

BOOKS ON ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

BY Chris Wilson

Architectural photography is something of a specialized subject — a cross between two fields. Nevertheless, it has been the topic of over ten books (most published since 1970) as well as numerous articles and chapters in photographic manuals and encyclopedias. The best bibliography of this literature appears in *Dean's Architectural Photography* (see below). Three of the most useful and interesting books are briefly discussed here.

The Photography of Architecture and Design. Julius Schulman. New York: Watson-Guptill, 1977. 238 pages.

Schulman was recognized for over twenty-five years as one of America's top architectural photographers. His book is primarily a discussion of his own approach and work, represented by over 300 photographs, often comparing alternate views of one structure. In a sense, the reader is allowed to look over Schulman's shoulder as he focuses the camera and hear him talk aloud about the specific factors that shape each image. The results are instructive, at times, even fascinating, and should be of interest to photographers and architects concerned with the representation of their buildings.

An interesting comparison to Schulman should be provided by *Photographing Buildings Inside and Out* by Norman McGrath, a leader of a younger generation of architectural photographers, which is due out from Watson-Guptill in June of 1987.

Architectural Photography: Techniques for Architects, Preservationists, Historians, Photographers, and Urban Planners. Jeff Dean. Nashville, American Association for State and Local History, 1981. 132 pages. Bibliography.

While Schulman focuses on the highest level of professional architectural photography, Dean addresses those who sometime must make architectural photos but are not primarily

photographers. He gives practical suggestions for improving the quality of photographs taken by knowledgeable amateurs, especially those working with 35mm equipment.

The major shortcoming of this camera format is that with wide angle lenses, which are so often required to get a full view of a buildings, perspective is distorted causing annoying, converging parallel lines. Dean's chapter on the use of special, perspective control lenses for 35mm is especially useful.

Dean's emphasis is on the documentation of historic buildings. However, the book will also be of particular use to architects needing to document their own work.

Photography and Architecture, 1839-1939. Richard Pare. Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1982. 282 pages. Bibliography.

This exhibition catalogue has 147 handsomely-reproduced photographs, biographical sketches of 80 photographers and a brief historical essay. It is a good introduction to the topic, surveying everything from the first monumental efforts to document the world's cities and architectural monuments through the Bauhaus photographer's meticulous, sharp-focus images which reflected the spirit of the new, modernist architecture. But when architectural photography became a commercial enterprise in the 20s and 30s, Pare suggests, "the photographer began to function entirely as an instrument of the architect, his photographs a gloss on the architect's vision of his structure rather than an interpretive vision." But this is all he writes about this dichotomy in architectural photography between promotion and documentation. A full history of architectural photography which delves into this issue would be a fascinating and valuable book.

C.W.

New Challenges For An Old Conservationist

by James Caufield

By the time of John James Audubon's death in 1851, a stone and adobe saw mill on Upper Canyon Road in Santa Fe, New Mexico, built to produce lumber for the construction of nearby Fort Marcy, had been in operation for nearly five years. By 1920, the saw mill operation had ceased and the property was purchased by American born artist Randall Davey for his home and studio. The property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, and by December of 1983, the Davey house and grounds had become the property of the National Audubon Society for use as a State Office in the Southwest.

Named the Randall Davey Audubon Center, the property is unique among Audubon facilities in that it is designed to fulfill each of the major Audubon Society missions: issue activism, environmental education, and wildlife and habitat protection. During the year, a variety of on-site natural history programs are offered to the local community. With the stewardship of the Davey property, the Audubon Society is facing a new conservation challenge — the preservation of endangered historic structures. The Randall Davey Center encompasses 135 acres of largely undeveloped northern New Mexico landscape along with four significant historic stone and adobe structures. The Santa



1. Photograph showing north (primary) elevation of the Randall Davey House/Studio. The two story central portion is the residential conversion of the 1849 saw mill structure.

Photo Credit: CAUFIELD•CAUFIELD, 1985

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