc as a school of rebellion to be

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<sup>172</sup> Stephen Albert, Roland Coate, Jerry Compton, Shelly Kappe, Bill Simonian, Glen Small and Arnie Stalk. September 07, 1975. "Accreditation Meeting Roland Coate Stephen Albert." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/accreditation-meeting-roland-coate-stephen-albert/>.

<sup>173</sup> Ray Kappe, Student Meeting (Accreditation), from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, c. 1975).

<sup>174</sup> Stephen Albert, Roland Coate, Jerry Compton, Shelly Kappe, Bill Simonian, Glen Small and Arnie Stalk. September 07, 1975. "Accreditation Meeting Roland Coate Stephen Albert." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/accreditation-meeting-roland-coate-stephen-albert/>.

a misnomer. In a correspondence he elaborated on this point. "I had no intention for [SCI-Arc] to be rebellious. I just wanted SCI-Arc to become the best school it could be."<sup>175</sup> This distinction of Kappe's, that SCI-Arc was not rebellious, was also supported by his comment that SCI-Arc did not take a position relative to architectural movements. He claimed that, "basically we were a school producing modern architecture. I don't like the term Modernism. In fact, I am not fond of any ism."<sup>176</sup> In preparation for the NAAB visit, Jerry Compton recommended that one student from each of the eight studios should be selected to demonstrate the collective studio efforts. Some students disagreed with the limited representation of student work for the accreditation board that needed to get a better sense of the political structures at the school.<sup>177</sup> After the interim report Kappe felt enthused that NAAB was "allowing schools of architecture to develop their individual approaches to architectural education."<sup>178</sup> One concern Kappe had regarding SCI-Arc's accreditation process was how it would work for the graduate students due to their curriculum being more or less intertwined with the undergraduate students in and around this time [Figure 1.24].<sup>179</sup> In November 1975 NAAB visited SCI-Arc.<sup>180</sup> Kappe believed NAAB gave

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<sup>175</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Stephen Albert, Roland Coate, Jerry Compton, Shelly Kappe, Bill Simonian, Glen Small and Arnie Stalk. September 07, 1975. "Accreditation Meeting Roland Coate Stephen Albert." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/accreditation-meeting-roland-coate-stephen-albert/>.

<sup>178</sup> Ray Kappe, Untitled Letter to NAAB, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, c. 1975).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Stephen Albert, Roland Coate, Jerry Compton, Shelly Kappe, Bill Simonian, Glen Small and Arnie Stalk. September 07, 1975. "Accreditation Meeting Roland Coate Stephen Albert." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/accreditation-meeting-roland-coate-stephen-albert/>.

the school a favorable review because they were “impressed by the work that was coming out of the studios. [Saying that] it was primarily mainstream.”<sup>181</sup>

The dates regarding SCI-Arc’s accreditation vary.<sup>182</sup> This seems to be due to the fact that a school must graduate a class having gone through the entire program sequence prior to accreditation. Even though NAAB reviewed SCI-Arc in 1975 it could not grant accreditation until the 1977-1978 academic year.<sup>183</sup> ACSA’s website addressed this topic: “A new school of architecture cannot have a program accredited by NAAB until its first professional class has graduated. If the program is then accredited, most state registration boards will consider the accreditation as retroactive for two years so that the first class can benefit from accreditation.”<sup>184</sup> However, in a school like SCI-Arc that began with all ages of students, that would mean that students from the first three years of the school’s operation would not receive an accredited degree. Ironically, this served as an advantage for SCI-Arc in the accreditation process because from its origins its students spanned all years of the program. Kappe remarked that this helped to expedite the accreditation process because they “had all years working right away.”<sup>185</sup> By 1976 there were 188 students, 22 of which were international students and 27 of which were female students.<sup>186</sup> The school that began without assignments, where grades were not given, and was

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<sup>181</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>182</sup> Many documents pertaining to SCI-Arc’s history, including what is stated on the SCI-Arc website, claims the school was accredited in 1976, though NAAB’s website states SCI-Arc was accredited in the 1977-19789 academic year.

<sup>183</sup> NAAB, “Accredited Program Detail: Southern California Institute of Architecture,” accessed December 17, 2015, [http://www.naab.org/r/schools/view.aspx?record\\_id=20530](http://www.naab.org/r/schools/view.aspx?record_id=20530).

<sup>184</sup> ACSA, “Architecture Programs,” accessed October 12, 2015, <http://www.acsa-arch.org/resources/student-resources/overview/architecture-programs>.

<sup>185</sup> Ray Kappe, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, February 24, 2015.

<sup>186</sup> Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. *Architecture Schools In North America* (Princeton, NJ: ACSA, 1976): 112-113.

established for the self-directed and curious student to engage their ideas with guidance from instructors received accreditation by the NAAB for a professional Bachelor of Architecture degree only five years after its founding.<sup>187</sup>

After receiving accreditation over the summer in 1977 SCI-Arc also purchased its first piece of property, a 120-acre plot of land in Topanga Canyon [Figure 1.25]. Glassman stated that for the school to purchase the Topanga property he and four of the founding faculty co-signed the loan to subsidize SCI-arc's purchase.<sup>188</sup> The reason for buying the land was twofold, it offered a means for SCI-Arc to grow equity, but also provided a location to test experimental architectural projects. In September 1977, Kappe described the pending purchase of this property in a school news letter.

Five years ago one of our goals was to have a second campus—one that would be in a natural setting in contrast to our industrial plant. We hoped to generate exploratory structures, test ideas, and develop a self-sufficient community. . . Several of our classes will generate projects and/or studies related to our new acquisition. As soon as possible, previously constructed light weight demountable structures will be moved to the land to form a base for future study.”<sup>189</sup>

The noble intentions for this site that overlooked the ocean never took off. There is evidence of some work that occurred in several design studios, one of which proposed an art research college, but no real development ever occurred and the site was eventually sold to combat financial difficulties in the late 1990s.

In an article from the newsletter's student editors, Ellen Christophe and Arnold Stalk, “Student Perspective on SCI-ARC '77,” commented on SCI-Arc's progress with a different tone. The students were encouraged by accreditation but they recognized a declining voice from the

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<sup>187</sup> Ray Kappe, “SCI-Arc History” (unpublished manuscript, December 19, 2012), Microsoft Word File.

<sup>188</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, February 23, 2016.

<sup>189</sup> Ray Kappe, in SCI-Arc Energies II, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1977).



students regarding institutional decision making processes, which was an issue they felt was essential to the school's formation. Rather than remaining as disordered individuals they felt it was important for the students to unify with a Student Lobby, that could speak on behalf of the students when administrative decisions were being made. Their sentiment was "an unorganized student body greatly hampers any attempt to be creative and, in fact, is the catalyst for more conservatism."<sup>190</sup> By 1977 a growing maturity became evident, not only from the administration and its faculty, but from the students as well, who, through a five-year period of testing organizational structures, started to settle into an identifiable curriculum to educate future architects that fostered diversity while meeting the demands of progress.

### **Michael Rotondi's Final Project and the Origins of Morphosis (1973)**

One of the early successes at SCI-Arc was a final project produced by a fifth year student, Michael Rotondi, that received a 1974 Progressive Architecture (PA) Award Citation [Figures 1.26-1.28]. Rotondi's project, The Sequoyah Educational-Research Center, was proposed for a site in the Santa Monica Mountains in Pasadena, California in spring 1973. The project was a proposal for a school that could adapt and change relative to its environmental conditions and programmatic needs. Without a formal language driving the project, it was a highly technical and responsive building proposal. Rotondi's motive in choosing a school as his program for his final project at SCI-Arc was apropos given the context of being a student in the fledgling institute. The instructor's he worked with at the time of developing his project were Thom Mayne and James Stafford. Mayne and Stafford had only just begun their collaboration under the name

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

Morphosis that year. Reflecting on the early years at SCI-Arc, Mayne suggested that the faculty were essentially “advanced students” who were asking as many questions as those who were taking their classes.<sup>191</sup> Mayne went on to describe the environment as one of “huge energy. You couldn’t really separate the work. Is it student work, is it faculty work?”<sup>192</sup> Within this kind of relationship between teachers and students it is understandable how the project team for the award published in *Progressive Architecture* was called the Morphosis Group, which included Stafford, Mayne, Rotondi, and Michael Brickler, who was a SCI-Arc student.

In Rotondi’s 2005 book *Roto Architecture: Stillpoints* he reflected on his relationship to this early project as a response to a time at SCI-Arc where everyone was actively concerned with the formation of an academic institution. In an interview with Rotondi in 2013 he described the atmosphere at SCI-Arc in the 1970s as a place where “anybody that came to terms with how to take responsibility for their lives actually started to do something unique. . . . If you didn’t take responsibility for your life, you were in and out, in and out, in and out, and you never got anything done.”<sup>193</sup> Rotondi took responsibility by producing a physical interpretation of the institutional questions taking place at SCI-Arc and created his idealization for an educational environment. “It was SCI-Arc, but I never called it ‘SCI-Arc’ because I didn’t want to discuss it as SCI-Arc . . . everybody would be up in arms.”<sup>194</sup> Rotondi internalized the aspirations for education that found expression through design. He created a project related to his context of being at SCI-Arc, but more constructively produced a metaphor illustrating pedagogy as architecture.

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<sup>191</sup> Thom Mayne, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, July 25, 2012.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

For the project's design, Rotondi recognized three recurring points of interest: (1) a relationship between freedom and structure; (2) natures of change; and (3) interdependent and interconnected part-to-whole relationships across scale.<sup>195</sup> The tenor of these points projected dynamic qualities that bear specifically to a time, a duration, and a need. The flexibility of his resolution to accommodate difference was ascetic in appearance, but the aesthetic interrelationships between building components fused expected, anticipated, and unplanned use. Though the drawings show louvers, the potency of the idea isn't the clarity of a resolved building but its performance as a diagram to conceptualize architecture with foresight. Programmatically, school or not, the didactic nature of the drawings exemplified architecture's capacity to evolve through reciprocal participation between form and its context.

Formally, the envelope was a modernist box highlighted by strip windows and skylights. These features did not signify the critical characteristics Rotondi identified, instead they become embedded into the technical details for how it would operate and perform. Suitability through performance overshadowed the virtuosity of composition. One of the primary technical components providing the flexibility for dynamic space planning occurred in the multi-purpose area connected to a fixed core. Providing the dynamic link between these two programs was a "flexible spine . . . [that] had moveable floor and wall panels. A gantry moved along the spine on a track . . . to serve the major public areas."<sup>196</sup> From the drawings published in *Progressive Architecture*, how the building looked did not appear to be a driving factor. Instead, the drawings communicated efforts placed on the clarity of an intelligent system able to accommodate

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<sup>195</sup> Michael Rotondi, *Roto Works: Still Points*, (New York: Rizzoli, 2006), 14.

<sup>196</sup> Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi, *Morphosis: Buildings and Projects* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 26.

multiple building conditions. Being a responsive system the building proposal predicated assessment through time. To do this, the drawings needed to show the project's iterative stages to demonstrate variability. These kinds of drawings are not presented in *Progressive Architecture*, though they exist in *Morphosis: Buildings and Projects*, published in 1989.

In Rotondi's presentation of this project at SCI-Arc he only used slides. He remarked that he was the first to do this at SCI-Arc, and presented without any drawings.<sup>197</sup> The importance of using slides was not because he was the first to do it, but because of the temporal nature of the slides. They reinforced the conceptual underpinning of the project. The ideas unfolded through time. As the audience watched, Rotondi clicked from frame to frame creating a rhythm for the project's presentation while revealing its narrative. Like being at a movie theater, the audience followed the direction of the story through interdependent chronologies between the viewer of the work and the work itself. The audience could not stay on one drawing, but had to relate to a script, relying on their imaginative projections interpreting gaps with vestigial images as the screen jumped to the next frame.

The 21st PA Awards evaluated 863 submissions (a record number at that time) under the common theme "responsible architecture."<sup>198</sup> The PA Award jury split its decisions regarding the project's merits with most comments focusing on the pragmatics of the project. Denise Scott Brown commented "why couldn't you do that in an old barn? Why do you need all of the equipment to do it?" A reply from Barton Meyers' situating it as a sophisticated barn did not change Scott Brown's mind, who countered by stating, "it's a shame to spend all that money

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<sup>197</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

<sup>198</sup> "The 21st Awards Program," *Progressive Architecture* (January 1974): 53.

making a new old barn, why do you need all that sophistication.”<sup>199</sup> The comments concluded from Paul Kennon who praised it for “mocking up different spaces, different activity environments, and that is really important in education.”<sup>200</sup> After the award was announced Rotondi, who was in his early 20s at the time, described his excitement.

I was saying, “Oh, God, we’ve got to have a firm!” I was hanging out with Thom [Mayne] and Jim Stafford at the time. I said, “God, we need a name. What should we call us? Stafford, Mayne & Rotondi?” And they went, “No, man! That sounds like SOM.” They said, “Oh, we’ve got a name.” I said, “What’s the name?” and they said “Morphosis.” . . . They called it The Morphosis Group . . . for that [*Progressive Architecture*] publication in 1974. . . . We weren’t a group. We just hung out together and they were the guys I spoke to all of the time when I was working on my project.<sup>201</sup>

The PA Citation in 1974 forged a bond between Mayne and Rotondi who formalized their partnership that year under the name Morphosis and would go on to win numerous PA and AIA Awards together until the firm broke apart in 1992. Mayne would keep the firm Morphosis and Rotondi formed ROTO Architects.

### **Glen Small and Ahde Lahti’s Urban Odyssey (1974)**

An extension of SCI-Arc’s interest in architecture exploring the social dynamics of urbanism was an experimental freshman studio project from 1974, *Urban Odyssey*, taught by Ahde Lahti and Glenn Small. The first year design studio received coverage from the *Los Angeles Times* and multiple local television stations in Los Angeles [Figures 1.29-1.34]. In *Urban Odyssey* SCI-Arc students designed and built tent structures and transported them by bicycle throughout city, using them for urban camping. Dan McMasters of the *Los Angeles Times* described the shelters

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>201</sup> Michael Rotondi, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 25, 2013.

produced by the students as a “social organism of nylon fabric and fiberglass ferrules.”<sup>202</sup> The tents used bright fabrics and could aggregate in a network. One requirement was that they had to have two doors so that they could connect to their neighbors. The ambitions of the studio were to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and to discover new ways to engage the city.

Challenging young designers’ preconceptions about architecture early fostered abilities at critiquing known typologies and expectations of use. Most young students come to the first day of studio with an image in their head as to what architecture is, which tends to be a caricature of their own home as a child mixed with a sports car or some appliance. Early exercises tend to redirect reductive tendencies by exposing alternatives that promote breadth in the students’ responses. The Urban Odyssey’s manageable parameters gave students an opportunity to reimagine what architecture could be. After the students embarked on the odyssey, they set up camp at Equitable Plaza on Wilshire Blvd where the anchor of KCAL-TV’s, *The Morning Show*, interviewed SCI-Arc faculty member, Ahde Lahti about the project.

[Interviewer] What do you hope to accomplish [with] your first year architectural students? Do you hope to make them more sensitive to their environments, or what is your hope?

[Ahde Lahti] that was the main idea, because when the student first comes in all he wants to do is become an architect, he wants to build houses and we've been trying to get them to realize what they are doing to the landscape, what they are doing to their own environments, and what they are doing to their own enclosures. . . . We didn't want them to build a “house,” right from the beginning. So, this was just a way to experience and not commit yourself to designing, let’s say, real houses, right away.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Dan McMasters, “The Great Bike Odyssey,” *Los Angeles Times* (July 21, 1974).

<sup>203</sup> Dick Garton, Ahde Lahti, Bambi Moise, Daniel Moran, Shiela Pinsky and Glen Small. April 04, 1974. “Urban Odyssey On Local TV Part One.” In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. Accessed February 27, 2013, <http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/sci-arc-urban-odyssey-one-of-two/>.

Unconventional methods in the Urban Odyssey explored ways develop complex ideas about architecture from a limited material palette, minimal programmatic requirements of a basic shelter, and the social activity of bicycling across a city that does not see many bicycles. The innovative approach to the studio demonstrated 1:1 building with a sociopolitical ambition to reflect on consumption.

Freshman student Bambi Moise recalled on The Morning Show that classmates from other studios helped complete the projects as the deadline for the excursion neared.<sup>204</sup> Students would also visit classmates and camp with them at their sites that included Equitable Plaza and the back lot of KABC-TV's, A.M. Los Angeles. A.M. Los Angeles interviewed Glenn Small and several students on April 4, 1974. Other coverage of the Urban Odyssey included Glenn Small's interview by Dick Garton on KTLA-TV's, Evening News. Small explained to Garton, "We are trying to get the students involved in exploring the city in a new way. . . exploring the buildings as they ride by and then setting up [their tents] in a very urban area and visiting all of the things around that area."<sup>205</sup> Something that architectural education can do is facilitate new ways to see the world that we occupy every day. That can happen by dramatic awareness to the phenomena of form, light, and shadow; it can be intellectual in the way that architecture uses reference, metaphor, or analytical frameworks to develop practice, it can also be a social activity that negotiates relationships to contexts. Using architecture as an education to see and re-see with heightened sensitivity compliments formal production with a civic aptitude to instigate the presence of culture.

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

One of the greatest obstacles the students faced was acquiring the necessary permits or agreements from city officials to use an urban environment in this way. Initially the class tried to sleep in the city parks, but their request was turned down by city hall and they instead took up residence in malls and public plazas.<sup>206</sup> The students slept in their tents for one week. One student's journal entry from the experience was quoted by McMasters in the *Los Angeles Times*.

This idea of experiencing this concrete, electronic jungle with a pro-life attitude is revolutionary. . . . In the night these large rock buildings turn to beautiful mountains that help us feel our smallness. Downstairs in the subterranean garages the vast number of columns turn into a forest of pines, and the sterile bathroom with its cold water faucet turns into an ice cold stream, and I dry myself with the electric fire that massages me with hot air. I go to sleep by the light of the electric moon reflecting on my shelter, cave. And I wake to the humming of an oversized vacuum cleaner."<sup>207</sup>

The student's surreal account of his experience sleeping in the mall reads like a parody of what it must be like to encounter William Blake's cleansed doors of perception; that the ways to relate to experience are infinite.<sup>208</sup> Though, what he exposed was how re-appropriating an environment elicits a renewed observation for how typically banal features can intersect with understanding.

The description of the mall shared features with an article written three years later by Rem Koolhaas in 1977 that also explored the novelty of urban environments through new relationships to experience products of cultural progress. Koolhaas' analysis described a contemporaneous condition of artificiality merging with lived experience. In "Life in the Metropolis' or The Culture of Congestion" he observed "emancipation through machinery" and

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<sup>206</sup> Dan McMasters, "The Great Bike Odyssey," *Los Angeles Times* (July 21, 1974).

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> William Blake, "plate 14," *The Marriage of Heaven Hell* (New York: Dover Publications, 1994), 36. Blake's quote reads: "If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern."



the “synthetic intimacy” of Coney island.<sup>209</sup> The polemic of this new modality of urban life was re-shaping a cultural value system with a new natural. Like the student’s experience described in Los Angeles, as well as Koolhaas’ descriptions of Coney Island, the quotidian normalcy of the day-to-day meets a constructed artifice creating a new real from the unnatural, re-contextualizing experience like a fun house mirror. In the Urban Odyssey, the student bent his perception of his environment, reinventing his relationship to it through new use. In Koolhaas’ descriptions of Coney Island, the context bends to reinvent its relationship to a person’s use [Figure 135].

Koolhaas and the Urban Odyssey diverge in the qualitative dimension of purposeful strangeness. Coney Island becomes a form of entertainment to be used as created, whereas the remarks from camping inside a shopping mall in Los Angeles produced their strangeness through inversions of use. Both cases, however, redirect attention to the relationships fostered in a culture of ersatz and “aesthetic populism.”<sup>210</sup> The Urban Odyssey and Koolhaas differ in another way and can be linked to Jameson’s 1984 terminology of parody and pastiche. The SCI-Arc student’s account of sleeping inside the mall parodies typical use with clear “ulterior motives.”<sup>211</sup> Alternatively, Coney Island provides the counterpoint of pastiche and wears “the imitation of a peculiar mask.”<sup>212</sup> Indirectly, the utopian tongue-in-cheek use of the city through the Urban Odyssey foreshadows Koolhaas’ dystopian assessment of society enmeshed with the urban artifice, establishing a series of moments linked to appropriating man-made objects for physical and intellectual pleasure, but with different results. Putting these two events in dialogue signifies

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<sup>209</sup> Rem Koolhaas, “‘Life in the Metropolis’ or ‘The Culture of Congestion,’” *Architectural Design* vol. 47, no. 5 (August 1977): 319-325.

<sup>210</sup> Fredric Jameson, “Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” *New Left Review* No. 146 (July 1984), 54.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

a transitional moment between 1974 and 1977 relative to the cultural consumption of an urban context. The synthesis of time between these events presents an arrival of Postmodernism in architecture through experience with urban artifacts.

In 1972 Charles Jencks identified the detonation of Pruitt Igoe as the decisive moment ushering in Postmodernism through the literal and figurative collapse of Modernism's social agenda. This alternative reading counters Jencks' assertion of a singular moment defining cultural transformation and instead claims that a duration between events signals an emerging Postmodernism through an evolving appropriation and aestheticization of capital driven urbanism. Using parody and pastiche to identify a revised timeline presents a Postmodern transformation in architecture as a relationship between events separated by three years and three thousand miles. Inadvertently, Small and Lahti's students become harbingers of a fading age by grafting onto a withered social utopianism that can no longer rely on simply seeing it anew, but needing to make something from it altogether different.

### **Nanci Michali's Urban Forms for Twilight of the Idols (c. 1976)**

In the mid 1970s Eric Owen Moss began teaching a course that he would continue teaching at SCI-Arc for over a decade called Twilight of the Idols. Moss described the course in SCI-Arc's schedule of seminars.

Evaluate a number of developments in the recent history of planning, urban design, and architecture about which there exist a variety of opinions. Rather than focusing on those events or personalities whose historic contributions are matter-of-factly

acknowledged, the seminar will attempt to evaluate a number of contributions whose significance has not yet been definitively assessed.<sup>213</sup>

This description coincides with a statement from Moss regarding some of his pedagogical motivations while he taught at SCI-Arc. He described wanting to create a “critical intellectual environment. . . . [stating that] it’s essential to stretch the range of content, to stretch the range of possibilities, to stretch the range of theoretical possibilities . . . in an interrogative way, in an optimistic way.”<sup>214</sup> In this course, Moss looked for actionable material latent in an urban context that offered an alternative interpretation relative to dominant trends. Using nonstandard sources to invigorate architecture with indifference to an established canon revealed an approach to architecture that joined intellectual divergence fueled by deceiving expectations.

Moss’ course shared its name with Nietzsche’s book also titled *Twilight of the Idols*, (original in German published in 1889). In Nietzsche’s short book he refuted Socratic rationalism and the immorality of the senses. In Part 1, “Reason in Philosophy,” Nietzsche critiqued Platonic being and becoming when he wrote, “What is, does not *become*; what becomes, *is* not. . . . Now they all believe, even to the point of despair, in that which is. But since they cannot get hold of it, they look for reasons why it is being withheld.”<sup>215</sup> This statement from Nietzsche paralleled the course by considering being and becoming in cities and the ways architecture, design, and urbanism constructed its own image. The double meaning of the seminar title opened up another reading relative to the heroes of Modernism’s waning efficacy for disciplinary progress. In attempts to see new opportunities in dormant territories of architecture the course emancipated

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<sup>213</sup> Eric Owen Moss, “Twilight of the Idols,” Schedule of Seminars (unpublished document, January 1976).

<sup>214</sup> Eric Owen Moss, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, April 7, 2015.

<sup>215</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* (New York: Penguin Group, 2003), 48.

the banal by challenging the relevance of inspired sources. Advancing critical thinking through creative response, innovation happened outside of standard exemplars by opening discourse in counterintuitive directions. In its effort to be new, *Twilight of the Idols* prickled with cynicism.

Listed as a theory course, the premise offered a postmodern idea related to reference. However, the class did not suggest using classicism or a re-contextualized collage of architectural forms, but relied on formal readings, or misreadings, of cities and the language of cities to create forms that speak with visual intelligibility. Proposing new meanings revealed intentions to utilize untested sources for inspiration. Nancy Michali's work from the seminar, titled *Urban Form*, analyzed San Francisco building code with renewed aesthetic energy. Her project was published in *LA Architect* in July 1978 [Figure 1.36]. In her title block, the seminar was named *Twilight of the Idles*. Whether the error was intentional or a Freudian slip, in either case, it helped make her project's point. The slip of the spelling signified opportunities for re-reading idle city policies. In her work she scrutinized San Francisco's *Policies for Major New Development* and produced examples that took the document's language and literalized it.<sup>216</sup> Her work used the following four policy statements for inspiration: (1) "large surfaces should be articulated and textured to reduce their size and to reflect the pattern of the older buildings;" (2) "reduce massiveness . . . soften building bulk;" (3) "unusual shapes (should be) reserved for structures of broad public significance;" and (4) ". . . visual access . . . to bay."<sup>217</sup> Adopting a form language with obvious associations to the building policies re-contextualized the document's meanings relative to an amplified stylization of the buildings. Adding to the

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<sup>216</sup> Nancy Michali, "SCI-Arc and Change - Urban Form," *LA Architect* (July 1978).

<sup>217</sup> Nancy Michali, "SCI-Arc and Change - Urban Form," *LA Architect* (July 1978).

playfulness of her project, Michali's drawings are not analytical plans and sections, but perspectival sketches with a child's whimsy.

Michali decided "rather than scaling down the new, larger buildings, scale up the small, old buildings."<sup>218</sup> The humorous response to her readings of the code produced awkward results that appeared inappropriate. In Michali's response to adding surface texture to reduce the appearance of scale an applied pattern of a quotidian house facade imprinted onto a large block building. She referred to it as a "billboard-type construction."<sup>219</sup> The repetitive pattern of diminutive houses flattened the building surface that looked like cut-out paper doll houses. The tongue in cheek response adhered to the city's recommendation, but willfully subverted its intentions with an adversarial fenestration. In a similar vein, the unusual shapes that she produced for "buildings of public significance" shared correspondences between building form and implicit function. The welfare building became a giant dollar sign, the fire station looked like a fire truck. While providing a liberating counterpoint to the city's recommendations, both examples read as another literalization by performing Venturi, Scott-Brown, and Izenour's arguments regarding the duck and the decorated shed. In *Learning From Las Vegas* buildings are differentiated in two ways; buildings that are symbols (ducks) and buildings that apply symbols (decorated shed) [Figure 1.37].<sup>220</sup> The strangeness of Michali's project was that by literalizing building policies she proposed both ducks and decorated sheds.

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972) 87-103.

Another text by Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, written in 1966, aids understanding Michali's third proposition. In Venturi's book he argued for complexity in form and function as a polemic against bland modernist simplification. Venturi recognized a lapse in the authority of rationalism and purity. He proposed instead that architecture should use contradictory interior/exterior relationships, programmatic complexity, and irrationality. Applying this kind of logic to Michali's third proposal, a sketch with a view to the bay, did not share the same qualities as the previous examples that literalized iconic shapes. This third proposal literalized the view with form. In this case, the view was made through two large, austere, rectilinear, and conjoined buildings by booleaning a giant cylinder from the center of one building, and a giant semi-cylinder, off center but on tangent with the other cut, which carved an opening into the second building. This became a formal solution to the problem rather than a shape solution because it maintained the tone of the other examples, but did not require the symbolic or applied reference to understand the concept. Instead, this proposal demonstrated the concept through the configuration of forms alone. The complexity from contradicting geometric primitives gave the moves greater strength than if a rectilinear boolean operation had been used instead, which would have removed the conflicting topologies and replaced them with coincident subtractions. This third strategy appeared most overt in its simplistic, yet highly articulate attitude toward formal composition that stretched possibilities through radical adherence.

## **Conclusion: Recognition at the Fringe**

SCI-Arc tested multiple methods of teaching and learning that encouraged freedom and autonomy of the individual designer—faculty member and student. Over time a structured curriculum became identifiable. At its origins SCI-Arc projected an outsider mentality compared to other models of architectural education, inspiring the belief that SCI-Arc was a school born out of rebellion to the mainstream, a fringe institution resistant to the status quo.

SCI-Arc and the Los Angeles architects who taught there demonstrated a do-it-yourself attitude reflected in the pedagogy. From its inception in 1972 SCI-Arc catalyzed architectural experimentation. The lingering image of SCI-Arc as a progressive outlier is not entirely accurate. Rather, the school sought to continue architecture's development toward advanced practices in architecture. While testing the borders of architectural education, SCI-Arc stayed aware of how its pedagogical strategies and evolving faculty matured and changed, oftentimes approaching the discipline with idiosyncratic and innovative perspectives. The philosophy at SCI-Arc provided a climate for diversity from within courses that evolved in a short period of time and became relatively common for an architecture curriculum. At its onset, the school's framework was not systematic or hierarchical, but was motivated by exchange and innovation. No prevailing ideology was mandated. Most decisions of the school were open to the collective academic community, usually with Kappe moderating and acting on them. Kappe's embrace of personal experimentation and the diverse personalities of the SCI-Arc faculty fed the creative experimentation of the students [Figure 1.38]. The ideology that emerged became one of disciplined looseness, rigor through self-initiative and self-motivation. This model of

architectural education offered ways to challenge conventions and create opportunities for discovery.

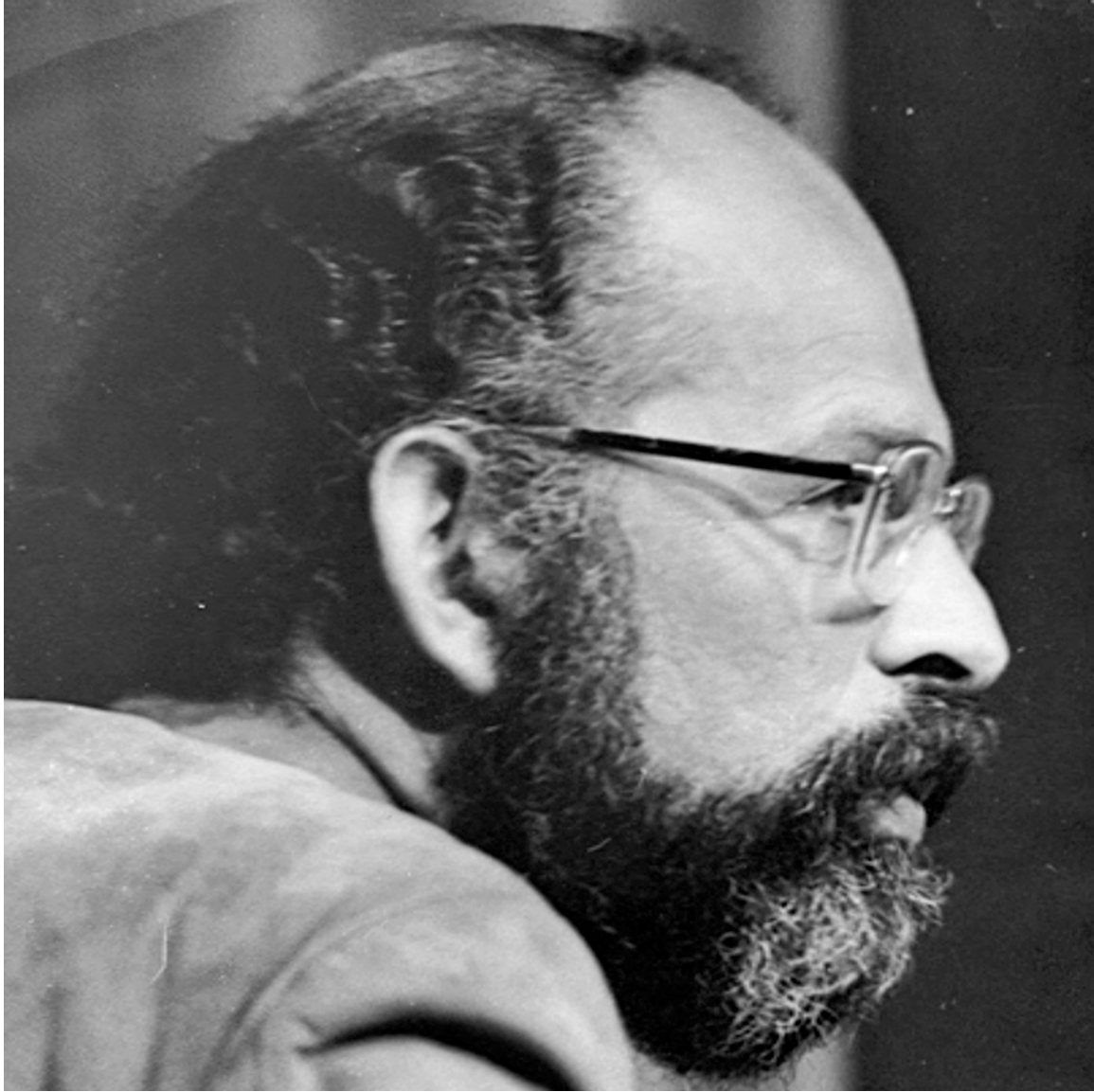
With pedagogical goals that embraced freedom through self-study, SCI-Arc approached educating future architects by instilling individualism through horizontal social structures. A pedagogy at a distance from large-scale university regulations capitalized on its agility to evaluate and make changes to its curriculum quickly. For the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art (LAICA) Journal in 1976, Dolores Yonker commented about SCI-Arc, “No doubt SCI ARC has not, perhaps never will, arrive at its ultimate definition. But that modest warehouse houses convincing evidence of a constructive, creative and humane approach to the education of the next generation of environmental shapers.”<sup>221</sup> In 1976 SCI-Arc received two significant distinctions from the architectural community. Ray Kappe received the Award for Excellence from the California State Council from the American Institute of Architects for the founding of SCI-Arc and the school’s students and faculty received an Honor Award for their transformation of the school from a derelict chemical manufacturing plant to a burgeoning architecture school [Figure 1.39-1.41].<sup>222</sup> Within five years of its founding, SCI-Arc was accredited by NAAB in 1977, establishing it as a school self-conscious of its need for credibility, while sustaining its distance from mainstream models of higher education.

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<sup>221</sup> Dolores Yonker, “SCI ARC: An Architectural Program in Progress,” *LAICA Journal*, No. 9, (January-February 1976)

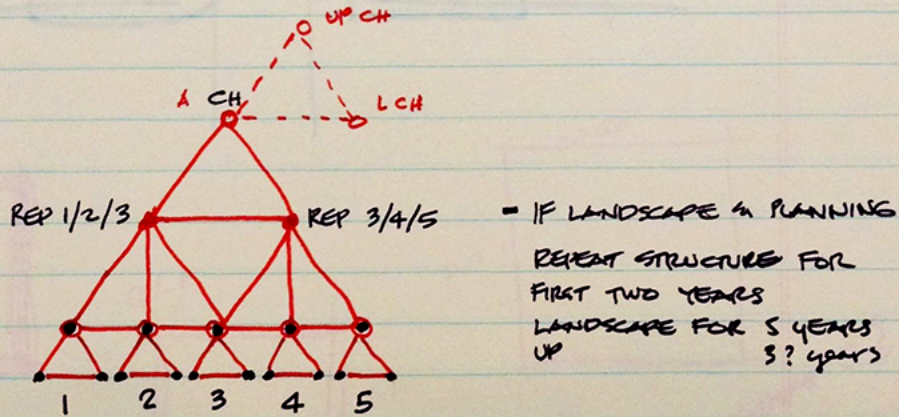
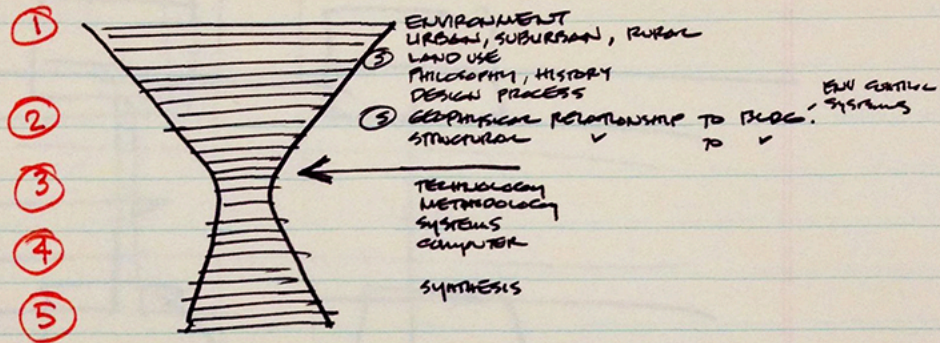
<sup>222</sup> SCI-Arc Catalog (unpublished document, 1976).





**Illustration 1.01** Ray Kappe c. 1970s.

TEACHING PROCESS

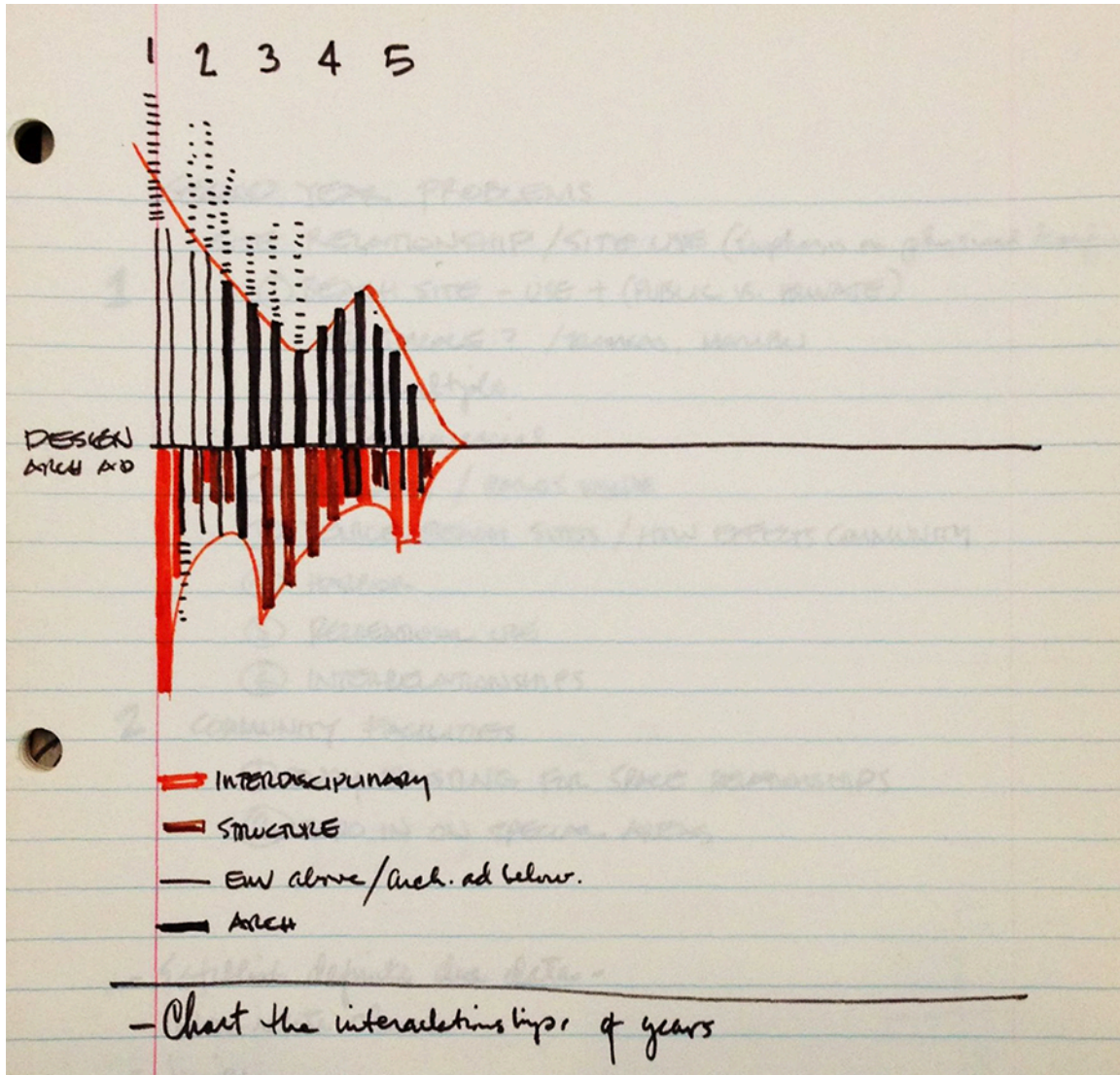


SPECIAL AREAS

- 100<sup>5</sup> ① HISTORY
- 200<sup>3</sup> ② CONSTRUCTION
- ? 100<sup>4</sup> ③ COMMUNICATIONS - \* graphics/photoq/art/music/
- 100<sup>2</sup> ④ STRUCTURE - \* ? 1/2/1/2
- 200<sup>3</sup> ⑤ ENV. SYSTEMS CONTROL - \*
- 400<sup>5</sup> ⑥ OFFICE PRACTICE & ETHICS
- 300<sup>4</sup> ⑦ COMPUTERS & SYSTEMS - \*

Illustration 1.02 Ray Kappe, "Teaching Process," Cal Poly notes, c. 1970 (image courtesy Getty Research Institute Archive).





**Illustration 1.03** Ray Kappe, “Chart the Interrelationships,” Cal Poly notes, c. 1970 (image courtesy of Getty Research Institute Archive).

Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman  
Trombley, William  
Los Angeles Times 1972 Current File, Apr. 26, 1972.  
Photograph reproduced by permission, Los Angeles Times (1972-1981)  
#2 31

## Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman

BY WILLIAM TROMBLEY  
Times Education Writer

Raymond Kappe, a prominent Los Angeles architect, has been removed as chairman of the architecture department of Cal Poly Pomona, apparently because his free-wheeling administration ran afoul of state college procedures.

College President Robert C. Kramer relieved Kappe of his duties as department chairman April 14, without giving reasons.

However, Dr. Kramer said in an interview he removed Kappe because the architect was not on campus every day, because he changed the architecture curriculum "without the appropriate approvals," because he switched class hours without permission and for other violations of "administrative policies and procedures" of Cal Poly Pomona and the state college system.

**Clash With Dean**  
Kramer said a personality clash between Kappe and William Dale, dean of the school of environmental design, in which architecture is one of three departments, also played a role in his decision.

According to President Kramer, Kappe spent only three days a week on the Pomona campus, devoting the rest of his time to his private architectural practice.

Kramer said a college policy requires every faculty member to be available to students at least one hour each day.

**Nights and Weekends**  
However, Kappe said he met all his classes and student appointments, often spent four days a week on campus and devoted many nights and weekends to his department chairman duties.

Many of the 11 architecture faculty members work a day or two each week in private practice, Kappe said, because he recruited professors with experience in the field, not a group of theorists.

He added, "If you meet your classes, carry your full teaching load, are available to your students for counseling, that's what you're supposed to do and we're doing it."

This arrangement was approved when he was hired 3½ years ago, Kappe said, and was only questioned after he had a falling out with Dean Dale.

**Had 'Too Much Trust'**  
"Unfortunately, I have nothing in writing," the ousted chairman said. "We have had too many verbal agreements, too much trust in each other."

Kappe said the changes in curriculum and class hours resulted in educational improvements.

"We have a monastic curriculum," he said, "we set up problems for the students and then switch them if they are not working out. This means you move hours and people around. It's the only way to have a viable program in architecture."

**Too Free-Swinging?**  
Kappe said Kramer "doesn't like our program being as free-swinging as it is" and that the "unconventional faculty . . . are a little bit threatening to the president."

But Kramer denied this. "I have never said anything about the ideas or

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## L.A. Architect Ousted From Post at Cal Poly

Continued from First Page  
the appearance" of architecture department faculty members, the president said. He also claimed to have supported Kappe and the department in past campus squabbles.

According to Kappe, "We were only guilty of doing too well." He said the program he started at Cal Poly Pomona would have been welcomed at a major university but was not acceptable in a state college.

**Admits Rigidity**  
Kramer conceded this might be so.

"We have more rigidities and inflexibility than some other institutions of higher learning," the president said.

He added, "These people in architecture believe that being in the profession of architecture is the most important thing in the world. I don't think they realize the obligation they have . . . as members of the college community. The department and the school have to function as cooperative parts of the whole, which is Cal Poly Pomona."

The president said he was investigating other charges against Kappe and would be prepared with a "bill of specifics" if the issue were contested in court or elsewhere.

**Union Plans Test**  
The United Professors of California, a union group which claims 130 to 140 members among the 525 Cal Poly Pomona professors, said there would be a court test.

"Due process is the central issue," said Theodore Humphrey, a assistant professor of English and chairman of the union's campus grievance committee.

"Kappe's removal as chairman constitutes a demotion," Humphrey said, and in such cases the state Education Code requires that specific charges be made.

But college officials contend that the removal was an administrative action which is not covered by the Education Code.

The ousted department chairman has gained support from architecture stu-



Raymond Kappe

dents and faculty members.

Students staged a brief strike April 17 but returned to classes next day.

Almost 300 students signed a petition supporting Kappe and his approach to running the department and urging Kramer to reconsider the removal.

The president has appointed a student-faculty fact-finding committee to investigate the case.

In the meantime, Kappe said he is continuing as department chairman, even though officially removed from the post, because "the faculty won't accept an acting chairman or anybody else."

**Rapidity of Growth**  
One part of the problem may be the rapid growth of the Cal Poly Pomona architecture program, from 40 or 50 students four years ago to about 350 today. It is the largest unit in the school of environmental design, which also includes landscape architecture and planning.

"We may have grown a little too fast," President Kramer said, "but there were so many who could not get into San Luis Obispo (the only other state college which teaches architecture) and so many junior college students who wanted to transfer in."

But a more important question may be whether an unconventional academic program, even a successful one, can survive among the many rules and regulations which govern the state college system.

Illustration 1.04 William Trombley, "Cal Poly Ousts Architectural Chairman," *Los Angeles Times*, April 26, 1972.



**Illustration 1.05** Ray Kappe at Cal Poly protest, Michael Rotondi in background, 1972 (image courtesy of Glen Small).





**Illustration 1.06** Ray Kappe and Glen Small at Cal Poly protest, 1972 (image courtesy of Glen Small).



**Illustration 1.07** Ray Kappe and students at Cal Poly protest, 1972 (image courtesy SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.08** Cal Poly protest in support of Ray Kappe, 1972 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



Senate  
California Legislature

ALFRED H. SONG  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
TWENTY-EIGHTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT  
CHAIRMAN  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

COMMITTEES  
BUSINESS AND  
HEALTH AND  
EDUCATION  
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
MILITARY  
NATIVE BORN  
NATIVE BORN  
NATIVE BORN  
NATIVE BORN  
NATIVE BORN

May 9, 1972

Dr. Robert Kramer, President  
California State Polytechnic College  
3801 Temple Avenue  
Pomona, California 91766

Dear Dr. Kramer:

I have been informed that you (1) have ordered the removal of Professor Raymond Kappe from the chair of the Department of Architecture, and (2) that you have failed and/or refused to disclose your reasons for this action.

I would respectfully submit, if the latter allegation is true, that basic due process has been denied Professor Kappe.

I would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

ALFRED H. SONG

AHS/jb

cc: Professor Raymond Kappe  
Professor Theodore Humphrey  
Dr. Robert Stull

Illustration 1.09 Letter from Senator Albert Song in support of Ray Kappe, May 9, 1972.



**Illustration 1.10** Rhombic Dodecahedron Structure, Cal Poly campus, 1972 (image courtesy Glen of Small).

## Ex-Cal Poly Pomona Architect Director Will Open New School

Ousted Chairman of Department to Start Beach Facility Oct. 2

BY WILLIAM TROMBLEY  
Times Education Writer

Raymond Kappe, removed as chairman of the architecture department at Cal Poly Pomona last spring, will open his own architecture school in Santa Monica next month.

The New School, also known as the Southern California Institute of Architecture, will start classes Oct. 2 with 50 to 75 students and a full-time faculty of eight, most of whom left Cal Poly Pomona to join Kappe in the new venture.

Kappe said most of the first group of students also will come from the Pomona campus.

"They were disturbed by what happened there and decided to make the switch," he said Wednesday.

### Enrollment Below Hopes

However, not as many students have switched as Kappe had hoped. Originally, more than 100 students said they would leave Cal Poly for the New School but only about half that number actually have paid first-semester tuition, the architect said.

Kappe started the architecture program at Cal Poly Pomona but was removed last April by college President Robert C. Kramer, who accused the architect of a variety of administrative errors.

However, a faculty-student fact-finding committee said Kappe was innocent of most of Kramer's charges.

The general view on campus was that Kappe was dismissed because of an acrimonious personality clash with William Dale, dean of the school of environmental design, in which the architecture department is located, and that Kramer sided with Dale instead of Kappe.

Kappe and many Cal Poly profes-



Raymond Kappe

sors and students protested that the chairman had been removed without cause.

This position won support last month in Los Angeles Superior Court, when Judge Robert A. Wenke ordered Kramer and the trustees of the California State University and Colleges either to reinstate Kappe as department chairman or to hold a hearing where the reasons for his demotion could be aired.

Kappe said he could have won his chairman's job back in a second court action but did not try because "I do not think one can operate if the administration doesn't support you . . . it's hard enough to make a program work if you have everything working for you."

Faculty members who have left Cal Poly Pomona to join Kappe at the New School include Ahde Lahti, Thom Meyne, Gary Neville, Glen Small and William Simonian.

Bernard Zimmerman will remain on the Pomona faculty but will also conduct an evening program at the New School, Kappe said.

Please Turn to Page 5, Col. 1

## Architect Will Open School in Santa Monica

Continued from First Page

The evening classes will be for architects who want to improve their skills while on the job and for people who wish to change to architectural careers.

The regular daytime program will stress studio work in such subjects as architecture, design and urban planning, as well as interdisciplinary seminars in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Most of these seminars will be taught by volunteers from other Los Angeles colleges and universities, Kappe said.

### Tuition to Be \$500

Classes will be conducted in an industrial-office building at 1800 Berkeley St., Santa Monica. Tuition will be \$500 per semester.

The school also has access to five acres of canyon land in the Santa Monica area where there will be an "opportunity to live in prefabricated stacking modules," according to school literature.

There are also tentative plans for a food cooperative and other community living arrangements.

The New School plans to offer a six-year master's degree program, standard in architectural education. A four-year degree will be available in some areas

and in the evening program, Kappe said.

The school must obtain state approval before any degrees can be awarded. Accreditation by the national organization of professional architectural educators will be sought after the school has graduated its first class, according to Kappe.

Meanwhile, officials at Cal Poly Pomona insisted that their plans have not been affected by the departure of Kappe and his colleagues.

"We'll be teaching architecture this year," said B. J. Shell, acting vice president for academic affairs. "We have every desire to build a good architectural school."

James Clark, former chairman of the architecture department at Pennsylvania State University, will replace Kappe as chairman and half a dozen new faculty members have been hired.

Three hundred and thirty students have enrolled in the department this fall, only 30 fewer than a year ago, according to Dean Dale of the school of environmental design.

"I don't think it (Kappe's departure) will have any effect," Dale said. "In some ways I think it will be a benefit to the program."

Illustration 1.11 William Trombley, "Ex-Cal Poly Pomona Architect Director Will Open New School," *Los Angeles Times*, September 14, 1972.

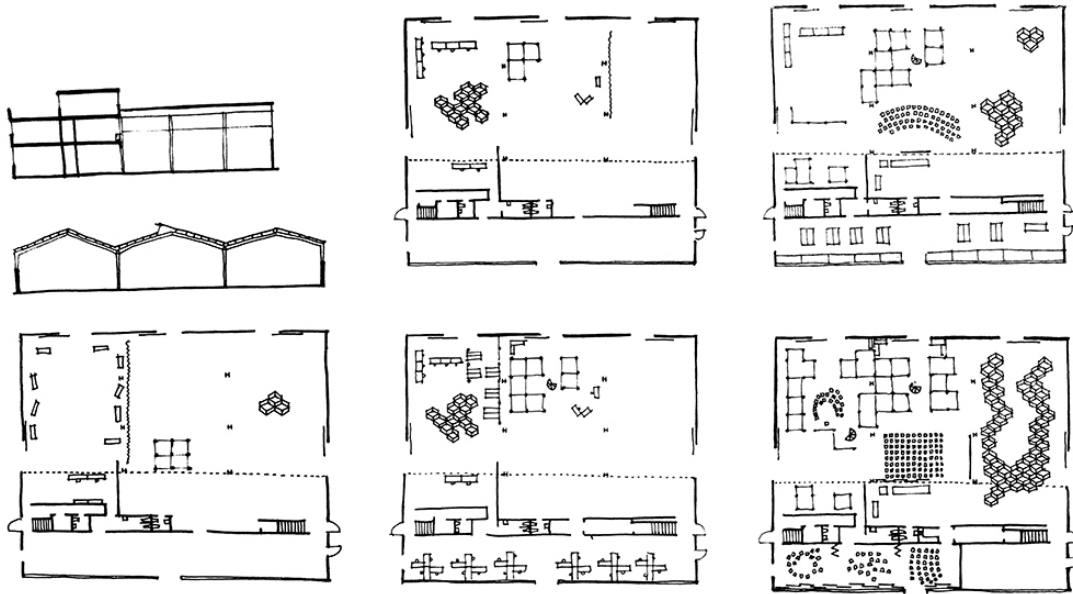




**Illustration 1.12** 1800 Berkeley Street, prior to SCI-Arc (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.13** 1800 Berkeley Street, renovations, c. 1972 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.14** 1800 Berkeley Street, space planning diagrams, c. 1972 (image courtesy of Getty Research Institute Archive).



## Arts in society Big shed syndrome Reyner Banham

The New School has got a big shed (murder of obvious congruence). Actually, it's not really a shed, but a former warehouse. Still, it gives them two huge bays of clear industrial floorpace, under that low-pitched glazed roof, with doors back and sides big enough to shoot an articulated truck in and out. And across the street front, there are two stories of very plain office space, under a flat roof (some kind of penthing lurks behind the parapet), with strip windows running right across, and a very slightly projecting door-frame round the front door. Paint all its flat stuccoed surfaces a dead chalky white and it might just be architecture of a low-profile sort—except that who'd ever notice one way or the other, down there at the junction of Berkeley and Nimitzka in a forgotten pocket of industrial grotto half-way between the Santa Monica beaches and the University of California Los Angeles campus?

They are noticing already. The New School is a breakaway group of architecture faculty and students from Cal State Poly at Pomona. Given the prestige that new schools enjoy both in architecture and in California, it is going to get visited—and envied, because, in the architecture school business, a Big Shed is a hot property at present.

The first clearly recorded outbreak of the present epidemic was around ten years ago, when Big Jim McCullough (the laird of Bennington) and a fact-finding bunch of Bennington leas, on a tour of New England art departments, decided that it was the storage spaces under the arts building at Brandeis they ought to emulate on their own campus, not what was visible above ground. And the most closely studied case has recently wracked the School of Environmental Studies at University College, London, where I teach.

What makes the idea of an architecture-free building so infectious is, of course, its freedom from architecture. It means that you don't find yourself competing with somebody else's aesthetic ego-trip, which may be aesthetically attractive, except for one thing—an architecture school's building (ditto for art and design) is a public statement about what's taught inside, and an architecture-free solution is a profession of no-faith in your own discipline and curriculum. It's a problem that is unique to these students: schools of dentistry don't have buildings that commit them to attitudes on floorboards, say.

But the architecture of an architecture

school will inevitably be read as so directly indicative of the intellectual content that Building at Yale was described as "a curriculum cast in stone." Every detail of its brick-backed concrete surface was scrutinized for educational implications. In a sense, this was realistic. The interior seemed to be arranged like some sort of theatre around the "crit pit," where the high ceremony of the "jury" or final review of a student's design, was conducted. But after Rudolph's departure, this spectacle of visiting prima donnas pouncing all over students' work in public became less important, and the case was reversed.

What had been a confession of faith now became a confounded nuisance. The great interior spaces filled up with do-it-yourself privacy screens and other structures. Finally the whole thing was put to the torch in a fit of student rage about something else. Frankly, my own sympathies are with the privacy-seekers, if not the arsonists. But it's what you might call a chastened sympathy, after what we have been through at UCL over Waites House, the proposed new building for Environmental Studies.

We lumbered Anthony Cox, the architect, with the advice of a representative/participative body, rejecting in the title of the Expanded Waites House Committee. The scheme on which building work has finally started it, after all the discussion, nearly a Big Shed—though this still does not dispose of one painful part of the problem: what the building looks like. On the site of the old Emsleigh Hotel (immediately behind Friends' House on Euston Square), we shall erect something that looks remarkably like a cut-price version of the old Emsleigh Hotel.

There are quite convincing reasons why this should be so, given our human and financial resources, the nature of the site, and the legal restrictions framing it. The result is neither a profession of faith nor a statement of no confidence: it is, rather, a resounding admission that anyone who hopes to build must acquiesce in the status quo. It neither says that we believe in Architecture with a capital A, nor that we repudiate aesthetic ego-trips. It says that we accept the situation where an architect is a kind of marriage-broker between a client's needs (however expressed) and a whole variety of external constraints.

For the constraints on our situation prevent any meaning about with double-height studios and mezzanines and other architectural fancies that are presently making life difficult in art and design studios around the globe. (Harvard is now stuck with a design school consisting entirely of mezzanine galleries, if you can believe that.) All we shall get will be standard single-height floorpace, which we can dispose of as we like, Big Shed style. To some extent, this is a solution of exhaustion. We couldn't even begin to agree to anything else. But there are also those among us (besides me) who actively believe that this is right.

For one thing, we saw what happened at Yale (and, to a more muted degree, at

Central Poly, London). For the odd thing, we saw what happened to us in applying about what sort of building we should have. The argument may have done me for environmental education than the building ever will. A Big Shed interior, with almost nothing fixed, ensures that the argument must continue. We have wild buildings in which the position of no interior wall (well, almost none) can be blamed as an outside force known as the architect. We have insisted that the interior be at our disposal. There have certainly been racism whenever a plan has been posted up to show any interior partitions, at all, even when they are annotated "for counting purposes only." We have created for ourselves a situation where the interior must always be in a state of existential flux. Thus a partition is not moved from time to time, then the school community to grow up with its collective responsibility to grow up with change. But whenever a partition is moved, then it must mean that a minority interest is being strong-armed by bigger battalions within the school: the weaker don't go to the wall. The wall moves on them . . .

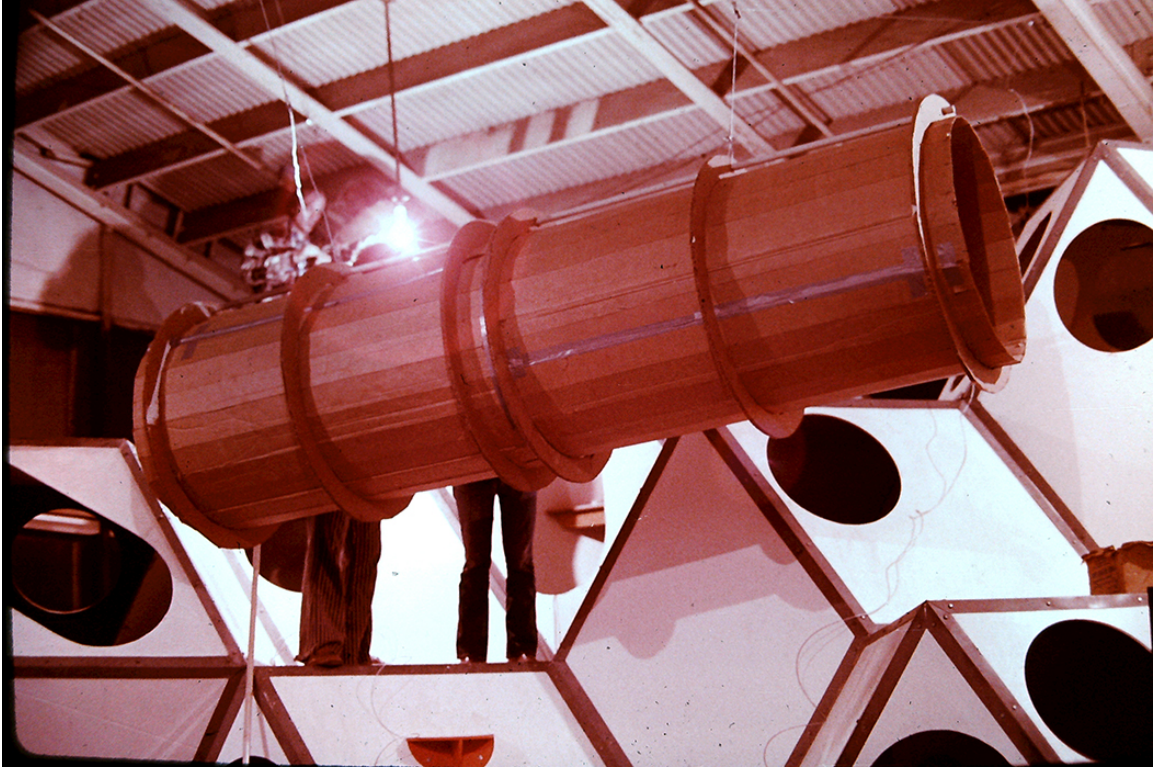
All this differs from any other organization rearranging its spaces only in one solitary crucial respect—that we are supposed to be experts in the arrangement of space, its human use, perception, social cost, cultural consequences, and all the rest of it. That's our business, staff at students together. We shall be laying it as the line as members of the internal community, committing ourselves and others to spatial decisions that help some and harm some. It's going to be hell in there: as endless Spangam games, with the state of play recorded in breeze blocks and plates.

Perhaps some faint divination of our drastic group therapies to come may account for the fact that the New School doesn't really make significant use of its own Big Shed. Instead of spontaneous seminars and autonomous work groups camped out over the Shed and colonising its panes of smooth uncluttered floor, the sea of play when I was there appeared to be that most of the drawing boards had been squashed into the old offices on the street front, and seminars tended to happen as a small gallery hard up under the roof. And this in the home town of Spangam!

So the freedoms of the Big Shed are a utopian illusion? No, they are as real as they ever were. But the price of that freedom may be too high to pay on a day-to-day, for-ever-and-ever basis. I hope that at UCL we will be able to bear the psychological wear and tear involved, because the educational yield could be enormous, and continuous. But what may happen, of course, is that we decide that we would rather learn the one thing that can only be learned once from any one building, and hand the whole problem over to an architect, to be solved "once and for all" by might thereby learn what it is that architects uniquely do that other specialists can't do. But only those around the school at the time would learn it first hand as lived experience.

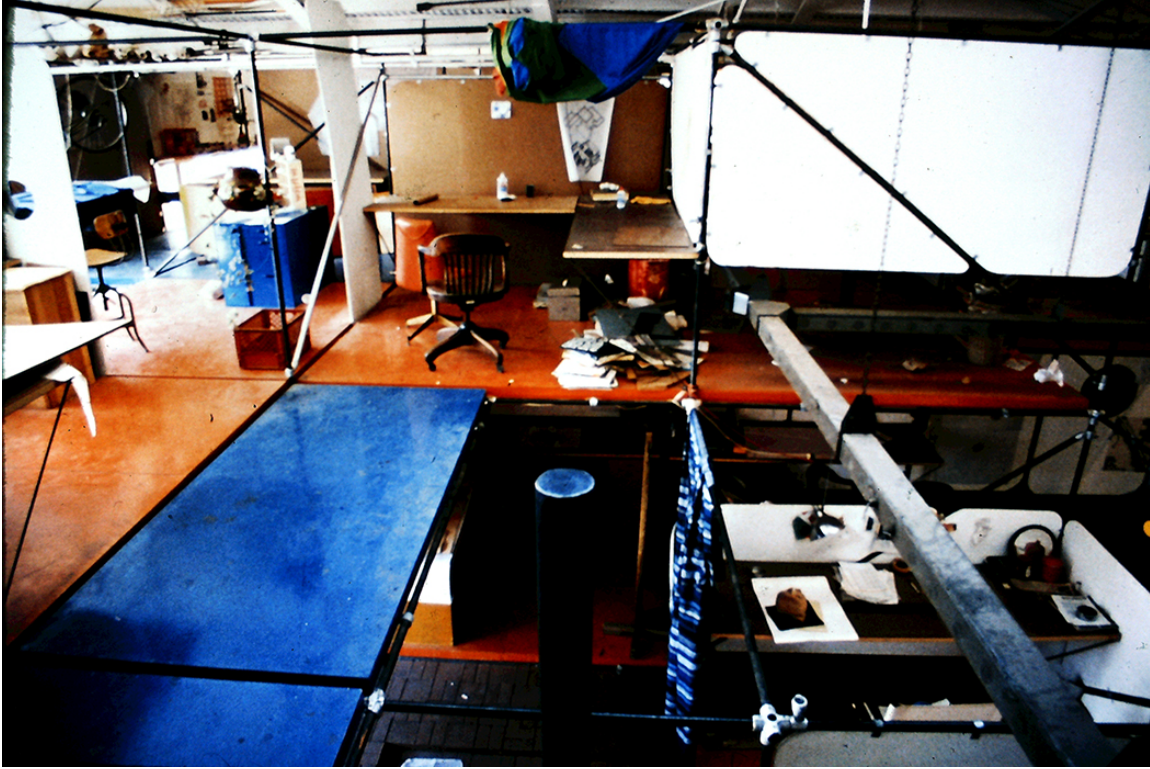
Illustration 1.15 Reyner Banham, "Big Shed Syndrome," New Society 22, no. 533, December 21, 1972.





**Illustration 1.16** Community '72, 1800 Berkeley Street, c. 1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).

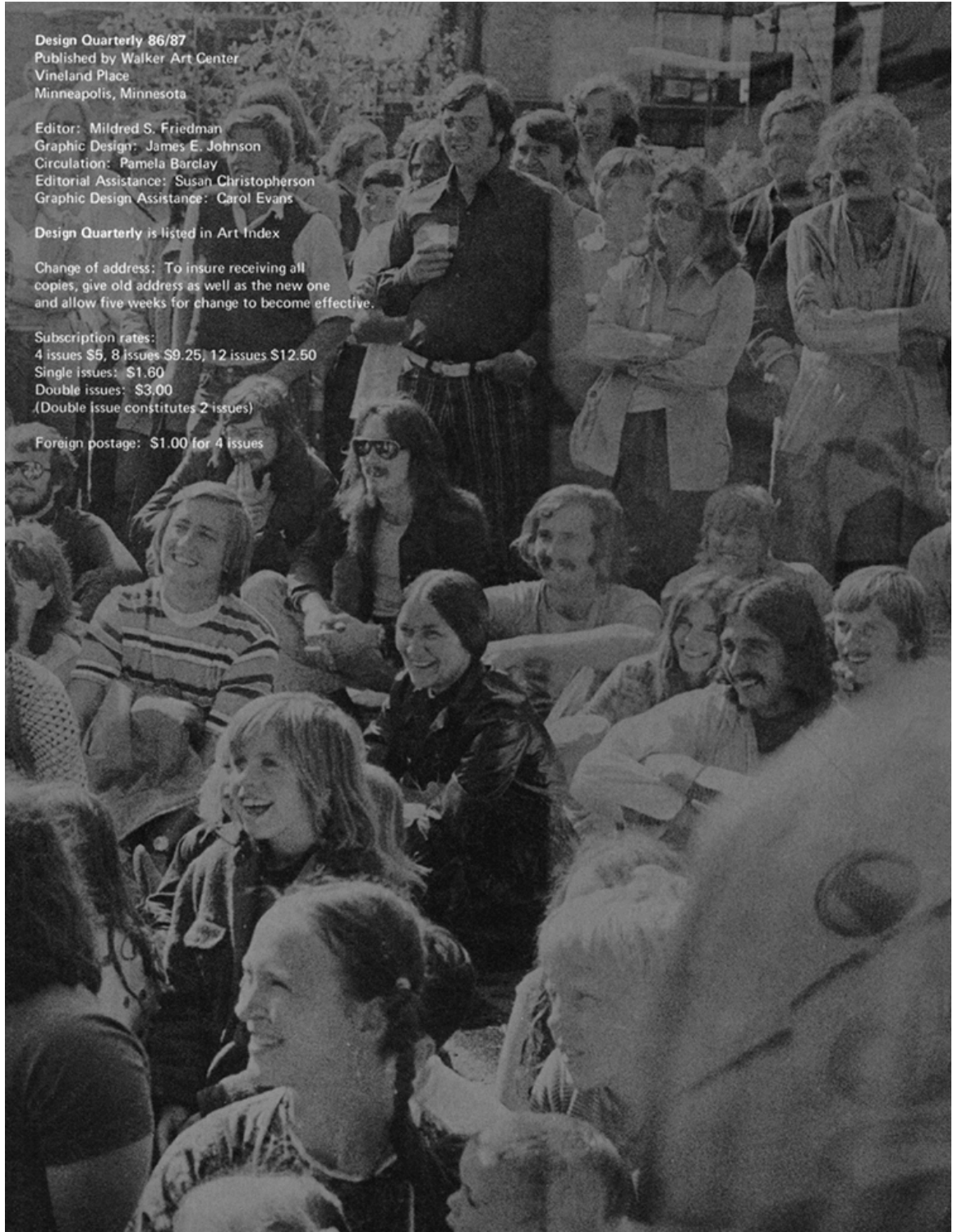




**Illustration 1.17** Pipe and scaffolding system, 1800 Berkeley, c. 1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.18** SCI-Arc studio space, 1800 Berkeley, c. 1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



Design Quarterly 86/87  
Published by Walker Art Center  
Vineland Place  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Editor: Mildred S. Friedman  
Graphic Design: James E. Johnson  
Circulation: Pamela Barclay  
Editorial Assistance: Susan Christopherson  
Graphic Design Assistance: Carol Evans

Design Quarterly is listed in Art Index

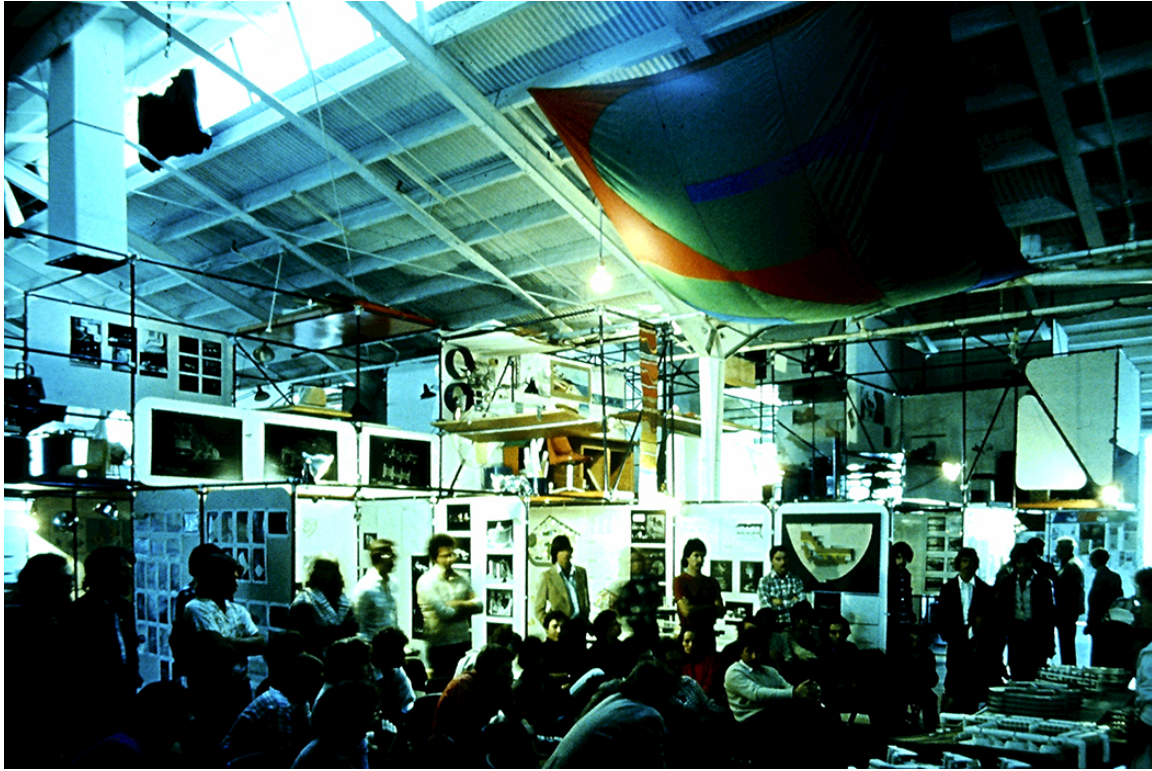
Change of address: To insure receiving all copies, give old address as well as the new one and allow five weeks for change to become effective.

Subscription rates:  
4 issues \$6, 8 issues \$9.25, 12 issues \$12.50  
Single issues: \$1.60  
Double issues: \$3.00  
(Double issue constitutes 2 issues)

Foreign postage: \$1.00 for 4 issues

**Illustration 1.19** Aspen International Design Conference, 1972, *Design Quarterly*, No. 86/87.





**Illustration 1.20** SCI-Arc interior, 1800 Berkeley, c. 1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.21** Jerry Compton leading an all-school meeting, 1975 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc Media Archive).



**Illustration 1.22** Eric Owen Moss, c.1974 (image courtesy of Eric Owen Moss Architects).



**Illustration 1.23** Arnold Stalk at the all-school meeting, 1975 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc Media Archive).

# PROGRAM NETWORK

southern california institute of architecture

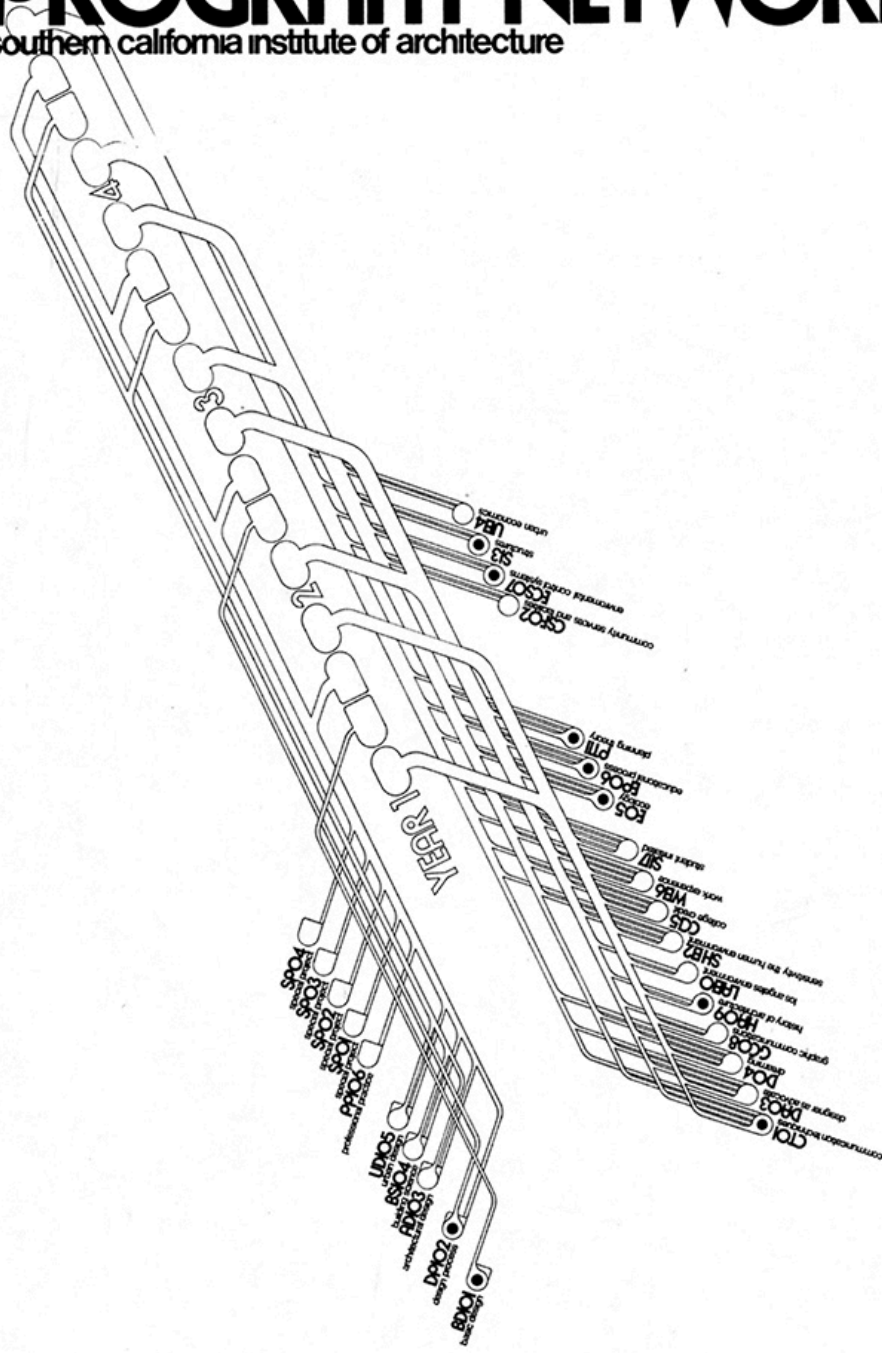
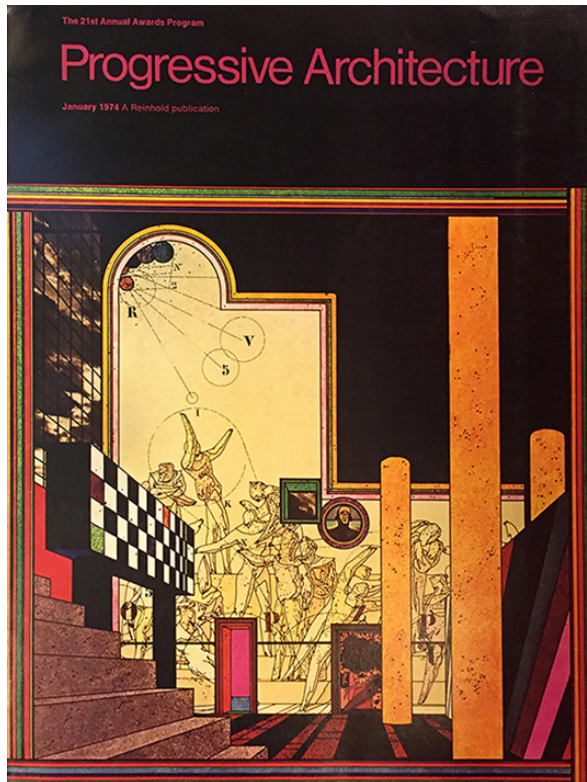


Illustration 1.24 Thom Mayne, curriculum diagram, c.1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).





**Illustration 1.25** Topanga Canyon site, project assignment brief, c.1977 (image courtesy of Getty Research Institute Archive).



Citation

## The Morphosis Group

The Sequoyah Educational-Research Center in California stresses potential to change form and adapt to emerging programs in education

**Program:** A facility for educational research to accommodate 200 students, 25 faculty staff, and 10-15 researchers. Two major concerns are that the building and all of its systems include a high degree of adaptability and that the building makes efficient use of energy and resources. While the general purpose of the building will be educational research, emphasis will be placed on four areas of investigation: the impact of various environments and spatial relationships on curriculum and educational performance; the effects and uses of responsive environments in education; building form as a means of adapting to environmental stress; the potential synergistic relationships between these last two.

**Site:** 450 acres in the Santa Monica mountains overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

**Solution:** The building contains 31,000 sq ft divided into four functional areas—core, some multipurpose instruction—each representing a different degree of adaptability. The core, a fixed shell with movable interior, provides major circulation and supply functions for the entire facility. The spine, a multifunction area, can become an extension of either the core or the multipurpose area. It accommodates horizontal and vertical circulation, equipment and gallery movement from a component storage building. The multipurpose area, with a fixed structure and movable floor and wall panels, houses active instruction. The instruction area encompasses the major learning spaces and has a completely demonstrable structure, representing the highest degree of flexibility and form response.

**Jury comments**

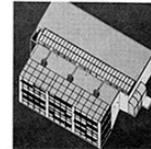
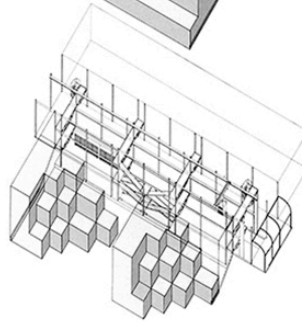
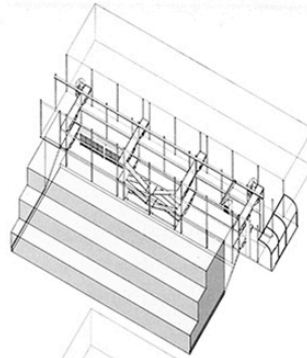
**Kennell:** I think it's a great school. It addresses itself to changing educational environments, not just programs. It actually makes up environments and tests the results. That whole section is demonstrable, and can move out on the site for summer programs—a stage set, a school as theater.

**Root Brown:** Why couldn't you do that in an old barn? Why do you need all of this equipment to do it?

**Myer:** He's really trying to make a more sophisticated barn, I think.

**Root Brown:** It's a shame to spend all that money making a new old barn, why do you need that sophisticated?

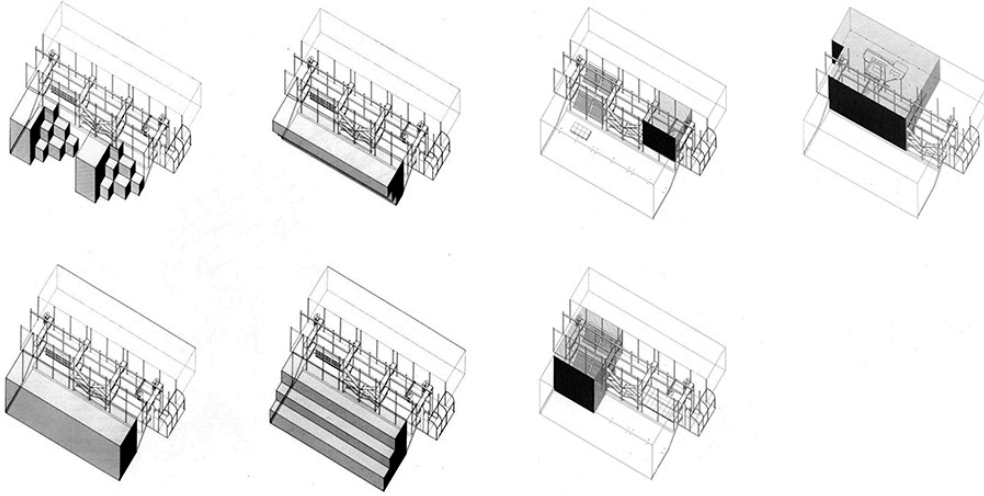
**Kennell:** He's mocking up different spaces, different activity environments, and that's really important in education.



**Credits:**  
**Architects:** James Stafford, Rom Mayne, Michael Rotondi, Michael Bricker, design team.  
**Consultants:** Mary Garman, structural.  
**Photographer:** Rubin Araujo.

**Illustration 1.26** Sequoyah Educational-Research Center, Morphosis Group, *Progressive Architecture*, January 1974.

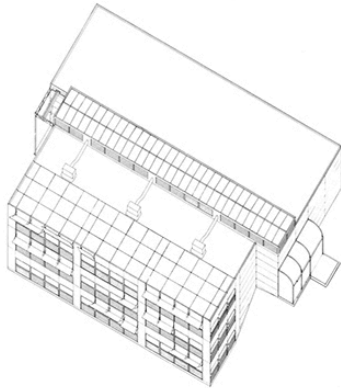
SEQUOYAH EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH CENTER



The building design makes use of interchangeable parts which would have allowed the building to adapt to changes in program and climate. These parts included structural scaffolding, mobile toilet units, plug-on mechanical systems, floor- and wall panels and furniture. By using this system, the educational facility could have been dismantled, relocated and reassembled in any desired configuration. This operation would allow the building to make best use of the site and the climate at different times of the year. The solution exhibits the relationship between climate, site and construction as an extension of the didactic mission of the center, while the architecture is a means of adapting to environmental stress.

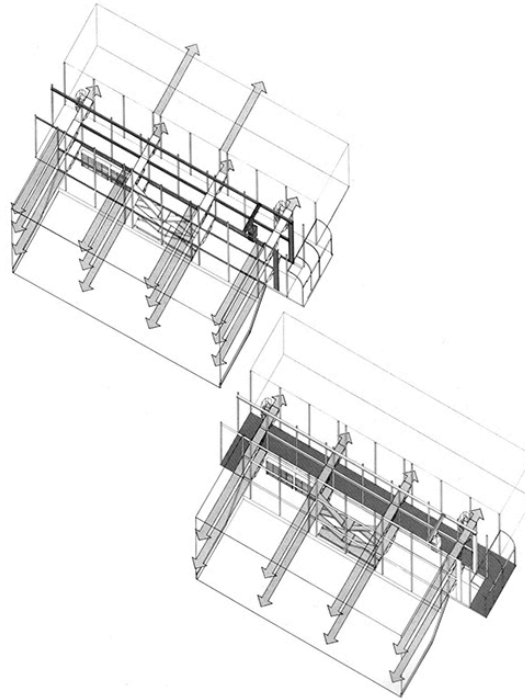


**Illustration 1.27** Sequoyah Educational-Research Center, Morphosis Architects, *Morphosis Buildings and Projects*, 1989.



The Sequoyah Educational Research Center was designed to accommodate 200 students between the ages of 13 and 18, 25 faculty staff members and 10 to 15 researchers on a 450 acre ranch in the Santa Monica Mountains overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The facility was to have been built in two phases, the second phase consisting of an expansion of the research facilities and a summer education camp. The building was designed to be adaptable and to make efficient use of energy.

The core of the building is made up of administrative and faculty offices, conference areas, and an eating area. This was to be a fixed structure with a movable entrance. A multi-purpose area was connected to this core by a flexible spine and was to have had movable floor and wall panels. A gantry moved along the spine on a track on top of storage areas in order to serve the major public areas of the center. A completely demountable structure was to be used to construct movable instruction areas.



**Illustration 1.28** Sequoyah Educational-Research Center, Morphosis Architects, *Morphosis Buildings and Projects*, 1989.





**Illustration 1.29** Urban Odyssey, Glen Small and Ahde Lahti's first-year design studio, 1974 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.30** Urban Odyssey, Glen Small and Ahde Lahti's first-year design studio, 1974 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.31** Urban Odyssey, Glen Small and Ahde Lahti's first-year design studio, 1974 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).





**Illustration 1.32** Urban Odyssey, Glen Small and Ahde Lahti's first-year design studio, 1974 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).

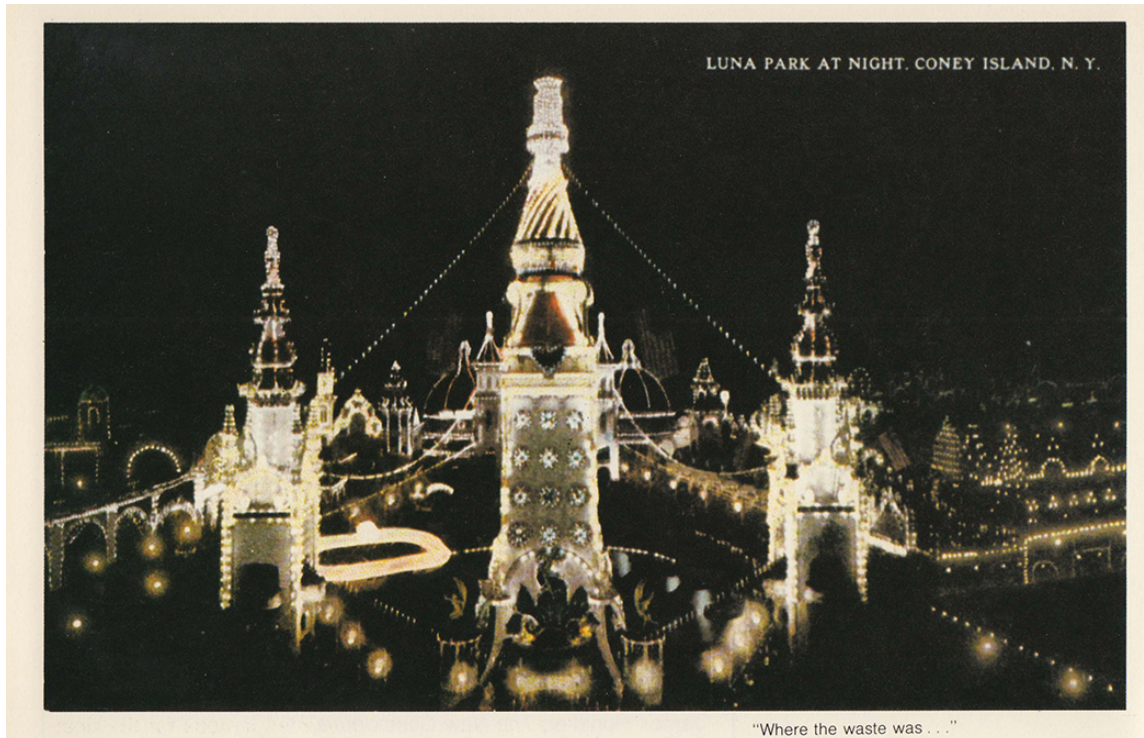




Illustration 1.33 The Great Bike Odyssey, *Los Angeles Times*, July 21, 1974.



**Illustration 1.34** Urban Odyssey, Ahde Lahti and Glen Small interview, KCAL-TV Evening News, 1974.



"Where the waste was . . ."

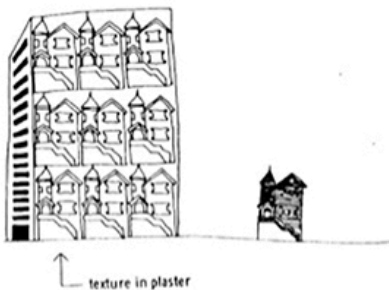
**Illustration 1.35** Rem Koolhaas, Luna Park at Night, Coney Island, NY, *Delirious New York*, 1978.



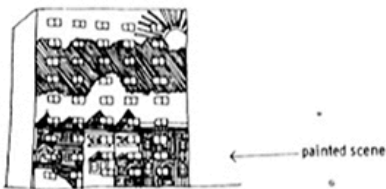
# URBAN FORM

While reading *Policies for Major New Development* for San Francisco, I found that several visual images came to mind when I subjected these policies to a literal translation:

“Large surfaces should be articulated and textured to reduce their size and to reflect the pattern of the older buildings.”



“reduce massiveness...soften building bulk.”

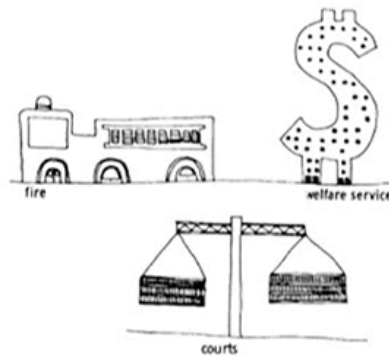


I would like to suggest that city planners and architects have been approaching the problem of the relationship of new, larger buildings to older, smaller forms incorrectly. Rather than scaling down

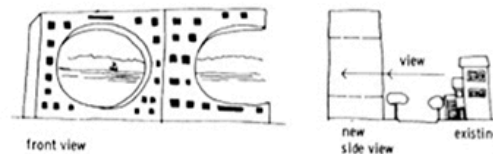
the new, large buildings, *scale up* the small, old buildings. Below is shown a billboard-type construction (false front) with windows painted on to make the old relate to the new.



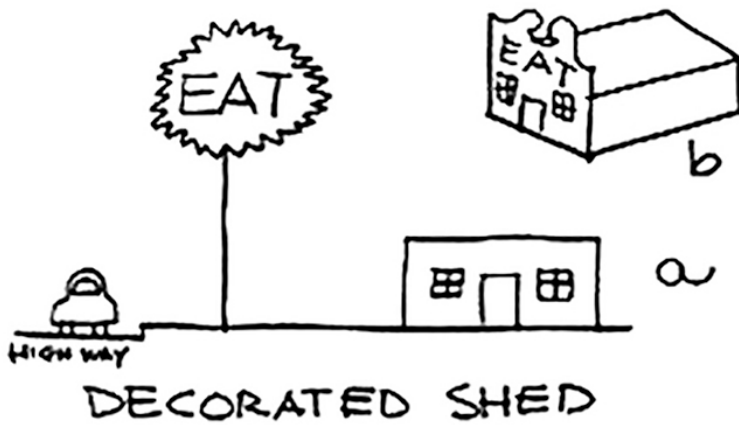
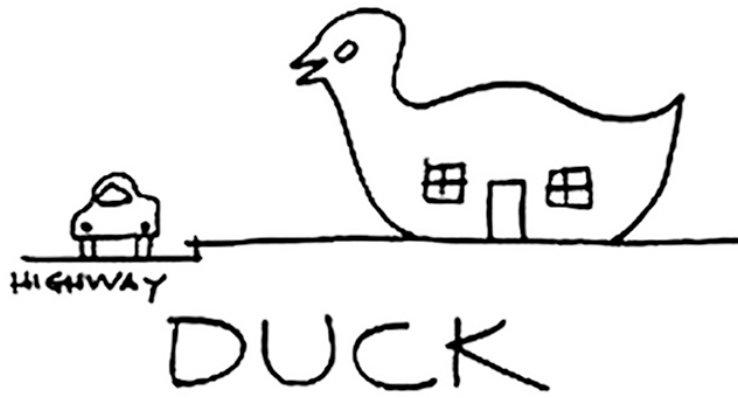
“Unusual shapes (should be) reserved for structures of broad public significance...”



\* ... visual access to... bay.”



**Illustration 1.36** Nanci Michali, “Urban Form,” for the course *Twilight of the Idols*, as it appeared in “SCI-Arc and Change,” for *L.A. Architect*, 1978.



**Illustration 1.37** Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, duck and decorated Shed diagram, *Learning from Las Vegas*, 1972.



**Illustration 1.38** SCI-Arc students, 1972 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 1.39** SCI-Arc Main Space, c. 1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).





Illustration 1.40 SCI-Arc interior, c. 1970s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).





**Illustration 1.41** SCI-Arc exterior, c. 1970s.

**CHAPTER 3:**  
**COMING OF AGE—FACULTY GROWING SEPARATELY (1978-1983)**

**Diverging Trajectories**

After accreditation the dynamic pedagogy at SCI-Arc did not settle into a repetitive pattern. The core faculty that included Ray Kappe, Thom Mayne, Eric Owen Moss, James Stafford, Glenn Small, Ahde Lahti, Bill Simonian, and Terry Glassman continued to push trajectories for architectural progression but toward different ends signaling a widening gulf between faculty committed to architecture's social agenda through interdisciplinary attitudes toward advancement and faculty engaged in disciplinary discussions related to formal invention. Discourse on both subjects contained postmodern attitudes, with each channeling ideas past heroic modernism's utopian coupling of architecture's capacity to realize formal responses with social consequence. This generalization is perhaps an oversimplification, yet, it becomes evident that Mayne and Rotondi with Morphosis, along with Moss and Stafford begin to establish themselves within the profession amidst contemporary discourse through publications. Alternatively, Kappe, Glassman, Lahti, and Small, while not sharing a common aesthetic, evolved modernist principles resembling Buckminster Fuller's social aspirations through technology and scientific methods, rather than engaging debates on style.

This divide was not lost on Kappe, and he willfully brought in faculty to engage alternative trajectories with competing ideas. As director, this kind of leadership was in line with his interest in horizontal management, a management style that allowed him to “hire people [he thought were] good, and let them do their thing. If they can’t do their thing, then they’re gone. . . . Hierarchies, I don’t think, work. People always feel threatened somehow.” A director operating under this pretense allowed Stafford to regard Kappe fondly as “the epitome of the benevolent dictator. . . . He took charge in a very soft-handed way.”<sup>1</sup> This meant that Kappe tended to let SCI-Arc play out like an experiment to get ideas churning without micromanaging. For example, in the beginning of SCI-Arc it was common that there would only be one faculty meeting per year, but as the school became more established faculty would meet more frequently. Kappe described his own style of management. “I was never a big one on meetings. . . . If I wanted to talk to a faculty member, we’d go out to lunch.”<sup>2</sup> Terry Glassman echoed Stafford’s sentiments stating, “one of Ray’s skills was that he would identify people’s strengths and then give them latitude.”<sup>3</sup>

Faculty became divided by their trajectories for architecture related to social and formal concerns. As the SCI-Arc faculty matured strong voices became established at the school through recognition from awards and publications, which fueled diverging attitudes for architectural concerns through the role of public exposure to shape discourse at the school.

By 1978 when Thom Mayne returned from his graduate work at Harvard a diverging faculty became more pronounced. The first day Mayne returned to Los Angeles Rotondi took him to see

---

<sup>1</sup> James Stafford, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 11, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, June 13, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 5, 2015.

Frank Gehry's house that was nearing completion in Santa Monica [Figure 2.01].<sup>4</sup> Mayne described his experience of the Gehry House as "so fresh, so relaxed in its formal approach. Its freedom was in such contrast to the rigidity I had felt at Harvard, the pervasiveness of history, the creative claustrophobia of Boston. I was glad to be back in LA."<sup>5</sup> The Gehry House epitomized the new architecture emerging from Los Angeles in the late 1970s, which capitalized on the artistry of formal expression. Gehry was a familiar face at SCI-Arc. He had taught a fourth-year studio with Kappe in the 1975-76 academic year. Kappe recalled that studio. "At that time Frank was just breaking out of what he had been doing. So we used to have fun. We would both crit the students separately. I would be pretty rational about what I wanted them to do, and trying to get them to think that way. And then he'd come along and say, 'fuck it up.'"<sup>6</sup>

In July 1978, *Los Angeles Times* architecture critic, John Dreyfuss, who championed the young architects in Los Angeles, wrote one of the first articles about Gehry's house [Figure 2.02]. "His house, in fact, has much in common with painstakingly crafted free verse whose elements relate to each other in myriad combinations. Like some poetry, the structure can be quite silly upon superficial examination. But serious study can lead to understanding, loving and hating the house."<sup>7</sup> His neighbors found the house unbelievable, wrong, and contextually inappropriate. One observer even called it "anti-social."<sup>8</sup> However, it ushered in a new style with its unabashed use of off-the-shelf materials set in exuberant compositions. Gehry hired Paul Lubowicki, a senior architecture student from the Cooper Union who "[became] 'translator,'

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<sup>4</sup> Thom Mayne and Yoshio Futagawa, "Interview," *Morphosis*. Tokyo: A.D.A. Edita, 1997, 14.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Ray Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, February 24, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> John Dreyfuss, Gehry's Artful House, Baffles, Angers His Neighbors," *Los Angeles Times* (July 23, 1978), L1.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

taking words and rough sketches, developing them, making detailed drawings and returning to Gehry to see if the ‘translations’ conformed to the concepts.”<sup>9</sup>

In an interview with *Architect Magazine*, 35 years after the house’s completion, Lubowicki remembered when he was working on-site that someone drove up and said to him “it looks like a Tijuana sausage factory.”<sup>10</sup> More than the material selections of sheet metal and chain link, Lubowicki remarked that the speed of Gehry’s sketches impressed him as a 23-year-old designer.<sup>11</sup> In 1985, Lubowicki began teaching at SCI-Arc with Michael Rotondi and Craig Hogetts in the second year graduate program.<sup>12</sup> This house was an early example of what would be known as an LA Style and became a hallmark example of a shift in attitude toward architecture as the creative self-expression of the architect. Even though the public remained entrenched in the status quo of the late modernist architecture from the California Case Study houses, the publicity from Gehry’s house signified a radical divergence at a time when the discipline of architecture sought alternatives.

Two years before Gehry rose to international acclaim, he participated in a symposium at SCI-Arc titled, “Which Way to the Future.”<sup>13</sup> Shelly Kappe moderated this event, and in addition to Gehry, panelists included Charles Moore, Helmut Schulitz, Peter de Bretteville, Roland Coate,

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<sup>9</sup> John Dreyfuss, Gehry’s Artful House, Baffles, Angers His Neighbors,” *Los Angeles Times* (July 23, 1978), L1.

<sup>10</sup> Alex Hoyt, Frank Gehry’s House, *Architect Magazine* <[http://www.architectmagazine.com/design/frank-gehrys-house\\_o](http://www.architectmagazine.com/design/frank-gehrys-house_o)> (January 4, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Course Schedule Fall 1985, from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1985).

<sup>13</sup> Bretteville, Peter de, Roland Coate Jr., Frank O Gehry, Shelly Kappe, Charles Moore, Helmut Schulitz and Glen Small. December 01, 1976. "Which Way To The Future." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. <<http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/0221designforumfive1of2-12-01-76/>>. (January 04, 2016).

and Glen Small. “Charles Moore emphasize[d] the importance of the past. Frank Gehry propose[d] new material possibilities. Schultz question[ed] the values of contemporary commercial society. Peter de Bretteville discusse[d] complexity and its various forms in architecture.”<sup>14</sup> The significant moment of this symposium for SCI-Arc institutional history comes at the end of the discussion when Glen Small mocks each of the panelists. This decision, specifically his criticism of Gehry, Small would later say in a documentary about his career, began his demise with the architectural community in Los Angeles and at SCI-Arc.<sup>15</sup> Small begins his presentation by first reading his fortune from a fortune cookie at the pre-event dinner, which read, “you have a natural grace and great consideration for others,” a statement all the more ironic given his estimation of the fallout from this event.<sup>16</sup>

I’ll be quite candid this evening. For those that have been suckered in here on the pretense that we have a panel of concerned architects about the future, let me introduce the panel. We have Charles Moore, the polite, eclectic, shed roof joker. A well-mannered Venturi. Then we have Frank Gehry, a man about town, a hustler and opportunist, usually with a gimmick. One of his quotes at dinner he said, “I don’t care about the future.” Helmut Schulitz and Peter de Bretteville, a couple of guys who just discovered steel construction 20-30 years after the fact. Roland Coate, the custom freeway builder. \$750,000.00 per 100 feet. All these guys are good guys, but they can hardly seriously be considered to talk about the future. Really, this must be a joke. What we’re qualified to talk about as a group is the professional praxis today supported by teaching incomes. I believe architects break down into groups. The first group: The nuts and bolts people. Visor hats, sift coats, play cards at noon. And then there’s the second group: The hustler implementers, get it built, sell it, what is it, who cares as long as we can detail it nicely. What are those gas jets in the ceiling for? Who are we to question, the client paid for them, the building department stamped the drawings, it’s a defense job. Then there’s the third group, a very minor group, there must be a better way and I won’t buy the present values so I’ll push for major change.

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<sup>14</sup> SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture, “Which Way To The Future-clip3903” <<http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/0221designforumfive1of2-12-01-76/>>. (January 04, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> My Father the Genius, directed by Lucia Small, Small Angst Films, 2002, DVD.

<sup>16</sup> Bretteville, Peter de, Roland Coate Jr, Frank O Gehry, Shelly Kappe, Charles Moore, Helmut Schulitz and Glen Small. December 01, 1976. "Which Way To The Future." In SCI-Arc Media Archive. Southern California Institute of Architecture. <<http://sma.sciarc.edu/video/0221designforumfive1of2-12-01-76/>>. (January 04, 2016).

I believe the public high school stuff of do your best, listen to your conscience. Each group has its place and the emphasis fluctuates, in this season out next season. I can't really get mad at this panel. They do these jobs. In 20 years if the biomorphic biosphere were in they would design and build it. They build the fads.<sup>17</sup>

As Small spoke he paused between insults to let the audience laugh and clap and the panelists could be heard murmuring in the background. “What did he say?” “Cheaper than a real freeway.” If this talk undid Small’s position within the architectural hierarchy it was not without cause. At a later moment he referred to the entire panel, including himself, as “second string hotshots.” Small’s presentation also included a description of his long running project, the Biomorphic Biosphere that he began in 1967 for his thesis at Cranbrook, which is a self-contained, self-sustaining, intersection between ecology and urban infrastructure. Implicating himself as a contributor to the environmental crisis that design found itself at that moment, he called for a complete reset of urban typologies with his project. While Small would only realize a handful of built projects he maintained his status as a visionary architect with work largely remaining in the world of representation with little impact on the discipline. Whereas Gehry eventually became one of the most famous architects in the world, a household name revered by a public enamored by his unconventional buildings. Gehry spawned a generation of prominent architects and ambitious projects in the late 1990s, which were attributed to the Bilbao Effect, referring to his design for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain that drove tourism, revitalizing the economy of a city.

With noble architectural intentions aside, the controversy of Small’s presentation was not that he was critical, but how he was critical. Forums and panels are meant to spark debate, raise alternative points of view, and establish nuanced directions, especially for a discussion regarding

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

the future of architecture. However, the position Small takes does not only come across as an attack on speakers who came to his institution to share their ideas, but he also came across as arrogant by dismissing any rigor behind claims from the other panelists. Though his antagonism appeared to captivate a familiar audience, the talk fell far afield from substance.

When ridiculing peers it should come as no surprise when the sentiment reciprocates. Depending on political and/or professional standing it may come with a stronger blow. Small remarked on his comments directed at Gehry on his blog, *Small at Large*.

My cynical comment was based on the idea that pursuing rich or connected people, with the goal of getting professionally ahead, was unethical. I was dead wrong, look at Gehry today, the architectural hero of the era. I cannot remember his comment about me, something to the effect I was into agrarian architecture. At that moment I was totally idealistic about the Biomorphic Biosphere and dedicating my life to making this planet green and biomorphic.<sup>18</sup>

At this event a line was drawn. One side veered toward formal invention. The other took hold of a social project steeped in the environmental movement. By 1979 that division became even clearer.

In 1979 Thom Mayne hosted an exhibition and lecture series at his makeshift Architecture Gallery, in Venice, California, and SCI-Arc. The 20'x27' room that housed the exhibitions, part of Mayne's own house, was the first gallery dedicated solely to architecture in Los Angeles [Figure 2.05].<sup>19</sup> The series featured the recent work from Eugene Kupper, Roland Coate, Frederick Fisher, Frank Dimster, Frank Gehry, Peter de Bretteville, Morphosis (Tom Mayne and Michael Rotondi), Studio Works (Craig Hodgetts and Robert Mangurian), Eric Moss, and opening and closing remarks from Coy Howard. Howard, who was familiar with the exhibition

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<sup>18</sup> Glen Howard Small, "How to Go to a Cocktail Party," *Small at Large*, <<http://www.smallatlarge.com/2010/07/how-to-go-to-a-cocktail-party/>>. (January 04, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> John Dreyfuss, "One-Week Shows by 11 Architects," *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1979), OC-C5.



scene in Los Angeles, had previously designed an exhibition for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in 1975, “From the Lands of the Scythians: Ancient Treasures from the Museums of the U.S.S.R., 3000 BC-100 BC,”<sup>20</sup> and curated an exhibition of architectural drawings in 1978 at the LAICA, “Architectural Views: Physical Fact, Psychic Effect,” focusing on work from Los Angeles architects showing drawings also featured in *Current L.A.*, including Hodgetts and Mangurian, Fisher, Kupper, and himself.<sup>21</sup>

John Dreyfus covered the entire *Current L.A.* series through numerous articles exposing these architects to the Los Angeles public, largely for the first time; though he mentioned a growing recognition of the architects work from having collectively won 11 PA Awards by 1979. Dreyfus remarked that the common theme between the architects was a “dedication to architecture as an art form.”<sup>22</sup> As fascinating as who was included in the SCI-Arc series was who was excluded, notably most of the SCI-Arc core faculty, Ray Kappe, Glen Small, James Stafford, Bill Simonian, and Terrence Glassman. Mayne’s series was conceived when Kappe was on sabbatical and is a benchmark moment in the history of the school. Personalities and aesthetic clarity was growing within the work of the architects who were featured, which began to differentiate from the ecologically and socially conscious work that was emblematic of SCI-Arc’s founding, demonstrating a separation of groups and emerging factions divided by ideological differences between architecture as a social science and architecture as art.

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<sup>20</sup> Kathleen Hendrix, “‘The Scythians’ —a Linkup of Inner Space at Museum,” *Los Angeles Times* (July 30, 1975), E1.

<sup>21</sup> John Dreyfuss, “Architects Insights Into the Sketches,” *Los Angeles Times* (January 30, 1978), E1.

<sup>22</sup> John Dreyfuss, “One-Week Shows by 11 Architects,” *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1979), OC-C5.

A comment by Dreyfus that established a tone for these architects was his regard for their lack of built work. This, he said, was due to being “unwilling to compromise their artistic principles.”<sup>23</sup> Though it seemed unlikely that any of these architects would turn work away, an alternate reading would be that small projects were all that was available to relatively young architects at that time who were willing to exhaustively explore their ideas through artifacts of architectural production with aesthetic value on their own right, regardless of the scale of a commission. For example, the exploded axonometric in Mayne and Rotondi’s 2-4-6-8 House, which became one of the most widely published drawings of this era, was relatively superfluous with regard to its necessity to explicate the projects construction [Figure 2.06-2.07].

In 2013, the 1979 *Current L.A.* exhibition and lecture series was revisited at SCI-Arc with a retrospective exhibition of the original work and was re-titled, *A Confederacy of Heretics*, which historicized that moment at the school [Figure 2.08]. Todd Gannon’s article for the exhibition catalog raised a similar idea about architectural artifacts’ relation to building construction. In Gannon’s interview with Ray Kappe, Kappe observed that a number of the drawings included in the exhibition series were unnecessary for the construction or the understanding of buildings.<sup>24</sup> Gannon’s reply to Kappe asserted, “buildings were not always necessary to understand the architecture.”<sup>25</sup> Contrasting with Kappe, Gannon suggested that alternative expressions also arrive at architecture. One example of an alternative expression could include how the drawing-as-object becomes a mechanism for architecture to generate its own understanding through

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ray Kappe and Todd Gannon, “A Confederacy of Heretics,” *A Confederacy of Heretics* (Los Angeles: SCI-Arc Press, 2013), 14-15.

<sup>25</sup> Todd Gannon, “A Confederacy of Heretics,” *A Confederacy of Heretics* (Los Angeles: SCI-Arc Press, 2013), 15.

speculations on critical aspects of value latent within the field and only through creative practices of aesthetic production can those aspects come forward.

Sonit Bafna has discussed an idea about latent value in architectural drawings in his article, “How Architectural Drawings Work.” In his article, Bafna described two types of drawings: notational and imaginative. He posited that an imaginative representation is capable of producing an architectural experience. Bafna differentiated notational construction documents from imaginative drawings, such as Mies’ Brick Country House and explained that notational drawings rely on a particular medium that uses a specific language and reference to symbols to communicate an object of a different material while imaginative drawings have an inherent structure, a set of relationships in its elements that produce a coherent syntax that is replete [Figure 2.09]. Bafna had a specific goal for the ways to understand and analyze representation and produce meaning. His interest in how we see what we see through active, critical engagement with architectural drawings elicits ways to understand intent.

The function of representation in works of art is not to make propositions about subject matter, but rather that in its capacity to create reference—to be about something—it acts as a means to structure an appropriate reading of the artefact. The advantage of this way of looking at representation is that the meaning of an architectural work is then not reduced to a reference, but rather appears as a conceptual content, which is perceptually created by an attentive reader. This conceptual content, or meaning, is not then a characteristic of the building, but rather a property of a particular reading. Multiple “meanings” of a building are possible in this account, but not in a way that leads to fully-fledged relativism, since the meanings are still guided by a perceptual engagement with the artifact—one has to see a depiction in the building, not just imagine it freely.<sup>26</sup>

The standards of evidence become how conceptual content can be understood by the viewer to embody meaning. Bafna dislocated reference and depiction to allow for greater possibilities

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<sup>26</sup> Sonit Bafna, “How Architectural Drawings Work — and what that implies for the role of representation in architecture,” *The Journal of Architecture* Number 13, Issue 5 (2008): 559.

for value in reading a representation. In some cases the rigor of architectural expression through drawing eclipsed the significance of the building itself. An argument for a drawing like Morphosis' 2-4-6-8 House operated this way with a twofold clarity with respect to the legibility of intent: (1) the surgical precision of part-to-whole relationships signifying a complex unity; (2) the eccentric novelty of visual communication portraying the architects' attitude toward idiosyncratic details.

In 2001, an exhibition focusing on the role of drawings in architecture was Jeff Kipnis' *Perfect Acts of Architecture* at the Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University [Figure 2.10]. Kipnis' exhibition sampled a collection of impactful representational projects from the 1970s and 1980s operating under the conceit that architectural drawings can become end-products in-and-of-themselves, independent from the production of a building. Kipnis remarked, "the architectural drawing as an end work can function in any of three ways: as an innovative design tool, as the articulation of a new direction, or as a creation of consummate artistic merit. Put simply, a perfect act of architecture achieves all three at once."<sup>27</sup> The *Perfect Acts of Architecture* exhibition included drawings from Thom Mayne's Sixth Street House from 1986-1987.

Mayne's description of the *Current L.A.* series from 1979, in his interview with John Dreyfus for the *Los Angeles Times*, revealed a clear distinction between the ways the exhibition related to the role and status of the drawing. "It's important for people to experience the artistic types of activities that lead to fine architecture."<sup>28</sup> The difference between Kipnis' assertions in

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<sup>27</sup> Jeff Kipnis, "An Introduction to a Perfect Act," *Perfect Acts of Architecture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2001), 12.

<sup>28</sup> Thom Mayne, "One-Week Shows by 11 Architects," *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1979), OC-C5.

2001 and Mayne's assertions in 1979 related to the status of the drawing. On one hand the drawing is the architecture, on the other hand, the drawing leads to the architecture. Though Mayne presented a different attitude later, in books such as *Tangents and Outtakes*, it is significant that the premise under which *Current L.A.* was created was to produce buildings [Figure 2.11]. Though Dreyfus does remark that "[Mayne] believes—and correctly so—that some architectural drawings and models are more than indicators of structures-to-be. They are art objects too."<sup>29</sup> Kipnis and Dreyfus shared a similar attitude, that architectural visualization offers more than an intermediary between idea and object, it can provide a cultural artifact negotiating the conceptual relationships of ideas.

In 1980 Karl Chu interviewed Coy Howard about the *Current L.A.* series. Howard's assessment of the group revealed a shared attitude of conviction toward individual expression. Howard described his characterization of the group.

The point I ultimately make in the lecture series is that there is a shift away from classic models to vernacular models in the work of the Los Angeles architects. . . . They are not trying to establish a dogma or make a statement about what architectural truth is. But they are, in fact, putting forward a subjective view with a sense of honest humility about that subjective view, and they are really interested in pursuing very personal or hedonistic concerns. I think that is something which all artists do. It's what art is about: following your natural concerns. I think it's a sad commentary on the state of architecture today that there are so many people jumping on various bandwagons, rather than trying to develop their own unique sources and unique points of view architecturally. And I think that the healthiest sign on the west coast is that there is a group of people who are trying very hard to do that.<sup>30</sup>

The fact that he referred to vernacular sources made a clear statement about Los Angeles, which had a history of domestic architecture throughout the 20th century. This group largely performed

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<sup>29</sup> John Dreyfuss, "One-Week Shows by 11 Architects," *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1979), OC-C5.

<sup>30</sup> Coy Howard and Karl Chu, "New Los Angeles: An Interview with Coy Howard," *Skyline* (April, 1980), 14.

through re-imagining architecture through that domestic context at this time, which situated these architects regionally. However, the formal attitudes they developed reached beyond Southern California and engaged an international discussion of what architecture could be after Modernism.

In a 2012 interview with Howard the discussion shifted to a disciplinary conversation when Howard reflected on the motives in the work from Los Angeles. Howard made a comparison to contemporaneous work he recognized coming out the East Coast, which he felt was very different.

I think that there's some radical differences, in terms of the work that was being done here and the work that was being done in other places. And whether that's had any influence or not, you know, I don't really know. But the work in most places had to do, had always to do with a kind of coherent whole, and the work out here had to do with a diverse totality, very different. So people there were trying to form wholes, and it had to do with a lot symmetry and geometric form to the object. Out here the concern -- going back to the sort of sensate nature of Southern California -- had to do more with parts, and individual textures and forms. We were all making stuff out of little pieces.<sup>31</sup>

The sensibility Howard described divided East and West Coast architecture relative to abstraction and sensation. The East Coast's intellectual project of geometry was countered on the West Coast through attention to the effects of geometry.

Howard's most significant differentiation of the two attitudes was reflected in his statement regarding part-to-whole relationships, which he described as the conceptual polarity between a coherent whole and a diverse totality. This description suggested two competing postmodern philosophies regarding architectural resolution. The East Coast synthesized diversity to create a new homogeneity, whereas the West Coast other fused diversity through a new heterogeneity.

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<sup>31</sup> Coy Howard, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, July 30, 2012.

Both ratified formal relationships but contrasted in attitude with respect to assimilation. One absorbed difference. The other embraced difference.<sup>32</sup>

That this group from *Current L.A.* was a confederacy, and that they were heretical, seems too bold of a claim for these architects at this time. In 1979, with the exception of Frank Gehry, collectively, they had only realized a handful of built projects. Though their work was maturing, they had not yet established decisive identities. Also, these events were by-and-large the first time they had assembled under a common agenda. The most heretical act from the series seemed to be excluding Kappe. Coy Howard's statement, in his interview with Karl Chu, that the architects in *Current L.A.* were hedonistic, was a quality also picked up on by Charles Jencks in his assessment of L.A. School architecture in his article, "Hetero-architecture and the L.A. School."<sup>33</sup> Hedonism, perhaps, reveals a closer approximation of their attitudes than being heretical. Rather than *A Confederacy of Heretics*, a more appropriate title to signify this group at that time might be "The Conviction of Hedonists," given the focus on freedom of architectural expression coupled with the architects' drive to realize their ideas.

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<sup>32</sup> The influence of the East Coast on Los Angeles architects during this time varies from architect to architect, but what became clear through conversations with the architects and the existing texts is that Los Angeles architects were certainly aware of what was happening on the East Coast, but seemed to feel it was restrictive relative to their interests in a less dogmatic approach. This sentiment comes through in discussions with Coy Howard as well as Thom Mayne's description of returning to Los Angeles after being at Harvard and his opinion of the Progressive Architecture awards in 1980, which is discussed in the following section of this chapter. If Los Angeles architects perceived a formal consistency in the collective work of their East Coast contemporaries, and formal variation among themselves, what could help discern and unify them was how they dealt with architecture as a part-to-whole phenomenon. While the Los Angeles architects may not have had a shared formal sensibility they likely had a shared methodology of generating architecture as a fusion of parts, resulting in what Howard described as a "diverse totality."

<sup>33</sup> Charles Jencks, "Hetero-architecture and the L.A. School," in *The City: Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century*, eds Allen J. Scott and Edward W. Soja (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 64.

Though not included in Mayne's series, or covered by Dreyfuss, Glen Small was getting press in the fall of 1979 as well. An article by Lynn Voedisch covered Small's new project, The Green Machine, and appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on November 15, six days prior to Dreyfus' article on Morphosis. The feature photo was much like the photos of the architects for *Current L.A.*; Small, in a sport coat, poised in front of an articulate model [Figure 2.12]. Small's project, the Green Machine, was a tamed version of his more ambitious project, the Biomorphic Biosphere [Figures 2.13-2.16]. This project used a space frame structure influenced by geodesic dome construction. The space frame supported a three-story network of single living units comprised of Airstream camping trailers. Conceived as a low-income housing solution for rising costs in Venice, California, Small described the project as an "antibuilding."<sup>34</sup>

Replete with greenhouses and plants, a goal for the proposal was to be nearly self-sufficient, using solar collectors and recycled water. Small's project was supported but the city and he was granted \$15,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts.<sup>35</sup> The challenge for the planning department was if Small could learn how to implement his novel strategy that composed disparate elements. Councilwoman Pat Russell, remarked "this is one of the few approaches I've seen that combines energy and enthusiasm. . . . [But questioned] will people live in it?"<sup>36</sup> The timing of this project's release in the *Los Angeles Times* and Small's lack of inclusion in *Current L.A.* signified diverging trajectories among the SCI-Arc faculty. The socio-environmental motive

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<sup>34</sup> Lynn Voedisch, Architect Designs 'Space Frame' Housing, *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1979), WS1.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Lynn Voedisch, Architect Designs 'Space Frame' Housing, *Los Angeles Times* (October 11, 1979), WS1.



of Small appeared incompatible with the theme, architecture as art. Competition brewed among faculty to sway discourse with alternatives for architectural progress.

### **Getting Known and Forming Groups**

As the SCI-Arc faculty began to get attention in the 1970s and early 1980s through publications and exhibitions it created an atmosphere at the school Jim Stafford described as being divided by traditional architecture and architects pushing a new formal agenda.<sup>37</sup> This was also suggested by a general feeling of dismissal by the mainstream architecture profession, as Coy Howard intimated in his response to John Dreyfuss about skipping the California Council of the American Institute of Architects [CCAIA] conference in Monterey in 1980, saying “why should I fly up to Monterey to entertain a bunch of people who see us as clowns, basically.”<sup>38</sup> Stafford explained the effects of the younger faculty who were growing national and international attention and its impact on directions at the school. “Students really thought they were in the middle of something important. And that gave the faculty, who were getting published all over the place, . . . a lot more personality, a lot more control . . . in terms of becom[ing] the personalities that were really driving the school.”<sup>39</sup> In the late 1970s and early 1980s the SCI-Arc faculty made an impact with a new formal agenda. The work looked different than what had come before in California and the pedagogy set itself apart from other schools.

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<sup>37</sup> James Stafford, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 11, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> John Dreyfuss, “Architects in Funny Shirts Communicate,” *Los Angeles Times* (April 6, 1980), G1.

<sup>39</sup> James Stafford, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 11, 2015.

Beginning with citations of Morphosis and Eric Owen Moss's work in the annual awards issues of *Progressive Architecture* magazine, other publications began featuring their work as well, including *Architecture and Urbanism*, *Architectural Design*, *Domus*, and *Global Architecture*. Exhibitions solidifying the changing architectural environment included *California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture*, co-sponsored by the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies and the San Francisco Art Institute; *The California Condition: A Pregnant Architecture*, organized by the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art; and *Los Angeles Now*, held at the Architectural Association (AA) in London. Along with *Progressive Architecture*, recurring advocates were drawn to the work coming out of Los Angeles, most notably the local *Los Angeles Times* architectural critic, John Dreyfuss, the Japanese editor of *Global Architecture*, Yukio Futagawa, and two Londoners, the architect, Peter Cook, and theorist, Charles Jencks. These figures contributed to the regional, national, and international exposure these architects gained.

The Los Angeles architectural environment was dynamic and did not reside within the boundaries of one academic location, or within one stylistic frame. Faculty members from SCI-Arc and UCLA began to show their work in the same exhibitions and publications, contributing to the growing identity of a youthful architectural movement occurring on the West Coast. With relationships developing, these architects became recognizable but with growing insularity with respect to other architects in Los Angeles. Friendships between architects grew through publication, exhibition, and awards, evidenced by who was coordinating a particular show, who was writing the publication, and who was on the awards committee. These relationships began to supersede faculty relationships, and these directions of professional work reinforced divisions already occurring among the SCI-Arc faculty.

For young architects in the 1970s and 1980s the PA Awards were a venerable who's who circulating in the American architectural scene. During this time Morphosis almost always received honors. Eric Owen Moss, Coy Howard, and Craig Hodgetts and Robert Mangurian of Studio Works also received many citations and awards from *Progressive Architecture*. Beginning with their first award in 1974 for the Sequoyah School, between 1977-1983, Morphosis would go on to collect three more citations: in 1977 for the Reidel Medical Building in Tijuana, Mexico; in 1980 for the Flores Residence Addition in Pacific Palisades, California; and in 1982 for the Western-Melrose Office Building in Los Angeles [Figures 2.17-2.18]. Over this period, noticeable changes in Morphosis' aesthetic were evident. What began as a technical response relative to contextual derivations within a modernist idiom in a project like the Sequoyah School, new influences from James Stirling became evident in the 1977 entry for the Reidel Medical Building.

By Mayne's own admission, "Stirling was, without a doubt, the single most important architect for me. . . . The Leicester, Oxford, Cambridge triad completely knocked me out."<sup>40</sup> The stepped curtain wall of the Reidel Medical Building and Stirling's Cambridge History Faculty Building are striking [Figure 2.19]. The pastel axonometric included for the PA Citation in 1977 shows this more clearly than the drawings in *Morphosis Buildings and Projects*, their first monograph. Craig Hodgetts, James Stirling's top student at Yale, was on the PA Award jury the year Reidel won an award.<sup>41</sup> Hodgetts remarked, "It is extraordinarily elegant and sensitive. It is

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<sup>40</sup> Thom Mayne, "Studio," *Morphosis* (Tokyo: A.D.A. EDITA Tokyo Co., 1997), 15.

<sup>41</sup> In an interview with Robert Mangurian on February 17, 2015, who was a partner of Hodgetts' in the 1970s, explained that James Stirling admitted publicly that Hodgetts was "the best student he ever had."

also very disciplined.”<sup>42</sup> In 1977 other Los Angeles architects receiving citations were Frederick Fisher, Coy Howard, and Roland Coate. Morphosis’ Medical Building utilized a strong geometric block with an angular facade climbing up the building, which portrayed a parti serving as progenitor for later large-scale Morphosis civic projects such as Cal Trans in downtown Los Angeles and the San Francisco Federal Building.

The most noticeable shift in Morphosis’ work came in the 2-4-6-8 House, which was featured in *Progressive Architecture* in 1982, though surprisingly it did not receive a PA Award. This small project demonstrated a clear separation from their previous modernist aesthetic and was developed in 1978 after Mayne returned to Los Angeles from Harvard. Mayne suggested this change in attitude in a 1997 interview in *Global Architecture*, “if you look at 2-4-6-8, you can see the traces of my time at Harvard, especially Rossi and Ungers.”<sup>43</sup> The transition away from an eco-tech response to something resembling a coupling of Rossian archetypes with a California Bungalow signaled an alternative to the beach vernacular Los Angeles had grown accustomed. Esther McCoy, writing about the 2-4-6-8 House and the Sedlack House in 1982, observed Mayne and Rotondi’s projects in relation to earlier work and as a collaboration with SCI-Arc students [Figure 2.20].

These houses resemble the firm’s Tijuana housing (P/A July 1978, p. 76) only in the small area and the narrow lots. They come more out of Mayne and Rotondi’s unbuilt projects and teaching at Sci-Arc, the newest and brightest Southern California architecture school, where the official ideal may be service, but the product tends to be elitist. Typical of a new school with a young faculty is a close association between student and teacher; ideas spark ideas, theory doesn’t unseat theory—it adds on.

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<sup>42</sup> Craig Hodgetts, “The 24th Awards Program,” *Progressive Architecture*, Vol. LVIII, No. 1 (January, 1977), 58.

<sup>43</sup> Thom Mayne, “Studio,” *Morphosis* (Tokyo: A.D.A. EDITA Tokyo Co., 1997), 15.

Mayne and Rotondi (and the students who collaborated with them) lavished the care that an in vitro baby commands.”<sup>44</sup>

McCoy described the use of commonplace materials creating a mass juxtaposed by a brightly colored collage of details surrounding the windows, calling it a “joyous play of colors on a drab surface.”<sup>45</sup> Referring to the interior as “self-involved,” McCoy’s observations reveal the firm’s evolving aesthetic, suggesting a tuned sensibility toward individual expression, contrasting with their housing project in Tijuana, aptly titled in the 1978 issue of *Progressive Architecture*, Everyman’s Casa. The 2-4-6-8 House signified an increasingly esoteric response toward architecture’s cognitive reception through material combinations in lieu of the straightedge orthodoxy of ascetic forms.

In 1978 Eric Owen Moss received his first PA Award in collaboration with Jim Stafford, a citation for the Morgenstern Warehouse [Figure 2.21]. The project garnered praise from Charles Moore who said the project was, “unusually spirited”—a remark indicative of a time where Moore’s own flamboyant Piazza d’Italia was completed in the same year.<sup>46</sup> The images that described the project in *Progressive Architecture* were two photographs of the model, one elevational and one showing the top view, revealing the super graphics on the roof. Two axos were also included and were drawn in a style reminiscent of John Hejduk’s Diamond Projects [Figure 2.22]. Hejduk’s drawings from the mid 1960s exposed the tension through the diagonal, the right angle, and its relationship to a feeling of space that is either deep or flat. In the case of Moss’s drawings, the result was a flattened shallow-space in an axonometric. In contrast to Hejduk, whose flattened expression of the axos relied on the diamond shaped floor plan. The

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<sup>44</sup> Esther McCoy, “Retreats in Venice,” *Progressive Architecture* Vol. LXIII, No. 3 (March, 1982), 80.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Charles Moore, “The 25th P/A Awards,” *Progressive Architecture* Vol. LIX, No. 1 (January 1978),

comparison revealed that although a similar technique of representation was used to describe architecture, it produced content with an alternative effect.

Hejduk's Diamond Projects, facilitated by the problem of the diamond from the debate in De Stijl painting between van Doesburg and Mondrian regarding the diagonal, focused architectural representation relative to the tension created by Mondrian's 45-degree rotation of the frame. Mondrian, who maintained the internal orthogonal relationships of a gridded network on the canvas, successfully suggested an extended field beyond the frame's edge [Figure 2.23]. The drawings Moss and Stafford included for the publication in *Progressive Architecture* were significant. A plan was not included and only the axon described the interior organization. Without the coordination of drawings to clearly establish the formal implications of spatial depth, like Hejduk, Moss and Stafford's use of the flattened axonometric, that remained parallel to the picture plane, produced a surface effect rather than a spatial one.

What also happened with this kind of technique was that Hejduk's spatial effect was only experienced through the drawing, due to the plan being presented at a 45-degree rotation relative to the picture plane. Examples to help illuminate this point are two paintings written about by Robin Evans; one by Hendrick Goltzius, *Job in Distress*, the other, Piero della Francesca's *The Nativity* [Figures 2.24-2.25]. Goltzius' painting showed the apparent tension created by the subject through the implied object. According to Evans, this is one of the first times where the subject of the painting is imposed upon by the frame itself. This is particularly apropos for the religious subject of this work and the imposition of the frame of Job's life. However, it raised formal and spatial considerations relative to this aesthetic experience through the implication of tension and the extended field. Della Francesca's painting, *The Nativity*, also discussed by Evans,

employed an alternative perspectival technique to the linear perspective of Brunelleschi. Pierro called this perspectival technique the Other Method.

[The Other Method] directly related to local relations between tangible things. . . . There is no perspective projection in Pierro's Other Method, for perspective. There is a perspective result that is achieved entirely by orthographic means—just like architecture.<sup>47</sup>

The result of Pierro's Other Method was a flattened, shallow-space. Linear perspective was not needed to imply depth, which arrived through a reading of surface qualities and their relationships.

From these two examples, Hejduk's work tended toward the discussion of Goltzius, whereas Moss and Stafford's axon offered an alternative that re-directed the understanding of space as flattened and confined to the surface. Hejduk still used the free plan to communicate spatial readings. The aesthetic of the Morgenstern Warehouse performed with distinct opposition to a planometric reading, which instead communicated through the relief of surfaces, much like the Della Francesca *Nativity*. Those surface effects provided the drawings visual critique. Parts congealed toward the resolution of a complex field of relationships read frontally through the elevation. Though Hejduk's drawings were an intellectual spatialization, its reading maintained horizontal movement through a plan, whereas the Morgenstern Warehouse drawings estranged the occupancy of an interior by placing the intellectual efforts on a spatialized reading of low-relief surfaces oriented vertically.

Another Los Angeles architect getting attention in the pages of *Progressive Architecture* was Coy Howard who received his first PA Award in 1977, a citation for his proposal for a

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<sup>47</sup> Robin Evans. *The Projective Cast: Architecture and Its Three Geometries*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995, 151.

renovation of the Boudov Residence in Palos Verdes, California [Figure 2.26].<sup>48</sup> In 1980 he received two more citations, one for the McCafferty Studio and the other of the Gross Residence. Howard was teaching at UCLA in the early and mid 1970s, he left UCLA in 1978 and moved his studio to Santa Monica [Figures 2.27-2.28]. He first joined the SCI-Arc faculty for a year in 1979 and returned in 1985 and continues to teach at SCI-Arc today. In 1977 Howard's Boudov residence was also included in the *Architectural Design* issue, "America Now: Drawing Towards a More Modern Architecture" guest edited by Robert AM Stern, which featured drawings shown in two concurrent exhibitions curated by Stern at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and The Drawing Center [Figures 2.29-2.30]. In 1978 some of the work from these exhibitions was later featured at the Otis Art Institute Gallery in Los Angeles.<sup>49</sup> Howard's drawings, included at The Drawing Center exhibition were shown alongside other drawings by architects, including Peter Eisenman's House X [Figure 2.31], John Hejduk's Texas House, and Charles Moore's Piazza d'Italia, among others.

Howard's drawings stand out in the exhibition, not due to the style of architecture depicted, but rather because of the means with which architecture was conveyed. The disposition of the drawing became an object in its own right, exceeding its status as a device to communicate something that it was not. In the *Architectural Design* publication, the Boudov and Hauser houses did not include plans and sections. Only perspectives situated the houses in brooding graphite atmospheres. Rather than clean lines on a stark page, the drawings exploit artifactual residue—drawn and leftover. The evidence of tape marks where the Hauser drawing was fixed to

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<sup>48</sup> Coy Howard, "The 24th Awards Program," *Progressive Architecture* Vol LVIII, No 1 (January 1977), 64.

<sup>49</sup> John Dreyfuss, "Architects Insights Into the Sketches," *Los Angeles Times* (January 30, 1978), E1.



a surface remained on the edge of the paper. Squiggles of a graphite pencil trail off the edge of an atmospheric depiction of the interior perspectives of Boudov. These artifacts translated into a reading of the drawing as a drawing, an object with presence, not only a representation. This confounded the representational quality of an architectural work and doubled its aesthetic reception. The doubleness revealed how architecture was drawn, which deserved its own measure of evaluation relative to form and an understanding of spatial qualities, but the drawing also appropriated the conventions of an art-object that used architecture as its means to evoke an aesthetic quality associated with the effects of perception. This was relatively atypical for how architectural drawings are usually read and signaled an alternative mechanism for the experience of architecture, and where that experience resides. Howard used the architectural drawing to foreground qualities of artifactual reception by embedding perspectives with grit and shadow around platonic forms, but occluded by hewn detritus. Equally cognitive as the analytical drawings of Eisenman's House X, the graphite drawings of Howard eschew an a priori and underlying virtual logic implicit in the formal generation of axonometrics, and instead structure poetic relationships between form and shadow, context and drawn page, suggesting architectural qualities laden with emotive physicality.

Earlier in 1977, Robert Stern included Howard in his article for *Architecture and Urbanism*, "Some Notes on the New '40 Under 40'." Stern speculated on the merits associated with the next generation of young architects emerging around the world, including Howard.

Howard echoes Machado and Silveti's concerns with the functional determinism of orthodox modernism, though he is more involved with behavioral issues than they. . . . [Stern quotes Howard who states] "We should recognize that architecture is not simply the inevitable consequence of needs, as the functionalists suggest; that both needs and the forms which respond to these needs demand high levels of social and psychological perceptiveness and formal skills, and that these skills are a scarcer and

more precious commodity than the organizational talent we have for so long been praising.”<sup>50</sup>

Howard’s remark suggested that architecture was not only the organization of form, but also the reception of form that communicated its value. His position proclaimed architecture as being less objective, and more subjective relative to the emotional potential of architecture to affect its users’ imaginations through their feelings. Howard’s work demonstrated this ambition through the role of the drawings and what their aesthetic presentation communicated through the perspective. What was surprising was the radical difference between the drawings included in the two publications. In *Progressive Architecture* the conventional plans utilized a legend and colored axes, whereas, the perspective drawings of the Boudov Residence featured in *Architectural Design* expressed an emotional countenance contrasting the clinical precision of the drawings in *Progressive Architecture*. Likely, this was due to the audience of the publications; one was a professional design publication giving awards for plausibility and eventual construction, the other publication focused on the disciplinary attitudes toward the medium of drawing.

In *Progressive Architecture* Howard described the Boudov addition through its programmatic and pragmatic responses describing sun decks, alcoves, and where the jacuzzi would go. Critics wavered about its vernacular readings and described the clarity of the representational efforts for a small project.<sup>51</sup> These kinds of descriptions are in stark contrast to Stern’s ambition for his exhibition that showcased drawings featuring three qualities: (1) beautiful drawings that aid the conceptual process; (2) are emblematic of a post-modern style;

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<sup>50</sup> Coy Howard quoted in Robert Stern’s “Some Notes on the New “40 under 40,”” “40 Under 40,” Special Issue *Architecture and Urbanism* No 73 (1977), 49-69.

<sup>51</sup> Coy Howard, “The 24th Awards Program,” *Progressive Architecture* Vol LVIII, No 1 (January 1977), 64.

and (3) critically reflect what it means to produce an architectural drawing.<sup>52</sup> Similar qualities drove Kipnis' selection for drawings included in the *Perfect Acts of Architecture* exhibition. Both Stern's and Kipnis' exhibitions looked for the ways drawings achieved agency to produce decisive results for architecture. The drawings they chose performed as self-conscious objects relying on their aesthetic presentation to comment on the time in which they were produced, as well as reveal an attitude about the qualitative status of drawings.

Supporting this difference between the PA Awards and Stern's exhibition are Howard's words in *Architectural Design* that described his work that "oscillate[s] between the 'cool' drawing of plan, section, and elevation, and the 'hotter' perspective studies. . . . Here the role of the graphic journalist takes precedence over the role of the architect."<sup>53</sup> What became clear was that there were different venues for public exposure and consumption of contemporary architecture in the 1970s through publication. There were trade journals that spoke to the profession. These tended to describe architecture's value relative to new ideas circulating within the built environment. Other publications like *Architectural Design* and *Architecture and Urbanism* offered alternative benchmarks for architecture's cultural value that focused with inward motives and conversations between designers and the discipline. Three years later, when Howard received two PA citations, each of the projects featured perspectives along with the antiseptic plans and axos, demonstrating Howard's self-described "hot" and "cool" drawing motifs.

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<sup>52</sup> Robert AM Stern, "Drawing Towards a More Modern Architecture," *Architecture Design* Vol 43, No 6 (1977), 382.

<sup>53</sup> Coy Howard, "Coy Howard," *America Now: Drawing Towards a More Modern Architecture Architecture Design*, Vol 47, No 6 (June 1977), 428.

The March 1980 issue of *Domus* titled, “The Young Architects of California,” used a painterly image of Frank Gehry on its cover; ironically relying on the oldest architect of the group to be the poster child of the next generation of Los Angeles architecture [Figure 2.32]. Reasonably, Gehry was the most well known at this time, with the design of his own house completed in 1978 that used conventional materials in unconventional ways that had made its rounds through various national and international publications. The new fame attributed to Gehry seemingly relieved Boissiere of the task to describe him beyond an architect “who explores unexpected roads.”<sup>54</sup> As if that was enough to identify a movement that displaced his criticisms of the state of California architecture in the 1970s, which he noted. “Sea Ranch and Moore aroused fresh hopes. But the fundamental character of Californian architecture remained an untempered eclecticism, the epitome of camp.”<sup>55</sup> The camp aesthetic, according to Susan Sontag relied on “artifice and exaggeration,” becoming “esoteric.”<sup>56</sup> The sensibility of camp comprised the clichés, *it’s so bad it’s good* and *style is everything* with a glint of purposeful irony behind eyes twinkling, “you get it, right?” Boissiere recognized the emergence of a young group of architects with “significant works to their credit; they are brilliant, often sparkling, and versatile.” At this time, these architects did not have a label grouping them. Today, they are colloquially known as the LA School. Boissiere attempted a label, calling them quick-silvers. The name sounds silly, reminiscent of a name of a comic book hero, but the claim behind the name recognized their youth and mercurial tendencies, which positioned them as being a nebulous group due to their abilities at changing directions in their practices quickly.

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<sup>54</sup> Olivier Boissiere, “Ten California Architects,” *Domus* 604 (March 1980), 17.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Susan Sontag, “Notes on ‘Camp,’” *Against Interpretation*, New York: Anchor Books, 1996, 275.

The architects included in the issue comprised four team practices and two solo practices, Eric Owen Moss and James Stafford, Robert Mangurian and Craig Hodgetts, Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi, Thane Roberts and Fred Fisher, Coy Howard, and Frank Gehry [Figure 2.33]. The general sense gleaned from the sparse project descriptions was the role of composition and to a lesser degree configuration as driving forces behind the creation of their architecture. Moss and Stafford used “symmetry and asymmetry . . . continuity and discontinuity” in their small guest house, Morphosis’ “assemblage of objects,” and Howard’s reference to action verbs ““crash, slash, snip, pounce, and plop, [as] design strategies”” for the Hauser and Wolfenstein residences.<sup>57</sup> The most emphatic description was reserved for Gehry’s Familian Residence.

The project translates complex programmatic requirements into an architectural composition, whose images question the distinction between the complete and unfinished, between the stationary and the kinetic, and between the image of the house as a place of refuge, or as a place of confrontation.<sup>58</sup>

Boissiere, recognized the public perception of Gehry as the progenitor of these alternative practices taking place in Los Angeles but raised the importance of Tim Vreeland, architecture department chair at UCLA with East Coast influences. The predilection of the East Coast insinuated the provincial character associated with Los Angeles architecture at this time, and that having ties to the east, however small, somehow elevated the merits of the group’s work. According to Boissiere, Vreeland was responsible for organizing a core group of young designers at UCLA, including Hodgetts and Howard. Interestingly, there was no mention of Kappe, who by 1980 had involved nearly every one of these architects at SCI-Arc as well. Ironically, SCI-Arc was never mentioned in the article. In 1980, perhaps SCI-Arc was still

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<sup>57</sup> Olivier Boissiere, “Ten California Architects,” *Domus* 604 (March 1980), 17-35.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

viewed as a school operating within the paradigm of late Modernism, at odds with a postmodern aesthetic thriving within design publications.

An early champion of the architecture coming out of Los Angeles in the late 1970s and early 1980s was Yukio Futagawa founder of *Global Architecture*, a Japanese design publication with a focus on Japanese and international contemporary design. An iconic issue representing the adolescent sensibilities of the LA School was a “Special Feature” issue *GA Houses 9: New Waves in American Architecture* with Moss’ quirky Fun House splashing the cover in the July 1981 issue [Figure 2.34]. The oblique view of the cardboard model exposed its distinct black and red checkerboard facade, an imitation cross section of a fractured conical ziggurat playhouse for his clients’ children.

This celebration of a nominal typology on the cover of a widely disseminated design publication demonstrated a critique and alternative to the heroic architecture of the discipline’s past. It breathed levity in opposition to the intellectually driven work of Peter Eisenman or Aldo Rossi of the 1970s and whose projects exemplified formal syntax and typological archetypes respectively. A project like Moss’ could become contextually relevant for a culture described by Reyner Banham as surfurbia.<sup>59</sup> The free-spirited attitude was also written about by Charles Jencks, who described the Los Angeles architecture of the early 1980s in his book about the city, *Heteropolis*. Jencks referred to Los Angeles as the “center for self-rebirth. . . . Whether true or not, the perception of this openness and opportunity becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy as it pulls in more and more people on the move.”<sup>60</sup> While architecture’s intelligentsia theorized semiotics

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<sup>59</sup> Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1971), Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Charles Jencks, *Heteropolis*, London: Academy Editions, 1993, 17.

and formalism, a rebellious attitude in the architects of California engendered calculated bravado.

In an interview by Eric Owen Moss with Thom Mayne for *LA Architect*, “2-4-6-7 1/2,” Mayne reflected on the culture of Los Angeles.

When I saw the recent P/A Awards I found them frightening, the work of a dogmatic, tight school. For us, though, I don’t feel a constricting. I feel there’s real opportunity to bust loose. One of the wonderful things about practicing on the West Coast is that there isn’t the pressure for party line stuff. There seems to be friendships on a personal level and discussions on an academic/professional level that happen without anyone insisting on the necessity for being in one camp or another. The P/A Awards issue is the thing you read on the john. I’m still buying the *Complète* on time anyway. And I would still consider myself to be a modernist. Exploiting the various functional aspects of any given situation develops the potency of the thing.

In the 1980 PA Awards, Morphosis received a citation for their Flores Residence and Coy Howard received two citations. Mayne appeared to be railing against the work of Machado/Silvetti and Michael Graves that used distinct Classical and Neo-Classical references. That year, Robert A.M. Stern, Frank Gehry, Charles Rogers, C.F. Murphy, and Helmut Jahn were the jurors. In the discussion about Graves’ Plocek House an exchange between Gehry and Stern illuminated the quality of aesthetics. Gehry concluded that Graves had the skill to transfer the aesthetic of the drawing into the aesthetic of the building. Stern’s response sharpened the point and on the surface appeared to be at odds with Mayne’s disposition toward exploiting function. Stern claimed the value of aesthetics in architecture.

The aesthetic is the only important thing about building. When architects get together to talk about the state of their art, aesthetics is the only interesting thing, although there may be many ways to talk about it and many ways to define it. . . . The architect may be concerned with a million things, but the only buildings that we are finally interested in are the ones that speak to us from an aesthetic point of view.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Robert Stern, “The 247th P/A Awards,” *Progressive Architecture* Vol LXI, No 1 (January 1980), 98.

Ironically, Charles Jencks published the 2-4-6-8 House in his special issue of *Architectural Design*, Modern Classicism under the label, Primitive Classicism.

With its cheerleading title, [2-4-6-8] makes references across opposite taste-cultures. The cube (cella), pyramid (pitch-roof), entrance signifier (pediment), concrete block (rusticated base), and studio with asphalt shingles (piano mobile) are treated with sober proportionality. . . . The straightforward use of modest materials, asphalt and concrete block, mark this building as an example of the West Coast Fundamentalist School. Modernist touches included the De Stijl lap joint and primary coloring, the asymmetrical entrance and trellis (to come), and the “handbook” of assembly instruction which is provided in a Constructivist manner so the primitive hut can be erected by everyman.<sup>62</sup>

A year later an entire issue of *Architectural Design* devoted to Los Angeles contextualized the city through periods of architectural development between 1930 and 1980. Better for flipping through than sincere concentration, the eclectic issue reads like a scrapbook of Los Angeles architecture with dozens of thumbnail images and does not present a clear body of work suggesting what lies behind the collection. In Alson Clark’s introduction to chapter two he regarded that the development of two new architecture schools, UCLA and SCI-Arc stimulated progress in the city.<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, the issue comes off as too disorganized to maintain a coherent thread. In his attempt to categorize contemporary work, John Mutlow used Hollywood as a typological metaphor for Los Angeles’ diversity to decipher recent architectural trends, calling it “a theatrical scenic backdrop, a city of stage sets.”<sup>64</sup> Featuring work from Moss and Stafford, Morphosis, Howard, Ray Kappe, Glen Small, Studio Works, Gehry and many others under the chapter “Architecture in LA Today,” Mutlow categorized the architectural work in 1980 Los Angeles according to 11 types of stage set; those included, Taut Skin Membrane,

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<sup>62</sup> Charles Jencks, *Architectural Design: Post Modern Classicism* 5/6 (1980), 112.

<sup>63</sup> Alson Clark, “Introduction,” *Los Angeles: Architectural Design Profile AD/USC Look at LA*, ed. Derek Walker, London: Academy Editions, 1981, 43

<sup>64</sup> John V. Mutlow, “Architecture in LA Today,” *Los Angeles: Architectural Design Profile AD/USC Look at LA*, ed. Derek Walker, London: Academy Editions, 1981, 96.



Miesian, Participation, Modern, Historical Illusion, High Art, Hollywood Modern, New Directions, Component Parts, Drawings as High Art, and Stage Set [Figure 2.35].<sup>65</sup> The 11 categories presented Los Angeles architecture as a difficult field to compartmentalize.

This optimistically demonstrated Los Angeles as a place where anything goes, and as a place where wide-ranging conversations took place with room for new ideas if given proper emphasis. Mutlow's organization of categories was vapid with little depth due to graphic issues such as image-to-page ratios that complicated with disorder. The lack of any detailed explanations linking the work cohesively disrupted the issues assessment with a common thematic. According to Mutlow the stage set metaphor implied freedom.<sup>66</sup> However, with inadequate substantiation the claim remained hollow. Instead of providing a basis for substance, the stage set performed as a mask, as something it was not, a veneer and unreal.

In the early 1980s three exhibitions continued the theme of showcasing the artistic practices of architects working in Los Angeles; (1) *California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture 1982*; (2) *The California Condition: A Pregnant Architecture*; and (3) *Los Angeles Now*. In each exhibition the attempt was made to classify the young generation of architects in Los Angeles and their marked differentiation from their predecessors.

*California Counterpoint* was co-sponsored by the San Francisco Art Institute and the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York [Figure 2.36]. Traveling between the two cities the exhibition showed the work of seven architecture practices including Batey and Mack, Frederick Fisher, Frank Gehry, Coy Howard, Morphosis, Stanley Saitowitz, and Studio

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 96-119.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 96.

Works. In the exhibition catalogue Nory Miller wrote about the architects freedom through their relative seclusion, the influences from artists and material experimentation, and an appeal for instinct over logic as common threads running throughout the work. Miller remarked, “at its best, the work of these architects tangles heroically with the incompatibilities of invention and precedent; at its weakest, restless reinterpretation becomes mired in decoration.”<sup>67</sup>

Michael Sorkin who also contributed an essay created his own classification for the architects in the exhibition through terms constituting the “range” and “rhetoric” of the work. He offered the following list: apocalypse, weather, madness, Disney, death, the movies, banality, America, cars, the artist, back east, the future.<sup>68</sup> Categorizing the work from Los Angeles was difficult. In part this had to do with the lack of writing by the architects to articulate methods outlining clear motives. This also had to do with their embrace of diverse sources of inspiration that pursued discovery through multiple styles of production alternating when opportunities arose. In Sorkin’s essay he commented on identifying the contribution the exhibition made through drawings, models, and other artifacts, in lieu of built work. “Unlike its predecessors, the new wave of Los Angeles architecture was widely interpreted before it was created.”<sup>69</sup> A humorous detail from both Miller and Sorkin was their reference of hot tubs amid their characterizations of the work. While the hot tubs were not integral programs, what became telling from their inclusion was an attitude toward architecture that was fun, relaxed, indulgent,

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<sup>67</sup> Nory Miller, “California Architects,” *California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture 1982*, New York: Rizzoli, 1982, 2.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Sorkin, “Explaining Los Angeles,” *California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture 1982*, New York: Rizzoli, 1982, 8-21.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

and pleasurable, while maintaining rigor. These kinds of qualities would allow Charles Jencks to posit the emergence of an LA School only a year later.

In a *Los Angeles Times* article discussing *California Counterpoint* John Dreyfuss raised the role of exhibitions in architecture to increase the public's awareness of architectural artifacts. Dreyfuss explained Robert Mangurian's position that "an architect's work is far better represented in an exhibition of drawings and models than in the resulting buildings. 'The architect doesn't make the buildings,' Mangurian said. 'The architect makes the models and drawings. They are the purest expression of his ideas. They are uncompromised.'"<sup>70</sup> Mangurian's claim suggested an attitude of authority in regard to the objects that an architect actually creates [Figure 2.37]. To be clear, architects do make and coordinate building projects, by studying ranging topics from form to technology and communicate their ideas through drawings, diagrams, and models in academic and professional contexts. What Mangurian called attention to was that architects do not only rely on buildings to explore what architecture is, it can also be questioned through the artifacts architects produce by foregrounding or combining representation and objecthood. In this mode, architectural artifacts have the opportunity to not only reflect concrete ideas about built architecture, but they can also spark a viewer's imagination to understand material and immaterial qualities in architecture.

Four years later Robin Evans echoed Mangurian's observation in a seminal text, "Translations from Drawing to Building." Evans explored the conceptual value of architectural drawing. A well-known passage from Evans' text described a situation architects find themselves when working. "I was soon struck by what seemed at the time the peculiar disadvantage under

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<sup>70</sup> John Dreyfuss, "Architecture in Search of a Style," *Los Angeles Times* (May 7, 1982), H1.

which architects labour, never working directly with the object of their thought, always working at it through some intervening medium, almost always the drawing.” Evans identified two options regarding the status of the drawing.

One emphasiz[es the] corporeal property of things made, the other concentrat[es] on the disembodied properties of the drawing. . . . in the one corner, involvement, substantiality, tangibility, presence, immediacy, direct action; in the other, disengagement, obliqueness, abstraction, mediation and action at a distance. They are opposed but not necessarily incompatible.<sup>71</sup>

One body of work included in the *California Counterpoint* exhibition that demonstrated the confluence of representation and objecthood was Coy Howard’s Drawls, which were conceived as models of drawings, and physicalized some of the properties explored in his graphite perspectives [Figures 2.38-2.39].

The Drawls offered specific qualities of architecture through the precise selections and compositions of media and format. Architectural qualities emerged through Howard’s attention to scale, formal differentiation, and details. Hovering in an ambiguous territory between representation and object, the Drawls fused material effects while relying on representation to nudge a work toward a recognizable form charged by rigid edges balanced with soft curves. The grit of the Drawls patina offset the pristine clarity of abstract linework. In this respect they alienated architecture by diminishing representational properties for experiential ones. They repelled traditional readings of the architectural object by commanding the interpretation of an object, hinting at contextual relationships masked in dark blacks and greys, or by the shape of a frame. Howard’s Drawls produced the quality of estrangement by straddling conventions of painting, sculpture, and architectural representation. While subverting expectations of what an

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<sup>71</sup> Robin Evans, ”Translations from Drawing to Building (1986),” *Translations from Drawing to Building*, London: Architectural Associations Publications, 1997), 160.

architect creates, they expanded opportunities for architectural artifacts to establish new territories of discovery through aesthetic play, and became a perspicuous representation of an intermediate case, where it became too simple to label the Drawls as drawings, paintings, or sculpture.<sup>72</sup>

Representationally, Howard's Drawls challenged the quotidian understanding of architectural representation through their tendency to distort scalable forms. They mixed identifiable 3-dimensional objects with suggestive formal sensibility. They were oftentimes made from conventional found materials, forged into place, appearing raw, and fluttering between phase changes. Instead of images with correspondence to architecture they produced contingencies, becoming 1-to-1 manifestations of ideas—objects no longer residing as a description for architecture, but became a medium of architecture, drawing on tones and essences. The qualities inherent to the Drawls suggest an attitude about architectural experience that John Dewey would describe as the quality of “perception that replaces bare recognition. . . . The esthetic or undergoing phase of experience is receptive. It involves surrender.”<sup>73</sup> The Drawls surrender preconceptions of representation by manipulating materials and forms for aesthetic affect, producing architectural qualities through their configurations.

An important distinction that Evans made resembled Mangurian's claim that speculated on the rawness of the idea to be present in the artifacts that an architect produced, not in the eventual construction of the object those artifacts described. The power of this claim elevated the cultural role of the discipline to supersede the profession. What was proposed was that

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<sup>72</sup> These ideas regarding perspicuous representation and intermediate cases comes from Ludwig Wittgenstein, “122” *Philosophical Investigations*, Second Ed., Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1958.

<sup>73</sup> John Dewey, “Having an Experience,” in *Art as Experience*. New York: Perigree, Penguin Group Inc., 2005, 54-55.

architecture's value resided in its communication through objects with ranging scales and from ranging mediums consumed by a diverse public. This ability of the artifact's motive related to how these architects worked to derive qualities through the presenting characteristics in their work. When architecture's ideas are expressed in objects other than buildings, the aesthetic qualities of drawings and models reflect a discourse enlivened by the experience of designed objects with manifold properties. A plan is no longer a document that describes unfulfilled potential that becomes unnecessary after construction. Instead a plan also becomes a document that establishes relationships to affect an audience's imagination for architectural experience.

A plan is cinematic. It is a configuration of forms composing a context collapsed like a Hiroshi Sugimoto theater photograph [Figure 2.40]. Multiple narratives co-exist in a single expression resolved by an audience imaginatively through moments of continuity and discontinuity, pauses and ruptures. Mentally inhabiting the territory of drawings provides access to eccentric experiences comprised of linear or nonlinear narratives, formal arrangements of content, or thematic combinations. These jumps across space and time are mappable through interpreting the information available.<sup>74</sup> The experience of looking at an architectural plan offers a corollary to viewing film, but differs by composing jumps through space rather than composing jumps through time. A drawing enacts scenarios incompatible with lived reality, but because a viewer can suspend their disbelief that such an experience is impossible they can experience contradictory events through a drawing's composition, such as a palimpsest, or more simply,

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<sup>74</sup> Colin McGinn, author of *The Power of Movies: How Screen And Mind Interact* presents a useful idea that "a dream is a complex mental product, and not a mere copy of ordinary experience . . . whose output consists of spatio-temporally fractured sensory/affective narratives . . . [dreaming] is not the result of learning, it must be innate." McGinn wrote about dreams in relation to understanding jump cuts in film, but his description could also apply to interpreting compositions of forms in an architectural drawing or artifact. Colin McGinn, *The Power of Movies: How Screen And Mind Interact*, New York: Pantheon Books, 2005, 112.

viewing the programmatic relationships of two rooms separated by walls. These kinds of experiences produce a conflicting duality with events and conditions simultaneously present and impossible to engage directly.

Two additional exhibitions rounded out the exposure of the work of the next generation of California architects. The first was *The California Condition: A Pregnant Architecture* curated by Stanley Tigerman and Susan Grant Lewin at the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art [Figure 2.41]. The second was *Los Angeles Now*, held at the Architectural Association (AA) in 1983 and was curated by Peter Cook and Barbara Goldstein [Figure 2.42]. Both of these exhibitions relied on critics outside of Los Angeles to assemble and critique the work. This gave the architects opportunities to have their work escape Los Angeles and influence discussions across the country and outside of it.

In his essay for the exhibition catalogue, Tigerman relayed the often-used simplification of the architecture emerging from California. “California is, above all, a place where the recognition of the individual in his or her most idiosyncratically exaggerated form is celebrated.”<sup>75</sup> But he tempered that reading with a caution that the work was not as freewheeling as it was often described. “California is simply not as open-ended a condition as one might believe, but rather it is more pre-conceived than purely conceptual in its composition.”<sup>76</sup> He identified four categories, each with sub-sections, for classifying the work: (1) Historic Regionalism; (2) Pragmatic Modernism; (3) Manipulated Materialism; and (4) Dematerialized (Disappearing?) Cutting Edge. He linked the pragmatism of the second category to two schools,

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<sup>75</sup> Stanley Tigerman, “The California Condition,” *The California Condition, Exhibition Catalog* (La Jolla: La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 1982), 12.

<sup>76</sup> Stanley Tigerman, “The California Condition,” *The California Condition, Exhibition Catalog* (La Jolla: La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 1982), 13.

SCI-Arc and University of Southern California. “Certain architecture schools have institutionalized this modernist mode: both the University of Southern California and the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-ARC) are predominant among those having tunnel vision in this particular arena.”<sup>77</sup> Yet, ironically, Tigerman positioned the work of SCI-Arc faculty outside of that category.

Ray Kappe factored as a “father figure” in the category of Manipulated Materialism. This category was characterized by the “techniques and sociology of pragmatic building and housing. . . . [And] begins to address the joint issues of marketing and communication and includes larger issues of formal manipulation and even attempts to embrace the recent phenomenon, ‘Attitude’.”<sup>78</sup> Eric Owen Moss, Eugene Kupper, and Michael Franklin Ross were classified under a sub-section of this category. They were referred to as “deco-tech tricksters and a general grab bag of post-modernists.”<sup>79</sup> Other SCI-Arc faculty such as Morphosis, and SCI-Arc’s close affiliates at this time, Coy Howard, Frank Gehry, Studio Works, and Fred Fisher were grouped into Tigerman’s more progressive category, Dematerialized (Disappearing?) Cutting Edge, which he described as having post-functional and conceptual tendencies.<sup>80</sup> In his announcement of the forthcoming exhibition John Dreyfuss remarked that the show featured previously unpublished work and reported Tigerman’s forecasting of architecture’s future of “what’s going to happen.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>81</sup> John Dreyfuss, “Architecture in Search of a Style,” *Los Angeles Times* (May 7, 1982), H1.



The exhibition in London, *Los Angeles Now*, at the Architectural Association was the first time that work from this generation of Los Angeles architects was assembled in a group show outside of California. One of the curators, Peter Cook, had become familiar with Los Angeles architecture from having spent time at UCLA in the late 1960s through the Chrysalis Group and lecturing at UCLA.<sup>82</sup> In 1980 Cook had corresponded with Kappe regarding being in Los Angeles during the spring of 1981 and enquired about an extended visit to “Cyarch.” He was invited by Kappe to be involved with a studio and to give a lecture.<sup>83</sup> In 1982 Cook and Ron Herron exhibited new work at SCI-Arc’s architecture gallery. The exhibition at the AA featured 19 practices, the majority of whom were faculty or recent grads of SCI-Arc. Though Glen Small’s drawing of *The Green Machine* was included in Cook’s catalogue essay, he was not one of the architects included in the exhibition. Unlike the other exhibitions, three of Kappe’s houses were featured in the AA show, all of which responded with an aesthetic derived from environmental concerns. Moss’ iconic *Funhouse* playfully tilted on the black and red cover of the catalogue.

In a description that could seemingly apply to Mayne or Moss, Cook explained a casual demeanor lined with erudition. “The best young architects are pitching-in at a traditional point, and high architecture occurs by stealth as a Harvard taught aesthete turns carpenter and bike-runner whilst still humming Scarlatti and attempting to look like a cattle-hand.”<sup>84</sup> Cook continued his characterization, linking it to SCI-Arc and the relationship between student and faculty member, remarking about an inspiring atmosphere with reduced hierarchical roles.

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<sup>82</sup> Simon Sadler, *Architecture without Architecture*, Boston: MIT Press, 2005, 151.

<sup>83</sup> Peter Cook and Ray Kappe, Personal Correspondence, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1980).

<sup>84</sup> Peter Cook, “City of Dreams,” *Los Angeles Now*, London: Architectural Association, 1983, 4.

This same aesthete will be bringing on other young architects in a tacky factory shed that on paper reads as the ‘Southern California Institute of Architecture,’ and he will be indulging in that game of cajoling, criticism and throwaway dismissal that is the inheritance from the Beaux-Arts—despite physical appearances. There will be fewer signs of heroics. In the extreme nonchalance of the atmosphere you will have to listen hard to tell which is the Master or Pupil<sup>85</sup>

The collegiality between practices and the roles of SCI-Arc and UCLA as points of intersection for the architects to engage discussions was also picked up on by Goldstein. “The reason for this cross-fertilization is the presence of SCI-ARC and UCLA, where many of these practitioners teach, and some of them studied. These schools have encouraged communication and debate.”<sup>86</sup>

The projects from *Los Angeles Now* embodied the complexity of a distinct Los Angeles Postmodernism—an emblematic charisma that provoked Charles Jencks to write about the work in a 1983 review of the exhibition, which was featured in *AA Files* that first posited an LA School. Jencks wrote of Moss’ projects embracing an LA Style, stating, “all the clashes and intersections are here: on the one hand a perfect expression of the laid back Angeleno with his shoes off, drink in hand, contemplating the next way he can extend his personal fulfillment, and on the other hand a free celebration of architectural motifs.”<sup>87</sup> This aesthetic, working toward an ambition that could also be described as the precision of casual indifference, succeeded at critiquing the Los Angeles vernacular through a rigorous study that looked effortless with backhanded playfulness.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Barbara Goldstein, “Los Angeles in Context,” *Los Angeles Now*, London: Architectural Association, 1983, 7.

<sup>87</sup> Jencks, Charles. "Los Angeles Now: 29 April-29 May, 1983: LA Style - LA School [Exhibition Review]." *AA Files* 5 (1984): 90.

Barbara Goldstein referred to the architects as “stylists . . . [with the] ability to *style* their buildings, to elaborate their broad ideas in built detail.”<sup>88</sup> The push to differentiate themselves as architects with an aesthetic agenda who invented new strategies for their work was understood by Goldstein. “The area in which their experimentation is taking place is largely esoteric. Theirs is an architecture whose concern is architecture, an aesthetic exercise rather than a practical or social one.”<sup>89</sup> By 1983 a new generation of architects from Los Angeles escaped its provinciality armed with a clear voice. Though still largely unseasoned builders, an attitude had matured, representing the expression of architecture that could persuade an audience through rigorous techniques and the conviction to be recognized.

### **Terrence Glassman’s Social Approach to Architectural Education**

Among faculty at SCI-Arc there was a consistent conversation on the topic being alternative, and whether that meant alternative architecture or alternative education.<sup>90</sup> Though instructors like Glen Small insisted on alternative architecture, an alternative approach for design education at SCI-Arc was Terry Glassman’s ambition for learning with a clear methodology that facilitated students’ abilities at problem-seeking as much as problem-solving. In an interview with Glassman, he described that he would begin conversations with his students by explaining “we don’t have the answers. If we had the answers, there wouldn’t be so many problems in the world.’ It’s really about helping them to develop the skills that they need to be able to address these

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<sup>88</sup> Barbara Goldstein, “Los Angeles in Context,” *Los Angeles Now*, London: Architectural Association, 1983, 8.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>90</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 5, 2015.

problems themselves.”<sup>91</sup> Glassman’s instruction at SCI-Arc was humanistic. He worked to develop students’ critical skills to ask questions that responded with social and ethical impact through design.

Regarding the instructor’s responsibility he paraphrased Louis Kahn, “as an educator you raise the question. It’s for the student to come up with the answer and find an answer that is meaningful and appropriate.”<sup>92</sup> A distinction Glassman made was the difference between designing an institution and a school becoming “an expression of the institution of learning.”<sup>93</sup> In the context of design education, educators’ abilities to excite the exploration of those qualities, of raising the questions versus answering the questions for the students is an important lesson. Design can be taught in such a way that more effort is spent learning a technique for a solution than understanding the value of the question that initiated the inquiry. One strategy for learning mathematics, that could apply to learning in design, occurs in math courses when students work collaboratively, testing and critically assessing how to arrive at a solution without being given the equation to get there. For students, this method of learning can help them to think creatively about the problems they encounter, regardless of the problem, and can initiate active learning driven by curiosity.

When Glassman had his interview at SCI-Arc to become an instructor he described going to lunch with Kappe who invited him to the school to meet the faculty and students. When he arrived at SCI-Arc’s Berkeley Street warehouse “everyone [was] . . . in a big circle in the Main

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<sup>91</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 19, 2015.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 5, 2015.

Space, and they all asked me questions and interviewed me.”<sup>94</sup> Glassman felt that he had a good relationship with Kappe because of his research on behavioral studies in architecture.<sup>95</sup> His involvement with multidisciplinary work at other universities sparked courses that he co-taught at SCI-Arc with experts from University of Southern California (USC), UCLA, and the Wright Institute, who fueled conversations about architecture by relating it to psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Two of the courses influenced from these relationships were Architecture, Planning, and Social Sciences, and Architecture and Behavior. Glassman’s course applied a student’s learning from another discipline to shape his/her understanding of design problems and solutions. Architecture, Planning, and Social Sciences first showed up on the SCI-Arc course schedule the following year and continued until 1986.

Another course complimented the ambitions of Architecture Planning and Social Sciences and was taught by Bill Kingsbury and Dave Stuppelbean. Their course was called Social Philosophy, which was taught in 1976. The syllabus in Ray Kappe’s archive for Social Philosophy described its content. “A synthesis of leading philosophies dealing with the evolution of the environment, consciousness, and culture.”<sup>96</sup> The course goals laid out two bullet pointed objectives: “To expand our working vocabularies, imaginations, intellect and personal awareness. To explore techniques for presenting abstract information graphically.”<sup>97</sup> Each week covered reading and discussion for a new book. Some of the books included Jung’s *The*

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Social Philosophy, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, 1976.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

*Undiscovered Self*, McLuhan's *Understanding Media*, Fuller's *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*, and Bookchin's *Our Synthetic Environment*.

Architecture and Behavior was broken up into three repeated segments. Each segment corresponded with studying behavior relative to an environment's design for a designated age group. For example, students would study early childhood through research of the social dynamics carried out through the architectural typology of preschools. Following segments continued this kind of research by investigating adolescence and early adulthood and culminated with studying adulthood and old age.

To facilitate this kind of learning process, Glassman's outside experts from the social sciences discussed these topics from their disciplinary perspective. His efforts integrated those discussions through the class' work that translated behavioral principles through design. Students were asked to work in groups.

They had to then go into the preschool and study it. They had to draw it up and model it, study it, and then during each of the three weeks, get more information and more examples. During this month period, as a team they were doing this project, and their objective was to then see what they would do to enhance the design of this existing facility based on what they had learned about the developmental issues and present it architecturally."<sup>98</sup>

After four weeks of working on a project the students presented their proposals to the class with feedback from the outside experts. Glassman's goal was for the behavioral, psychological, and social component of design to gain equal footing as structural or mechanical issues in the development of design projects.<sup>99</sup> This sequence was repeated two more times over the course of the semester with the other age groups. Repetition allowed the students to reflect on this

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<sup>98</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 5, 2015.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

methodology for design by evolving their skills with the kind of research Glassman was after, but it did not repeat the same topic, by changing the scope for each segment the students learned how a robust methodology applied to more than one design project.

Glassman noted that engaging design with this kind of methodology showed students how other disciplines like anthropology and psychology could affect design goals and outcomes.<sup>100</sup> He observed that the students in the graduate program at SCI-Arc tended to ignore their multidisciplinary backgrounds.

Students [were] basically turning their back on their undergraduate experiences and embracing the architectural education, but not bringing in the experience they had in literature, or in history, or sociology, or whatever it might be. My approach has always been inclusive rather than exclusive. The program . . . I set up . . . integrated multidisciplinary courses [in the] undergraduate program.<sup>101</sup>

Without other fields to compliment the work of the department and vice versa, an education for an undergraduate student at SCI-Arc could easily become myopic. This limitation could debilitate a young student who lacked exposure to thinking outside of his/her own bubble. Recognizing this, Glassman sought out opportunities to maintain the focus of architecture, but channeled through outside discussions.

The methods he developed in his seminar impacted his teaching in design studios as well. When Kappe hired Glassman he was asked to coordinate the second year design studio, which he taught with Bill Simonian. By second year at SCI-Arc, the students began to work on distinct programs within known architectural typologies. Glassman established a brief for the students to design an architecture office. The program was less important than how engagement with the program was taught and what that exposed. Students were encouraged to reflect on their

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

relationship to an environment through observation and subsequent critique of that understanding through architectural design. This particular program, however, was a context the students should have had particular interests in as it engaged their immediate and/or near experience. In ways similar to the preschool example from the seminar, the students visited offices of ranging scale to affect their questions for deriving solutions in their proposals.

The exercise of visiting architecture offices helped them understand how a work environment functioned relative to programmatic requirements and scales by observing employees' behaviors relative to the space. The information gathered by the students was visualized through flow diagrams that they worked on in small groups. In their presentations to the rest of the studio, students articulated not only the organization of the spaces, but also what they had learned about the physical and social dynamics from studying them. The next phase lasted upward to three weeks and focused on the class determining the programmatic and social requirements of the architecture office that the students in the studio would design. This included the number of employees and the type of practice it would be. These considerations, Glassman recalled, helped them ask "what should the square footage be and what kind of functions or activities have to be accounted for in the program?"<sup>102</sup> With observations rooted in discovering how something was and how it could be changed for the better allowed the students to speculate how a programmatic solution could evolve while maintaining pragmatism in their results.

Another exercise Glassman embraced was using the Johari Window to grow understanding from what students learned. The Johari Window is a square diagram organized with four quadrants. The top of the square designates two categories: "Known to Self" and "Not Known to

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<sup>102</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 19, 2015.



Self.” The left hand side of the square designates two other categories: “Known to Others” and “Not Known to Others.” This culminates with the four quadrants containing the following information: known to self and known to others, not known to self and known to others, known to self and known to others, and not known to self and not known to others [Figure 2.43]. For Glassman this simple diagram had profound consequence to reflect on knowledge, but more importantly, the acquisition of knowledge. “One of our objectives with this process, using the Johari Window, [was] to be able to expand in the realm of what we know, but also to be able to understand and acknowledge what we don't know.”<sup>103</sup> By engaging the discoveries of their classmates students could grow what they did not know or think to consider. Adding that kind of discourse to students design experience encouraged questioning not only what architecture could be, but also what it should be.

This second year design studio engaged a process where the students designed the programmatic brief for the course themselves, which is an atypical exercise in architecture schools. Glassman’s approach to learning “introduced content and principle, and then [he] stepped back.”<sup>104</sup> This meant that he didn’t tell them what to design, but gave them a structure to generate design thinking to affect the development of a project. This approach, relative to the description of knowing and not knowing from the Johari Window, allowed each of those students to create their own body of research that they shared with the other students. Then, collectively, from their diverse interpretations, they determined the brief. They built the brief together, coming away with something more robust than if one student, or one faculty person wrote it alone. Also, they had ownership over the actual exercise for the project that they were

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

working on, even from the standpoint of its conceptual development. They evaluated that as they progressed relative to how they determined what it needed to be. This approach arrived at programmatic distinctions without dictating what the actual design needed to look like, or how it had to be organized, but outlined what the organization must contain. Until this point the students' efforts created the means from which design could generate. To assist their developments in form, students diagrammed relationships that exemplified the conceptual frameworks for their projects, and created conceptual physical models.

Getting students to work formally, the studio began to consider different organizational schemes. For example, Glassman would discuss with them if their concept suggested a linear scheme, or a cluster or branching system. The goal was for students to translate their concepts into a physical environment that reflected the discoveries of their research. That did not mean they literalized their diagrams, but that the DNA of the concept produced generative opportunities to explore inventive formal relationships in three-dimensional models. The models were coded by abstract materials and colors, which referred to various attributes to create an organizational system that included primary and secondary functions, structures, lighting, and circulation.<sup>105</sup> Each organizational system provided an additional opportunity for design considerations. For example, structure, which in this studio used post-and-beam construction, corresponding with their structures course, could influence spatial relationships by making a more dynamic expression as to how the structure defined programs, if it complimented the design concept.

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

In studio sessions the students discussed their work with their classmates to assess conceptual consistency as the project developed.<sup>106</sup> One example Glassman used to demonstrate a methodology of assessment was Louis Kahn's use of a conceptual diagram for his Unitarian Church in Rochester, New York [Figure 2.44].

He came up with this concept of this centralized sanctuary with the school wrapping around it. Then he talked about how that reflected the essence of what it meant to be Unitarian. . . . He was trying to express that in his architecture. Then he would take his scheme and turn it inside out and say, "Does it still work?" If he could turn it inside out and it still worked, it meant that it didn't work.<sup>107</sup>

This worked much like deducing an if-then statement. The value of an if/then statement for creative problem solving can expose the relationship between logic and product relative to a hypothesis, or hunch about how design should perform. In Lawrence Sklar's book, *Space, Time, and Spacetime*, he defined the sound logic of a hypothetical as being when "the consequent of the hypothetical is logically inferable from the antecedent."<sup>108</sup> For Glassman and his design students this kind of process helped demonstrate if the conceptual logic of their projects manifested an articulate design proposal that communicated its original intent.

By recognizing when a project lacked what it intended, this kind of assessment allowed students to learn the productive value of failure. If Kahn recognized that a solution to his diagram had failed, that became a productive moment because he understood the limits and the extremities of the design he produced. Kahn's next scheme could reflect what he learned, which could also mean he might have to rethink the conceptual strategy. How Glassman argued for the conceptual apparatus of the diagram to steer decision-making was similar to the logic of a

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Lawrence Sklar, *Space, Time, and Spacetime*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, 106.

manifesto. The diagram, like a manifesto, purported the value of a specified dogma. Both manifesto and diagram can become operatively opportunistic with their dogma by the way they allow something to be posited. The act of positing produces something, an idea or an object, and makes that something actionable. A manifesto recognizes a desire for the way something can be and outlines a course of action, a set of steps, to reach that desire, but does not recognize that as the only way to arrive at a solution, but simply recognizes it as a way.

Architecture can be dogmatic as long as it knows that it is and remains open to opportunities that arise. This kind of architecture is self-conscious and can transcend its outcomes if a more preferable alternative becomes evident. In this sense, dogma opens up opportunities for architecture to evolve and contradict. This way of using the dogmas of a manifesto is not negative. Instead, dogma can become a positive architectural reaction, a response to a clearly defined set of conditions. This response makes the instantiation, evolution, and/or contradiction of the manifesto's terms coherent and effectual by being a clear demonstration or resistance to its claims.

Using a manifesto this way implies that nothing is ever fixed, including knowledge and understanding. Points of view can always change and adapt. Learning does not stop. A manifesto suggests that ideas be put out there. This characterization of the manifesto proposes experimentation and testing the validity and logic of its ideas and products, that can contradict, build off of, challenge, and change. A manifesto is not an end, but a means. A manifesto establishes rules and allows ideas to fester, germinate, and transform. A manifesto plays easily with ideas, by laying a groundwork from which those ideas can be tested.

At the end of the semester Glassman's students would present their final projects in a typical review format, but he assembled the discussion in a way that he felt was more constructive for the students to learn. "I did not believe in a jury system, and I did not hold it as a jury system, because I don't like that notion that the student is on trial and has to justify what they had done. I wanted it to be a learning experience. It was a presentation. It was not a jury."<sup>109</sup> An important distinction is if the panel on a final review in architecture school is referred to as jurors or critics. Jury connotes a trial. Critic connotes evaluation and discussion. A critic exposes. A jury casts judgment, giving approval or condemnation. Critics reveal insights demonstrating value and inconsistencies by aiding peoples' ability to see what they could not have seen otherwise.

Reviews are a stressful and significant moment for both architecture students and their instructors who are vulnerable. It is the time when ideas are expressed and the products from those ideas are scrutinized. Glassman described his understanding of the culture of many juries at SCI-Arc.

What you found was typically it was for the benefit of the jurors. It had no relevance to the students. The jurors were there to prove what they knew and how quick they were. . . . It had no educational value to the students at all. It was purely an ego exercise for the superstars who were there to show off. . . . I wanted [reviewers] to be there for the students' benefit.<sup>110</sup>

This kind of assessment of reviews can go two ways. On one hand, the review should be focused on the development of a student's understanding and growing their awareness of architecture's concerns that reveal how their project impacts discursive progress through evaluating their work, exposing its successes and shortcomings. On the other hand, a review is also a great opportunity for architecture students to participate in disciplinary conversations with

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<sup>109</sup> Terrence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 19, 2015.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

the people responsible for its scope and direction. Students deserve both, which ideally occur at the same time. What Glassman cautioned was that reviews easily get off track from the students' projects and became an inside conversation between a small group of people.

Glassman's social agenda permeated all aspects of his students' experiences and through his courses, he gave a perspective that could be channeled to any architectural project regardless of typology or ambition. He appealed to an architect's sensibility for considering how their work reflected a broader understanding of its place within society. Glassman regarded Buckminster Fuller as his mentor.

Bucky used to say, "There are no clients for the real problems that need to be solved in the world." In other words, nobody is going to come and hire you to solve the problem with homelessness. Nobody is going to come and hire you to solve some of these environmental issues, or looking at global warming. . . . Bucky said, "It has to come from our initiative."<sup>111</sup>

This claim signified the responsibility of designers to affect change in ways that contribute to social progress. The understanding put forward was that these issues do not solve themselves; however, through design they can be worked on. They not only become noticed through awareness, but through designed alternatives for pressing cultural problems.

This teaching approach empowered the students to become involved in the decision-making process regarding architecture's value by determining where architecture focused its efforts. From this, the goal was to enrich architecture as a humanistic response that could affect the profession. Glassman described a problem he felt influenced too many of the concerns in professional practice.

We're still practicing architecture the way it was practiced in the 18th and 19th century, where it's the golden rule. The guy who has the gold makes the rules. . . . It's

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

the people who don't have money that need design, because they don't have the choices that are available to the wealthy. . . . One of the things that I was looking at and dealing with, with the students, was the re-design of design, because our old way of practicing does not serve the world and serve us.<sup>112</sup>

This attitude toward design education proposed a moral ethic to challenge the status quo of power. Though Glassman did not disavow formal ambitions, he worked to shape the directions of attention to problems outside of architecture's typical purview. An issue that can arise for many designers within these kind of discussions is how people choose to spend their creative energy, it also has to do with what happens to architecture designed for a diverse public.

An ambition would be for socially progressive architecture and formally progressive architecture to align. A mirror example to designer initiated solutions was someone like Steve Jobs at Apple Computers, who in a 1985 interview for *Playboy* responded to a question about the ability to realize great ideas. "We didn't build Mac for anybody else. We build it for ourselves. We were the group of people who were going to judge whether it was great or not. We weren't going to go out and do market research. We just wanted to build the best thing we could."<sup>113</sup> The charge of Fuller, via Glassman, suggested one way to synthesize great ideas that balanced formal and ethical considerations through research by coupling observation with execution. Designers need to feel unencumbered to exceed the pragmatics of constraints, and they need rigorous commitment to their work, pushing through obstacles while generating creative solutions. These skills prove essential to produce significant projects while evolving social and formal concerns.

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Steve Jobs and David Sheff, "Playboy Interview: Steve Jobs, in *Playboy* (February 1985).

## Developing Institutional Structure

In 1978 SCI-Arc began a European Studies Program that evolved over five years resulting with the purchase and renovation of a villa in Vico Morcote, Switzerland, that ran year-round courses in architecture. The first year the European Studies Program traveled to Nimes, France. The class was organized by a student, Ellen Christophe, and was led by SCI-Arc faculty member Roland Coate.<sup>114</sup> The following year Ray and Shelly Kappe took a group of students throughout Europe. During that year the Kappe's concluded the semester in Corona, Switzerland, where the students camped on the roof of Martin Wagner's villa.<sup>115</sup> A similar program was repeated in 1980. These experiences influenced Kappe to purchase real estate in Ticino, Switzerland. "Wagner found a villa in Vico Morcote . . . that had not been occupied for nearly 30 years (it had been occupied by Polish refugees in World War II . . .)." <sup>116</sup>

After gaining support from the town to have an architecture school there, SCI-Arc was able to purchase and restore the building. The decisions to buy land in Ticino were twofold: "It was the center of the Rationalist movement and Switzerland was more stable at that time."<sup>117</sup> Responding to Postmodern developments taking place at SCI-Arc Kappe felt that this exposure to Rationalism in its context facilitated students understanding of its relation to place. "The students would see where architecture of this style belonged in the world and not just accept it as a style of architecture that you place anywhere, especially not Los Angeles."<sup>118</sup> Kappe's polemic was clear, know what movements percolate throughout architecture, but know where they

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<sup>114</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, December 19, 2013.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.



belong. A challenge to this logic was that architecture during this time was undergoing a shift that became more globally connected. The era of architecture's regional associations was fading into diversified expressions transported across oceans.

After renovating the villa, which included “a restaurant and large terrace area to be used by students and the people of the village,”<sup>119</sup> the school opened for the students in 1983 [Figure 2.45]. Martin Wagner ran the school throughout the year, which was named SCI-Arc: VICO. He described the organization of the school in a 1995 article he wrote about the European campus.

The work in Vico Morcote is carried out in small groups in the privileged isolation of an old villa which serves both students and lecturers as a place to live and is supplemented by excursion and travel. More than merely receptive and designed to cater for Americans, the SCI-Arc: Vico is also intended as a regional forum of the architectural scene, a fact which it has proved by issuing invitations to innumerable Swiss architects for design seminars and lectures.<sup>120</sup>

The school was set up on a four-semester schedule with courses running in 10-week intervals at the villa followed by five weeks of travel throughout Europe. It was Kappe's intention that spending a semester at Vico would be a requirement for all students, though it was never implemented.<sup>121</sup> SCI-Arc sent students over the summer, fall, and winter semesters, and outside universities could rent the villa during the spring semester.<sup>122</sup> In 1982 Kappe spoke with Peter Cook and Ron Herron about the Architectural Association's involvement and lease of Vico from SCI-Arc and setting up a faculty exchange during the spring term.<sup>123</sup> The summer 1983 visiting faculty included Mario Botta, Luigi Snozzi, Mario Campi, and Reinhardt and Reichlin,

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Martin Wagner, “SCI-Arc, Vico Morcote,” in *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen* No. 82 (1995), 36.

<sup>121</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J. Smith, March 1, 2013.

<sup>122</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J. Smith, December 19, 2013.

<sup>123</sup> Ray Kappe, “Letter to Martin Wagner,” from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 1, 1982).

with SCI-Arc faculty members Martin Wagner and Daniel Herren.<sup>124</sup> SCI-Arc continued to send students to Vico for more than 25 years. The villa was eventually sold in 2009 during Eric Owen Moss' term as director.

In 1981 SCI-Arc opened the SCI-Arc Architecture Gallery, an official gallery for the school. The first exhibit was related to a research trip the Kappe's had taken to Mexico. The Mexican architect, Ricardo Legorreta introduced them to two generations of Modern Mexican architects.<sup>125</sup> These interactions spawned a lecture series and the eventual exhibition that led to the opening of the gallery and production of an exhibition catalogue, *Modern Architecture of Mexico*, directed by Shelly Kappe. Luis Barragán had turned down the invitation for a lecture visit, but had accepted a request from Shelly to speak with him for the series and gave them a tour of his work, which Ray Kappe photographed.<sup>126</sup>

SCI-Arc's gallery was located in a building adjacent to the school and was owned by the same company they had leased the Berkeley Street building from. This adjacent building was referred to as the Annex. As the graduate program grew, the Annex became the graduate students' studio spaces. The school also continued to refine its library and hired Rose Marie Rabin as the school's first librarian in 1980. Soon afterward, Rabin became the primary administrator responsible for many of the day-to-day operations at the school, intersecting with faculty, staff, and students.<sup>127</sup> SCI-Arc also maintained a woodshop for student and faculty to use for their projects. In 1983 Nick Doucakis supervised the shop. In 1983 the American Institute of

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<sup>124</sup> SCI-Arc Newsletter, from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>125</sup> Shelly Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, February 24, 2015.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ray Kappe and Shelly Kappe, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, February 24, 2015.

Architects honored both Rabin and Shelly Kappe. Rabin was awarded for having founded the organization Architects, Designers, and Planners for Social Responsibility. Shelly Kappe was “made an honorary member . . . in recognition for her contribution to the profession and the community on behalf of architecture.”<sup>128</sup>

In 1982 the faculty core board met several times over the summer to discuss institutional development and changes to the undergraduate and graduate curriculums. The unwritten policy of tenure and contract terms was also brought up. In a memo from Kappe to the faculty he clarified the school’s policies. “The prior system of assumed tenure after the first year was rescinded, and all faculty members who joined SCI-ARC after 1975 were to now receive two-year contracts, and those who completed their first year prior to fall ’82 were to receive one year contracts.”<sup>129</sup> Within one month of the end of a contract a faculty member would be reviewed and it would be determined if they were to receive a new contract. Sabbatical was another faculty concern. The board determined that after seven years of teaching a faculty member would receive two semesters of paid sabbatical leave with the salary of an incoming studio instructor.<sup>130</sup> With the Vico campus established there also needed to be a rubric for determining which faculty would be allowed to teach the European Studies studio. The board established that faculty would apply for this position. Applications had to demonstrate the “ability to strengthen the program through European experience, personal student support, European contacts, and longevity.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> SCI-Arc Newsletter, from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>129</sup> Ray Kappe, All Faculty Memo, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, October 25, 1982).

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. In my correspondences with SCI-Arc faculty there have been various accounts of SCI-Arc’s salary structure, further discussion on this topic would help to clarify what criteria determined faculty pay.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

Clarifying the faculty understanding of contracts and tenure was a pivotal discussion. The board, at that time was 11 members, nine faculty, and two students, one undergraduate and one graduate. This group acted as the decision making body for the school. The governance was clear. “Committees will make recommendations to the Board. Final decisions and policy will be made by the Board.”<sup>132</sup> At that time, the nine faculty members were the seven founding faculty and Glassman and Moss, who had started in 1974; who all had job security independent from board review. If a faculty board member resigned the board would vote a replacement member on.<sup>133</sup> The student representatives would relay decisions made at the meetings to the student body and held one-year terms “to provide continuity in the decision-making process.”<sup>134</sup>

Class schedules became articulate and were divided by student level and course type. The 1980-1981 catalog identified 42 faculty teaching at SCI-Arc. In the summer of 1983 Ray Kappe served on the advisory panel for the NCARB Education Evaluation Committee that reviewed the new NAAB performance criteria for first professional degree programs in architecture.<sup>135</sup> NAAB’s criteria that was discussed by NCARB included four different categories: (1) History, Human Behavior, and Environment (18 semester hours); (2) Design (58 semester hours); (3) Technical Systems (22 semester hours); and (4) Practice (six semester hours).<sup>136</sup> Similar categories in SCI-Arc’s Educational Materials catalog were evident as early as 1980.

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<sup>132</sup> April Board Meeting Decisions, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, April 1982).

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> NCARB, “Education Evaluation Committee, Architects Education Evaluation Advisory Panel: Memorandum of Meeting Proceedings, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, September 23-24, 1983).

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

In addition to outlining the studio sequences, the catalog broke seminars up topically and included technology, environmental controls, structure, history, theory, methodology, human factors, urban issues, professional electives, humanities/liberal arts, student directed seminars, and natural systems.<sup>137</sup> At this time there were no faculty with PhDs teaching classes. Bill Simonian taught the required history survey that went to 1850. Mark Bielski later taught this course. Albert Pope taught the required course, History of the Modern Movement. The theory courses included Twilight of the Idols taught by Moss, Issues in Architecture taught by Glassman, and Architecture and Ideals taught by Howard Lathrop. An introduction to architecture seminar was also listed as a theory course and was coordinated by Kappe and served as a course to introduce the new students to the faculty practices. Each week a different faculty member would speak about office structure or personal philosophy.<sup>138</sup> In 1983 the Introduction to Architecture course was renamed Faculty Forum and was coordinated by Eric Owen Moss.<sup>139</sup>

By 1982 there were more than 25 seminars on the fall schedule, each meeting two hours per week. Seminars included requisite history, representation, and structures courses, which were taught by the design faculty. In 1983 additional history courses included Mexican and Japanese Architectural History. There were topical courses focused on specific regions, such as a course on the Chicago School and Los Angeles Architecture. Many courses were geared toward environmental issues and environmental systems as well as professional practice and structures. Ched Reeder's course titled Computers in Architecture studied the computer as a design tool,

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<sup>137</sup> SCI-Arc Catalog, from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, c1980).

<sup>138</sup> Ray Kappe, "Introduction to Architecture," from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, c.1982).

<sup>139</sup> Eric Owen Moss, Faculty Forum Memo, from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, December 31, 1982).

design element, and design context and was a follow-up course to his Computer Applications seminar that introduced students to spreadsheets, word processing, database managing, and business graphics.<sup>140</sup> Glenn Small taught Natural Structures, Glassman taught Humanistic Design.

The *Educational Materials* catalog from 1980 outlined the objectives for the undergraduate curriculum. “A basic objective of the undergraduate program is to encourage students to assume increasing responsibility and independence as they progress through the years.”<sup>141</sup> This included how they would integrate with upper level undergraduate and graduate students as they advanced. One of the regulations that became outlined in the pedagogy was that students were only allowed to work with the same studio instructor for two semesters. This was meant to expose the students to the diversity of faculty at the school. The graduate program outlined three criteria for the production of architectural competency in the design studio in the same catalog, demonstrating its pedagogy for graduate students.

The first is to give the student a complete overview of all aspects of architecture and urban design by discussing the theoretical, philosophical, historical, and practical issues involved. The second objective is to help the student, by way of discussion, develop strategies for design. The general process explored is described as follows:

1. To identify the problem to be solved.
2. To gather and analyze information necessary for the task.
3. To generate ideas based upon the above findings.
4. To develop ideas.
5. To translate these ideas into architecture.

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<sup>140</sup> Ched Reeder, Course Descriptions in SCI-Arc Newsletter, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>141</sup> Educational Materials, from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, c. 1980).

The third and final objective is to help the student develop the means of communicating his/her work to others through verbal explanation and graphic representation techniques.<sup>142</sup>

Studios were organized by year and program. Glassman served as the undergraduate coordinator and established the curriculum for the program. Michael Rotondi was the graduate coordinator and developed the curriculum. The 3.5-year and two-year graduate programs achieved accreditation by NAAB in 1980.<sup>143</sup> Both graduate and undergraduate curriculums were reviewed in the summer of 1982. A document titled Proposed Graduate Curriculum outlined the required courses for the 3.5-year graduate degree for students without prior training in architecture that included one design studio and three seminars per semester.<sup>144</sup> SCI-Arc continued offering the two-year graduate program for students who held a BA in architecture and the one-year graduate program for students who held an accredited B.Arch degree. Each year SCI-Arc admitted 45 students to the 3.5-year M.Arch program.<sup>145</sup>

The studio sequence used a naming structure that was first used in the 1980-81 academic year and is still used today. First year is 1GA and 1GB, second year is 2GA and 2GB, and third year is 3GA and 3GB. The last semester was named 4GA. The core graduate studios occurred in the first four semesters of the program, which began with studying and designing smaller building types that grew in scale and complexity each semester, building off of the previous semester's projects. For example, students in the first semester of their first year might design a villa. In the following semesters they might design programs such as a library, or a salvation

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> NAAB, "Accredited Program Detail: Southern California Institute of Architecture," accessed December 17, 2015, [http://www.naab.org/tr/schools/view.aspx?record\\_id=20530](http://www.naab.org/tr/schools/view.aspx?record_id=20530).

<sup>144</sup> "Proposed Graduate Curriculum," from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 6, 1982).

<sup>145</sup> Ray Kappe, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, December 19, 2013.

army.<sup>146</sup> The first year, first semester, graduate studio was taught by Rotondi, Chris Dawson, and Albert Pope. Additional required courses included Architectural Communication, a representation seminar, History to 1850 taught by Mark Bielski, and Tectonics, taught by former founding SCI-Arc student, Dean Nota, which included building components, structural concepts, theory, and structural types. Rotondi would continue teaching in the 1GB studio and was joined by Alberto Bertoli. The 1GB semester was filled out with a freehand drawing seminar, Architecture History: 1760-1900, taught by Albert Pope, and a second structures course taught by the structural engineer David Taubman.<sup>147</sup>

The second year curriculum included the 2GA studio which was taught by Ray Kappe and Alberto Bertoli, with seminars including Architectural Communications II taught by Richard Orne and Ron Fiala, Modern Architectural History taught by Albert Pope, which covered architecture from 1900 to the present, and Urban History taught by Rotondi and Mayne.<sup>148</sup> The Urban History course was dropped on the official required graduate curriculum in the spring 1983 announcement and was replaced by Glassman's course, Humanistic Design.<sup>149</sup> The 2GB studio was taught by Mayne and Stafford, a theory seminar was taught by either Ellen Morris, Moss, or Lathrop, and there was a Mechanical/Electrical Systems course taught by Saul Goldin and Norma Sklarek. 2GB was the first semester graduate students could take an elective.

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<sup>146</sup> These kinds of programs are identified in the SCI-Arc exhibition catalogue, *Current Work* published by SCI-Arc in 1983.

<sup>147</sup> "Proposed Graduate Curriculum," from Ray Kappe's archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 6, 1982).

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Required Graduate Curriculum, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).



The two semesters the graduate students would take vertical studios were 3GA and 3GB. These studios were topical and based on a research/design objectives designated by the instructor.<sup>150</sup> The 3GA semester also included an elective of any choice, a theory elective, and Project and Office Management taught by Albert Pope. The 3GB semester continued with another selection of a vertical studio. In spring 1983 the vertical studios ranged. There was Computer Controlled Kinetic Environments taught by Ray Kappe and Ched Reeder; there were three five-week mini studios in Vernacular Housing, one of which was Third World and Native American Architecture and Planning taught by Nadir Khalili; there was also a vertical studio taught by Michael Black called Cliff Dwellings: Santa Monica Palisades.<sup>151</sup> The seminars proposed for 3GB included another theory elective, an elective of any choice, and Professional Practice.<sup>152</sup> The Professional Practice course was dropped in the 1983 curriculum announcement and was replaced with another elective.<sup>153</sup>

The proposed curriculum outlined the final semester of the 3.5-year graduate degree with a Final Project studio, dropping the title of thesis, which this studio had been called previously. The Final Project was proposed as a studio “developed each year by the grad faculty and will focus on a relevant urban problem within the L.A. metropolitan area.”<sup>154</sup> This last semester also included the student choosing two additional electives.

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<sup>150</sup> “Proposed Graduate Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 6, 1982).

<sup>151</sup> Course Descriptions in SCI-Arc Newsletter, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>152</sup> “Proposed Graduate Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 6, 1982).

<sup>153</sup> Required Curriculum Graduate, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>154</sup> “Proposed Graduate Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 6, 1982).

Over the first and second summers students were expected to either travel, or pursue individual work in history, design, or take other required courses.<sup>155</sup> In the third summer, prior to the final semester, students were advised to use that time preparing for their final project by engaging on “demographic, and analytical aspects of the problem.”<sup>156</sup> The two-year graduate students developed a thesis project over two semesters in their final year. Each semester, students continued to develop their portfolios, which would be presented in the spring of each year.<sup>157</sup> First and second year core work was also evaluated at the end of every year.<sup>158</sup>

The proposed undergraduate curriculum laid out a schedule much like the graduate program but used a slightly different naming convention. First year included 1A and 1B, with subsequent years following suit through five years. In addition to studios the first year seminars were Introduction to Architecture and Ecological Systems, Natural Structures, Architectural Communication, Basic Environmental Controls, Architectural Communication, and Evolution of the Modern Movement.<sup>159</sup> If students came into the undergraduate program without prior education two other courses were required in the first year, *The Ascent of Man* and Language Skills. *The Ascent of Man* was taught by Shelly Kappe, who used the BBC television series *The Ascent of Man* and Jacob Bronkowsky’s book of the same name to follow human progress

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> “Proposed Graduate Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, June 6, 1982).

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Required Undergraduate Curriculum, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).

through scientific achievements.<sup>160</sup> Language Skills was never clearly articulated in a SCI-Arc course catalog, but corresponded with humanities and general education requirements.<sup>161</sup>

The second year included two design studios and the following seminars. Structures A and B, History to 1850, Perspective and Delineation, Professional Practice 1, and an architectural history elective. Two more general education requirements included Architecture, Planning, and the Social Sciences and Political and Economic Theory.<sup>162</sup> Perspective and Delineation had originally been proposed to be taken in the first year, but was moved to second year on the official materials for the undergraduate curriculum.<sup>163</sup> Similarly, a history course was not proposed for the first year, with the first history course occurring in the second year.<sup>164</sup>

Third year continued with two more core design studios, a third structures course, and the seminars Mechanical/Electrical Systems, Humanistic Design, Lighting and Acoustics. The students had another elective choice for an architectural theory elective in their third year. In addition, the first semester of the third year introduced the first open elective. After the second year there were no more general education requirements. The third year ran as it was proposed from the 1982 summer meetings about curriculum development with only one change, the elective in the first semester was originally proposed as a history elective.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> “Educational Materials,” from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, c.1980).

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Required Undergraduate Curriculum, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>163</sup> “Proposed Undergraduate Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, July 16, 1982).

<sup>164</sup> Required Undergraduate Curriculum, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, spring 1983).

<sup>165</sup> “Proposed Undergraduate Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, July 16, 1982).

Included with the undergraduate curriculum proposal was a statement regarding the core curriculum for the undergraduate students. The core curriculum was the first three years of the accredited B.Arch degree, which outlined the pedagogy during this time. Glassman described how he envisioned the curriculum structure. “The core curriculum was designed so that . . . if a student was coming in with a background from other areas, they could come into the core at various points, depending upon their . . . experience.”<sup>166</sup> In 1A, studio projects would be grouped into three- to five-week sessions focusing on ordering principles and 2D design.<sup>167</sup> A focus was placed on the relationship between man and his/her environment.<sup>168</sup> In 1B, studio projects increased their duration to five weeks. The focus was on experiencing Los Angeles and engaging problem solving processes.<sup>169</sup> From 1B to 2A to 2B faculty continuity was proposed.<sup>170</sup> Likely, what this meant was that one of the faculty from the previous semester’s teaching team would be part of the following semester’s team.<sup>171</sup> One of the biggest changes to the core curriculum was that it shifted from two years to three years by the 1983 academic year. Previously the undergraduates would begin vertical studios after their second year.<sup>172</sup>

In 2A the students started to work on designing their first buildings. The scale was small and they used wood construction on three projects during the semester, while focusing on organization, lighting, and structure. The 2B studio also worked on three projects over the semester. The program, multi-unit housing, grew in scale and complexity. The structural system

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<sup>166</sup> Terence Glassman, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, November 19, 2015.

<sup>167</sup> They would use a text by Francis Ching for these exercises.

<sup>168</sup> “Core Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, July 16, 1982).

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> SCI-Arc still does this to some degree.

<sup>172</sup> SCI-Arc Catalog, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, c1980).

shifted to masonry construction and continued with the same issues from 2A with the addition of site, climate, and energy.<sup>173</sup> The number of projects proposed for 3A was dropped to two, which began to consider multiple building scenarios on a site. The structural system used for this semester was concrete, and continued to build off of previous skills with the addition of greater attention to context.<sup>174</sup> In the final core studio the students worked on one urban project that used steel construction. Context in this project shifted to an urban scale.<sup>175</sup>

By fourth year the undergraduate students began to have much more choice in their courses. This was their first year in vertical studios, and they could choose the instructor whose studio they were most interested in taking through a lottery system based on seniority. The vertical studios were integrated with the graduate students. In their fourth year they were required to take three courses, Project and Office Management, Urban Economics, Professional Practice 2, and Urban Design/Planning. In their second semester, in addition to the Urban Design and Planning, they could choose two more electives. The fifth year continued with vertical studios both semesters and the students had their choice of six more electives over their last two semesters.

In 1982 SCI-Arc organized a studio to develop a project for their Topanga property. The studio determined a proposal for an educational research station called the Experimental Resource Unit (ERU) [Figure 2.46]. The ERU was conceptualized that semester with 20 students and 2 faculty members.<sup>176</sup> The first phase was completed in 1982. The studio recognized, that

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<sup>173</sup> “Core Curriculum,” from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, July 16, 1982).

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Interim Project Report: SCI-Arc Experimental Resource Unit, from Ray Kappe’s archive at the Getty Research Institute (unpublished document, July 20, 1982).

due to requirements related to cost, transportability, and size, a standard shipping container could serve as the base structure to retrofit as the ERU. During the spring 1982 studio the students designed the ERU and began implements on an acquired shipping container with an interior of 215 square feet that could expand with approximately 100 additional square feet of space.<sup>177</sup>

By the end of the semester they had stripped and cleaned the shell of the container, and cut the openings for doors and windows based on the design they had collectively developed. They had also designed the interior assemblies and necessary mechanical systems.<sup>178</sup> The container they acquired had been previously used for refrigerated transportation and came with insulated roof, walls, and floor. The program for the ERU included “studio and workshop space, a small food preparation area, a toilet, a shower, sleeping quarters for two to three people, and space for service systems equipment.”<sup>179</sup> By the summer of 1982 over \$6,500 had been spent on the container, windows and doors, photovoltaics, paints, and miscellaneous expenses.<sup>180</sup> A grant proposal was drafted to cover the remaining expenses. The team estimated needing an additional \$14,000 to complete the project.<sup>181</sup>

The second phase of this project was pitched as a vertical studio in 1983 and was taught by founding faculty member, Ahde Lahti. Lahti described his general teaching approach in a correspondence. “You cannot lead your students, they have to each lead themselves, and carry the design to the goal you have them set. You will not get them there by pushing them up hill.

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

Leading the team is a subtle process of educating each member so he or she is self directed.”<sup>182</sup>

Lahti outlined the objectives regarding continued development of the ERU. This project was “an ongoing educational and experimental facility . . . for SCI-Arc students to get into the practical study of energy, environment, resource, and space-use related design problems.”<sup>183</sup> Three motives drove the studio: “minimum resource engineering systems appropriate to small residential applications. . . . First-hand, practical experience in detailed construction and engineering problems. . . . The role of transfer technology which describes cross-fertilization of technological expertise between different industries.”<sup>184</sup>

The studio project would develop the design of the interior program and realize that design to accommodate living, research, and eating for eight students during the day and three students overnight.<sup>185</sup> No records indicate what happened to the shipping container after spring 1983. The 1984 catalog of education materials maintained the same description of the Topanga site as it had in the catalog from 1980. “The immediate purpose is to generate structures, test concepts, and develop self-sufficient community processes. The eventual goal is to establish a research center for graduate study where leading architectural, scientific, and behavioral minds will be able to be in residence with graduate students in search for new concepts.”<sup>186</sup>

In 1983 SCI-Arc published *Current Work*, its first exhibition catalogue exclusively dedicated to showcasing faculty and student projects [Figure 2.47]. The publication and exhibit were conceived for the tenth anniversary of the school by showcasing the diversity among the

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<sup>182</sup> Ahde Lahti, correspondence with Benjamin J Smith, November 11, 2015.

<sup>183</sup> Ahde Lahti, Vertical Studio Course Description, from SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, 1983).

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Educational Materials, from the SCI-Arc Archive (unpublished document, c1984).

faculty and student interests.<sup>187</sup> The launch of the exhibit also corresponded with the new academic program at Vico Morcote that started in 1983 at SCI-Arc's renovated villa in Switzerland. The exhibition traveled to Vico later that year. The exhibition catalogue presented work on tall oversized pages. It was double-sided, so if flipped, what was the back became a second front, making it possible to read from both directions. Depending on how it was read, it either began with student work or faculty work. Split at the middle by a two-page spread, the catalogue was divided by a plan view photograph of the interior of Morphosis Architects' office, which separated faculty and student content [Figure 2.48]. Gabriel Mörner, who also coordinated the corresponding exhibition, designed the catalogue. He worked with three student assistants, Bill Huang, Rick Gooding, and Neal Matsumo. Thom Mayne acted as the faculty advisor overseeing exhibition and catalogue development. In Mayne's statement about the exhibition he commented on the nature of combining faculty and student work into one publication.

The inclusion of both faculty and student projects within one catalogue will allow for the opportunity to compare and give further meaning to both. The work of these students must, to some degree, find expression in response to the issues and attitudes presented by their teachers; and it is the student work that must compete and give expression to the full range of faculty interests.<sup>188</sup>

In an interview with Mary Ann Ray, who has been a faculty member at SCI-Arc since 1988, she remembered being a graduate student when the publication came out. "That's how I knew of SCI-Arc. . . . I would just look at it everyday in the first year [of my graduate degree] and I was like, 'Why aren't I there?'"<sup>189</sup> Robert Mangurian, who had work featured in *Current Work* began teaching at SCI-Arc in 1983 and was practicing with Craig Hodgetts at their firm Studio Works at that time. Ray and Mangurian would later become the two partners of Studio Works in 1987.

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<sup>187</sup> Thom Mayne, *Current Work* Los Angeles: Southern California Institute of Architecture, 1983, 36.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Robert Mangurian and Mary Ann Ray, interview by Benjamin J. Smith, February 17, 2015.



The publication featured the professional work of 20 of the design faculty at SCI-Arc, giving each practice a two-page spread organizing them in alphabetical order. The student work was either a one or two-page spread per student and included graduate and undergraduate work from all levels except for first and second year undergraduate studios, which at this time were not designing buildings. In total 31 students were featured who worked with 15 different faculty members. Three student projects featured in the catalogue pursued architectural projects active in public conversations that were planned for construction at the time the students worked on them. These included an addition to the Downtown Los Angeles Public Library, a master plan for the Sepulveda Dam in the Sepulveda Basin, and a proposal for The Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

### **Kiyokazu Arai's Los Angeles Public Library Addition with Thom Mayne (c. 1983)**

Kiyokazu (Kazu) Arai's masterful drawings have become well known through visualizing some of the most memorable Morphosis projects as an employee there in the 1980s. Arai came to SCI-Arc from Japan for this M.Arch in 1980 and graduated in 1983. He began working at Morphosis Architects in 1980 and continued on after his graduation until 1991. In an interview by Orhan Ayyüce with Thom Mayne for the website *Architect*, Mayne remarked on Arai's abilities.

He was like the silent partner. He worked with us almost ten years. I learned a lot from him. He was a ferocious designer. He worked so fast, it was hard for us to keep up with him. He set up difficult standards to follow for everybody else in the office. He was a pure design facility, fast and highly talented.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Orhan Ayyüce and Thom Mayne, "Thom Mayne in 'Coffee Break,'" *Architect* <<http://architect.com/features/article/61129/thom-mayne-in-coffee-break>> (January 6, 2015).

The 1983 *Current Work* catalogue featured Arai's addition for the Los Angeles Public Library during his second year graduate studio, where he worked with Mayne and Jim Stafford [Figures 2.49-2.50].

Arai's bold proposal for the addition to the library in Downtown Los Angeles subsumed Bertran Goodhue's Art Deco building, dwarfing its monumental motifs and classical references. His student project anticipated a future expansion and renovation to the library that began in 1983 by the Los Angeles and New York based architecture firm Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, which was completed in 1993, making it the largest public library in the western United States.<sup>191</sup> The part of Arai's master plan, re-conceptualized primary axes, resembling Corbusier's Carpenter Center at Harvard University, that torqued dominant figural relationships to the ground plane, though Arai maintained a prominent southwest entry perpendicular to Grand Ave. Three of the principle elevations maintained a direct view to the original building that became sandwiched between two massive and regular solids. Formal tension occurred through the relationships between the old and the proposed, culminating at Goodhue's pyramid at the top of the original building that became flanked by Arai's orthogonal box on one side and his dense cylindrical form on the other. The addition, at heights just beyond the highest point of the original library, compressed the old forms in an exercise of primary geometric relationships.

The street level on 6th street became an exuberant combination of idiosyncratic moves with rational geometries that composed a system of asymmetric relationships. The elevation showed a solid carved with variable 90 degree cuts that hollowed a mass peppered with discrete windows. Multiple window patterns occurred throughout the cylindrical facade, three dominant patterns

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<sup>191</sup> Pfeiffer Partners, "Los Angeles Public Library," <[http://www.pfeifferpartners.com/project\\_detail.php?id=281](http://www.pfeifferpartners.com/project_detail.php?id=281)> (January 7, 2016).

ran vertically, splitting the horizontally distributed mass with sharp slices piercing it with changing degrees of intensity. A secondary window pattern ran in a horizontal band at the top floor, integrating with one of the vertical window patterns and terminating at the second. Using multiple geometric systems to close and open regular solids, relied on competing formal logics between the different buildings elements. Arai's exquisite drawing, rendered with detailed colored-pencil finery amid a background of empty blackness composed a relationship to a canvas in dialogue with architectural forms, nudging corners just off 90-degrees, relative to the subtle slope of the site. Arai developed the library addition over 15 weeks. His exercise in geometric relationship shared affinities with Cedars-Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Center, a project he would later work on as a project designer at Morphosis. The evident conflation of student and faculty motives driving the results of this project revealed an educational process that dissolved boundaries between instruction, inspiration, visualization, and profession.

A rendered section through the existing library was equally emotive. Contrasting the existing library with his proposed addition demonstrated competing stylizations in volume. Fusing relationships conceptually, Arai's project did not make a new whole from juxtapositions, but enmeshed associations between old and new forms by generating cues to read a new totality relying on the precision of diverse moments. One such cue was a covered exterior courtyard in the addition that doubled as an exterior atrium. Drawn with dramatic shading, the atrium volume shared the same height as the highest interior volume of the original library, even accounting for material thickness. The apex of the library's pyramid poked just above the elevation of the addition's atrium. Seeing beyond the cut of the original library revealed the exterior atrium's gridded network of glazing that was shifted just off center from the exposed interior volumes. A similar exterior atrium courtyard would appear in a Morphosis project years later at Emerson

College in Los Angeles, though differentiated by the library addition as being a carved a volume open on one of its six sides, whereas Emerson punctured a perpendicular opening through two sides, reminiscent of the La Grande Arche in La Defense.

Though it is unclear how heavy-handed Mayne's instruction was at guiding the conceptual tenor of the project and to what degree Arai translated that visually, his results nonetheless shared identifiable traits that occur in varied instances within Morphosis' work. In an interview with Kappe he remarked about Mayne's teaching style. "Whatever [Thom] was into at one time, that's all. He wasn't really . . . open to explorations different from what he thought was right at the time."<sup>192</sup> A takeaway for a student with that kind of instruction undoubtedly learns how to craft a project with a strong aesthetic sensibility. That, coupled with Arai's ability to execute drawings at a level of precision with keen graphic nuance produced a body of work that rivaled the quality of anyone at SCI-Arc at that time, faculty member or student. The achievement of the project to synthesize geometric relationships to a primary source invigorated a discursive formalism akin to postmodern notions of architecture and language. Arai's project departed from the semiotics of Venturi and the syntax of Eisenman at the expense of coherency to expose latent territories of a pre-existing style made unfamiliar. With the addition dismantling the geometric logic internal to the original library an overall configuration of discrete elements symbolized the appropriation of forms to create new archetypes.

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<sup>192</sup> Ray Kappe, interview with Benjamin J. Smith, February 24, 2015.

### **Charles Browne's Sepulveda Dam with Glen Small (c.1983)**

Charles Browne, a student working with Glen Small in the early 1980s produced a proposal for the Sepulveda Dam for his fourth year undergraduate studio [Figure 2.51]. The Sepulveda Dam, originally completed in 1939, was built to combat flood risk from the Los Angeles River after a flood had killed over 140 people in 1938. “After a flood in 1980 tested the capacity of the lower Los Angeles River channel, Los Angeles County officials requested support from the district to study the channel’s capacity to protect against larger floods.”<sup>193</sup> In 1981 a Master Plan was developed to re-assess the 2,150-acre Sepulveda Basin with the addition of public amenities while minimizing environmental impact.<sup>194</sup> The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report for the 1981 undertaking described conditions for an “additional 540 acres of land that are available for future recreational uses. With an orientation towards open space as its unifying theme.”<sup>195</sup> Browne’s proposal conceived an entirely new dam with a mixed-use program.

Due to The Sepulveda Dam’s proximity to Los Angeles, Hollywood has capitalized on its brutalist concrete aesthetic to reach the cultural imagination and has been featured in many films and television shows. A popular science fiction film from 1997, *Gattaca*, featured the spillway of the dam as an exterior of the Gattaca complex [Figure 2.52]. Browne’s rendition of the dam transformed the dam and its site with a proposal that looked more sci-fi than the *Gattaca* film. Photographs of Browne’s pristine physical model showed a bright white mega-structure towering

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<sup>193</sup> David A. Salazar, The L.A. River and the Corps: A Brief History, <<http://web.archive.org/web/20140308203118/http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/Media/NewsStories/tabid/1318/Article/18853/the-la-river-and-the-corps-a-brief-history.aspx>> (January 8, 2016).

<sup>194</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Sepulveda Basin Master Plan, Environmental Impact Report/Statement, March 1981, IV-3.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 1.

over the Sepulveda Basin. The 50-story complex tapered as it rose with a concave facade gently arcing created by a large ellipse booleaned from the transverse section. Mechanical and control systems housed in the tower provided solutions driven by environmental concerns. The top of the proposal featured wind turbines. Several floors lower housed a solar plenum. Below that was a recycling center. Exterior surfaces of the model were covered with a metallic film that suggested a reflective surface to concentrate sunlight for another programmatic area Browne referred to as “solar collectors.” Two spherical domes covered an auditorium and commercial space.

A longitudinal section would help to understand the scale of the project that stretched with more than 3000 feet of enclosed volume, snaking across the Sepulveda Basin. The primary program of the horizontal expanse was housing that curved in plan with a trapezoidal section. The housing lined the intersection of the Ventura and San Diego Freeways on its southern side. To the project’s north the master plan continued with two parks, two small lakes, and a colossal putting green with paths connecting them. Swooping forms generated with elliptical and spherical radii characterized the architecture of the public service spaces. The project had the effect of Saarinen without the differentiation, or a mash-up of Albert Speer’s Deutsche Stadion and Erich Mendelsohn’s Einstein Tower, and became a monument to ecology through curving ascetic forms.

Browne’s project shared two dominant characteristics with the Lieberman Residence, a house designed by Glen Small in 1989. The Lieberman Residence included a composition of sectional arcs that stacked vertically to produce a vaulted interior. Its exterior used bright white stucco unifying the multiplicity of formal moves. A former student of Small’s, Orhan Ayyuce, described Small’s interest in curves in a forum on Archinect. “Glen Small is really into curves. . .

. Glen likes them because curves are sensuous, organic, ecological and therefore sustainable.”<sup>196</sup>

For many years Small taught a course called Natural Structures at SCI-Arc that employed these principles.

On Small’s blog, *Small at Large*, he referred to a quality of his work as sensual design.<sup>197</sup>

Much of his work relied on abstract curves to signify the sensuous aesthetic. A diagram that partially explains how these forms could elicit a sensory response was an experiment on synesthesia conducted by Wolfgang Köhler and repeated by a Neuroscientist at UC San Diego, V.S. Ramachandran called the booba/kiki effect. Ramachandran’s experiment used two sketches, one jagged and one blobby, and gave a name to each of the shapes. One was called booba, the other kiki [Figure 2.53].

If asked which of these two abstract shapes is “booba” and which “kiki,” 95-98 percent of respondents pick the blob as booba and the jagged shape as kiki. This is also true for non-English-speaking Tamillians for whom the shapes bear no resemblance to visual shapes of the Tamil alphabet corresponding to B or K. The effect demonstrates the ability to engage in cross-modal abstraction of properties such as jaggedness or curviness.”<sup>198</sup>

This experiment explained that forms affect our senses in different ways with respect to interpretation, but it does not validate a curving form’s preference or value above another form through sensation. Browne’s project was a heroic response to a program with unusual social impact. His combinations of commercial, residential, and public spaces woven together by an

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<sup>196</sup> Orhan Ayyüce, “Is There a Good Reason for Using Curves?,” Archinect, <<http://archinect.com/forum/thread/53594027/is-there-a-good-reason-for-using-curves>> (January 8, 2016).

<sup>197</sup> Glen Small, “About,” *Small at Large* <<http://www.smallatlarge.com/about/>> (January 8, 2016).

<sup>198</sup> V.S. Ramachandran, *A Brief Tour of Human Consciousness: From Impostor Poodles to Purple Numbers*, New York: Pi Press, 2004, 73.

infrastructure steeped with environmental concerns pitched an autonomous complex rooted to its context.

### **Martin Mervel's Vietnam War Memorial with Eric Owen Moss (c. 1981)**

In 1981 over 1400 blind entries were submitted to the Vietnam War Memorial competition. Famously, Maya Lin, an undergraduate art student from Yale University born in Ohio to Chinese immigrants, won the competition. With controversial issues ranging from race to its perceived nihilism, the winning entry sparked a national debate on the ethics of memorials.<sup>199</sup> A student at SCI-Arc, Martin Mervel, also produced a design for the memorial during his third year graduate studio with Eric Owen Moss over 15-week period. In radical contrast to the subtlety of Lin's winning design that proposed a gradual descent into the ground by visitors confronting walls rising from a carved-away mass, Mervel's proposal also excavated the ground plane, but traded intimate isolation for disruptive mediation [Figure 2.54].

Mervel designed an apparatus inspired by the Rolodex and dominoes to signify a finite metaphor for infinity. "Monuments speak about the continuum of history. History is infinite and its movement is viewed as redundant and endless. A memorial also commemorates a singular event."<sup>200</sup> With the names of dead soldiers stenciled to aluminum plates crafted like dominoes,

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<sup>199</sup> Jesse Greenspan, "6 Things You May Not Know About the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (2012)," History Channel Website, <<http://www.history.com/news/6-things-you-may-not-know-aboutthe-vietnam-veterans-memorial>> (January 7, 2016).

<sup>200</sup> Martin Mervel, "Vietnam Memorial," *Current Work* Los Angeles: Southern California Institute of Architecture, 1983, 38.



the oversized Rolodex symbolized an organized system that could loop repeatedly.<sup>201</sup> Proposing wind as the thrust to rotate the aluminum plates, Mervel's concept for the experience of history used the life of the present to represent the memory of the dead.

Mervel's drawings shared affinities with work from two contemporaneous architects; Eric Owen Moss, his instructor, as well as John Hejduk. Both architects produced work at this time with stylistic resonance to Mervel's drawings. Moss had recently completed his Pinball House that relied on the reference to a low-tech device through whimsical formalism. Alternatively, the representational language Mervel adopted had direct associations to Hejduk's Berlin Mask [Figure 2.55]. The Berlin Mask; however, diverged in concept. Where Mervel relied on the referent as an analogy for the experience of time and loss, the Berlin Mask constructed internal references within the figures themselves to generate the expression of an archetypal microcosm. Hejduk's strange figures are self-involved, self-determined creatures creating an autonomous ontology divorced from external sources. The collection of figures from the Berlin Mask performed a visual organization of forms like a symphony that composes diverse instruments to create tone. More so, they could be recomposed and reconstituted to different effect. Whereas, the symbolism of the Rolodex could not escape its own limitations in meaning.

In addition to its metaphor of infinity, another metaphor used by the project was at the entry. Two arced tubes were conceived with a dual meaning to be read as nurturing or oppressive depending on point of ingress. One was open to the air, composed by a sequence of masonry walls connected by brass rods. A vaulted canopy covered the other. Mervel regarded the entry as an "intensification of ambiguity" where it could be read as "embracing arms or conquering

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 39.

hands.”<sup>202</sup> The metaphor fell flat, but it’s not because the arms are not interesting objects or convincing forms. Instead, it was because unlike the spirit of Hejduk’s Masks that open up opportunities for imaginative interpretation, the reliance on connecting experiential expectation to an anthropomorphized apparatus left little room for discovery, even more, his supporting text forced a trivial association to its sobering program. Without the accompanying text directing the users engagement the project could become more compelling. His memorial looked like a transformer having scuttled onto the site trying to burrow itself into the ground. There are two opposing ways to push this project forward. One could amplify the artificiality of the references in the manner of Claus Oldenberg, sparkling with high-gloss paints, which given the context, compels a radical assessment of the government and war. Another would be to move in the direction of Hejduk’s masks. Through a relationship of figures, that could even be named, whose associations begin to formulate an identity that is not prefigured.

The poetic sensibility of his idea was noble, but the means for the idea’s expression produced a mismatch in its gismo aesthetic. The paradox between concept and result could be read as not tongue-in-cheek enough to be satirical, or that it lacked the sensibility to create an affective consequence relating to national sentiment. Curiously, the synthesis between satire and sentiment was where Mervel’s project landed, becoming an artifice with pop-culture resonance. If instead of referring to infinity and subconscious characteristics attributed to wind he had played out the inhumanity of the Rolodex as a filing system to shuffle people relative to a bureaucratic system without sympathy the metaphor would produce a different reading. What we know about the creative process is valuable and matters to our experience of a work. Richard

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 39

Wollheim described this as knowing the meaning-bearing properties. “In order to determine the meaning of a work of art we have first to determine what the meaning-bearing properties of the work are, and it is only on a very naive view of the matter that we can do this without invoking the creative process itself.”<sup>203</sup> A strength of the project was the fantasy of the drawing to create a carnival of tricks. The project excelled at perfunctory assemblies, but got lost in its own rhetoric.

### **Conclusion: DIY Divided**

In the late 1970s after a structured curriculum was established and accreditation had passed the school remained committed to Ray Kappe’s open-minded approach to pedagogy. As faculty matured within this atmosphere it fostered diverse personalities to emerge within the school. Most of the SCI-Arc faculty was in their late 20s or early 30s when the school opened in 1972 (Kappe was only 45 years old). Many of them did not have a clearly identified “project” in the sense of a cultural aspiration or formally motivated agenda for architecture. By the late 1970s and early 1980s sensibilities were maturing and a clearer relationship to discourse was beginning to form. The ecological project was present but was losing ground to louder voices, notably Eric Owen Moss and Thom Mayne.

Two characteristics of SCI-Arc continued to propel its identity; a lagging intellectual culture with a fledgling history and theory curriculum and a strong do-it-yourself (DIY) attitude. This peculiar combination fostered the growing diversity of perspectives being tried and tested

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<sup>203</sup> Richard Wollheim, “Criticism as Retrieval,” in *Art and Its Objects*, 2nd edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980,200.

between the faculty and the students. In the late 1970s SCI-Arc was not postmodern in the sense of formal appropriation of history, but work at the school began to diverge from the late modernist Case Study era of Los Angeles. This trend became evident with the work coming out of Morphosis, Moss, and other faculty. In many ways SCI-Arc operated like an island for architecture. An island that was free to try things out within a pedagogy established for experimentation. During SCI-Arc's formative years the country was in a recession, which only propelled the DIY atmosphere among the faculty. There were not a lot of opportunities to build; however, the slow economy offered other opportunities for innovation, in the case of some SCI-Arc faculty, this came through small projects, mostly home renovations and additions. Seemingly small jobs were taken out of the excitement to be able to do work. Driven by the intensity to build something was more characteristic of SCI-Arc than relating to a particular style or trend.

While the architects teaching at SCI-Arc did not share a common style or design language, they did share the common ideology of DIY. As an ideological position for producing architecture, this attitude paralleled an argument from Charles Jencks' critique of Modernism in his book, *Post-Modern Architecture*. Jencks criticized the modern project on the basis of "univalent form" and its lack of a social project. Jencks believed that social codes could be read in architectural form and that Modernism failed in its attempt at social homogeneity that misread cultural idiosyncrasy. The DIY mindset linked with Jencks by its ability to preference idiosyncrasy. In the case of SCI-Arc and its faculty, the idiosyncrasies existed within the culture of a school developed from faculty person to faculty person. However, by 1983, Jencks would coin the term "LA School," and begin to describe the collective work of a group of Los Angeles Architects, Morphosis and Moss included, as an "L.A. Style—or en-formality—[which] is

complicatedly informal, rough, and ascetic.”<sup>204</sup> What can be seen in the work of prominent faculty at SCI-Arc in the late 1970s was a revision of the Modernist social project through ecologically driven infrastructure in the work of Glen Small, an emerging formal aesthetic engaged in a systems based and contextually motivated part-to-whole sensibility in Morphosis, and Eric Owen Moss’ development of a more cerebral formal language of disruptions and misreading through archetypes critiquing the Los Angeles vernacular.

Though Kappe’s own attitude regarding the profession and the discipline remained focused on the technological imperatives of an ecologically minded, and ultimately programmatic approach, his tolerance and willingness to embrace ideas outside of his own was a great asset to the school. In reality, something like this can be quite rare in many academic environments. Without needing to satisfy tenure requirements amidst the bureaucracy of large research university the SCI-Arc faculty were more free and were not beholden to obtaining grants, publishing in peer-reviewed journals, attending conferences, working on committees, or maintaining clear forward progress related to their research to advance through the academic hierarchy. Without these requirements the faculty could build a body of work from having followed their intuitions. The lack of tenure was only part of it, aside from effective teaching the SCI-Arc faculty were expected to achieve professional credibility.

Professional credibility in architecture is different from most professional and academic disciplines, at least in terms of the credibility that shapes its discourse. It is not characterized by peer-reviewed publishing and grants, or even financial success, but by building projects and producing noticeable work. The architects at SCI-Arc who were successful within the discipline,

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<sup>204</sup> Charles Jencks, *The L.A. Style if Forged—En-Formality*,” *Heteropolis* (London: Academy Editions, 1991), 56.

who shaped trajectories for the field tended to be inwardly focused and driven by opportunities within their work to push new ground.

Though Kappe remarked that he felt the days of the hero architect were over, the pedagogical framework he set up at SCI-Arc was well suited for the development of strong egos. What this pedagogical attitude also allowed for was the creative opportunities that come with making mistakes, which, in a field like architecture, is a luxury easily overlooked. An atmosphere that accepted mistakes meant to grow a faculty that found excitement by trying something new with unknown value. What became transmissible to the students in a context such as this was not the transfer of acquired knowledge, but the energy to experiment for change by engaging a way to learn that might not be available in other academic environments. Though SCI-Arc's pedagogical framework encouraged a DIY environment, in many ways, it was a model of education better suited for the faculty to develop rigorous and advanced projects than it was for the students to do the same.



**Illustration 2.01** Frank Gehry, Gehry Residence, 1978 (image courtesy of Stephen Philips).

# GEHRY'S ABSTRACT WORK OF ART

Continued from First Page

work of art far more striking than anything else on the block were plunked down near your home, would you be likely to understand it immediately?

Add to that question the facts that the work of art is made of material usually associated with factory buildings, that it incorporates an old house, that it doesn't look much like a house even though the man who designed it intends to live there with his wife, Berta, and their son Alejandro, and you may have an idea of what is going on in the minds of some people in Gehry's new neighborhood.

Their minds, however, are not irrevocably set against what some of them call "the prison."

Several of the neighbors were given a tour of the unfinished house and an explanation of the logical and philosophical reasoning that went into its design.

## Gained Respect

After the tour, each of them said he or she had gained respect and appreciation for the building and what Gehry was trying to do with it. Some liked it better, some did not, but everyone indicated one degree or another of new respect for the house.

There are, of course, those who think the building is wonderful. Among them is Donna Swink, mayor of Santa Monica.

One of Gehry's neighbors called Me

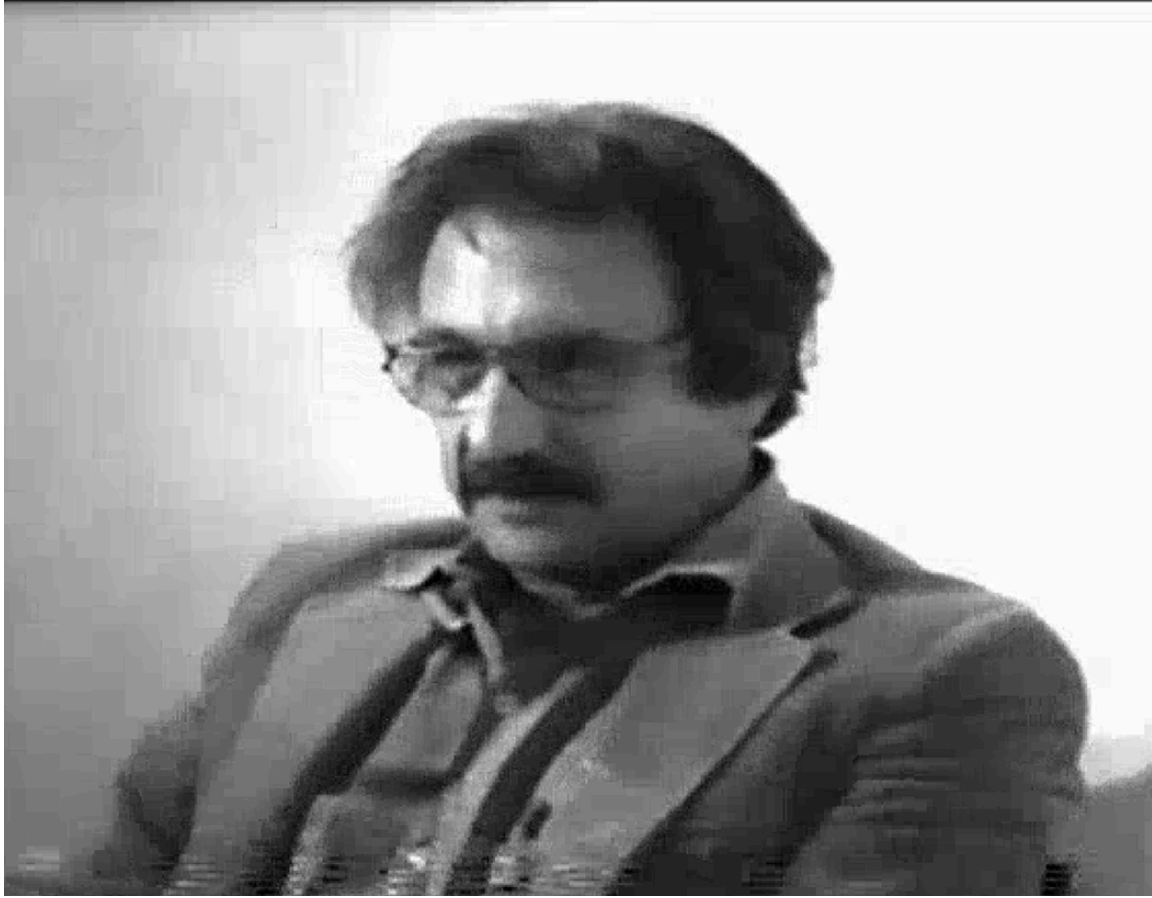


**WORK OF ART IN THE MAKING** -Architect Frank O. Gehry outside Santa Monica duplex he is transforming into abstract work of art. House reflects many of his controversial design theories.

Times photo by Mary Frampton

**Illustration 2.02** Frank Gehry at Gehry Residence, *Los Angeles Times*, July 23, 1978.





**Illustration 2.03** Frank Gehry at “Which Way to the Future” symposium at SCI-Arc, 1976 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc Media Archive).



**Illustration 2.04** Glen Small at “Which Way to the Future” symposium at SCI-Arc, 1976 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc Media Archive).

# The Architecture Gallery Opens for Business

## Kupper Employs Dual Process

BY JOHN DREYFUSS  
Times Architecture and Design Critic

An exhibition currently at The Architecture Gallery in Venice can lead viewers on an enlightening tour through the artistically oriented design process architect Eugene Kupper employs in his work.

The show demonstrates how Kupper uses drawings to "discover architecture and explore ideas, rather than just find solutions."

Titled "Architectural Studies," the exhibit of 11 drawings and five models indicates the artistic and theoretical concepts involved in three projects.

If they can grasp the concepts, viewers will achieve the rare, enlightening and satisfying pleasure of developing from an architectural exhibition a feeling for and understanding of both physical architecture and its emotional impact.

But architect Kupper's concepts are not easy to grasp, and, unfortunately, the exhibit does not offer much help to the layman looking for a handle.

That problem could have been avoided by means of explanatory labeling, but Kupper chose to omit labels because "the pieces in the exhibition form their own context, and labeling would tend to isolate each piece."

Notwithstanding his reasoning, the architect is depriving his viewers and selling

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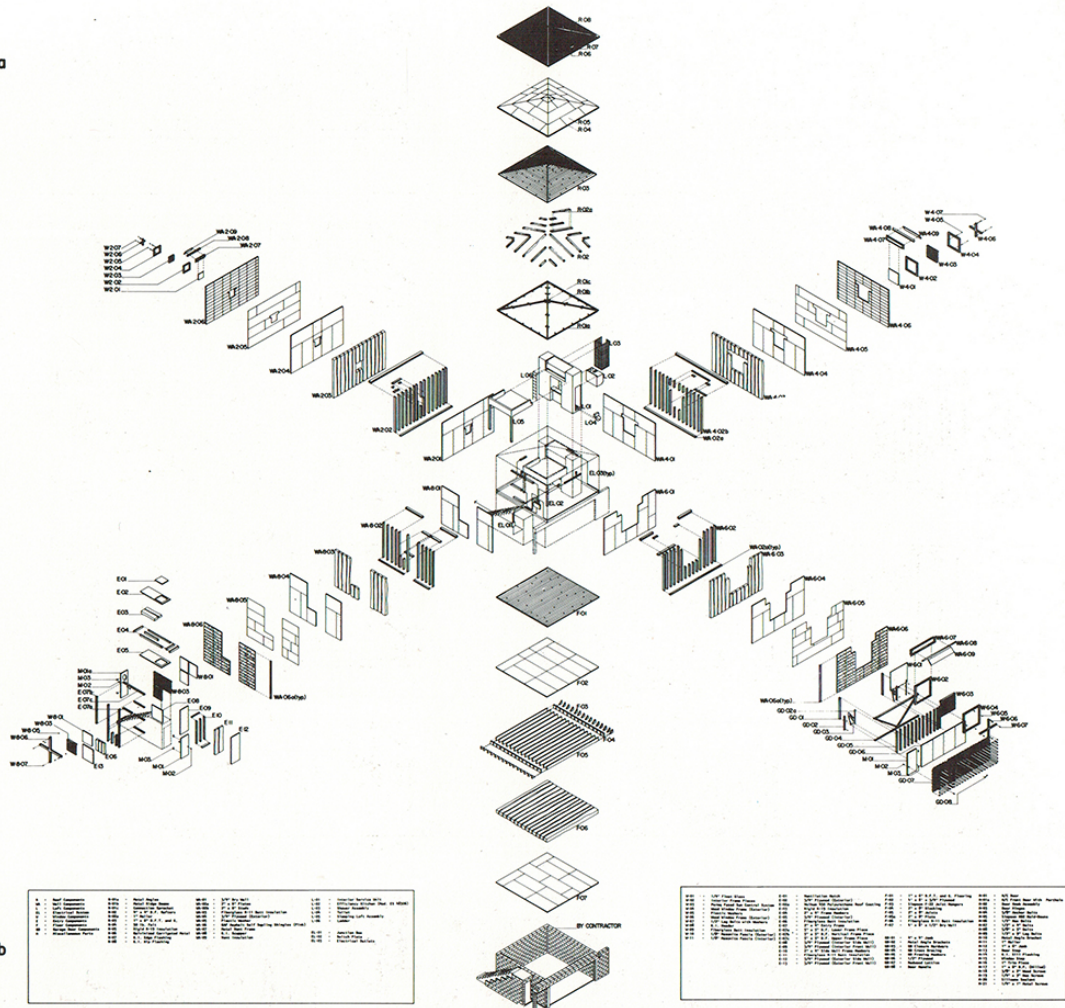


**ART IN ARCHITECTURE**—Architects Thom Mayne, left, and Eugene Kupper discuss Kupper's work exhibited at The Architecture Gallery.  
Times photo by Mary Frampton

**Illustration 2.05** Thom Mayne and Eugene Kupper at *Current L.A.* lecture and exhibition Series, *Los Angeles Times*, October 11, 1979.



**Illustration 2.06** Morphosis Architects, 2-4-6-8 House, 1978 (image courtesy of morphosis.com).

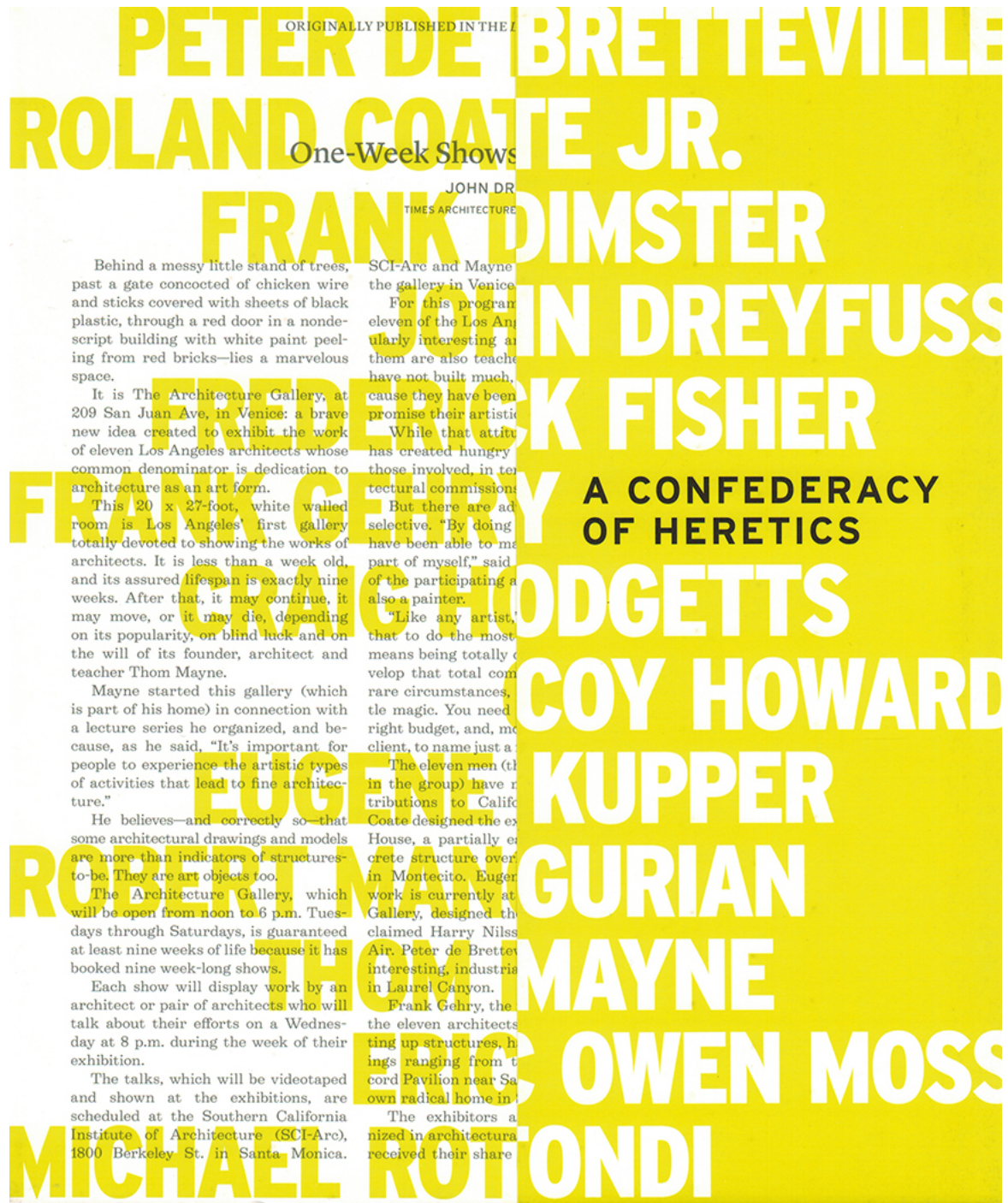


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W203	Wall 203	F103	Floor 103	R103	Roof 103	...	...
W204	Wall 204	F104	Floor 104	R104	Roof 104	...	...
W205	Wall 205	F105	Floor 105	R105	Roof 105	...	...
W206	Wall 206	F106	Floor 106	R106	Roof 106	...	...
W207	Wall 207	F107	Floor 107	R107	Roof 107	...	...
W208	Wall 208	F108	Floor 108	R108	Roof 108	...	...
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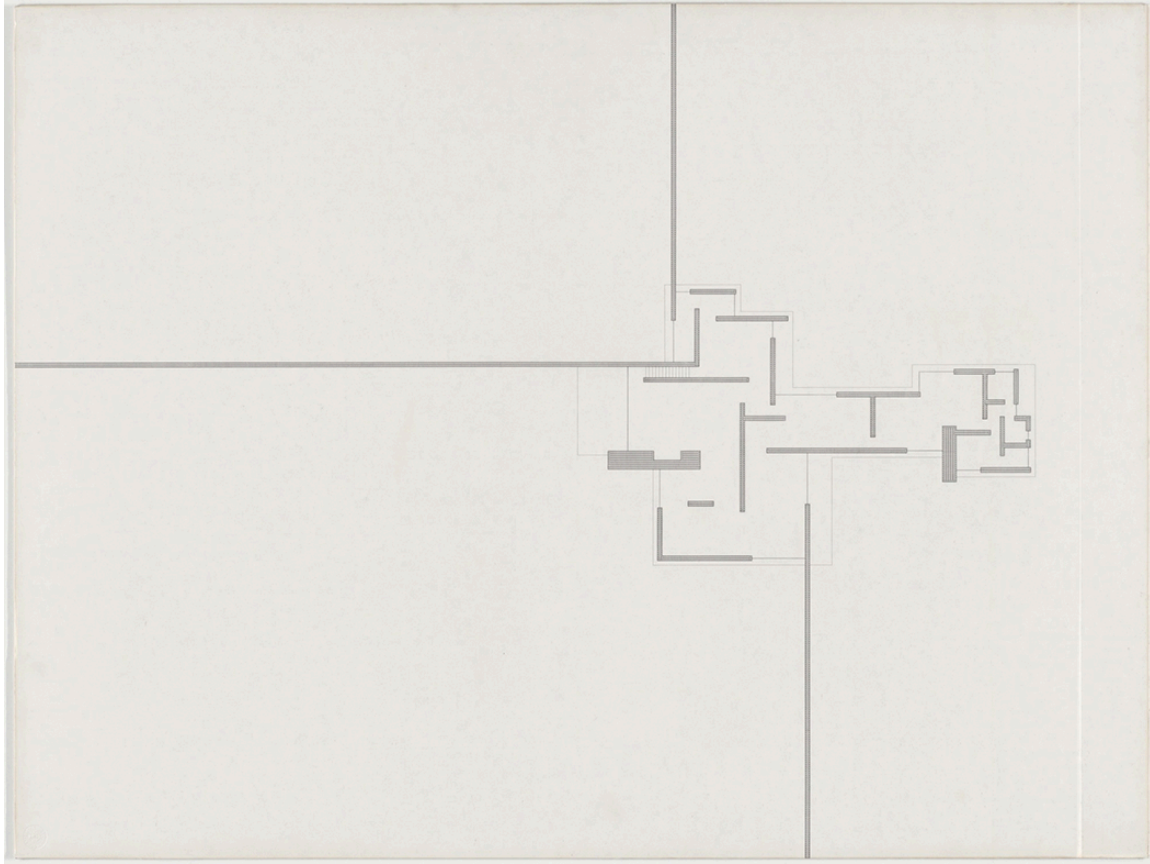
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W303	Wall 303	F203	Floor 203	R203	Roof 203	...	...
W304	Wall 304	F204	Floor 204	R204	Roof 204	...	...
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W306	Wall 306	F206	Floor 206	R206	Roof 206	...	...
W307	Wall 307	F207	Floor 207	R207	Roof 207	...	...
W308	Wall 308	F208	Floor 208	R208	Roof 208	...	...
W309	Wall 309	F209	Floor 209	R209	Roof 209	...	...
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Illustration 2.07 Morphosis Architects, 2-4-6-8 House, Tangents and Outtakes, 1993.



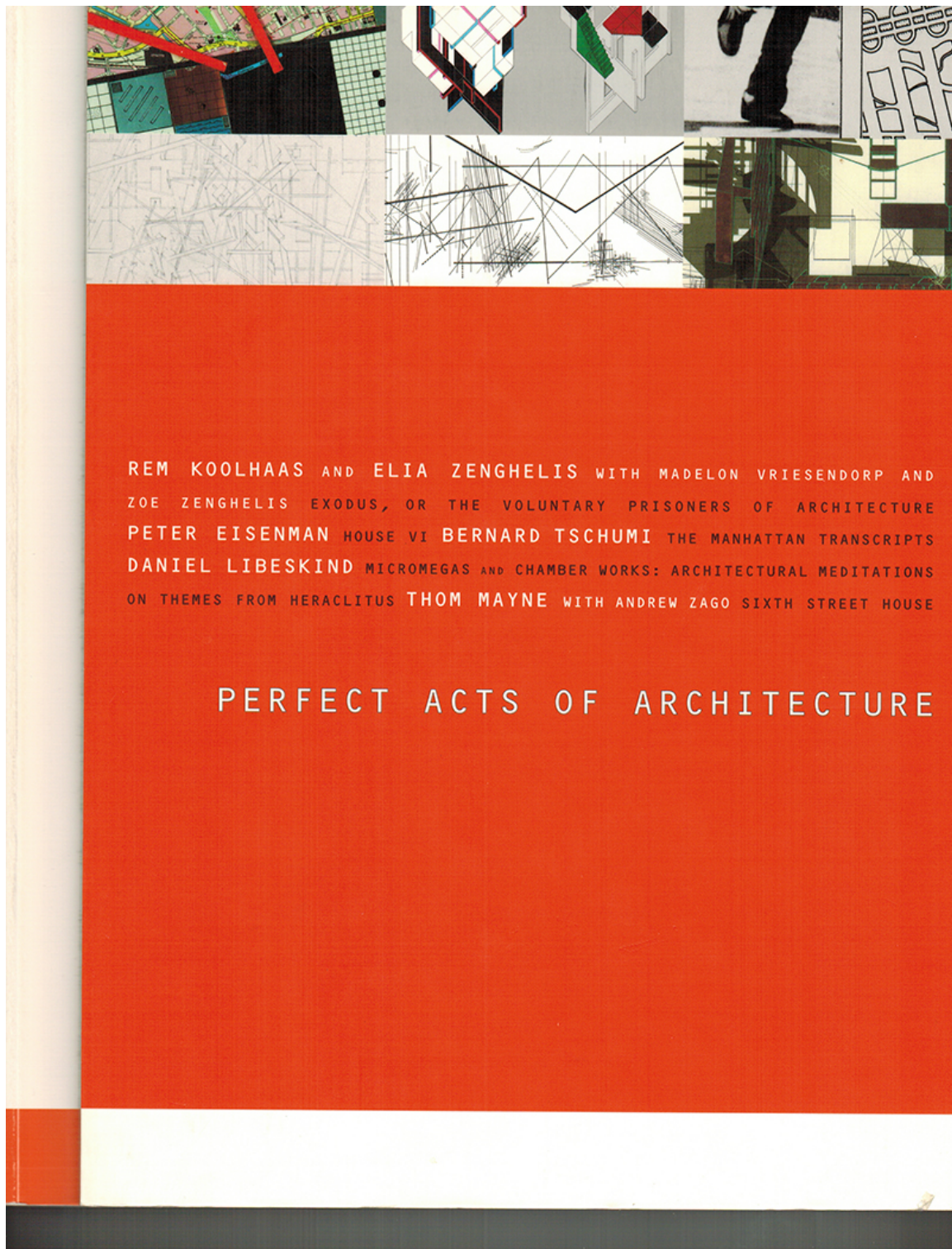


**Illustration 2.08** Todd Gannon and Ewan Branda, *A Confederacy of Heretics*, 2013.



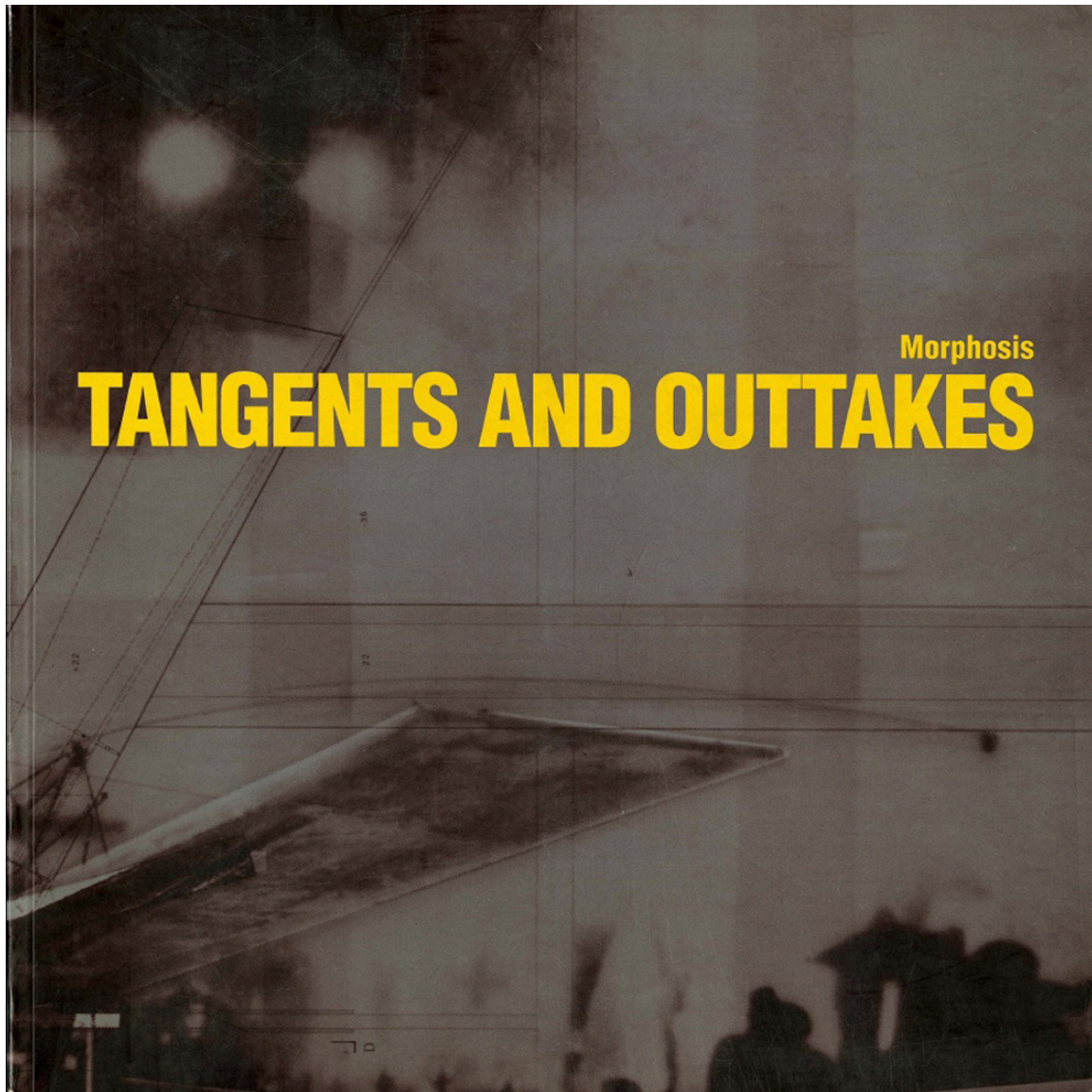
**Illustration 2.09** Mies van der Rohe, Brick Country House drawing, 1964 (image courtesy of moma.org).



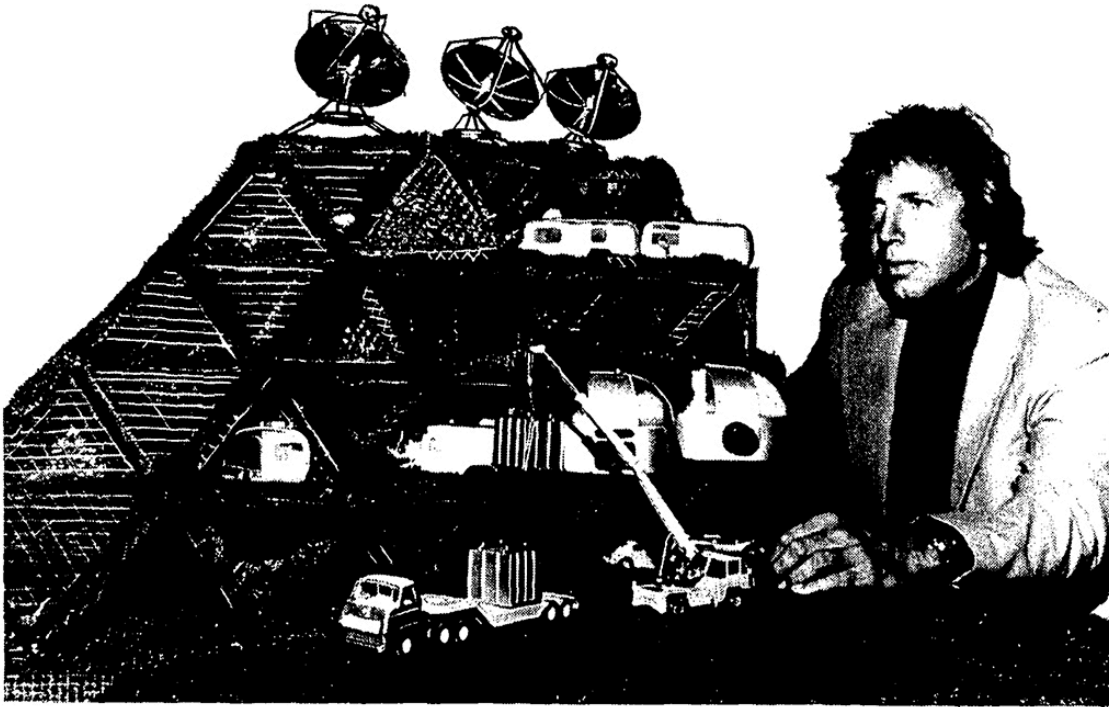


**Illustration 2.10** Jeff Kipnis, *Perfect Acts of Architecture*, 2001.





**Illustration 2.11** Thom Mayne, *Tangents and Outtakes*, 1993.



**MODEL SOLUTION-** -Architect Glenn Small shows off tabletop model of his Green Machine, a proposed solution to the high

cost of housing. The 72-foot structure, a "space frame" for 24 living units, is designed to sit diagonally on acre site in Verice.  
Times photo

**Illustration 2.12** Glen Small with the Green Machine, *Los Angeles Times*, November 15, 1979.



**Illustration 2.13** Glen Small with the Green Machine, c. 1979 (image courtesy of [smallatlarge.com](http://smallatlarge.com)).



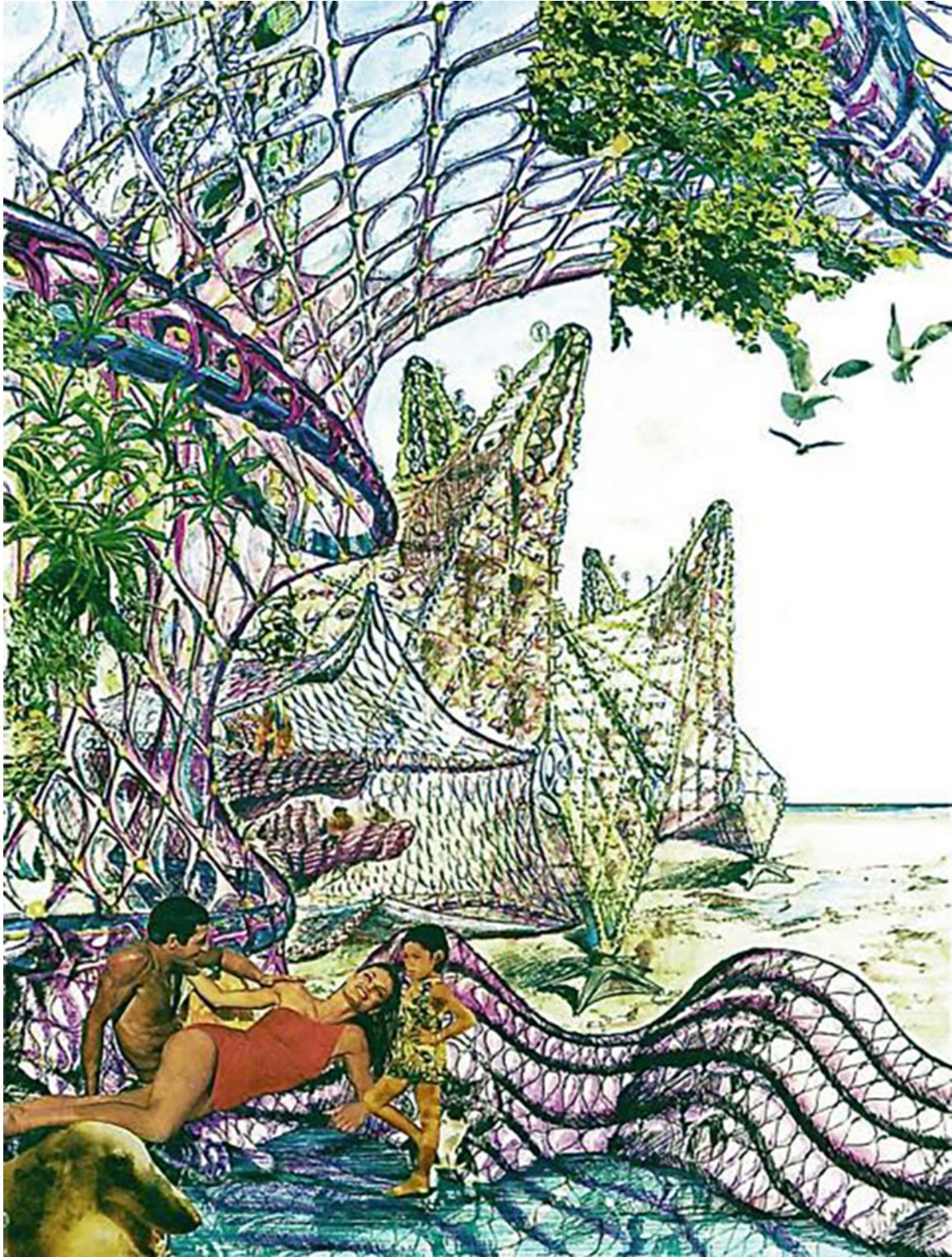


**Illustration 2.14** Glen Small, Green Machine, c. 1979 (image courtesy of smallatlarge.com).



**Illustration 2.15** Glen Small, *Biomorphic Biosphere*, c. 1970s (image courtesy of [smallatlarge.com](http://smallatlarge.com)).





**Illustration 2.16** Glen Small, *Biomorphic Biosphere*, c. 1970s (image courtesy of [smallatlarge.com](http://smallatlarge.com)).



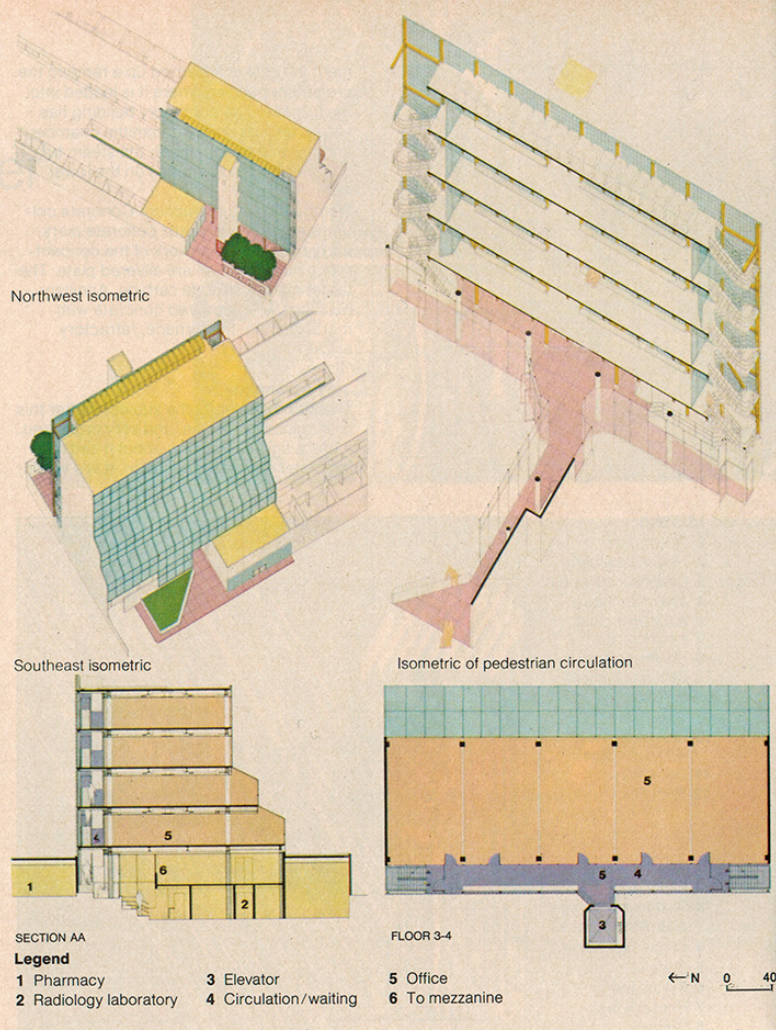
Citation

# Morphosis

**A hospital addition in Baja California solves its family care program well while presenting a coherent diagram from which its parti is generated.**

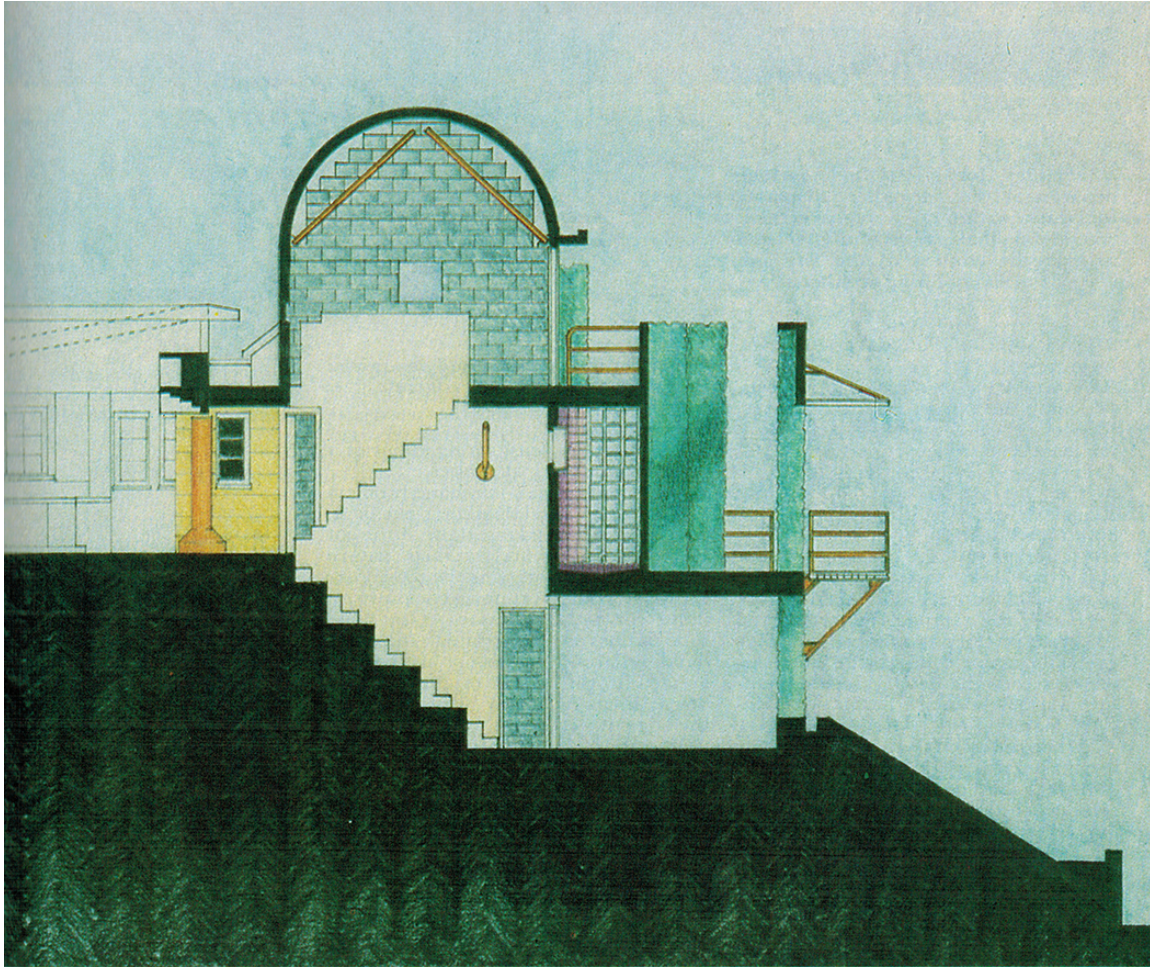
*Program:* Provide 20 individual suites of varying sizes for a small medical office building adjacent to a small community hospital. Since different types of practices will be located there, ancillary facilities such as radiological laboratory and optical services are needed, as well as a restaurant and pharmacy to serve both buildings.  
*Site:* About 1/2 acre, adjacent to existing hospital in suburban setting in Tijuana, Baja California.

*Solution:* The building's 25,000 sq ft is divided into three functional areas. The spine, which accommodates major horizontal and pedestrian movement plus waiting spaces, is oriented west and sheathed in glass block to minimize solar penetration and heat gain. The commercial ground floor spaces are oriented towards the major street and to places of easy pub-



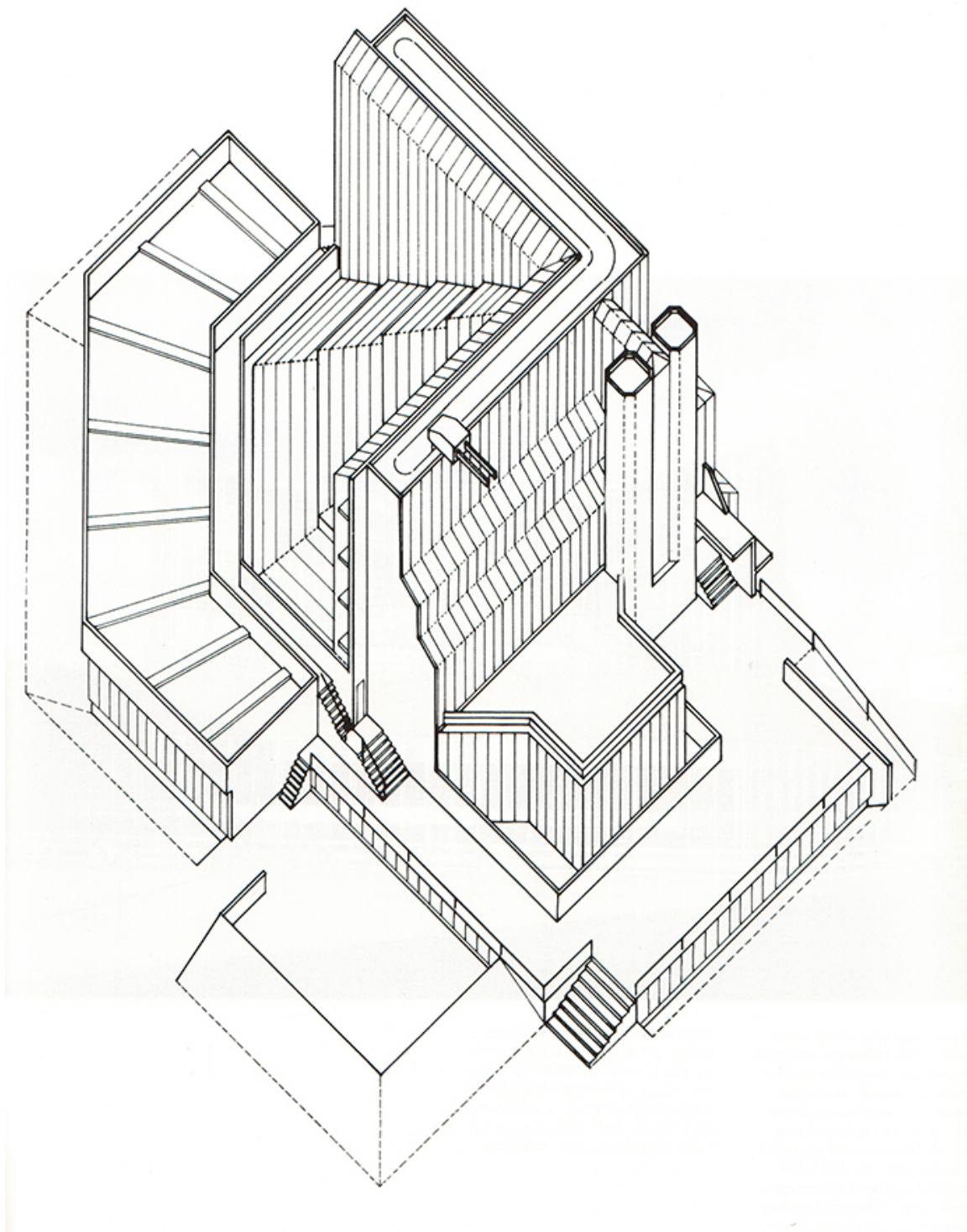
**Illustration 2.17** Morphosis Architects, Reidel Medical Building, Tijuana, Mexico, *Progressive Architecture*, 1977.



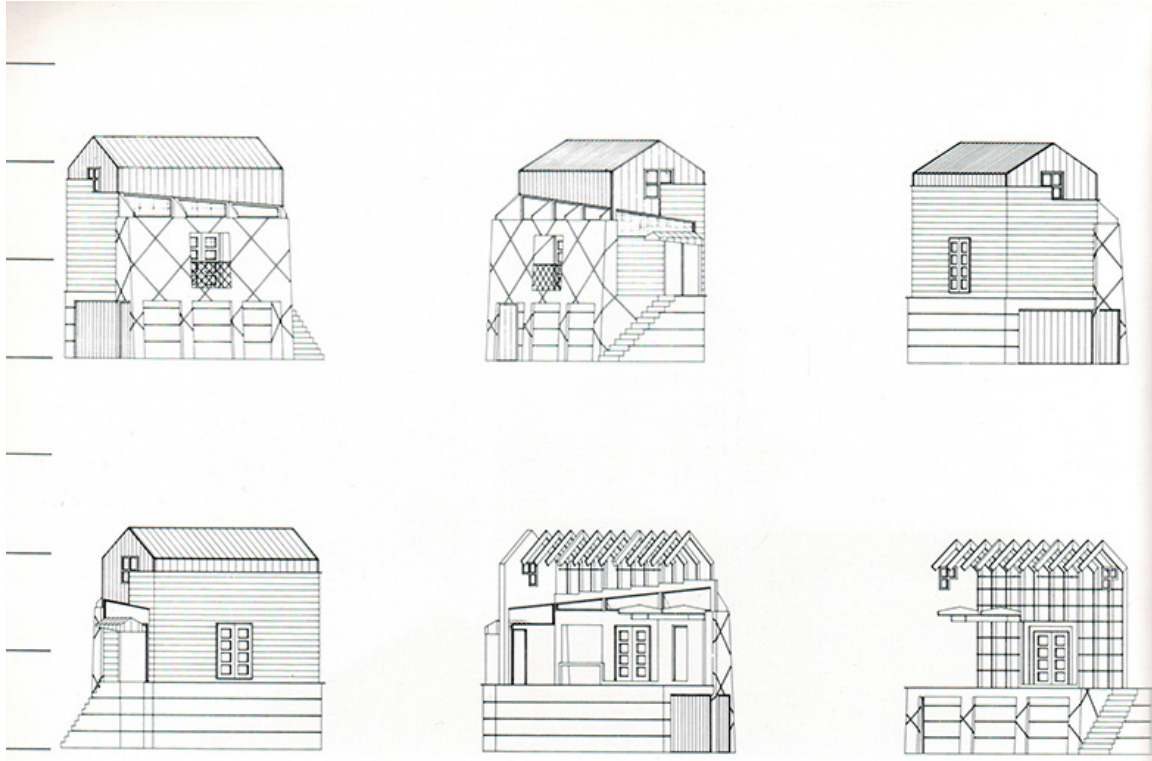


**Illustration 2.18** Morphosis Architects, Flores Residence, Tijuana, Mexico, *Progressive Architecture*, 1980.



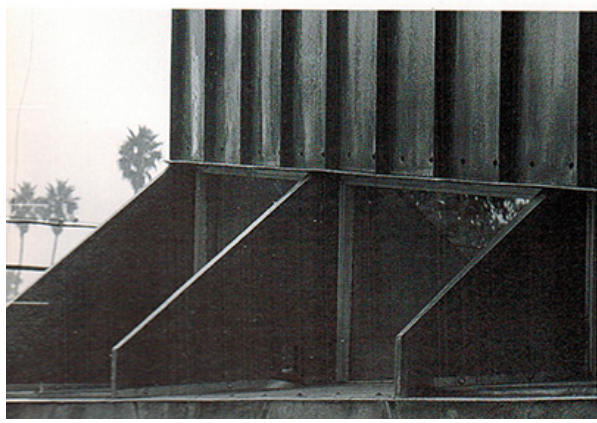


**Illustration 2.19** James Stirling, Cambridge University History Faculty Building (1967), *Architecture and Urbanism: James Stirling the Meaning of Form*, 2015.



1980 68

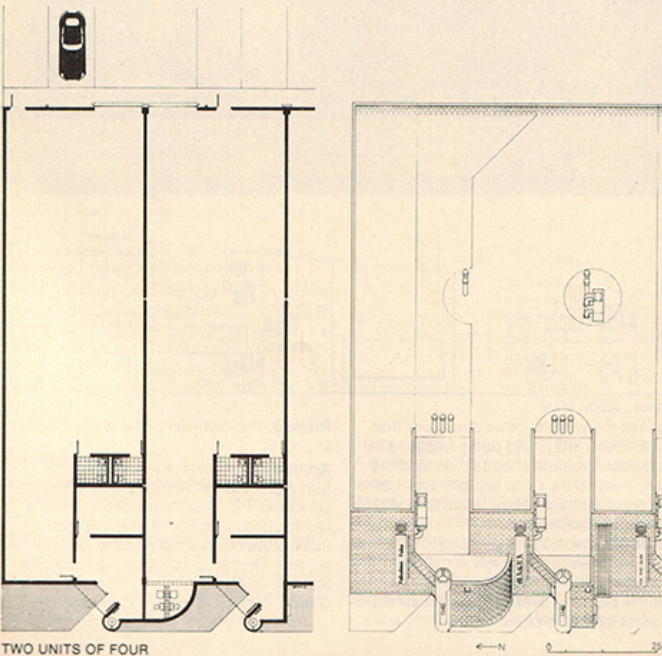
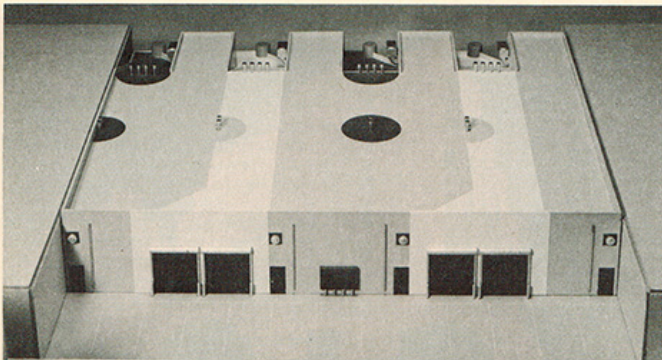
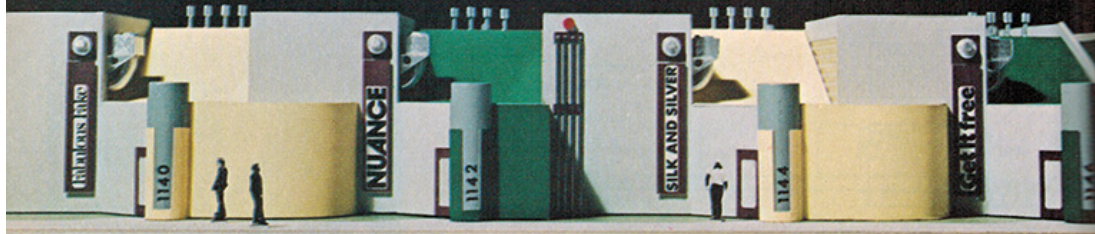
**Sedlak  
Residence  
Addition**



**Illustration 2.20** Morphosis Architects, Sedlack House (1982), *Morphosis Buildings and Projects*, 1989.



# Eric Moss and James Stafford



**Morgenstern Warehouse in LA shows how a simple, but unbending program can yield a low-cost, sleek design.**

*Program:* 13,000-sq-ft speculative warehouse with four tenant spaces including 500 sq ft of offices each; building could be otherwise subdivided or used by a single tenant.

*Site:* Garment district of downtown Los Angeles; adjacent buildings are 60-year-old masonry warehouses.

*Solution:* Low entry and sloping roof indicate office space; higher flat roof, the warehouse space. Between the two roof treatments are glass block walls providing natural light for the offices. Concrete cylinders encase hot water heaters. Roof painted with supergraphics to appeal to occupants in nearby high-rise office towers. Removable metal stud walls provide interior space flexibility.

*Materials and construction:* Concrete block bearing walls; pre-assembled wood roof system.

**Jury comments**

**Moore:** Unusually spirited, I'd say.  
**Bain:** If they can afford the sculptural quality, I think it'd be tremendous.  
**Meier:** I think it's a very attractive project.

**Project:** Morgenstern Warehouse, Los Angeles, Ca.

**Architects:** Eric Moss and James Stafford, Los Angeles; George Elian, design team member.

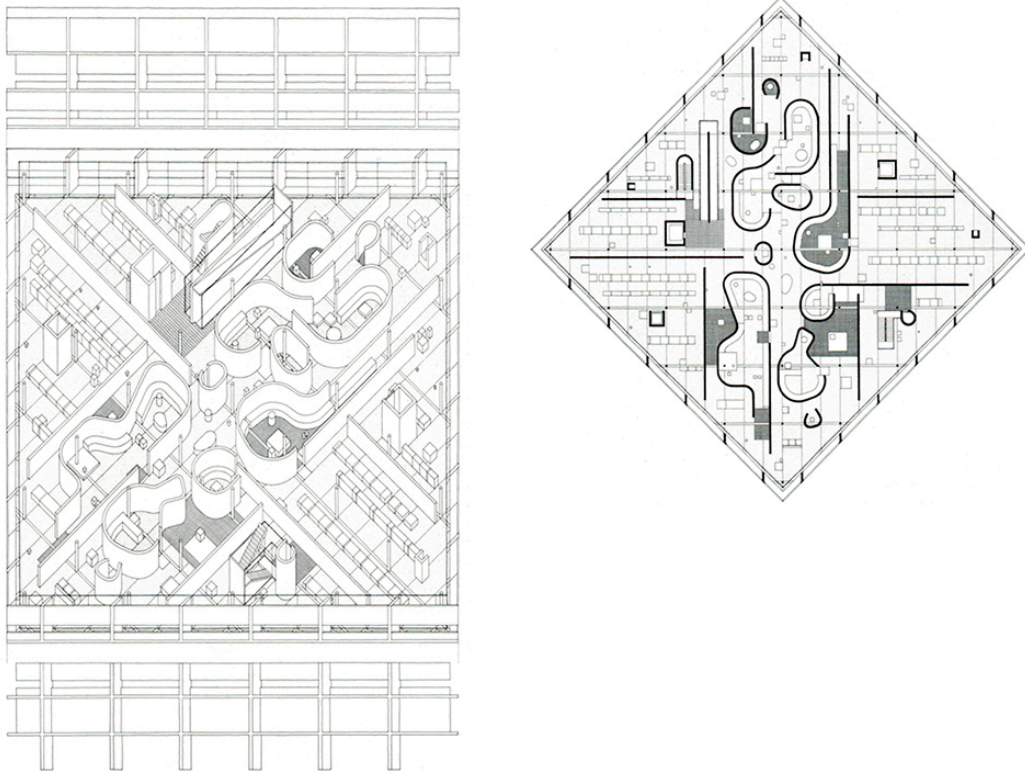
**Engineers:** Dimitry Vergun, structural; Hugh Weber, David Portillo, mechanical; Shigeo Ishibashi, electrical.

**Modelmaker:** George Elian.

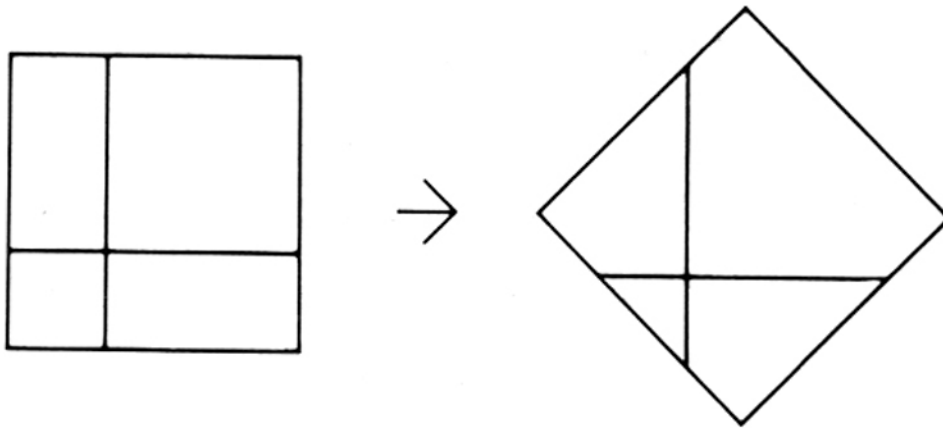
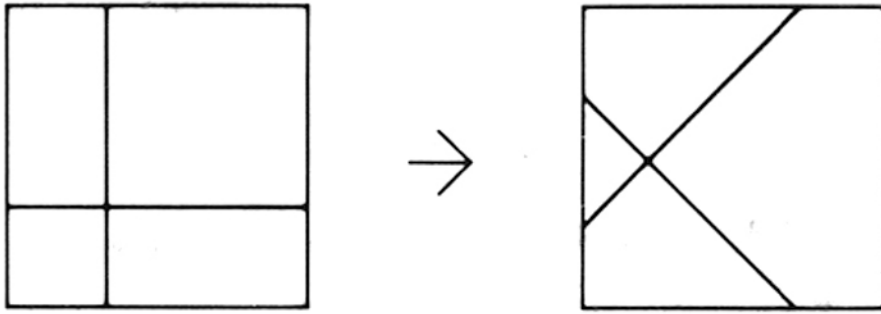
**Model photographer:** Leo Fernandez.

**Client:** Arthur Morgenstern, Beverly Hills.

**Illustration 2.21** Eric Owen Moss with James Stafford, Morgenstern Warehouse, *Progressive Architecture*, 1978.



**Illustration 2.22** John Hejduk, Diamond Museum C (1963-1967), *Mask of Medusa*, 1985.



**Illustration 2.23** John Hejduk diagram representing differences between Theo van Doesburg and Piet Mondrian, *Mask of Medusa*, 1985.



**Illustration 2.24** Hendrick Goltzius, *Job in Distress*, 1616.



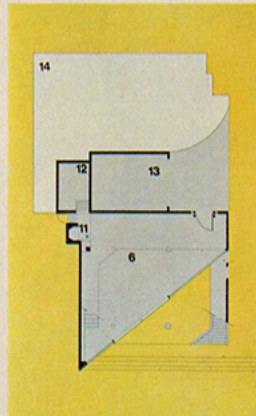


**Illustration 2.25** Piero della Francesca, *The Nativity*, 1470.

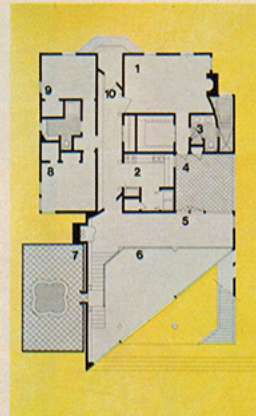


Citation

# Coy Howard



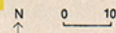
TERRACE LEVEL



MAIN LEVEL

### Legend

- 1 Master bedroom
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 New master bath
- 4 Outdoor terrace
- 5 Dining balcony
- 6 Living area
- 7 Jacuzzi — greenhouse
- 8 Bedroom (existing)
- 9 Bedroom (existing)
- 10 New hall
- 11 Fireplace alcove
- 12 Subterranean room
- 13 Garage (existing)
- 14 Unexcavated



**Boudov residence, Palos Verdes, Calif. is an addition to, and reinterpretation of, an existing house with an ocean view.**

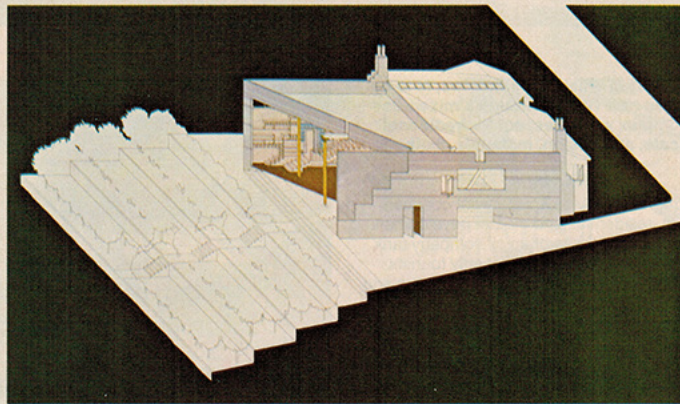
*Program:* Needing an additional bedroom and bath, plus dining and living spaces, the clients wanted to preserve the eccentricity of the existing house. In addition to an ornately paneled subterranean room, and "a wonderfully decaying lattice greenhouse," the site had a terraced fruit tree orchard and a view of the Pacific Ocean.  
*Site:* Residential lot in Palos Verdes, Calif.  
*Solution:* Existing living room was converted into the master bedroom with a new bath area, with new sundeck and living area added in the rear, with views of the orchard and the ocean. The front façade and roof of the house are cut back to reveal the new curved tile entry wall. Adjacent to the living room, the greenhouse will become a Jacuzzi bath, entered through a "locker-arch," in a wall which is designed to contain the library and other objects. The fireplace alcove on the lower level is designed to embody mystery and security patterned after Wright and Lutyens, and includes the entrance to the paneled basement room. It is the architect's intent to: "Recognize multiple and divergent design sources which, through juxtaposition, jar expectations and awaken the mind; exploit formal incompleteness, which suggests and prompts multiple interpretations; and create a sense of mystery, wonder, wit, and surprise for [the] inhabitants."

### Jury comments

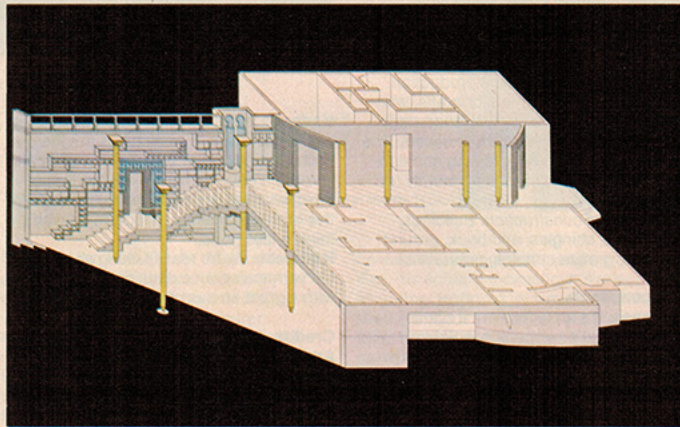
**Gwathmey:** This is a piece of vernacular architecture, but it's done in a way which is not recording history so much as making a sign about it.

**Harkness:** Whose vernacular?

**Hodgetts:** I think this should be thought of



Terraced orchard (above) steps toward view of Pacific Ocean. Existing house is to right.

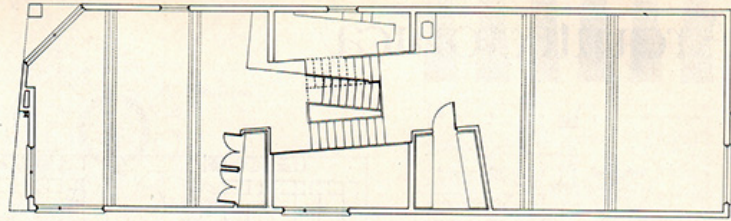


**Illustration 2.26** Coy Howard, Boudov Residence, Palos Verdes, CA, *Progressive Architecture*, January 1977.



Citation: Architectural design

# Coy Howard



FLOOR PLAN

5' 10"

**A studio house in an industrial area exploits jarring juxtapositions and formal incompleteness to create a sense of wonder and mystery.**

**Project:** McCafferty Studio, San Pedro, Ca.

**Program:** Studio/residence.

**Site:** Narrow lot in industrial beach area.

**Solution:** Eroded elements—roof, façade, fence—and isolated forms—address, stair tower, prop column—suggest an enigmatic sense of “abandonment and rehabilitation” to relate to the tough and dilapidated character of the area.

**Construction method and materials:** Wood frame construction, plywood panel finish.

#### Jury comments

**Gehry:** I like the organization of the space. They're simple, big spaces.

**Jahn:** It doesn't advance things. It's basically a row house with a two-story space in back and a three-story space in front, and a split stairway in the center, which is made somewhat complex by shifting the grid and the angles.

**Rogers:** The delicacy in proportions and angles and the subtlety inside are amazing. There's a great understanding of sequence.

#### Credits

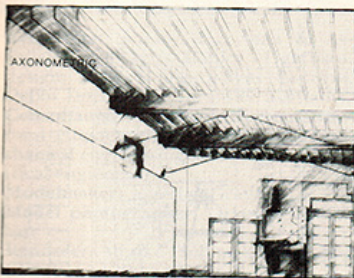
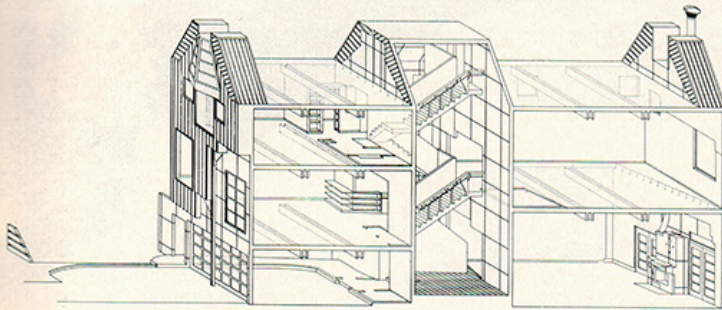
**Architects:** Coy Howard, Venice, Ca. Coy Howard, designer. Rachel Williams, associate in charge. John Springman, Sherwood Roper, Kenneth Beck, assistants.

**Consultants:** Erdelyi-Moon-Mezey & Assoc., structural engineers; Math/Tec, mechanical engineer.

**Contractor:** Biscotti Construction Co.

**Drawings:** Coy Howard, Rachel Williams, John Springman, Geoffrey Goldberg.

**Client:** Jay McCafferty.



AXONOMETRIC

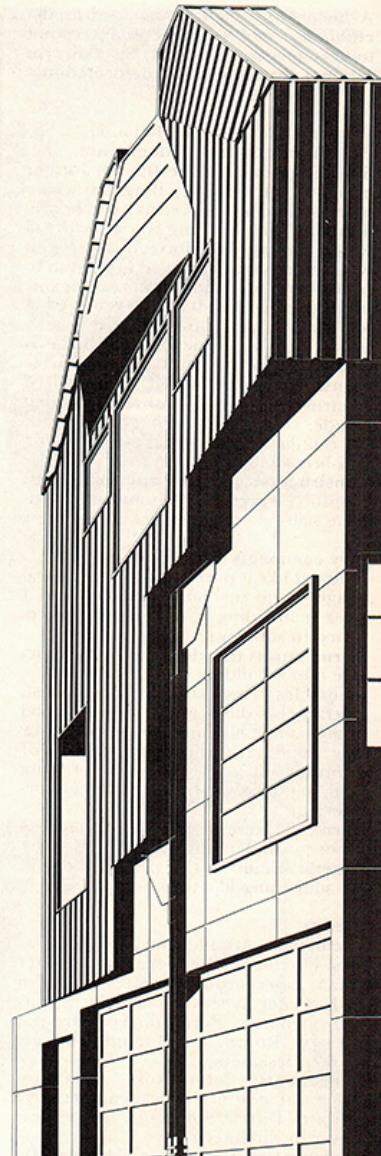
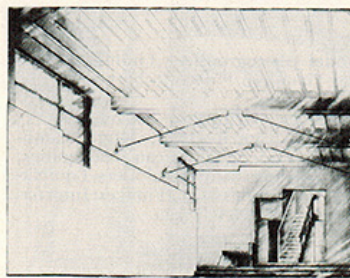


Illustration 2.27 Coy Howard, McCafferty Studio, *Progressive Architecture*, January 1980.



Citation: Architectural design

# Coy Howard

Verticality is the design cue for a California house above a canyon, maneuvered for a rich spatial range in addition to dramatic views.

**Project:** Gross residence, Hollywood, Ca.

**Program:** House for a bachelor, with spatial variety and views of residential canyon and Downtown Los Angeles.

**Solution:** House is layered vertically, tight to the street, with major living spaces on the second level. Verticality is emphasized by columns and stairs. House is intentionally hybrid, alluding to traditional and contemporary buildings and manipulating illusionary aspects of space and material.

**Construction method and materials:** Wood frame construction; exterior finish of natural gray-color cement, tinted with various shades of green.

## Jury comments

**Jahn:** For me, it misses a kind of discipline.

**Gehry:** The grand space is just beautiful.

**Stern:** I like the improbable juxtapositions of images, like this sort of latticework out of stamped metal, or the fireplace being very traditional in a room that looks like half of a dirigible.

## Credits

**Architects:** Coy Howard, Venice, Ca. Coy Howard, designer. Rachel Williams, associate in charge. John Springman, Sherwood Roper, Kenneth Beck, assistants.

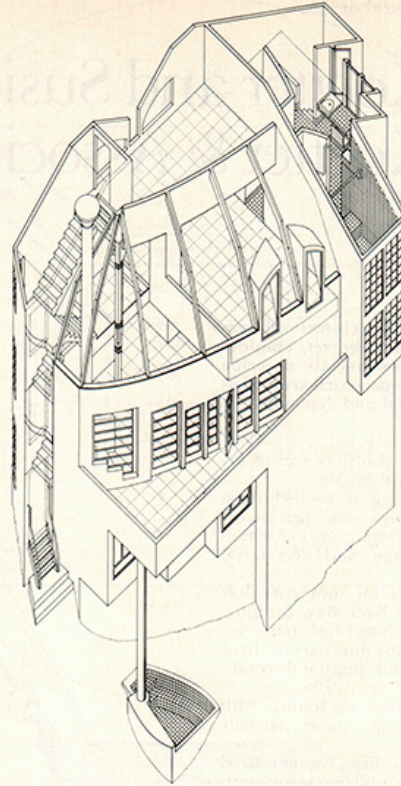
**Consultants:** Erdelyi-Moon-Mezey & Assoc., structural engineers; Math/Tec, mechanical engineer.

**Modelmaker:** Dan Rhodes.

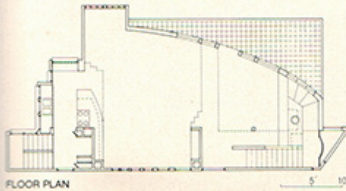
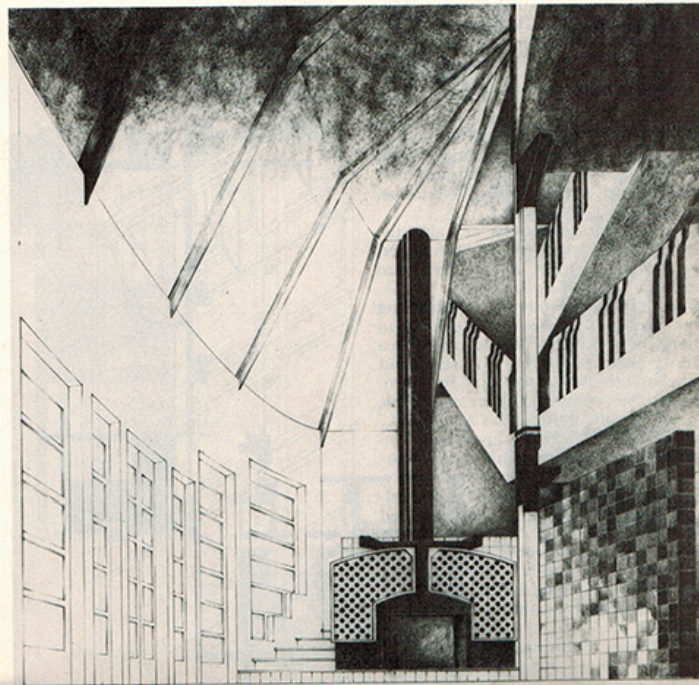
**Model photographer:** Coy Howard.

**Drawings:** Coy Howard, Rachel Williams.

**Client:** Paul Gross.

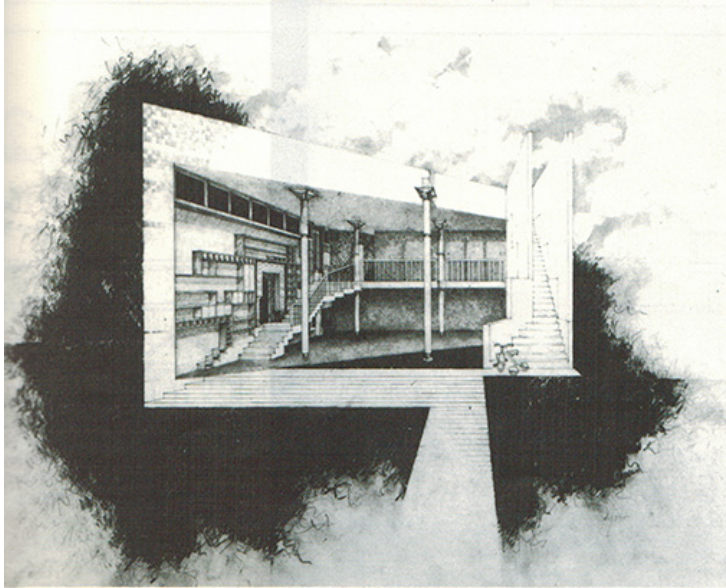
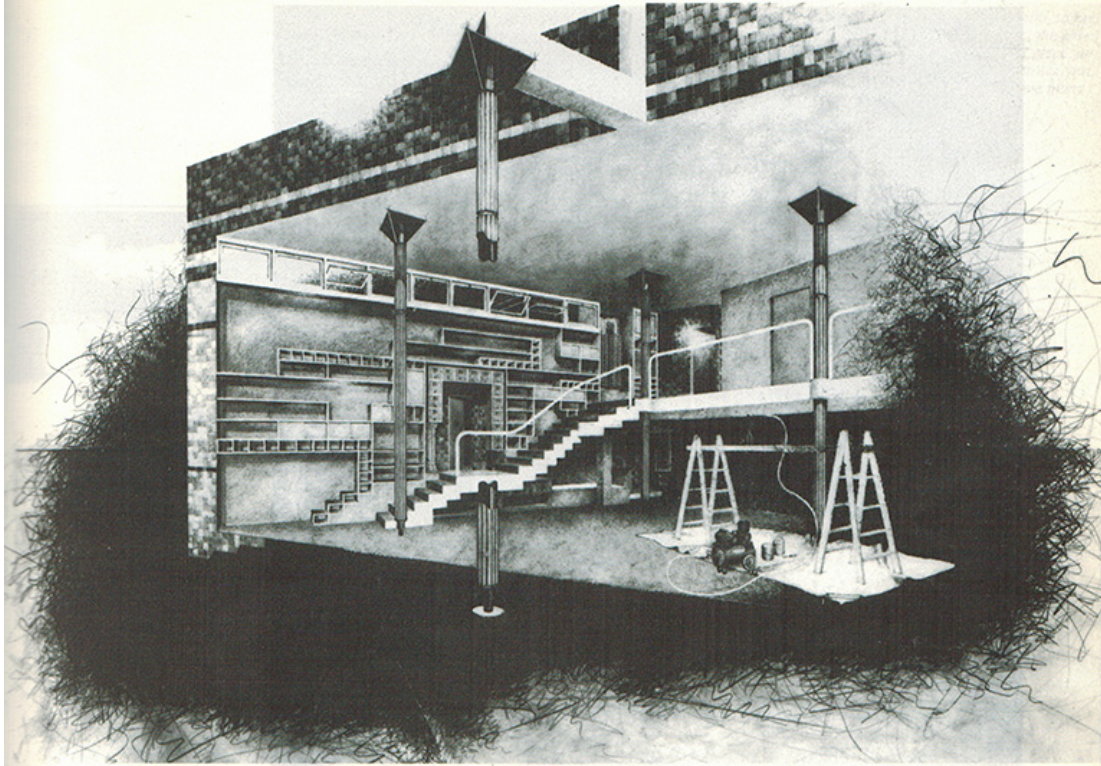


AXONOMETRIC  
LIVING ROOM



**Illustration 2.28** Coy Howard, Gross Residence, Hollywood CA, *Progressive Architecture*, January 1980.





*Boudov Residence, Palos Verdes, Ca., designed by Coy Howard. Drawings by Coy Howard and Sherwood Roper. Above: Perspective of living room, 1976, 920mm x 760mm. Left: Perspective from orchard, 1976, 650mm x 530mm.*

**Illustration 2.29** Coy Howard, Boudov Residence, *Architectural Design*, “America Now: Drawing Towards a More Modern Architecture,” 1977.

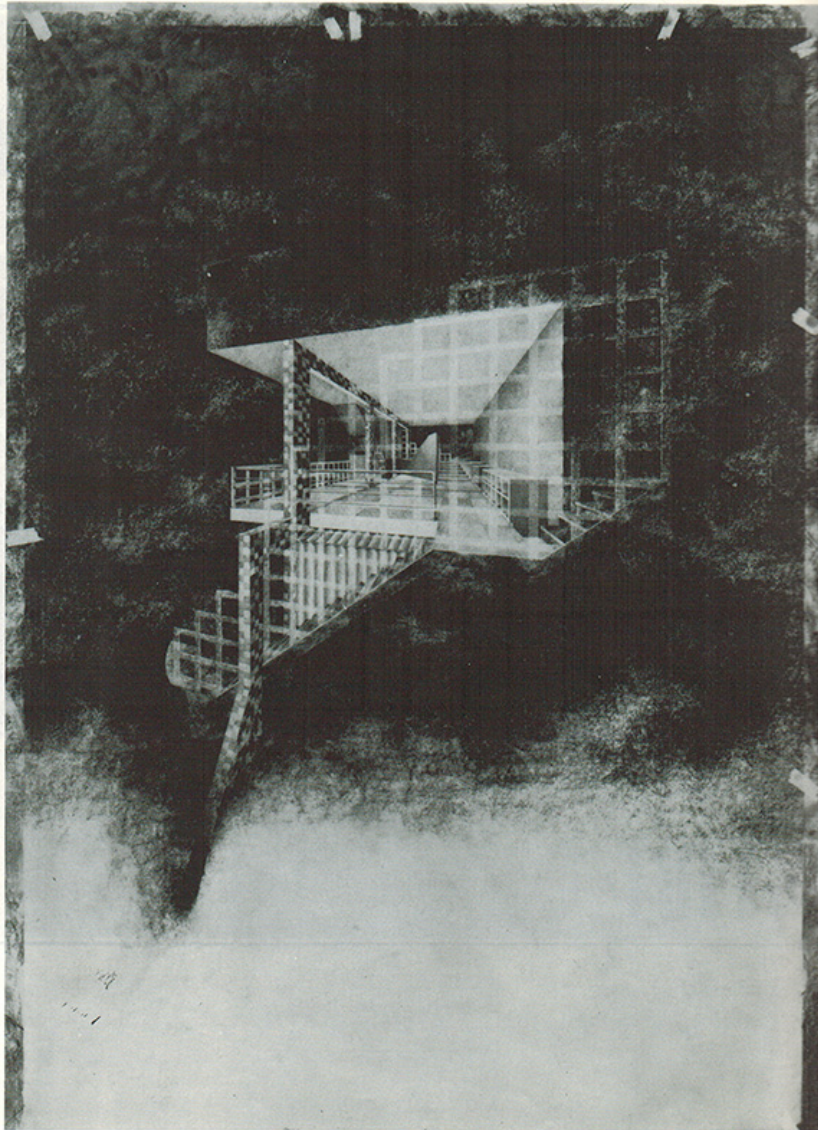


## Coy Howard



Coy Howard, born in 1943, obtained his B Arch at Texas (1966) and M Urban Planning at California (1971). He has been teaching at California since 1971. His posters are in several museum collections, and have been published in *Graphis* and *Print*. He has made a number of short films, designed exhibitions and published in several important periodicals.

*I oscillate between the 'cool' drawings of plan, section and elevation, and the 'hotter' perspective studies. The ideas that are important to me in architecture cannot be easily contemplated, juxtaposed, resolved and built into work outside the domain of techniques which allow for the study of the temporal and perceptual qualities of architecture. 'Final Drawings' are tuned-up versions of design drawings, which attempt to allow the drawing a presence of its own, extending the ideas of the building through choice of technique and nuance of execution. Here the role of the graphic journalist takes precedence over the role of the architect. Designing a building provides me with an opportunity to explore issues that are important to me; designing a drawing provides me additional opportunities to explore these issues in another format, as well as issues particular to the domain of drawing.*



Right: Hauser Residence Pacific Palisades, Ca., designed by Coy Howard. Drawing by Coy Howard and Sherwood Roper. Interior perspective, 760mm x 1090mm.

**Illustration 2.30** Coy Howard, Hauser Residence, *Architectural Design*, "America Now: Drawing Towards a More Modern Architecture," 1977.



## Peter Eisenman

Architectural Design/6/77

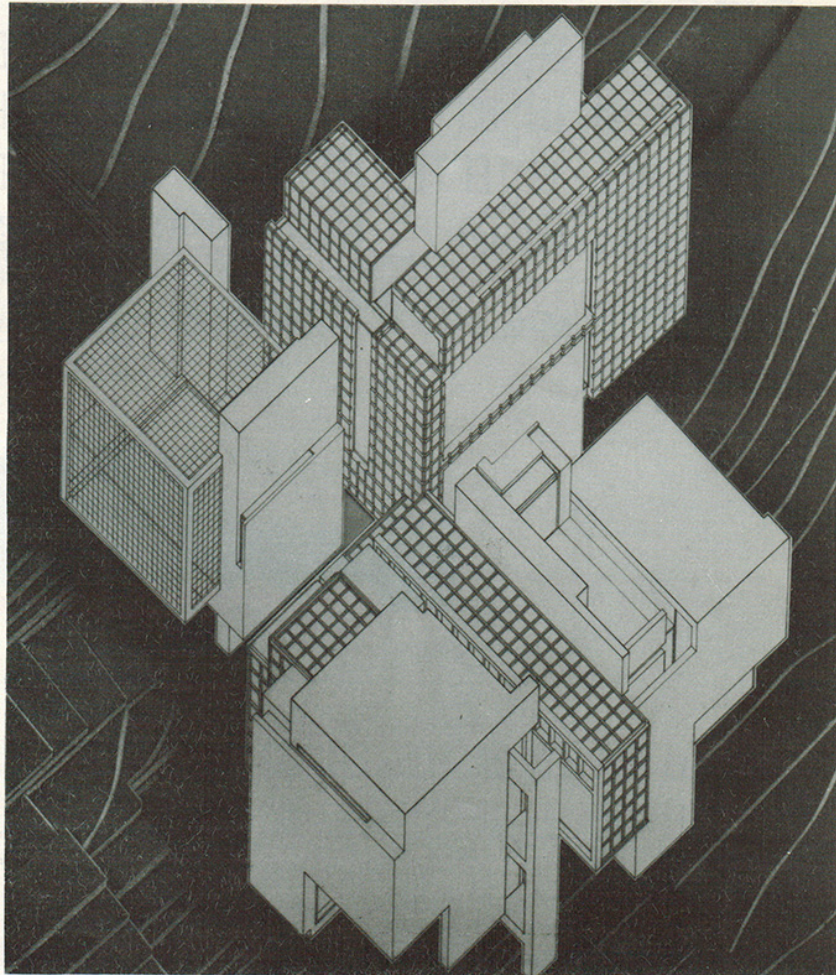
420



Peter Eisenman, born in 1932, was educated at Cornell, Columbia and Cambridge. He is an architect and Director of the Institute for Urban Studies in New York, where he is also an editor of *Oppositions*. Currently he is teaching at the Cooper Union, and is working on two books, *Post-Functionalism* and *House of Cards*.

Right: House X, 1976. Peter Eisenman with assistant Livio Dimitriu. Axonometric drawing model, ink on paper and cardboard.

'Words divide a conceptual spectrum in many arbitrary ways and in ways peculiar to language.' So architectural drawings can be said to filter, define or obscure certain concepts of architecture. Since the 16th century the orthogonal system of projections – the plan and section – have tended to define the facture of architecture. This axonometric model attempts to suggest alternative modes for conceptualising architecture. It is at once a means of representation and an object in itself. It suggests an attitude towards space which is both compressive and planar – tensile and volumetric. These suggest an object which possesses both a virtual condition and a notion of otherness – a tactile presence beyond the literal elements of structure and use. It is an architecture which is in itself the sign of its own presence and its manner of coming into being.



**Illustration 2.31** Peter Eisenman, House X, *Architectural Design*, "America Now: Drawing Towards a More Modern Architecture," 1977.



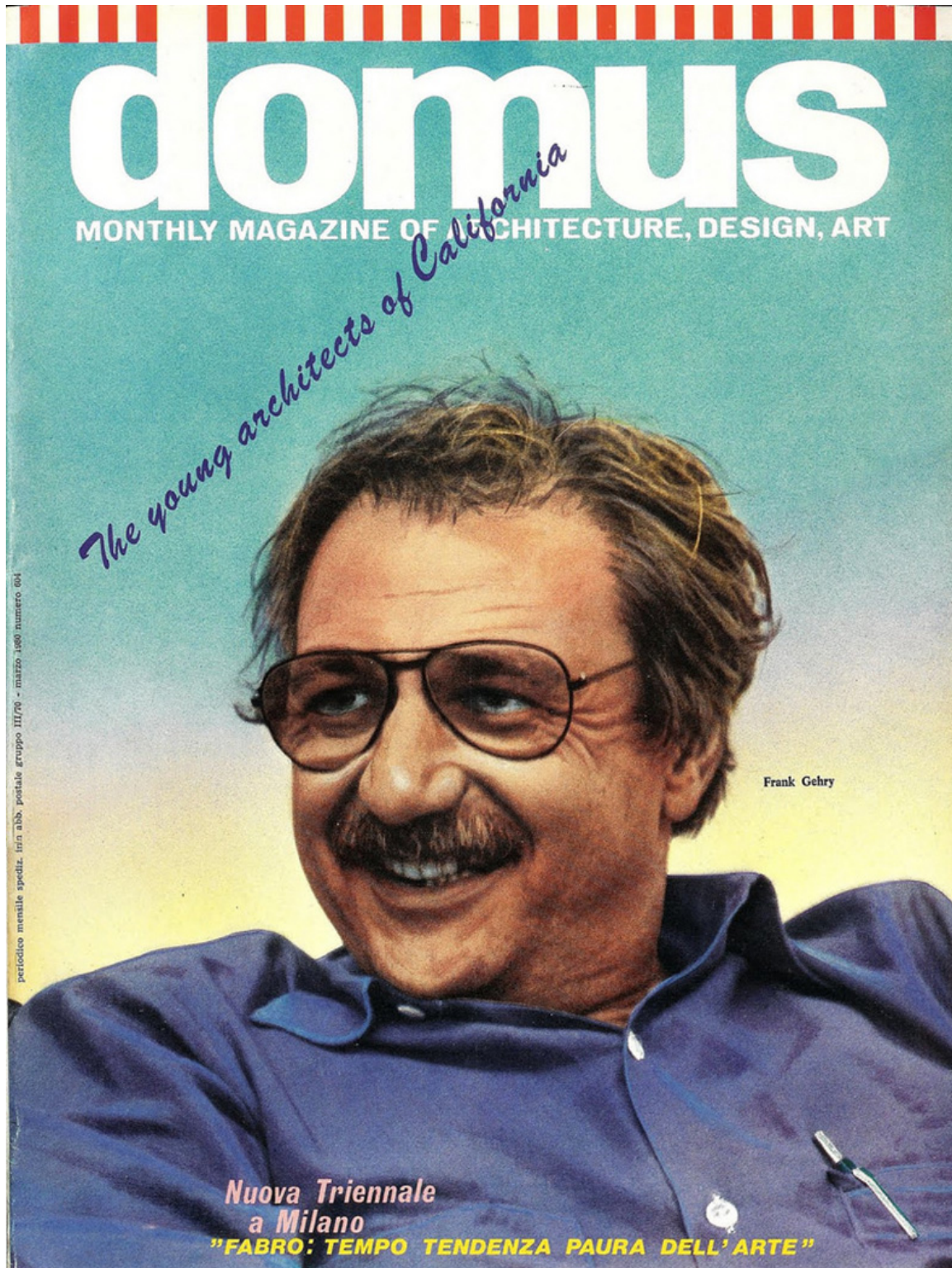
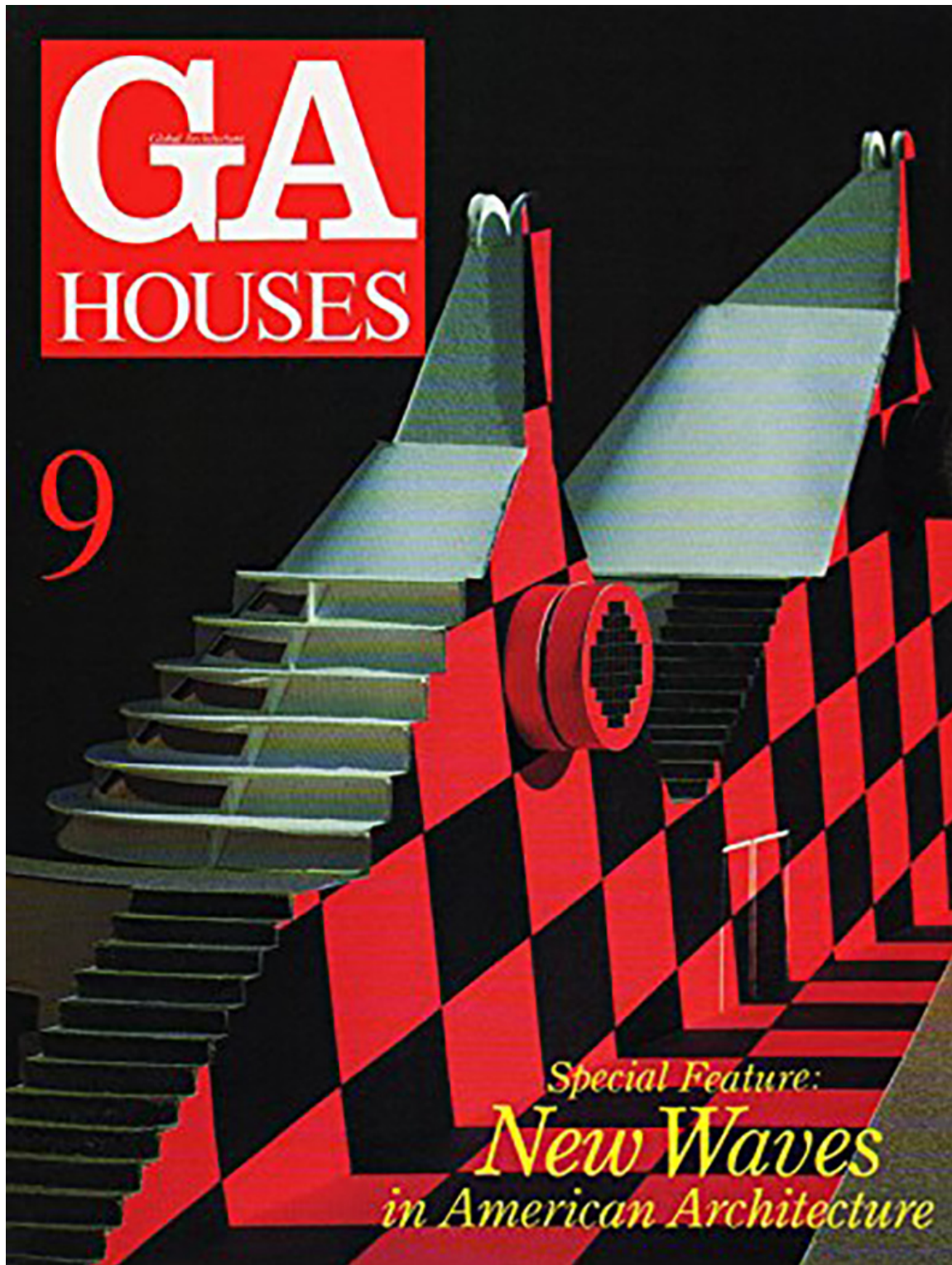


Illustration 2.32 *Domus* 604, March 1980.



**Illustration 2.33** “Ten California Architects,” *Domus* 604, March 1980.





**Illustration 2.34** *GA Houses 9: New Waves in American Architecture*, July 1981.





Federal Aviation Building, DMJM



Offices, Luckman



Art Centre, Ellwood Tyler



Pacific Design Center, Pelli/Gruen



Bonaventure, Portman



Teledyne, DMJM



Willow Glen House, de Bretteville



Green Machine, Glen Small



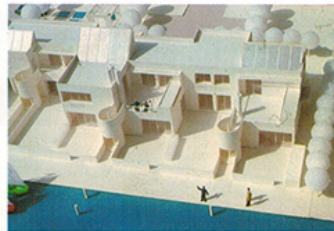
Warehouse, Eric Moss



Senior Citizen Housing, John Mutlow



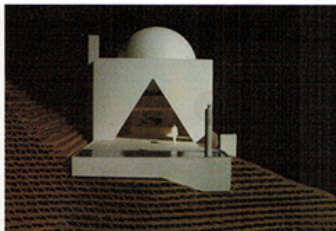
Schultz House



Bahamas Housing, Dimster



Charles Moore



Rowland Coate



Law Office, Gehry

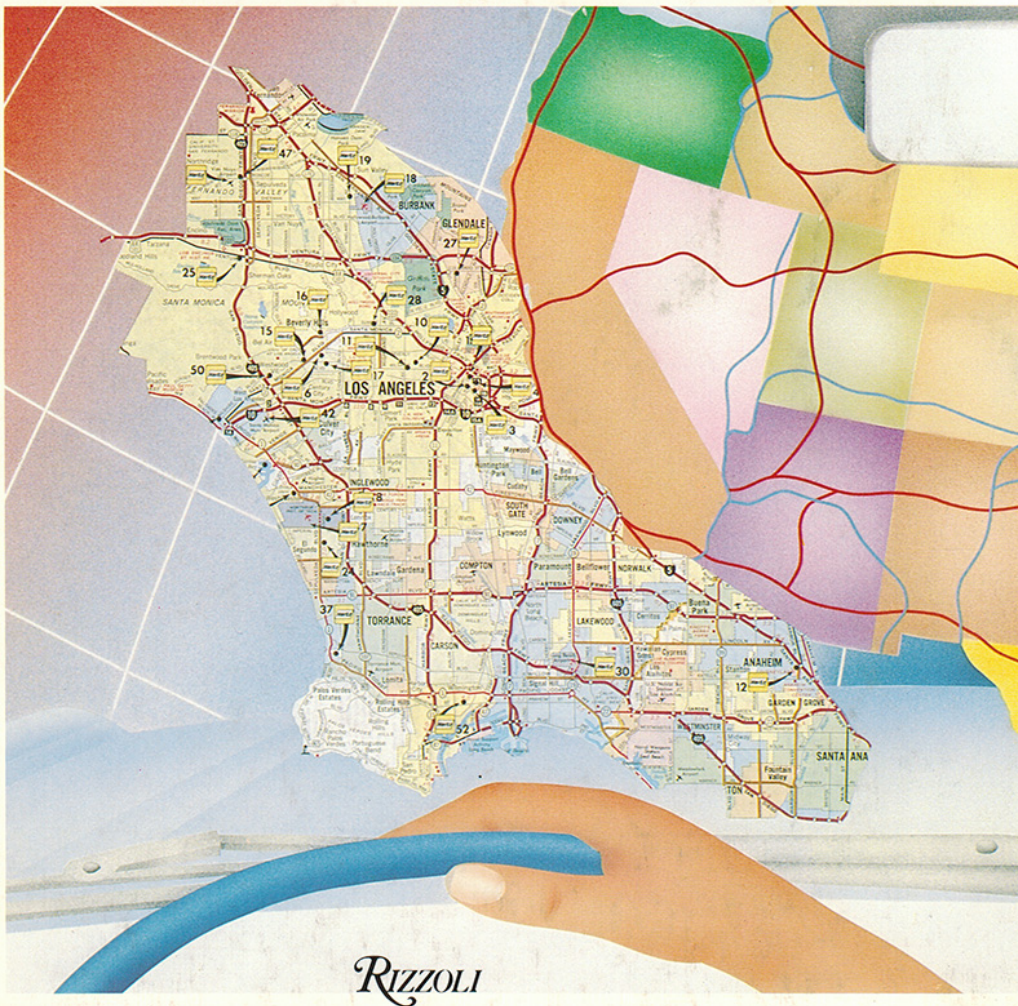
**Illustration 2.35** John V. Mutlow, "Architecture in LA Today," *Los Angeles: Architectural Design Profile*, 1981.



18<sup>IAUS</sup>

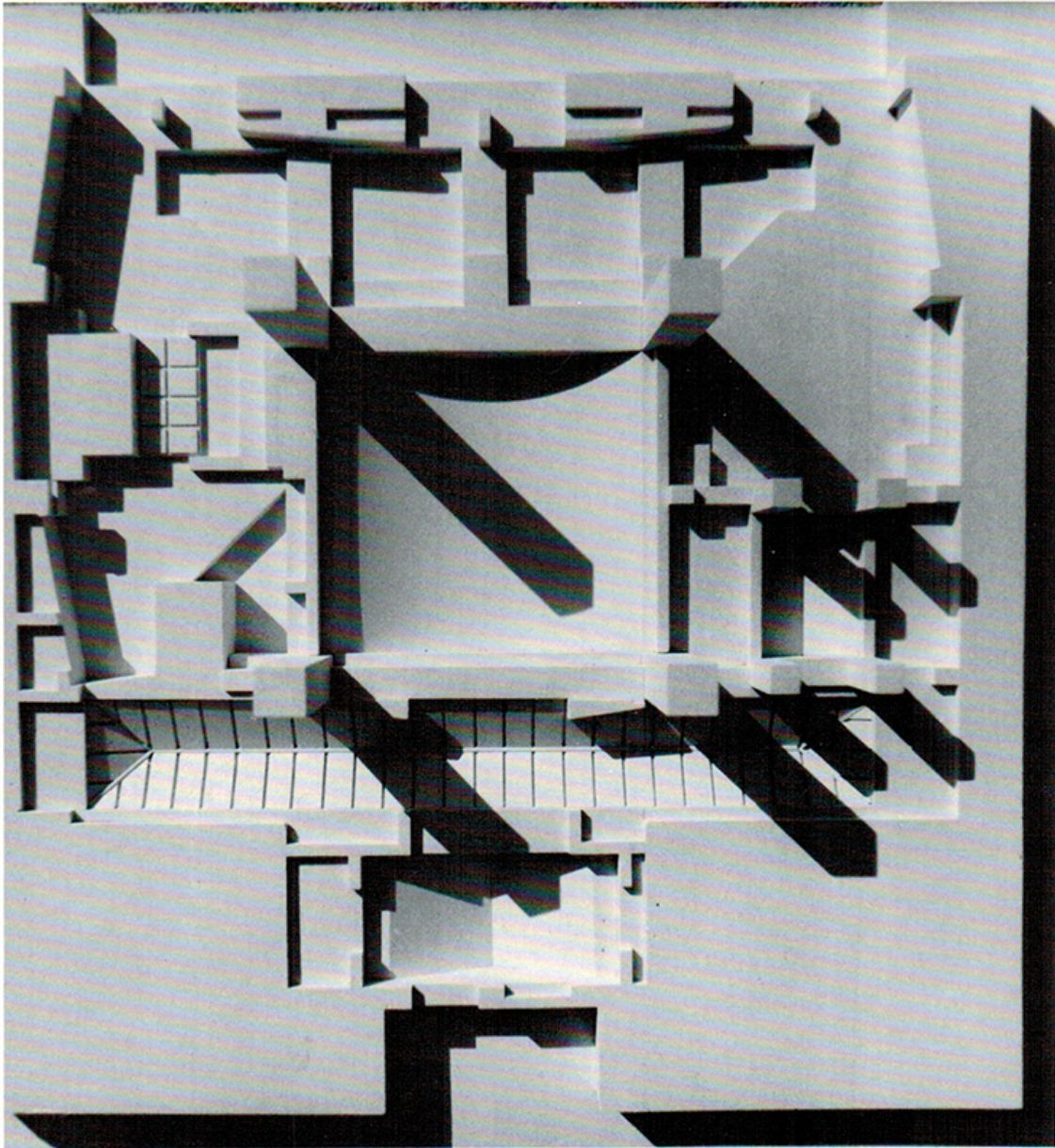
# CALIFORNIA COUNTERPOINT

New West Coast  
Architecture 1982



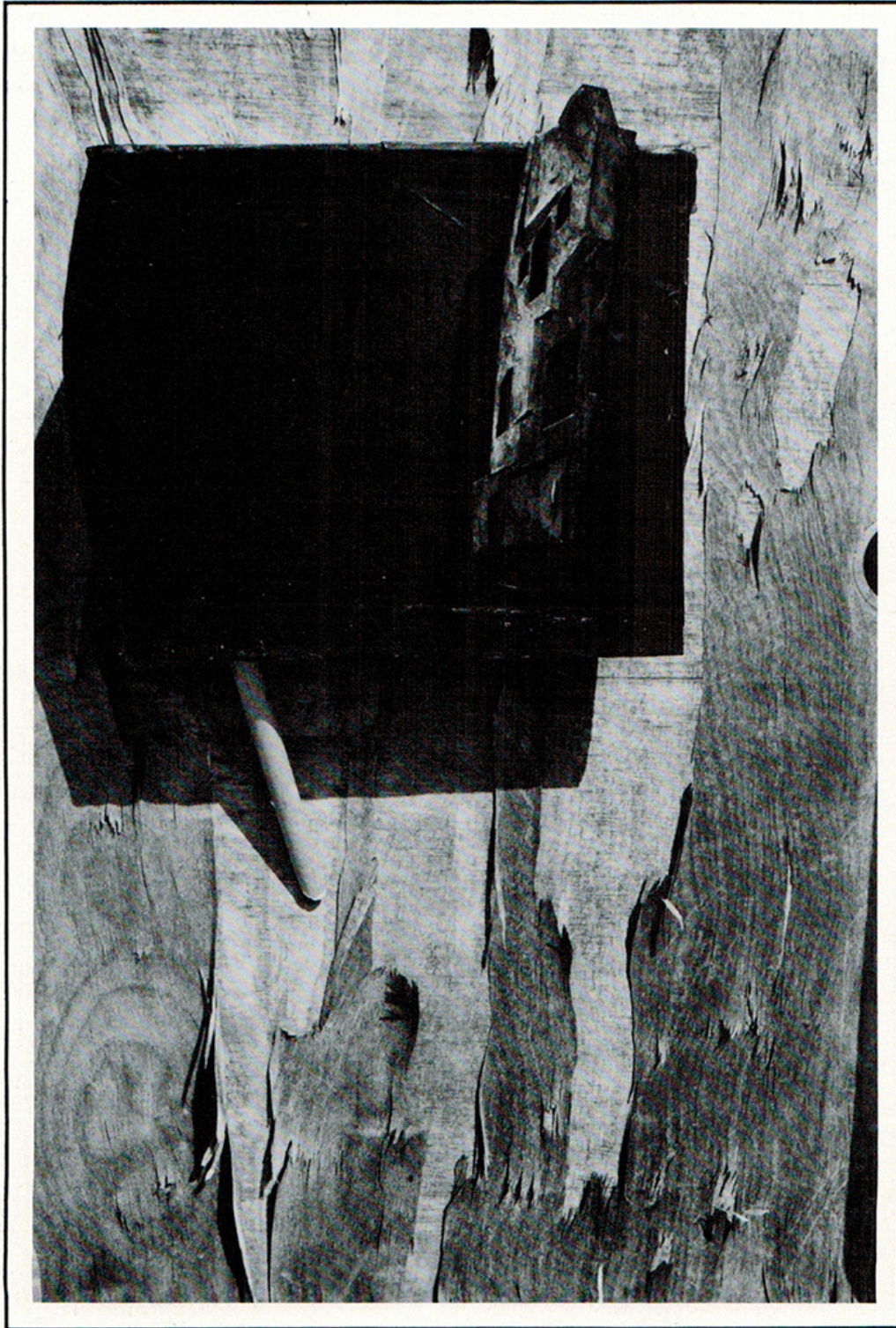
**Illustration 2.36** *California Counterpoint: New West Coast Architecture 1982, 1982.*





**Illustration 2.37** Studio Works, Waterman Apartment, plaster maquette of ceiling (1981), *California Counterpoint*, 1982.



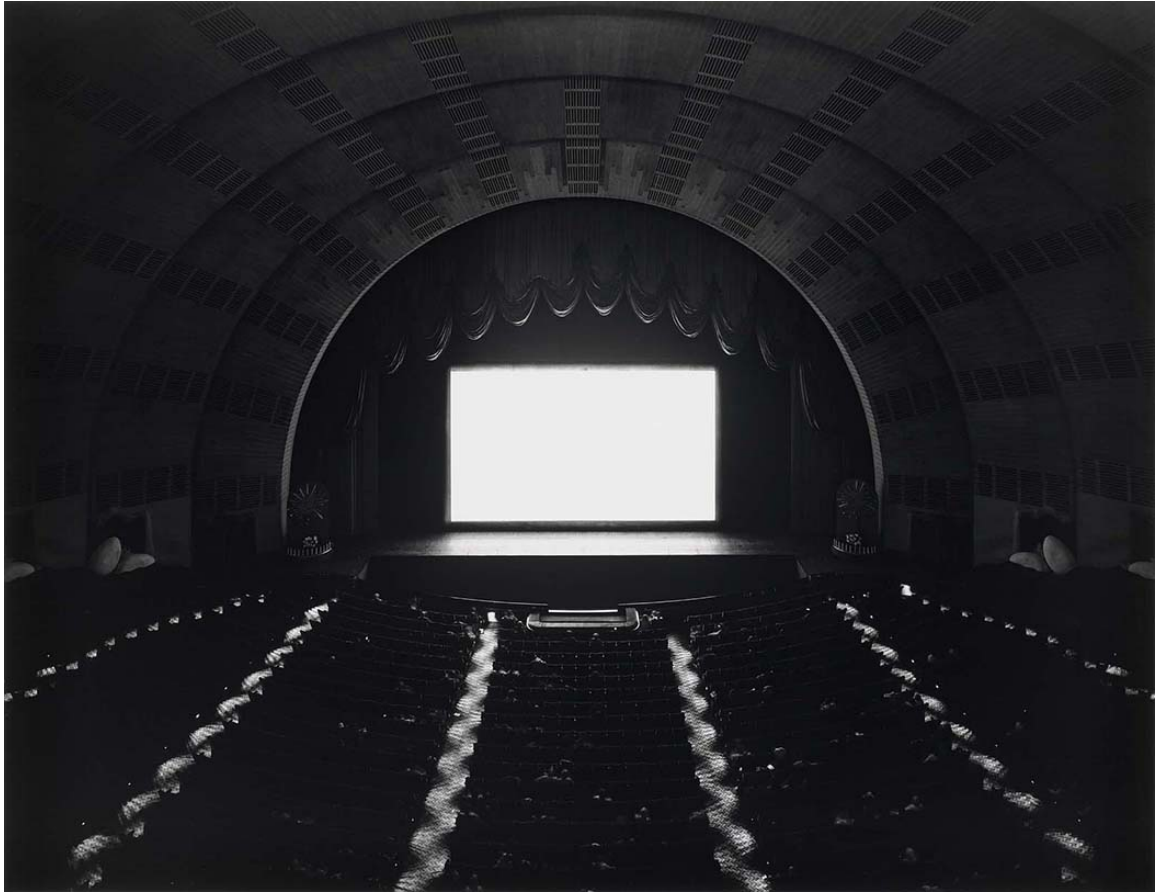


**Illustration 2.38** Coy Howard, McCafferty Residence, San Pedro CA, encaustic, mixed media Drawl (1977), *California Counterpoint*, 1982.





**Illustration 2.39** Coy Howard, Gross Residence, Hollywood, CA, bronze Drawl (1978), *California Counterpoint*, 1982.



**Illustration 2.40** Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Radio City Music Hall*, 1978.



FARWELL HAMILTON HARRIS NAN HEARST HODGETTS  
 HINSHAW COY HOWARD **FRANK ISRAEL** JENNINGS AND  
 QUINCY JONES RAY KAPPE PAUL KENNON EDWARD KI  
 KOENIG EUGENE KUPPER LANGDON AND WILSON JOH  
 LERUP TOBY LEVY RICHARD LIND LOMAX/ROCK ASSO  
 PEREIRA **ANTHONY LUMSDEN** DONLYN LYNDON GERAL  
 MARTINEZ/WONG MARQUIS/STOLLER BERNARD MAYE  
 YUDELL JULIA MORGAN **MORPHOSIS ERIC OWEN MOSS**  
 CESAR PELLI PULLIAM/MATTHEWS **ROB QUIGLEY** MICH  
 STANLEY SAIDEWITZ RUDOLPH SCHINDLER HELMUT SC  
**THOMAS GORDON SMITH DANIEL SOLOMON/BARBARA**  
**STAUFFACHER SOLOMON** RAPHAEL SORIANO STAFFOR  
 WORKS GENE SUMMERS JON THOGMARTIN DAVID THO  
**VILLIAM TURNBULL, JR.** THOMAS WEN FORDS TIM VREELAND  
 KEM WEBER FRANK WELLS WRIGHT WILSON HAROLD SAUL W  
 WILSON WURSTER BERNARD WYLLIAMS HERMAN WYLLIAMS ARCHITE  
 REG AIN BATEY AND MARK BATTERMAN WELTON BEC  
 WARREN CALLISTER JOHN CALDWELL AFFARD CLAY ROL  
 DAVIDSON PETER DE BRETTEVILLE DELPH GROUP DA  
 CHARLES EAMES CRAIG ELLWOOD JOSEPH ELLWOOD ERICK  
 FISHER/FRIEDMAN **FRANK GEHRY** JAMES GILL MARC G  
 AND GREENE **TOM GRONDO** GUSTAV GRUEN HARWE  
 IAN HEARST HODGETTS MANGURIAN HOLT AND HINSI  
**FRANK ISRAEL** JENNINGS AND STOUT JOHN JERDE A.  
 KAPPE PAUL KENNON EDWARD KILLINGSWORTH PIERF  
 KUPPER LANGDON AND WILSON JOHN LAUTNER LARS  
 RICHARD LIND LOMAX/ROCK ASSOCIATES LUCKMAN A  
**LUMSDEN** DONLYN LYNDON GERALD McCUE A.C. MART  
 /STOLLER BERNARD MAYBECK **MOORE RUBLE YUDEL**  
 MORGAN **MORPHOSIS ERIC OWEN MOSS** RICHARD NEU  
 M/MATTHEWS **ROB QUIGLEY MICHAEL FRANKLIN ROS**  
 TZ RUDOLPH SCHINDLER HELMUT SCHULITZ **TED SMIT**  
**GORDON SMITH DANIEL SOLOMON/BARBARA STAUFFA**  
 RAPHAEL SORIANO STAFFORD/BINDER STUDIO WORKS  
 THOGMARTIN DAVID THORNE FRANK THORNTON WILLIAMS

**THE CALIFORNIA CONDITION**

*A Pregnant Architecture*

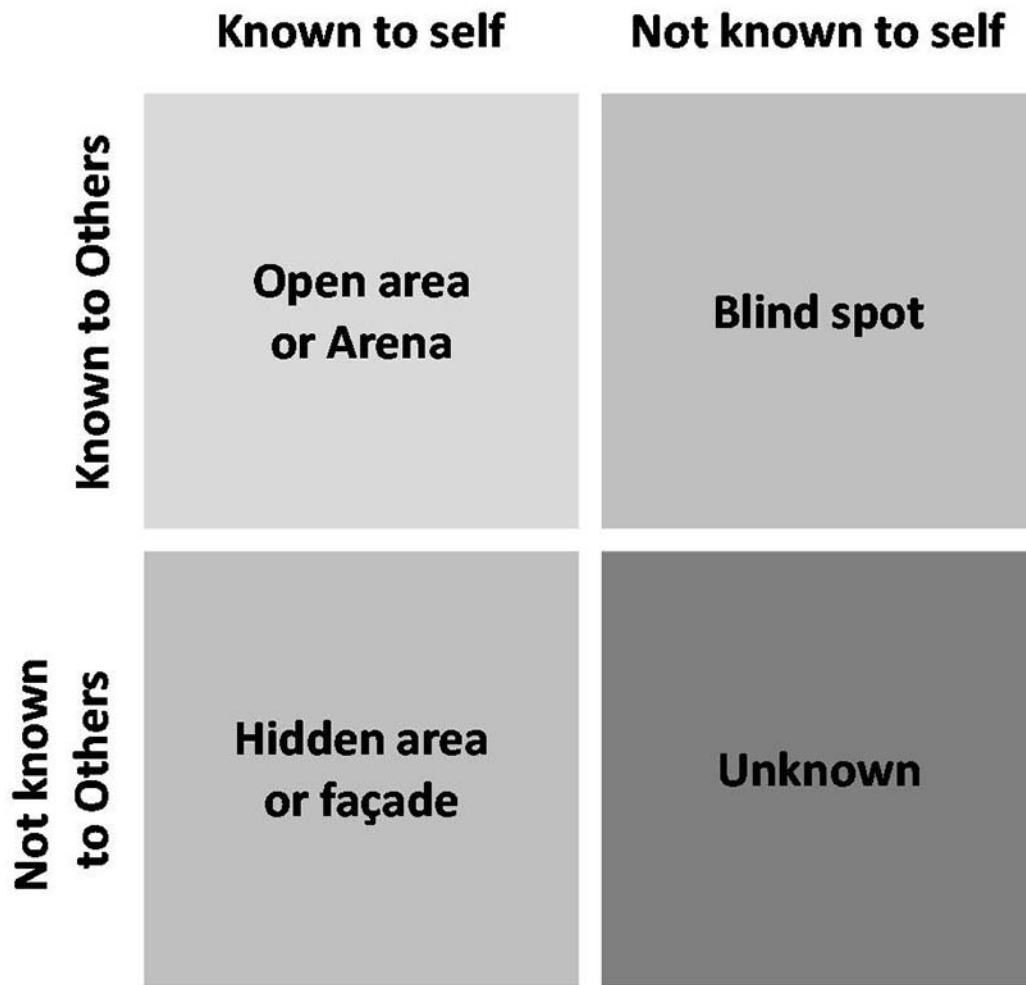
**Illustration 2.41** *The California Condition: A Pregnant Architecture*, 1982





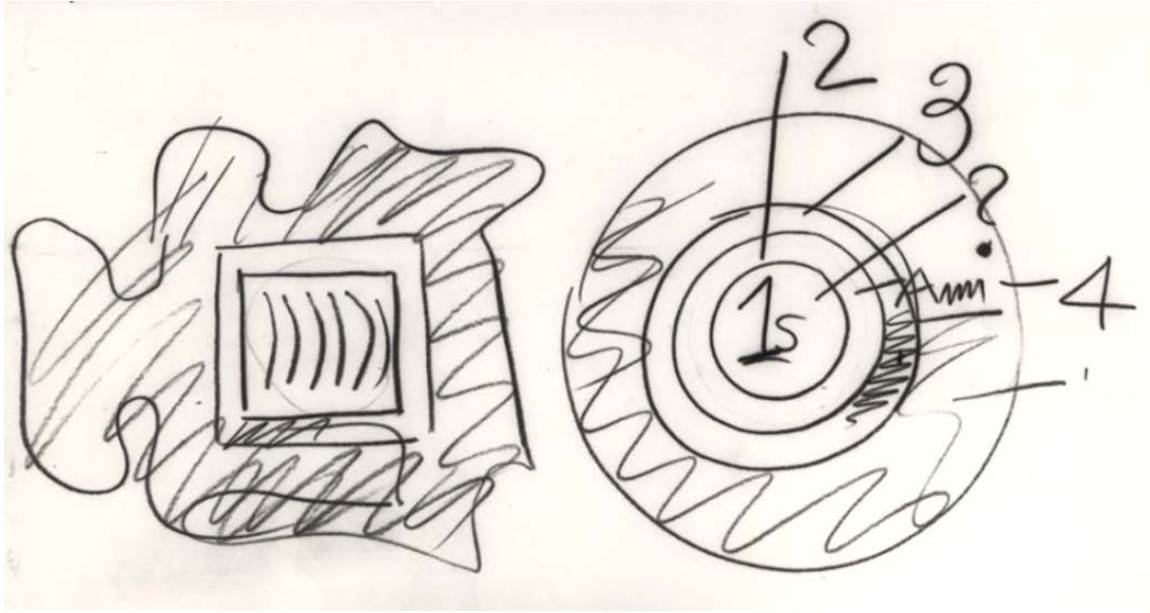
**Illustration 2.42** *Los Angeles Now*, 1983.



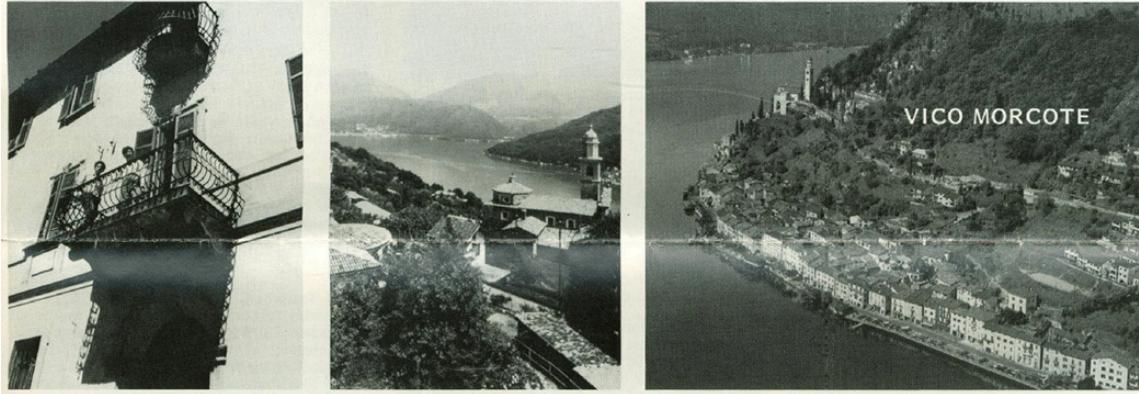


## The Johari Window Model

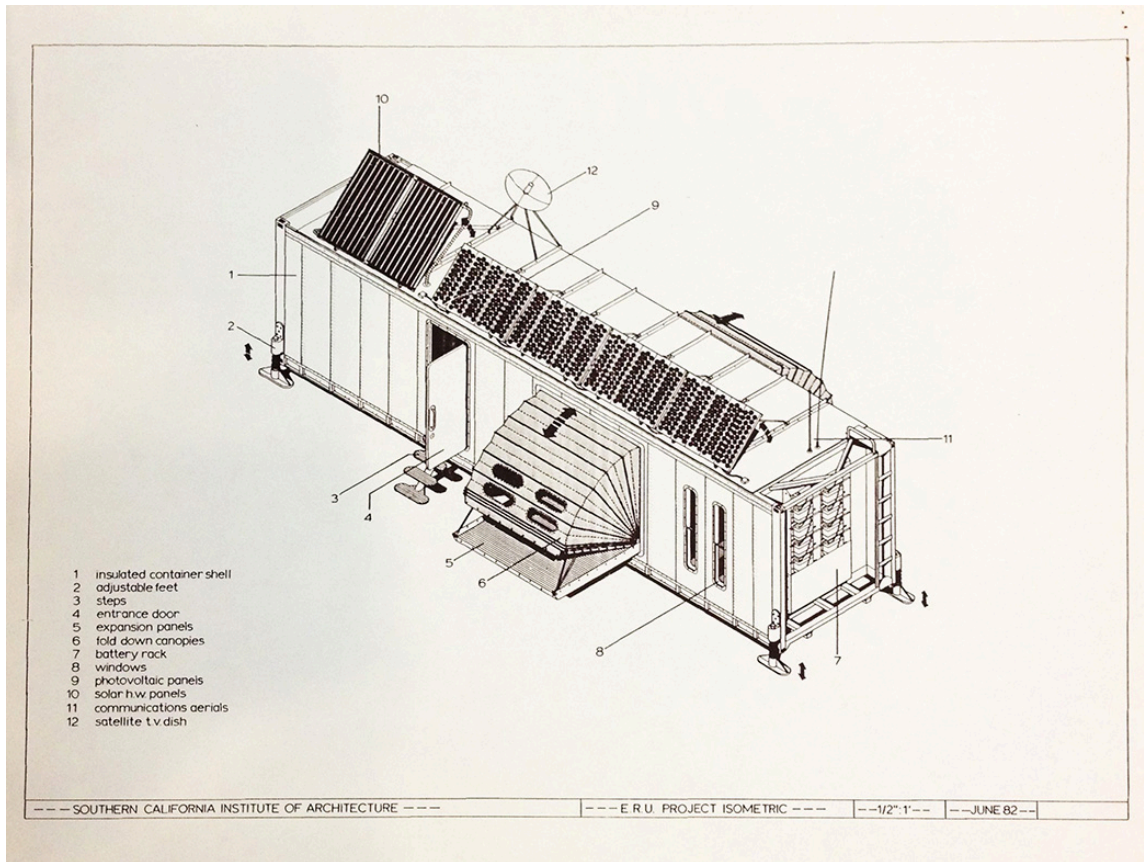
Illustration 2.43 Johari Window example (courtesy of communicationyheory.org).



**Illustration 2.44** Louis Kahn, diagram for the Unitarian Church in Rochester, New York, 1959-1969.

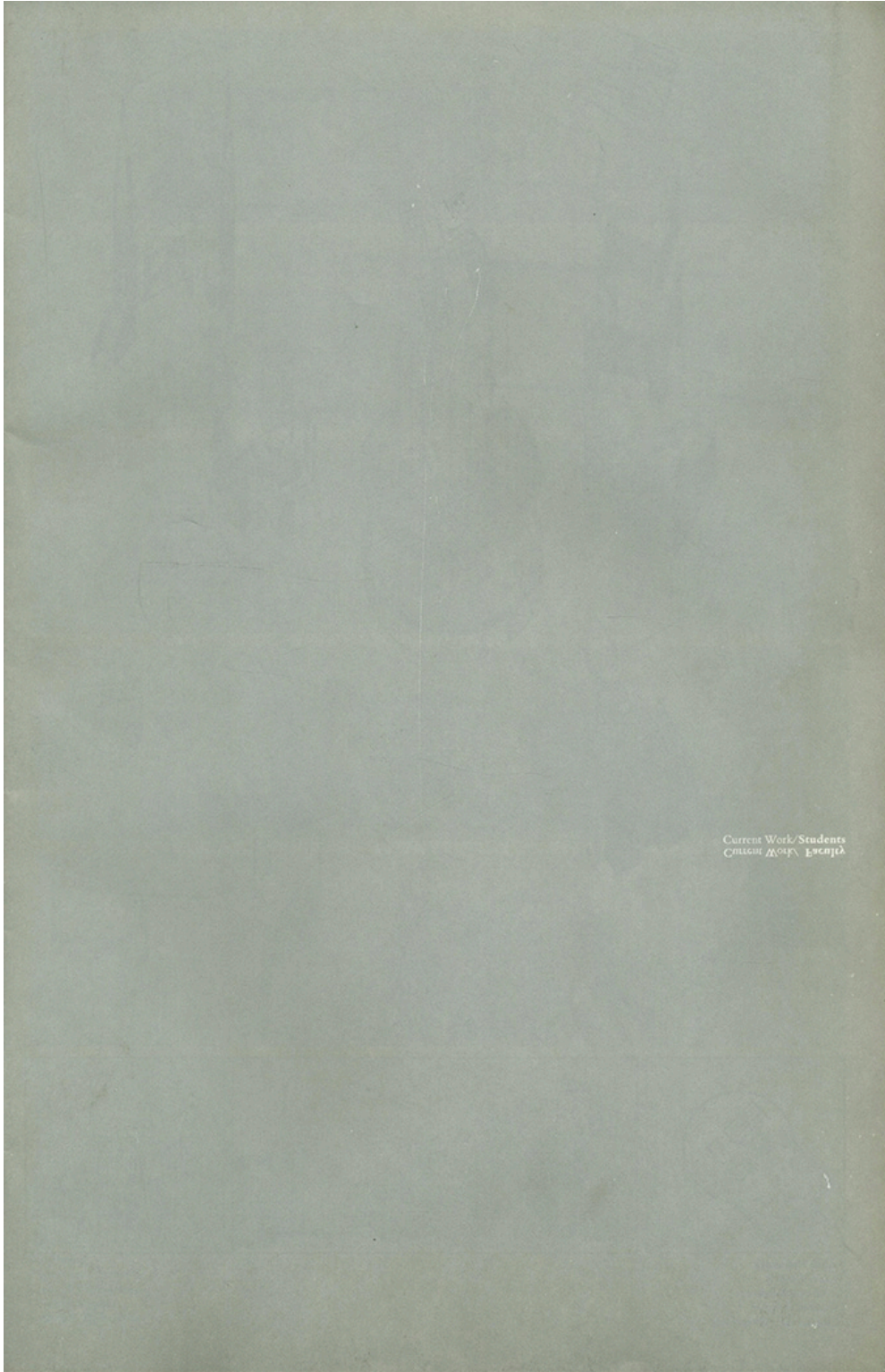


**Illustration 2.45** SCI-Arc: Vico Morcote, c.1980s (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).

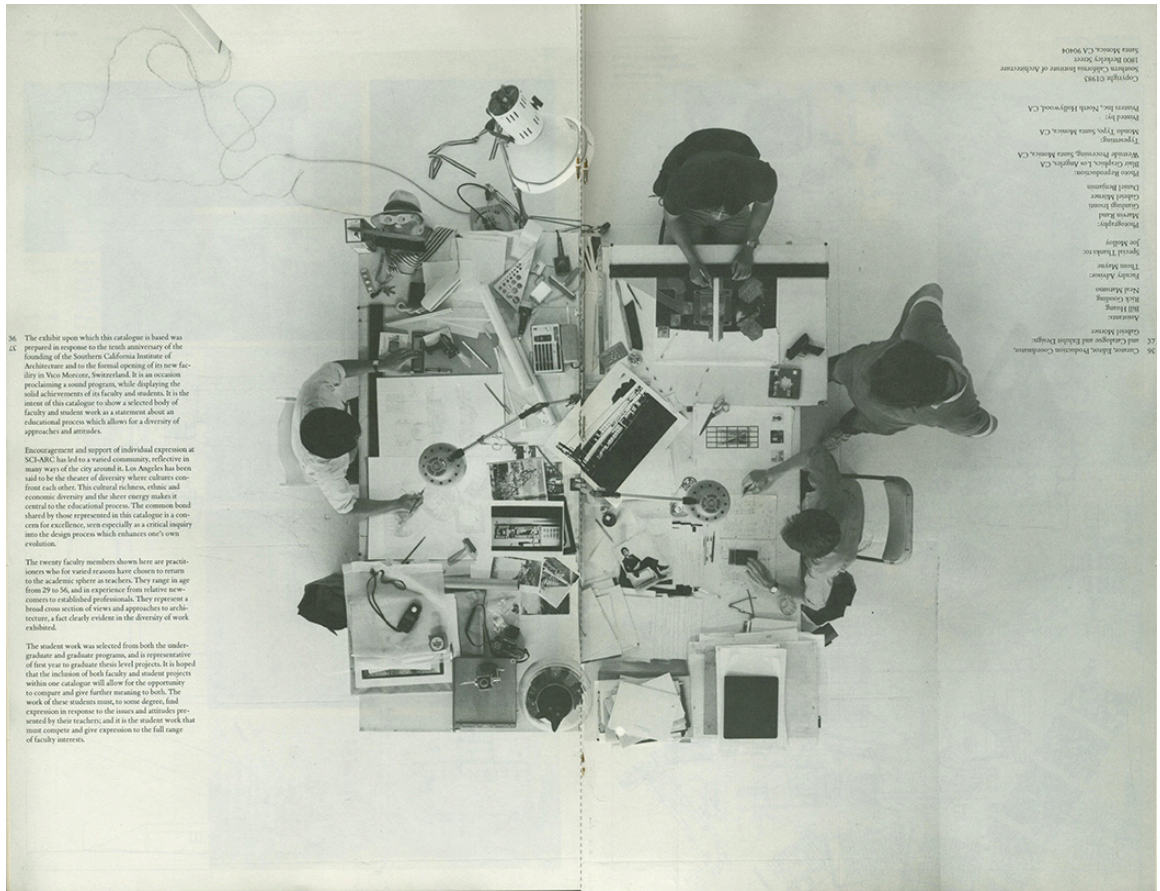


**Illustration 2.46** Experimental Research Unit (ERU), SCI-Arc project for Topanga Canyon site, 1982 (image courtesy of Getty Research Institute Archive)





**Illustration 2.47** *Current Work*, SCI-Arc student and faculty publication, 1983 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



36 The exhibit space which this catalogue is based was prepared in response to the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Southern California Institute of Architecture and to the formal opening of a new facility in Van Nuys, California. It is an occasion for celebrating a second program, while displaying the solid achievements of faculty and students. It is the intent of this catalogue to show a selected body of faculty and student work as a statement about an educational process which allows for a diversity of approaches and attitudes.

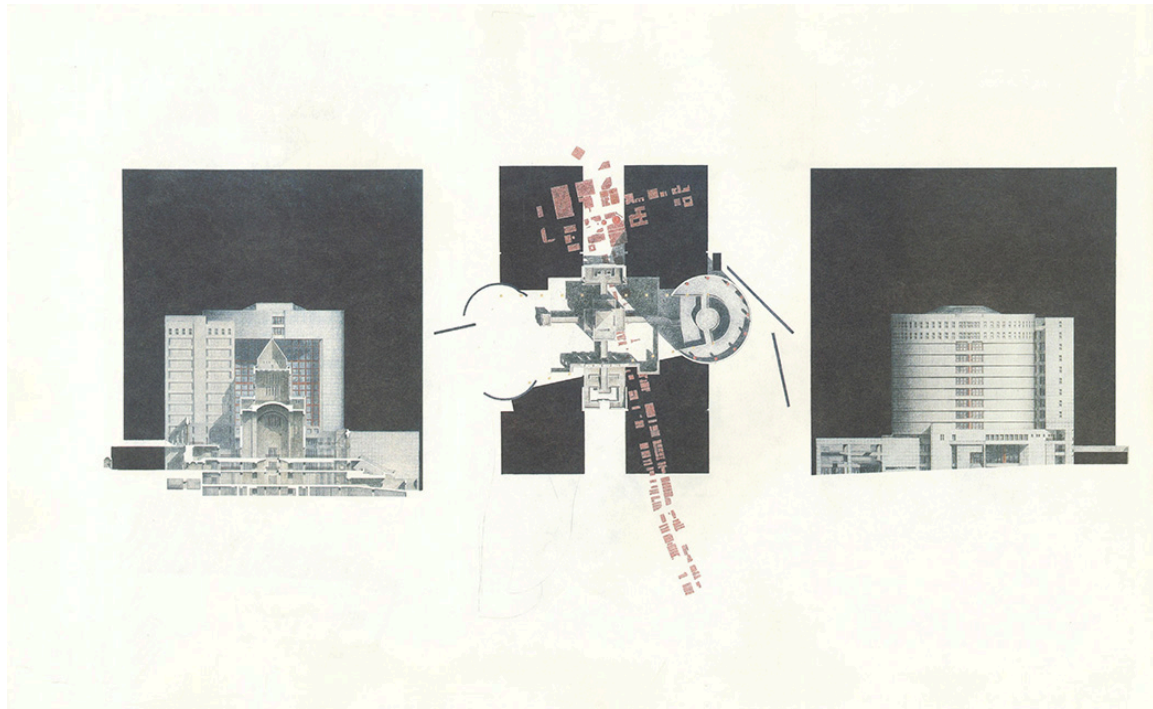
Encouragement and support of individual expression at SCI-ARC has led to a varied community, reflective in many ways of the city around it. Los Angeles has been said to be the theatre of diversity where cultures confront each other. This cultural richness, ethnic and economic diversity and the sheer energy makes it central to the educational process. The common bond shared by those represented in this catalogue is a concern for excellence, seen especially as a critical inquiry into the design process which enhances one's own evolution.

The twenty faculty members shown here are practitioners who for varied reasons have chosen to return to the academic sphere as teachers. They range in age from 29 to 56, and in experience from relative newcomers to established professionals. They represent a broad cross section of views and approaches to architecture, a fact clearly evident in the diversity of work exhibited.

The student work was selected from both the undergraduate and graduate programs, and is representative of first year to graduate thesis level projects. It is hoped that the inclusion of both faculty and student projects within one catalogue will allow for the opportunity to compare and give further meaning to both. The work of these students must, to some degree, find expression in response to the issues and attitudes presented by their teachers, and it is the student work that must compete and give expression to the full range of faculty interests.

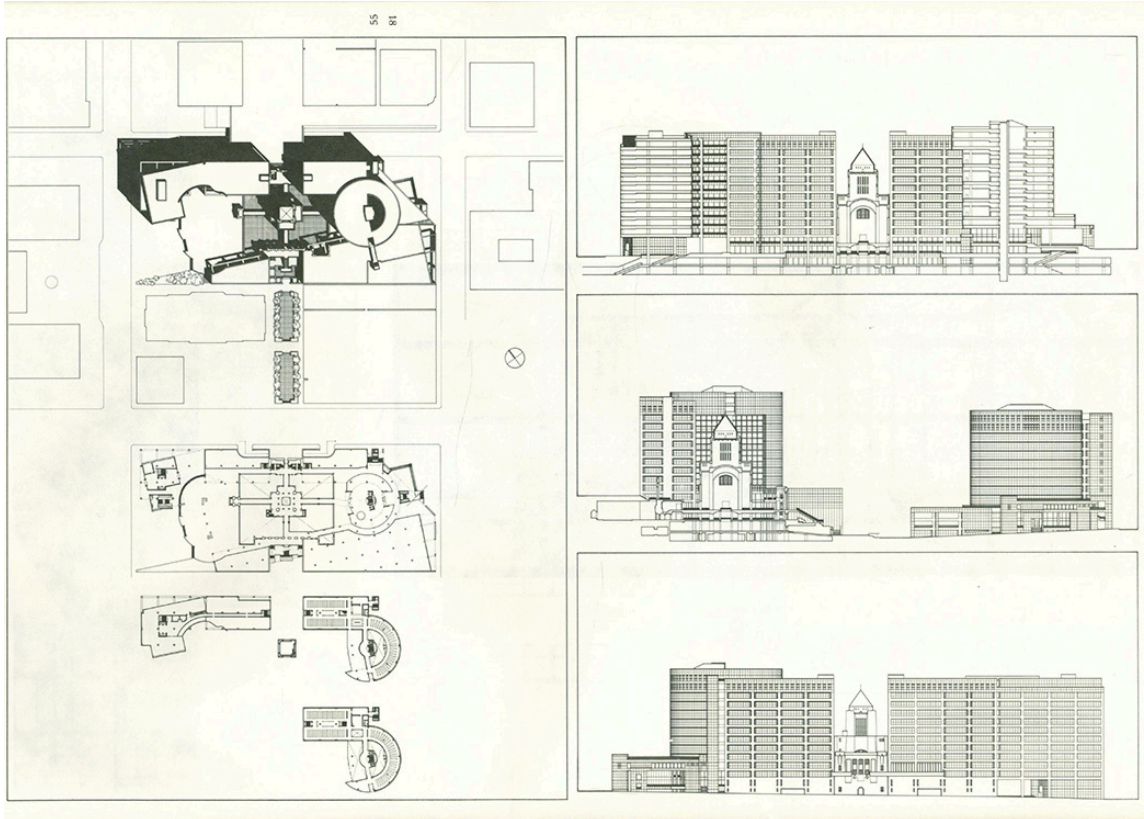
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**Illustration 2.48** Morphosis Architects, *Current Works*, 1983 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).

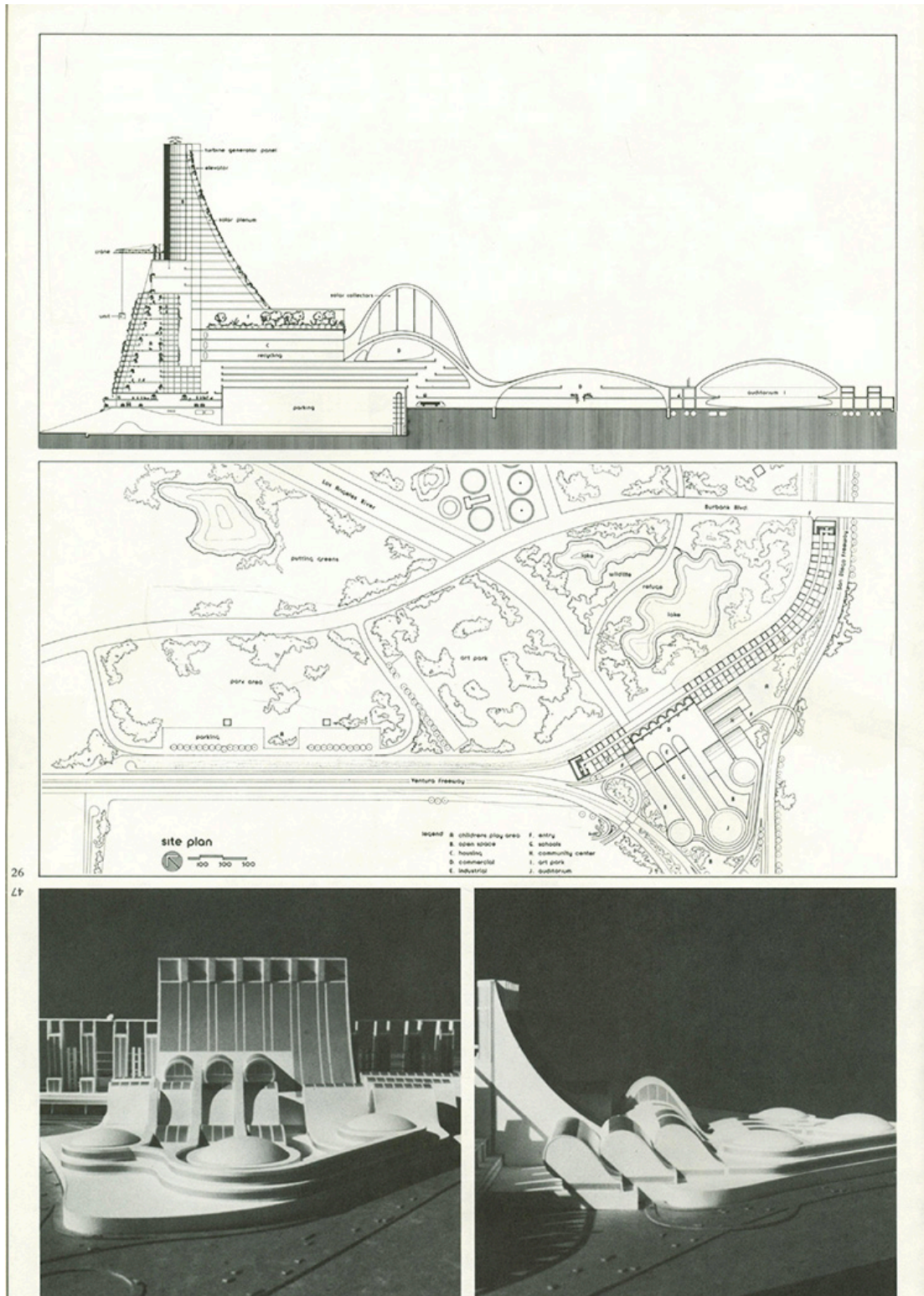


**Illustration 2.49** Kioyakazu Arai, Los Angeles Public Library Addition, *Current Works*, 1983 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



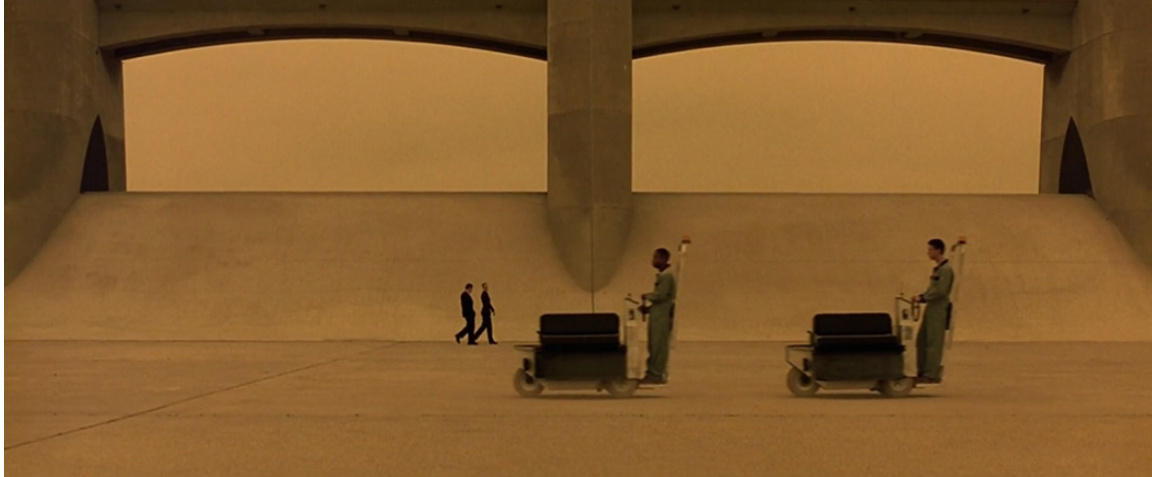


**Illustration 2.50** Kioyakazu Arai, Los Angeles Public Library Addition, *Current Works*, 1983 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).

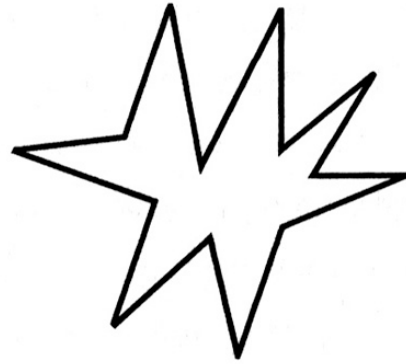
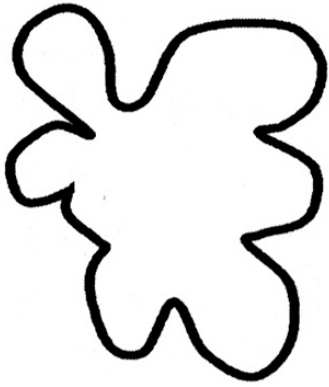


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**Illustration 2.51** Charles Browne, Sepulveda Dam, *Current Works*, 1983 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).

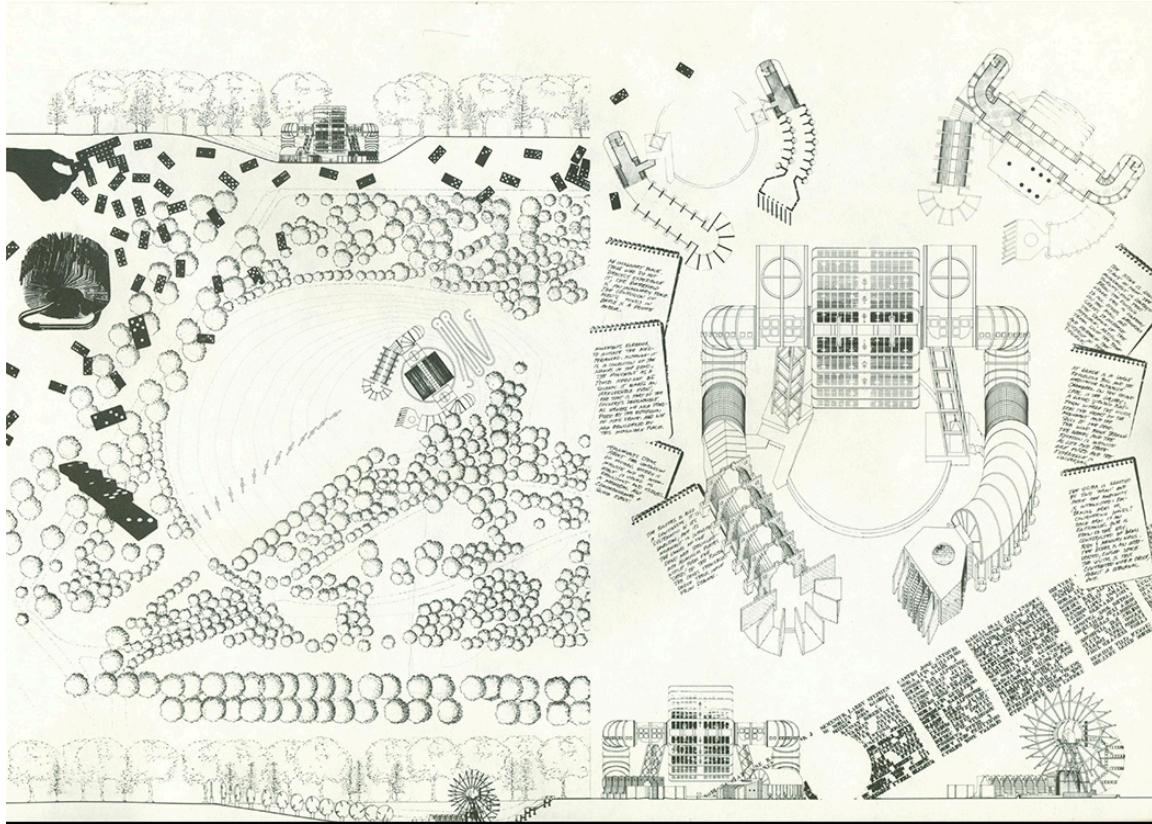


**Illustration 2.52** Andrew Niccol, Sepulveda Dam in *Gattaca*, 1997.

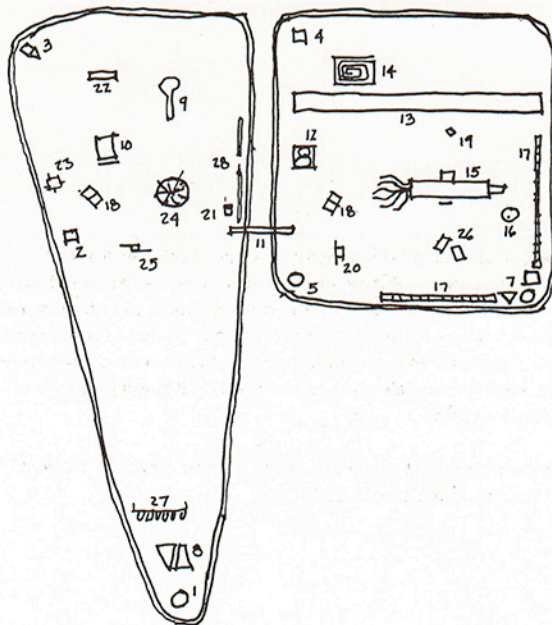
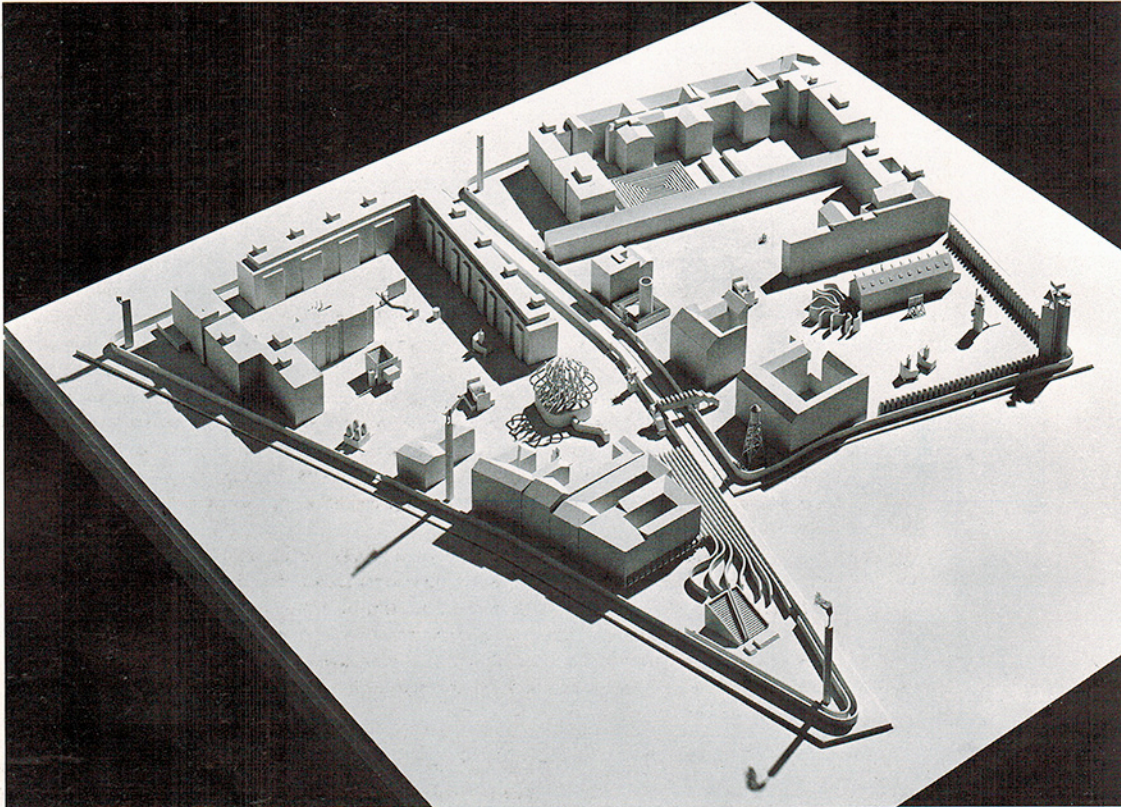


**Illustration 2.53** V.S. Ramachandran, Booba/Kiki Diagram, *A Brief Tour of Human Consciousness*, 2004.





**Illustration 2.54** Martin Mervel, Vietnam Memorial, *Current Works*, 1983 (image courtesy of SCI-Arc).



**Illustration 2.55** John Hejduk, Berlin Mask, *Mask of Medusa*, 1985.