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(Cover—Doorway, Penitente Upper Morada, Jack Boucher, Photographer)

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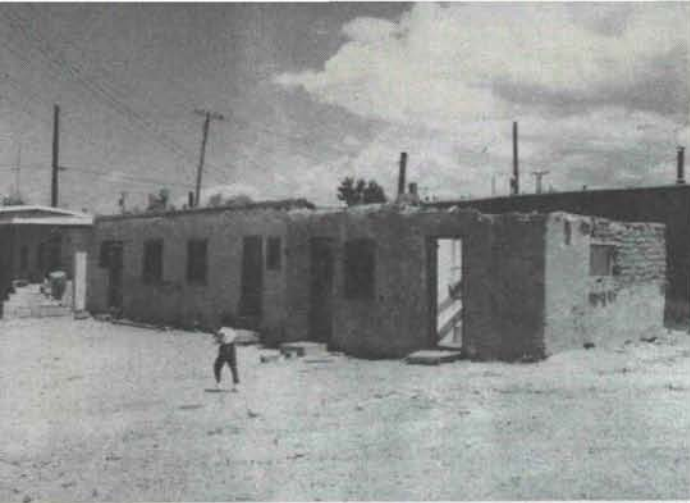
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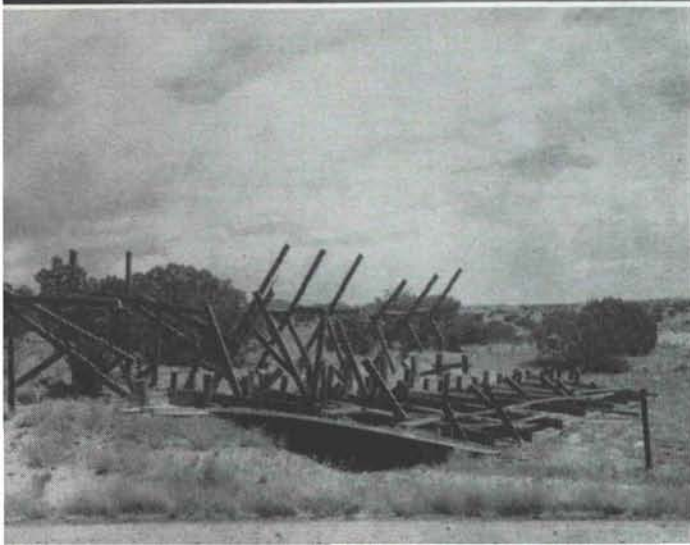
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THE UGLINESS AROUND US

A conference was held recently at the Plaza Hotel in New York on the subject of ugliness. Excerpts of this meeting have been widely publicized. Our friendly neighbor the **Arizona Architect** has been hitting hard at the billboard industry, the utility pole creators and that recent modern adjunct air-conditioning apparatus which adorns architecture like a wart or a malignant growth. This series they have called "The Mess We Live In" and their accompanying photographs certainly emphasize the chaos of Arizona's cityscape and highwayscape. However, the same results could be gleaned from similar photographs taken in New Mexico or anywhere else across the land.

The **Arizona Architect** suggests legislative "control" as the answer: "Now if serious attention will be given to a law prohibiting free-standing signs and otherwise controlling height, setback and other factors of billboards . . ." (Page 13, Feb., 1962).

Quite possibly the gross ugliness of our highways and main city thorough-fares could have been prevented by law. Zoning might have prevented the utter chaos of Central Avenue in Albuquerque or Cerrillos Road in Santa Fe. We could hide under the protective restraints of the law; it would, perhaps, be more comfortable that way. But can we create a new and better environment in this manner? Is not law basically a preventative rather than a creative measure? Does not law usually set limits and boundaries? Limits and boundaries are safe; but at most they only prevent blatant misuse of land or the erection of eye-catching ugliness.

If, however, legal controls were the only way to prevent the complete desecration of our land by bad graphics, bad architecture and bad design, how, then, do WE write the Law? How, then, do WE administer the Law? For is it not WE who actually created the ugliness?

Planners think they should write the law; but are most planners trained in aesthetics or in statistics? Architects think that they could write the law; but do they agree amongst themselves as to the basic goal of architecture? Artists think that they have the natural vision to write the law, but are they not proverbially locked in internecine strife as to what is art? The layman thinks he should write the law because "he knows what he likes." But look about you—he bought those 30 foot high flashing signs.

Laws to control can only insure conformity—and possibly mediocrity. Our civilization was not built on conformity. Zoning can be a tool for development, but it is generally a crutch. It may be "better than nothing" but seldom does it allow for experiment and development. It can and usually does demand set-backs, but seldom does it allow for imaginative land use. It can guarantee continuation, but seldom does it foster progression.

Billboards are in themselves not ugly. They can tell us much of interest about the city we are approaching; they can actually do us a service by their information. But the billboard industry has abused its privileges; it seems to display a complete lack of graphic design sense. And it places the dreary results at such close intervals along the highways that the poor tourist cannot possibly assimilate the useful information — nor see

the sunset. Billboards have earned rigidly restrictive legislation. And although I cannot condone actual violation of the law, I can appreciate the results of the unknown **vigilantes** of Santa Fe who occasionally clean the entrance highways of billboards by cutting them down.

It might be possible for national corporations such as automobile manufacturers or liquor distillers to refrain from cluttering our highways with their ads. It might be possible for prospective purchasers to buy another brand and inform the retailer of the reason. It might be interesting to see the results of a significant drop in retail sales of billboard advertisers where such a drop could be directly attributed to advertising methods.

Sign builders within the city area have shown even less regard for their community. It is a wonder that the old American custom of tar and feathering has not been revived for these offenders. Perhaps the tourist might make his feelings known to motel owners who vie for the air rights of our cities with even bigger and bubblier signs.

Constant public demand and pressure upon power companies might finally result in the burial of those horrible tangles of wires, transformers and poles that criss-cross the city skyline like cobwebs woven by some giant atomic-mutated spider. The telephone company has been more considerate in its installations in many new subdivisions and deserves our high praise.

We architects might help by being aware of the lots upon which we place buildings. We should be aware of the buildings about us and make a more definite attempt towards order and harmony rather than toward chaos and clash.

We could ask for more education through the news media and through the school curriculum which would make the next generation more aware of its surroundings and alive to the possibility that one's surroundings can be beautiful rather than sordid.

As a nation and as a people we have gone off the track, and only a citizenry aware of this deflection and desirous of improving the environment can get us back onto the track. I think that the architectural profession can do much here: It can, along with the best minds in the planning profession, take the lead in fighting ugliness. It can show the way to a better total environment both by creating orderly projects and by taking an active part in its own community life.

The **New Mexico Architect** agrees that conditions are bad, in fact, they are dreadful! And we intend to show how ugly New Mexico can look to the camera. We want to explore, along with the **Arizona Architect**, the means to alter this trend towards an uglier America. But the **New Mexico Architect** will try to show both the ugliness and the beauty around us. We wish to show also the "fun" around us — that occasional bit of folk art, or good graphics, or fun detail that exists hidden in the mess. We shall publish "The Ugliness Around Us" and its opposite "The Beauty Around Us" as we have material and space. We expressly solicit our reader's participation. We want your photographs and your thoughts.

—JPC



*Rendering of New York City Housing Authority's Simkhovitch Housing Project in Manhattan.
Architects-Engineers: Frederic P. Wiedersum Associates, New York, N.Y.*

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Simkhovitch Houses, 1961. Five contractors bid. All bid lower for concrete than for steel. For six

21-story apartments, concrete saved \$704,000.

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herbert bayer on environment

Paper delivered at the twelfth annual International Design Conference in Aspen—June 1962—Aspen, Colo.

I am here, not as a historian, not as a philosopher nor as a theologian; I am here only as an artist. I am a working artist and not a talking artist, and as such I have had occasion to come to terms with the concept of environment. But I have only realized what a far-reaching subject this is while attending this Conference.

I have, therefore, chosen to talk about some subjects which are closer than others to my interests. If I pronounce any thoughts on the artist in connection with environment, I must first make some distinctions.

There is the kind of art which is produced in terms of merchandise to be sold through the regular channels of trade. Not knowing where his products will end up, the artist is deprived of the control of their environment, although he may contribute to the character of an art collector's environment in his home collection.

It has been more or less accepted that the artist is a displaced, misunderstood being. From his viewpoint the man-made world around him is an organization to which he does not belong and he is under no illusion that his society will sustain him.

But there is also the artist who chooses to participate in the processes which form and shape the world we live in and who thereby becomes part of it. The designer, the painter, the sculptor who works in the belief that his particular talents can contribute to human existence. One who projects himself to deal with visual problems: the shaping of environment, the design of the spaces in which we move and rest, of those objects which we use and touch and handle, and who believes above all in the mission to crystallize and demonstrate the meaning and content of his time.

The designer and the architect are fairly well anchored, their occupations being looked upon as legitimate professions. But how does the artist operate, if we can speak here of a *modus operandi* at all. He depends upon clients when he works for commissions. Who are these clients? The government?

Although we must give praise to a government branch for the many recent fine embassy buildings, visions of pseudo-monumentality prevail among those who govern and administer the people. And artists, because they have been given no opportunity for contact with the national community in order to form its emotional life, live in retreat. The government then can hardly be called a client when it hasn't yet found a way to produce good postage stamps.

There is industry, but on what grounds can industry and art meet except for commercial purposes, for advertising and selling, for the purpose of establishing an industry's image, for the design of its products.

And there is the architect who lately has in some instances become a forceful advocate and mediator for the integration of art with architecture.

At the inception of the new architecture, buildings were purged of all ornamental design elements to express in their purity, structure and function underlying the building. After having swung to this extreme, we are again concerned with the idea of art with architecture.

What are the suppositions which will enable us now, out of a vacuum, to successfully accomplish such a fusion? When I question this I am doing so not because I doubt that we will ever reach such heights, but in order to throw some light on the subject.

The present architectural disorder shows how the urge for the sensational, the obsession with techniques and the superficial pursuit of the merely new have obscured the search for a balanced environment. This disorder is reflected also in art for architecture.

Man always had the urge to express the image of his society with monuments of art and architecture. But these symbols of his creative aspirations can only grow out of the unified total aspects of human conditions. And art, now produced for a minority, must become an art with meaning for the majority.

This cannot be promoted simply with cries for more art in architecture, nor with regulations that a certain percentage of the building costs must be spent for a mural or a sculptural relief in every housing project, as instituted in Austria. It would then be better to have an unadorned, honest, good building, than the ordinary, mediocre variety with a mural filling some empty space.

A further weakness is, that because artists were for so long excluded from great public tasks, there are today few artists disciplined to cope with the special conditions, technical and artistic, which commissions present.

Furthermore, the cases of successful communication, on a basis of mutual understanding between architect and artist are rare; and there are few architects who will surrender their jealously guarded art to the processes of true collaboration.

The visual arts today are concerned with scale and space, with simplicity and boldness, all ingredients which point towards monumental expression.

To talk of beauty today is taboo. The criteria by which we measure art are vitality and power. And it remains to be seen whether these criteria alone without the concord of an underlying concept or ideal can produce great artistic statements. Vitality is a quality, but only an ideal with vitality can lead to the expressions for which we long.

Contemporary man is perhaps not yet able to produce unified statements like those of the past which we admire so much, because of the unprecedented freedom he has attained so recently.



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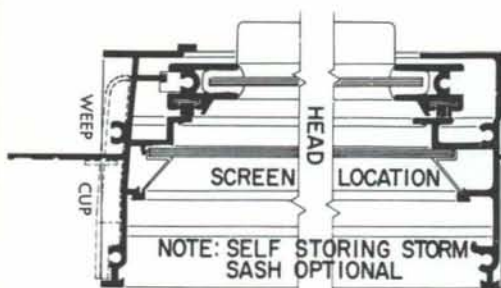
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However unresolved the problems may appear, the collaboration of artist and architect towards a common perception has higher promises than the isolation of the self expresser.



If we speak of the place of the artist who contributes to the character of environment, we must also touch upon the environment in which he can thrive artistically. We know of the Middle Ages, when artist-craftsmen were united in a truly collaborative effort in the building of great cathedrals. Here each individual craftsman was an integrated member within the fellowship of the guild, pyramiding in architecture. This was a time when the values of art were not only not questioned, but art answered a definite need of communication and portrayal of the invisible.

Since the advent of industrialization and the artist's isolation, there have been group movements which have made great advances in man's artistic vision: The Impressionists, the Cubists, the Constructivists, the Bauhaus. Even if the final creative statement was exerted by individual genius, the spirit of the group made each member an active part in the explorations of the new. A harmony of ideas, as well as friction of thought against thought, inspired the individual. A similarity of expression was attained without losing personal identity. The unifying air of a group spirit supported feeling and thinking, living and working.

These are not the only circumstances conducive to produce good art; but today's lack of direction may well be traced to a dispersion of artistic energies into small fractions, pulling in all directions, because of the absence of a unity of thought.

The new thrust into space is related to our concern with space-time concepts and the advances of science have opened entirely new vistas into a new invisible environment from the smallest to the vastest in the cosmos.

But we will continue to live in the visible environment of this earth, be it man-made city or organic nature. These will continue to be sources of inspiration for the artist. Not that his imagery must derive from mimetic processes in the sense of imitation; but that the artist's inner eye as much as his outer physiological eye transcend his environment with sight and insight.

Art, with a capital "A" grows on the abundant and diversified aspects of life. Without the continuity of a physically and psychologically satisfactory environment, man does not live up to his potentialities. In the case of the artist, it must not only be conducive to creativity but support and carry his entire being.



The design of communication in the cityscape and landscape is a concern of the graphic artist as well as of the architectural designer. There is a widespread hostility against outdoor signs in general. We reject

them for various reasons. They force themselves on us at all times of day and night, especially at times which we thought we had escaped the clutches of commercialism as when driving through the countryside. They are tactless intruders in our private lives—they detract, undermine and poison our minds. They keep us captives at all times of a materialistic civilization. By their mere existence as well as by their intrinsic ugliness, they desecrate any landscape or roadscape.

It is a grim state of affairs which engages public opinion now in this uphill fight against road signs. Here in Pitkin County, Colorado, we were successful in doing away with commercial signs on the state highway. But some citizens have circumvented the law by merely moving their signs into the neighboring county.

Billboards must eventually be banned altogether from roads and highways, if only for the preservation of privacy for the individual, to keep our contact with the landscape clean, and because there are more appropriate places for advertising. There will still remain the necessary directional and informational signs—these we hope will be legible and aesthetically pleasing. Here is an area for the graphic designer to pay attention to and to serve the human being rather than the commercial world.

Among the arguments of the defenders of road signs is that the signs help to keep the driver awake. This seems a poor justification, as the design of the highway itself should take care of the problem.

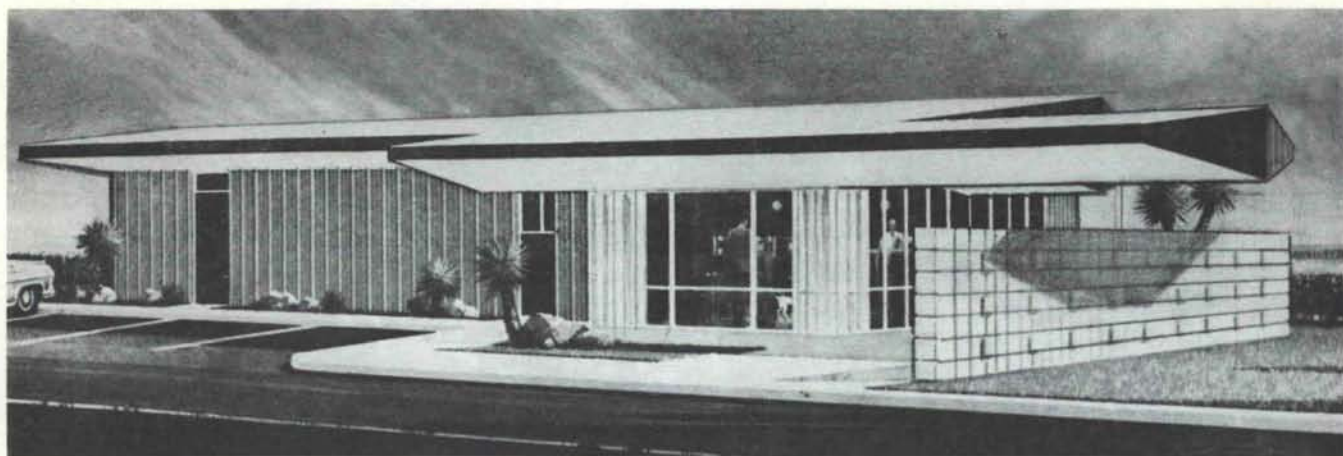
I sincerely urge all designers with moral responsibilities to refrain from designing commercial billboards and to refuse to collaborate in the desecration of the outdoors in the mere interest of business.

A different matter is the case of communication within the urban setting. It continues to be a challenge to design posters when they can be displayed in a well defined, standardized and organized manner in a cityscape. They add color and interest to the life of the city and can become artistic events to the citizens, as in Switzerland.

On the other hand, letters and visual symbols are elements which grow uncontrolled over the facades of the city streets. The structures of light posters, which come into their own at night, untidily cover walls and windows with disregard for the buildings' exterior appearance. The original intention, to hang out one's shingle and to inform the passerby about one's business, has long been defeated by shouting the neighbor with ever larger, noisier, attention getting devices. The traditional skills of the sign painter and the knowledge of good lettering have vanished, and the new possibilities dormant in the utilization of light and color have not been recognized or explored.

We can observe that in high class streets, size and character of signs are becoming smaller, more subdued, less garish, which almost looks like natural self-regulation.

But it is understood that areas for amusement and entertainment, the life of which is enhanced by more



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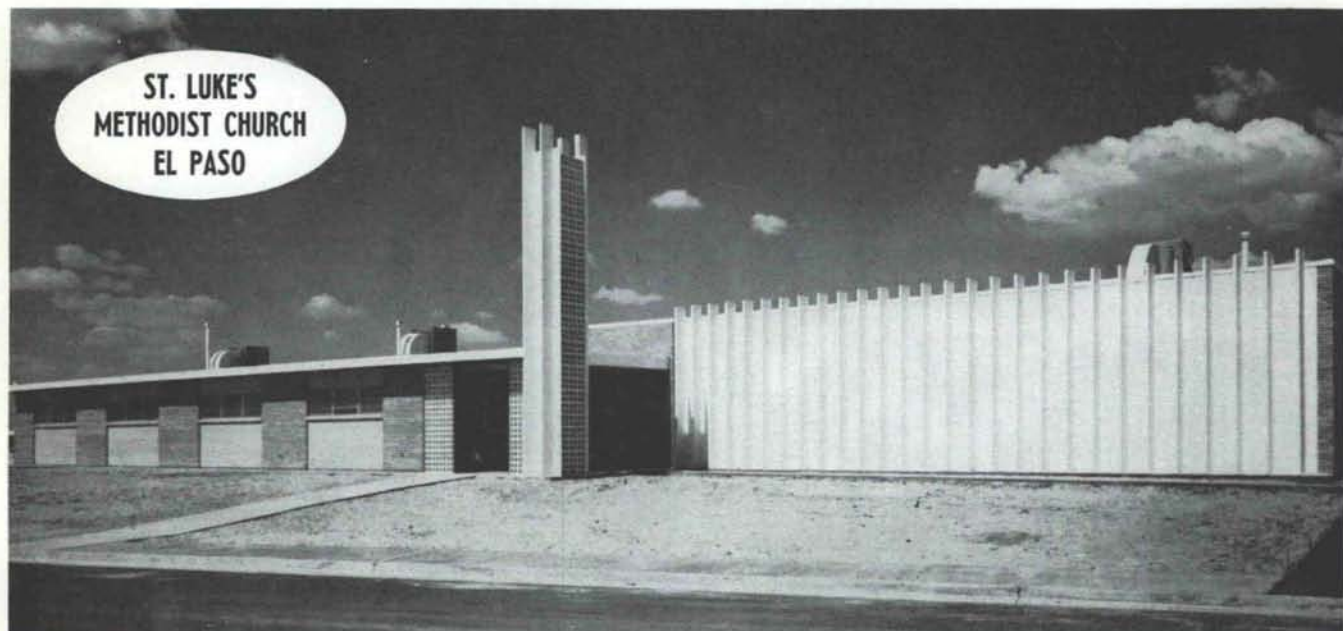
George C. Staten, Architect

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colorful expression in the street, can be less ordered and can be given a freer rein.

Attempts to regiment signs and letters within a strict architectural framework have had deadening effects. As an example, the false monumentality of the Stalin-Allee in East Berlin is emphasized by the regimentation and suppression of signs.

Visual communication is very much part of the life of a city street. This element, contributing to its pulse must not be squelched by inhibiting design imagination, and the free growth of elements of color and light in the cityscape must not be stifled by overstrict regimentation; but mushrooming out of proportion is equally undesirable.

The only sensible approach seems to be that of freedom within a certain order.

The problem of communication in the cityscape will become a different one when pedestrian and mechanical transportation become more separated. Scale and placing will be largely determined by the better defined character of the various functions within the city. But how to make the symbols of communication become integral parts of street architecture, by day and by night, still has to be answered, unless we learn to do away with visual symbols and learn to communicate by extra-sensory means.



Color surrounds us everywhere but, surprisingly, we know little about it. It is a somewhat intangible matter. We know that more than 60,000 shades of color can be distinguished by man of average color education. This capacity will in all probability increase.

We know that past civilizations have shown a great sense of color—the Egyptians, Etruscans, the Mayans. We know of the bright colors used by ethnic groups such as the folk art of the Slavic peoples or the Pennsylvania Dutch.

Almost without exception their use of color is pleasing, dignified and psychologically functional. Even if the symbolism and significance of color are different from our approach, such as they are with some Asiatic peoples, we cannot but be impressed whether its use is instinctive or planned. Even if it remains to be stated what is a good color, what is a harmony or dissonance, the impressions among these examples are usually of pleasing harmony or power of simplicity. Admittedly, technical limitations reduced their palettes to a comparatively small number of colors, and fading with age added subtle qualities, even to Victorian color schemes.

Let us look at the limited understanding of color today. Much of the color we are forced to use is of the industrially made variety, as paint and as color in products. They are invariably of a sweet and sickening character and rarely is there a hue which can be accepted outright. Today's color experts, who in part give us these colors, often arrive at them by surveys, such as the specialist who concluded by this method that peach color is the shade for restaurants, most appetizing and most appropriate as a stimulant for eating.

Or the one who concluded by the same method that all men's toilets are to be baby blue. This is the same nonsensical attitude which is forced upon us by the misuse of mass psychology in advertising. But what is wrong in the case of color surveys is that they are based on the mass taste of a population which, in the wake of industrial mechanization, has lost aesthetic instincts, and good taste.

To describe our everyday experiences and to serve our requirements in paints, inks, dyes, cosmetics and countless objects finished with colorants, we use about 1500 colors. 1500 colors are still a great many, and we must have some way of organizing and harnessing them. Color systems are impartial tools to assist us in the work with colors, as the piano keyboard is a system of sounds and scales used to create music. But many times I have observed how people, when using color systems, failed to select such qualities and quantities or relationships of colors that would make for character, for harmony, or for effect as the problem would call for.

I know of only a few instances of teaching color in schools, and I do not know of any method of teaching color which imparts the necessary understanding of this medium and its use with knowledge. I grant that the loss of symbolic meaning of color and the infinitely larger range of colors at our disposal today pose a new complexity. While intuition continues to play its part, a more precise and reliable knowledge of the use of color must be achieved, especially with the help of the science of psychology.



Some of the lectures we have heard during these last days have elevated our minds to higher perspectives. Now I must suffer you to listen for a few minutes to a more down to earth subject.

It has been said that the highest aim of the artist is to contribute to the shaping of the community by visually organizing it.

I chose a small community to live in and have had occasion to participate in its problems of concept and growth. This, by necessity, calls for an understanding of the economy, psychology, morals and the general character of a community, as one does not exist without the other. Besides being a specialist, one has to function as a citizen, educator, even politician. It is my belief that this understanding cannot be acquired unless the designer or architect participates in the civic duties and wrestles with the issues of a community which are the background for his activity. It is especially for the architect to realize that this work cannot grow well on a detached attitude, and that he can find a link for communication with his fellow citizens by making the issues of the community his own.

In one of the Conference folders it is written that man has acquired the power to ennoble his environment in material and spiritual circumstances. In the material sense, perhaps, he knows; but spiritually, man rather bewails his nest.

I must briefly go back to the beginnings of Aspen's re-birth, to the time when Walter Paepcke first began to realize his idea, to make this town a place where a

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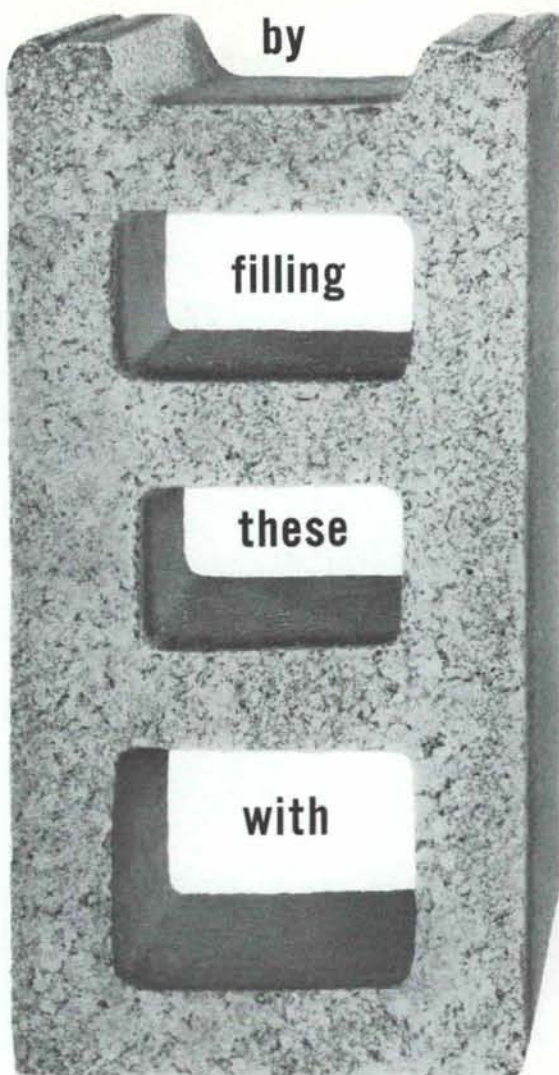
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balanced existence could be lived. It started with what was nearest at hand, the development of facilities for skiing. This in turn called for places to eat and sleep.

What distinguished this undertaking from other ski developments was that here was already a self-contained community, however insufficient—a core which could be a factor of stability to the new aspects of its future. This was well recognized by Walter Paepcke, and I believe that it greatly contributed to the success of the enterprise.

Later plans were conceived to enrich Aspen's sport and community life with music and culture in summer. And let us not forget that economic considerations weighed heavily in these plans. The Goethe Bicentennial in 1949 became the starting point for the annual music festival, music school, and for the founding of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies.

With these institutions, the nucleus for the round-out life of the community was established—summer and winter sports, culture and education, enjoyment of nature, and the prospects of making a livelihood in an economy promising to become more solvent.

Unfortunately, there was not enough far-sightedness to buy large tracts of land in the city. This would have made planning possible and by its example would have influenced the rest of the city and county before land speculators made effective planning almost impossible.

So-called independence of the Westerner is something fierce to cope with. Attempts to unify, by a color scheme the exteriors of the old buildings which had remained from Aspen's early days failed, as no Aspenite wanted to be told by the new intruders what colors to paint his house.

To break down ignorance and suspicion and to institute zoning regulations took many years of effort. But the cart had to be put before the horse by instituting zoning before planning.

In the meantime more speculation was attracted to Aspen by publicity of its glamorous life and rumored economic boom (more a sales talk than a fact). Becoming known in the world for its attractions, it drew more tourists and fewer permanent residents. It became more of a seasonal tourist town than a place to live in. The profit motive has become more evident with Aspen's recent growth, while the original ideas are not often remembered. And there is the danger that the idea for a better community will be wiped out by commercialism. Some citizens and the Aspen Institute are active to preserve and perpetuate Aspen's assets. There is hope that a regional plan, rejected by the citizens until recently, can be started soon so that it may guide this area in its future development.

The city has inherited from the old mining days too many streets, broken down utilities and debts; but it has pulled itself up with strenuous efforts and has acquired a new water system, a sewer and power system, natural gas line—all improvements invisible in the ground. But above ground the architectural confusion grows almost with every new building addition. The establishment of an architectural ordinance has so far met with resistance. The fact that all building was

done piecemeal, without planning, until very recently, accounts in part for the architectural goulash.

However, hopeful things are in progress with the prospects of a regional plan. But the efforts to achieve these hopeful aspects will now require many times as much effort as would have been necessary 15 years ago.

These experiences are probably not unusual to anybody who has been involved in community work at close range—but they are ever new and disillusioning.

Why is this report not more positive? In addition to the reasons implied in what I have already said, there may be a few more answers.

The average man's aims are directed toward personal monetary gains, comfort and acquisition of possessions. His preoccupation with material comfort has blinded him from focusing attention and understanding on anything of a higher order.

The designer or architect is rarely given sufficient responsibility as his work is confined to individual, isolated projects without a relation to a more total concept, especially if this is non-existent.

But at the bottom of it is our civilization's failure to provide an education for the understanding of a more meaningful existence. It is only lack of creativeness which limits man's realization of environment.



As one who feels a strong attachment to the natural environment, who perceives the deeper values from contemplation of nature, I conclude with a few words on an attitude toward nature.

Western man, especially in his advance in a westerly direction, has degenerated in his outlook on nature as a source for material exploitation. Our recent history shows us depleting these resources with greedy eyes. Today we realize that the uncontrolled pursuit of this aim must end in exhaustion and disaster, however able man may be to invent substitutes.

On the other hand, we try to preserve in a defending and retreating action, wilderness areas and playgrounds for man's recreation.

Pagan religions made natural phenomena into personified gods expressing man's awe before all that man had not made. If a religious, man-to-nature relation has been lost in the wake of progress, then we must capture and develop a balanced attitude between our outlook on the man-made and on the natural. We must learn to look upon nature with reverence as the source of all existence.

With this respect for nature, it will continue to be magical and poetic, beautiful if many times cruel; the artist will not imitate nature but create a spiritual world of itself, side by side with nature. Picasso has said, "Art is what nature is not." The structures which man erects will not compete with nature nor set themselves up against it. Both natural environment and man-made environment will exist with each other if their boundaries are understood.

—herbert bayer

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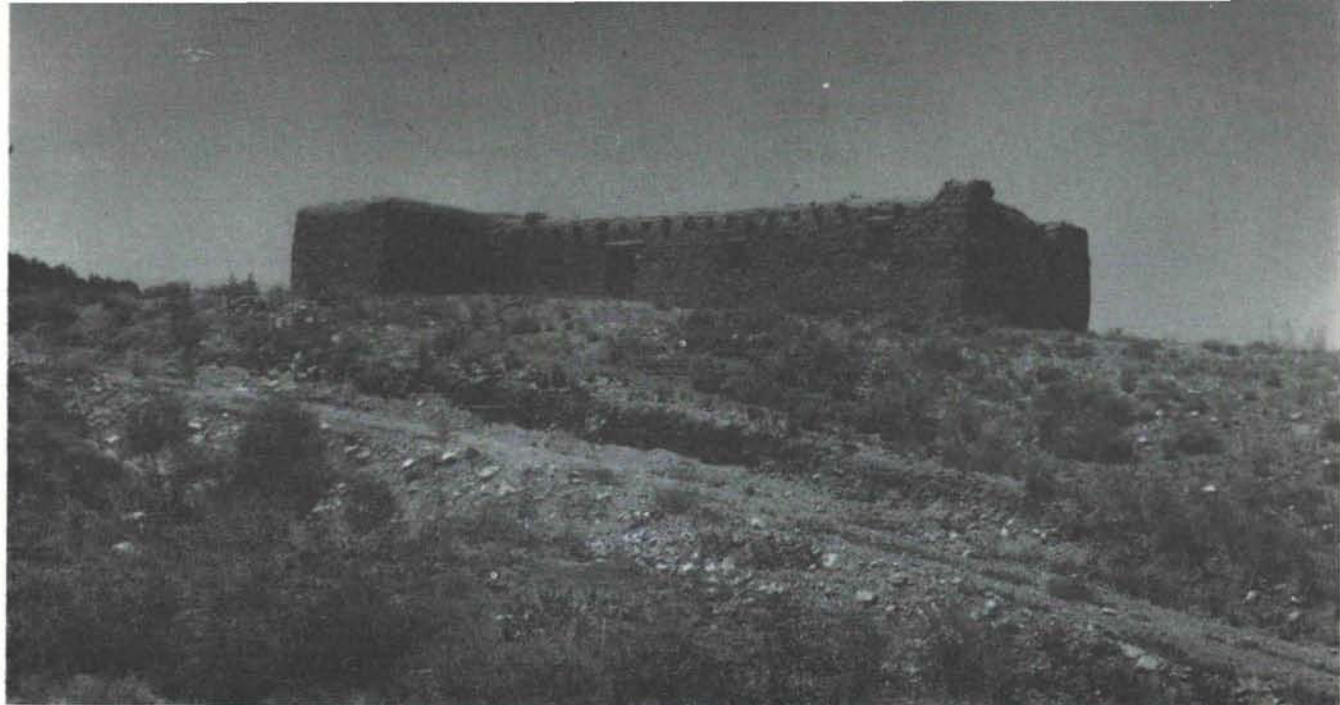
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THE PENITENTE UPPER MORADA

— Arroyo Hondo — New Mexico

A religious confraternity known as the Penitente (Penitents) was popular in New Mexico during the nineteenth century. Members of the organization were especially active during Holy Week when they met in their chapel or meeting house called a "morada" for vigils and acts of penitence. Consisting of flagellation and other acts of self-mortification, these religious observations were carried on outside the strict supervision of the Roman Catholic Church. Late in the century the Church sought to discourage these extreme practices, and eventually it forbade the organization. In remote areas, however, Penitente groups continued with considerable strength until the 1930's. In recent years, the extreme practices have lapsed; many of the chapters have dissolved and those that are left have returned to an orderly observance of Church-directed rituals.

The moradas of the confraternity were usually situated outside the village adjacent to the graveyard. Often a confraternity would control more than one morada. Morada design was by no means uniform; each chapter constructed its meeting house in accordance with site and such building materials, local resources, and technology as it commanded. With the dissolution of the chapters, the moradas have been abandoned or converted to other uses.



The architectural importance of the Upper Morada of Arroyo Hondo (the village has two such meeting houses) is that it typifies these nineteenth century buildings which were once so common. The Morada

seems to have been built between 1852 and 1856. A deed of April 17, 1852, conveyed the land without mention of a building. (The price was one mare, one horse, and four goats.) On January 2, 1856, the property including a three-room building was sold for 94 pesos. In these transactions no specific mention is made of the confraternity, but in New Mexico, title to property used by the Penitente is usually held in the names of the principal brothers.

The morada is built over an earlier Indian site as is indicated by the presence of pot chards in the subsoil. A few feet to the southwest of the building, the rectangular outline of the Indian remains are clearly distinguishable. A large sunken area in the middle of the raised level of the ruins indicates the location where the adobe brick for the morada were most probably made.

In August of 1961, the property was purchased by Mr. Larry Frank and converted into a summer residence. The remodeling respected the original building as much as possible. At least one other remodeling of the morada is evidenced by the commercially sawed roof boards in the large, central room which bear a penciled inscription, "Marzo 18 ano de 1911." The adobe wall between this room and a small one to the west also attests a post-construction addition. This is proven by the manner in which the beam supporting the roof was incorporated into the wall. This partition subdivides what was a larger single room and probably accounts for the fact that only three rooms were mentioned in the deed of 1856.

In general, a Penitente morada contains a minimum of two rooms. One room serves as a chapel and is equipped with an altar placed on a dais set off by



a railing; the second serves as a meeting room. Here the brothers gathered for their more extreme acts of penance. If more rooms were included there was space for storage and a place to gather about a fireplace for less strenuous observances. A fireplace is never found in the chapel itself.

The morada at Arroyo Hondo, presently consisting of four rooms and two fireplaces, is more elaborate than most of those that survive. Irregular in shape and built with no interest in right angles, the structure is some 76 feet long and 40 feet at its widest point.

The extremely limited fenestration is one of the most important aspects of this building. For reasons of privacy during their religious services, the windows have been kept small and placed high. But the paucity of windows is also typical of all New Mexican architecture before Yankee technology and commerce provided the glass with which to fill the windows and the iron tools with which to fashion the wooden frames. Spanish settlers, of course, possessed iron tools, but constrained to trade only with Mexico some 1,000 miles distant over deserts and mountains, metal was prohibitively expensive. There was no window glass in the area until it was brought overland via the Santa Fe Trail.

Eighteenth and nineteenth century houses had windows filled with small sheets of mica, with oiled paper or closed with solid wooden shutters. Larger windows with glass were quickly provided as they became available. It is only in a conservative institu-



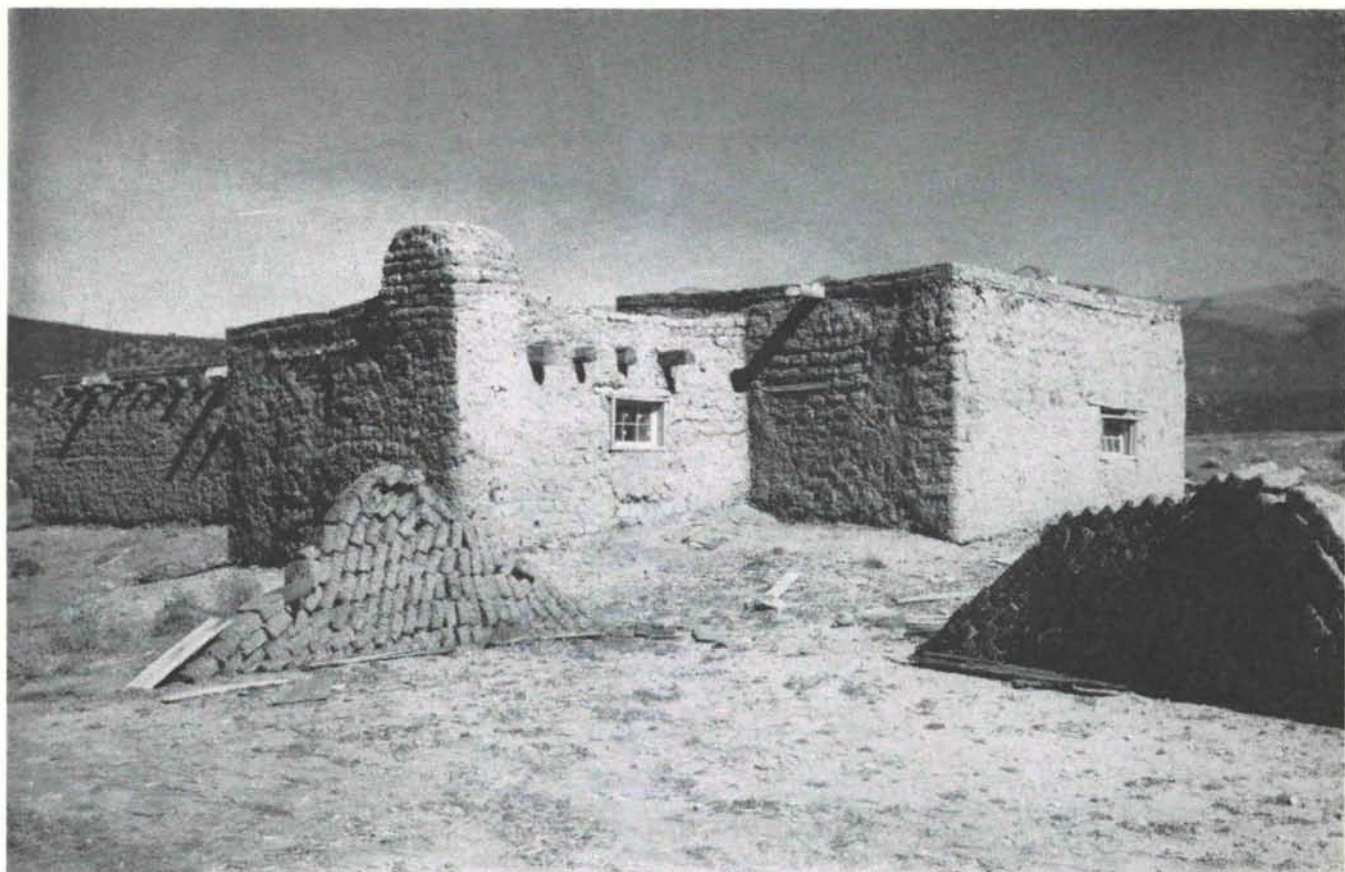
tion like this Penitente chapter that the old fashioned small windows were left un-enlarged. Since the morada is domestic in scale and entirely without ornamentation, it provides an unusually rare and interesting example of what early homes in the region might have looked like.

Architecturally, the interesting thing about the morada is its compact, low-lying mass. Adobe walls are slightly battered and pull markedly inward near the top in soft, rounded contours. The masonry surface is warm and eroded like the hilltop on which the morada stands. The solid massing of the edifice is all the more emphatic because of the few openings (one door and four small windows) to interrupt the planes. The soft-contoured massing is plastic and sculptural.

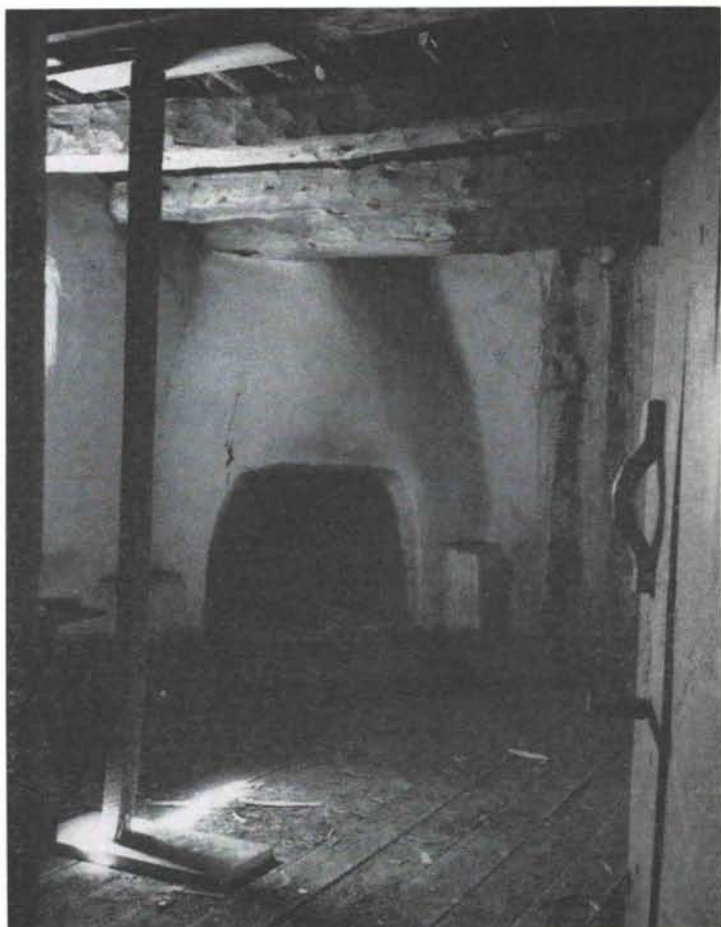
The floors of the chapel and meeting room are of wood; those in the other two rooms are of packed earth. Two corner fireplaces of adobe are found; the one in the meeting room is unusually large for the region; the other, is a more usual New Mexican design: quarter-round in plan, a tight parabolic arched opening, raised hearth, small rectangular flu projecting from the corner, edges rounded, and the whole white-washed so that it appears beautifully plastic and modeled in even the subdued interior light.

The Upper Morada is situated on a hilltop about one mile northeast of the church and plaza of Arroyo Hondo. The cemetery is immediately adjacent.

—Bainbridge Bunting



Exterior view taken after start of remodeling into summer home. New adobes and new canales have been added to the walls. New windows have been installed.

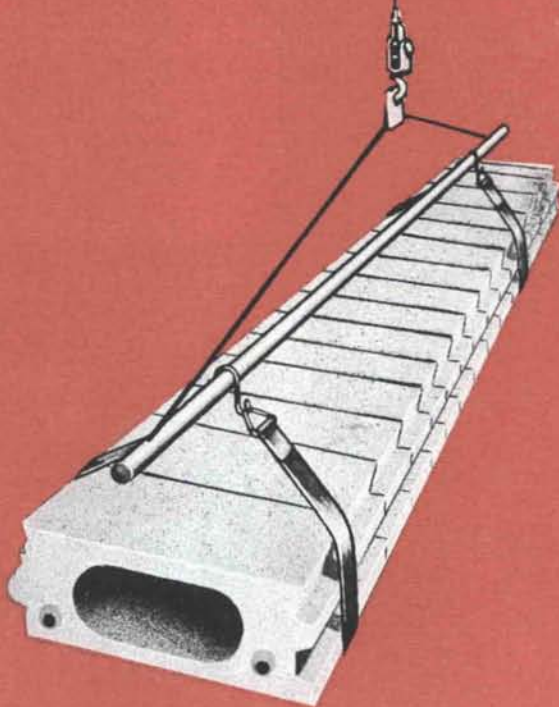


The meeting room fireplace.

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PRINCESS JEANNE REVISITED or Current Folk Art in the Duke City

A special dispatch from the NMA's roving correspondents in the highlands of eastern Albuquerque.

To one who had not been to the Princess Jeanne subdivision since it was opened to prospective home buyers in 1954, it was astonishing, simply astonishing. No early visitor could have foreseen that this desert prospect peppered with project houses would appear so different within less than a decade. The cutting out of the vast, dusty extent of the East Mesa by other houses and yet more houses—yes, one had come to accept that as “progress”. Blocking the clear sweep of the Sandias by a rising tide of green tree tops—this happened so gradually that one hardly noticed it. The substitution of fresh green lawns and symmetrical arborvitae for thirsty desert by dint of watering — this one knew became a near-sanctified ritual in all new subdivisions. But that the architectural character of the individual tract house could itself change so much—this one would not have dared thought possible. But such indeed has transpired by 1962 as anyone can plainly see if he takes the trouble to look.

Of course one has to know how to look for these architectural changes. Speculative builders would settle on, let's say as a guess, six designs. Eight or ten blocks would then be built up with these designs which would be alternated according to some ratio. To follow the point I'm trying to make in this article, one has to compare houses of a similar design. Let's take, for example, a stucco house with attached garage (to the left). Three casement windows show on the facade with the front door just around the corner from the projecting ell with the biggest window (undoubtedly the living room), and opening onto a shallow porch (Fig. 1). Like the rest of the house, this porch has a low curved parapet supported by a heavy wooden beam, in turn supported by corbeled brackets and at the corner by a round wooden post. Initially the builders might have called this design “El Pueblo” or something like that because it was supposed to look like adobe construction and the Southwest.

Now the fun comes in seeing how many variations of this original design one can spot in the immediate neighborhood. Your correspondents found four variants on one design alone and we very likely missed some, for we drove through the area only once.

Variation A (Fig. 2) simply added a permanent metal awning beyond the old porch and supported this light canopy on wrought iron trellises into which panels of colored tiles were set. A planting of trimmed privet forms a kind of parapet in front of this porch, a horizontal note which is repeated in other parts of the facade and lawn. A wrought iron fence and gateway to the left recall the supports of the canopy. This is a very nice face-lifting and the regularized horizontal elements have made this modest house appear considerably larger than it did originally.

Variation B (Fig. 3) sought the same end result in carrying across the facade a basement-like planting box constructed of ledge stone. Most effective note of all is the front porch opening partially filled in by a panel of the same stone. This alteration exhibits unusual restraint.

Once the home improvement campaign gets under way, however, it is apt to be such fun that the improver cannot restrain his improvements as Figure 4 illustrates. Here Variation C is more a matter of the fancy wrought-iron fence with lantern-bedecked block piers.



Figure 1

Figure 2

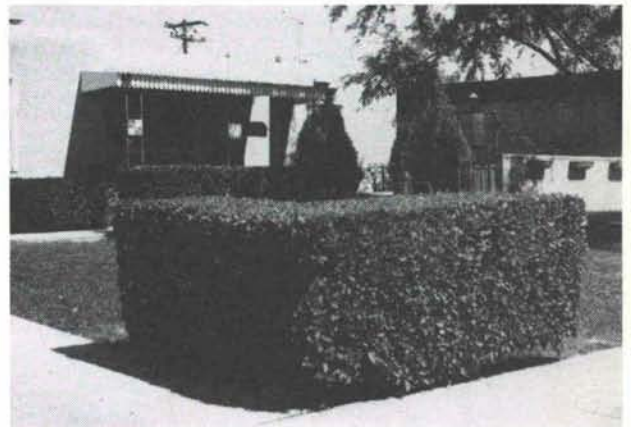


Figure 3



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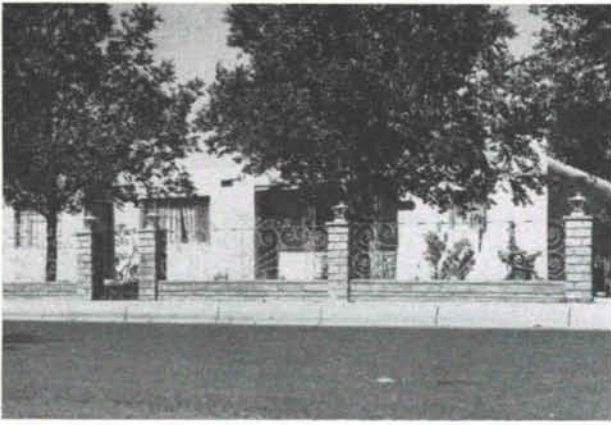


Figure 4



Figure 5

In the house itself, V-shaped wrought iron supports (tapered downwards, of course, and the middle one structurally unnecessary) appear on the porch and the garage has been converted into a room, viz. the casement window.

The most elaborate undertaking is Variation D (Fig. 5). Here ponderous chunks of red sandstone have been dragged to the location. Obviously much sweat and enthusiasm have gone into this undertaking. Good sized menhirs thrust upright before the living room window to contain a cactus garden and rounder boulders lie heavily about—too symmetrically placed for any glacial deposit. But most ambitious of all, are the beginnings of a fireplace where the garage door once gaped, this too constructed of red megaliths. Presently this portion of the improvements stands unfinished, it appears to be the slow product of weekend back strain.

In other areas of the Park or indeed in almost any other tract development one can find comparable modifications and improvements. And if one had access to the backs of the houses—the only side really practical and private for outdoor living—one would probably discover many more ingenious and ingenuous home-grown improvements. But as most of the newer subdivisions are laid out without alleyways, your architectural sleuths were unable to spy and report on what may transpire there.

A survey of Albuquerque subdivisions built up in the post-war boom has certain sociological as well as architectural interests. First, there would seem to be certain prerequisites for the kind of home-improvement that we have described. Most important here would be the sustaining-ability of the neighborhood. It must be “holding up”, not occupied by too many “shiftless” householders who allowed property to deteriorate, not inhabited by too many negligent renters. At the same time, it is interesting to note the large number of “For Sale” signs one can see in a single block without evident decline of neighboring property or morale.

These dormitory areas are so close-built and wide-open that a single property's deterioration is the whole neighborhoods loss. Once a malignant spot develops, there is nothing to stop its spread. No natural bar-

riers or cell-like boundaries exist to contain it. Blight can spread like rot in a bushel of peaches.

There is another aspect of a stable neighborhood: the houses must have been well enough constructed so that they can be maintained after the green wood starts to shrink and the foundations settle. Some districts were so shoddily built that their houses simply aren't worth “improvement.”

Or else the land allotment was so shamefully restricted that there is no place to enlarge the house upon it. This is particularly true where an attached garage was not provided. One sees a number of these poorly built or too cramped neighborhoods, primarily in the old Belle Aire area, which are visibly “slipping” and where almost no attempts have been made to remodel houses in the manner here described—or, for that matter, even to keep them up.

One more criterion governs such “home beautification.” No owner is wise to invest in house improvements “too much money for the neighborhood.” In a block of \$14,000 houses, it would be futile to sink more than \$2,000 in improvements with hopes of ever getting one's money out. For this practical reason most projects are restricted and they are generally “do-it-yourself” undertakings.

Then as they must not be too expensive, neither may these home remodelings be too radically different. This may be because of resale values, or pressure of conformity, or it may simply be the way a folk art works. One fellow gets an idea and then his neighbors decide to have a go at it, bettering him slightly if possible. Thus as one drives through the Heights, he can localize certain architectural ideas or points of gardening or details of decoration in certain districts. Few extreme innovations are to be found; even fence-enclosed or heavily planted front yards are rare (Fig. 4). But our purpose here is not to dwell on the blight of conformity but to underline the hopeful and irrepressible signs of individual expression, slender though they sometimes are.

We might also observe that very new areas are without the kind of architectural modifications we have described while in slightly older regions the process is just beginning. This would seem to imply a kind of

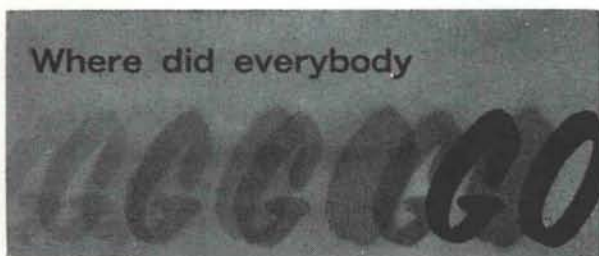
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time table for the Albuquerque house owner. And this, in turn, would be controlled by a certain priority and the amount of after-hours-work an ambitious owner could do in one season. Such a time table might go like this: Years 1 & 2: front lawn and basic planting. Years 3 & 4: rear "patio" and garden, play yard or drying area. Years 5 & 6: garage converted into extra room or other interior improvements. Years 7 & 8: "fixing up" the facade as described.

As I said before, to initiate a neighborhood fix-up campaign, it only seems to require one resourceful person to begin it—whether it be a garage door mural, (Fig. 6) a fountain on the patio terrace, a front door shelter or a family room in the old garage. Then, if the neighborhood has the requirements and "bounce", others will follow. Follow, probably, not with a drastically new idea, but with a slight variation on what a neighbor has just done. And this is folk art.

It is folk art in twentieth century guise, but essentially folk art. Though forms are different, it represents the same process and springs from the same roots that have urged men of numberless generations to elaborate and to decorate the useful objects of every day life. It is a manifestation of the same process that caused the householders of the Pénasco valley to carve annular designs on front porch posts or cut elaborate jigsaw panels for their front doors (May-June issue,



Figure 6

NMA). It was this same urge that caused Swiss peasants to elaborate the balconies of their chalets or Pennsylvania farmers to devise intricate hex-designs for their barn gables. The urge is fundamental though the external forms may vary.

—Bainbridge Bunting

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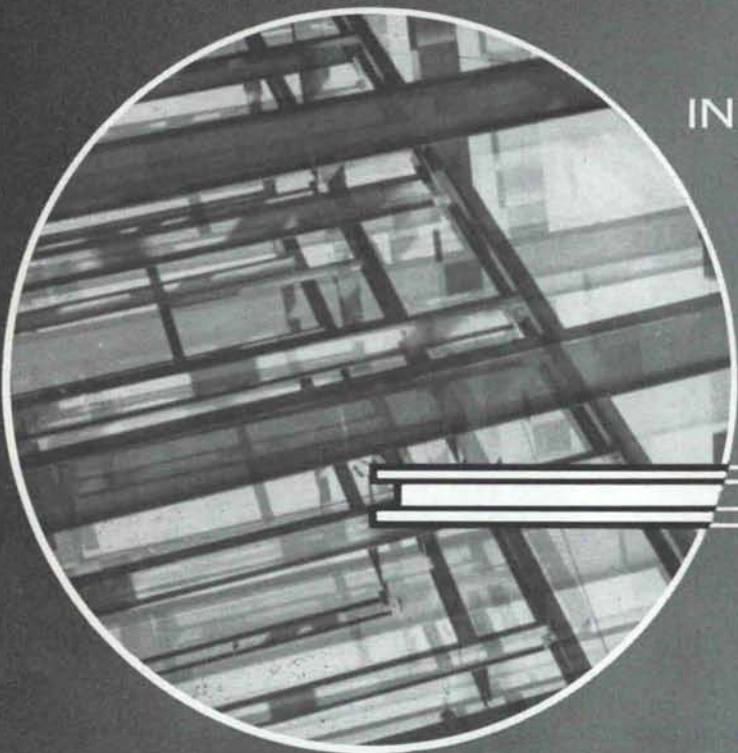
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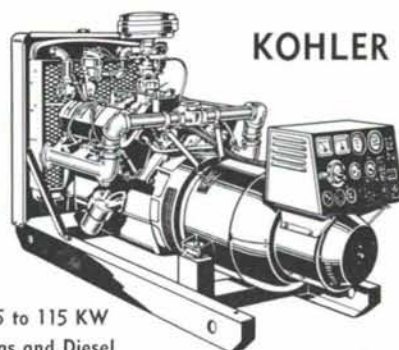
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Since most of the members of the Chapter must travel on business from time to time throughout New Mexico and the neighbouring states, and since they must frequently take meals in unfamiliar towns or cities, and since these meals more often than not contribute little either toward good health or good humor—the editors felt that something should be done to improve this situation.

We wish, therefore, to publish the names of restaurants in our area which we feel are above average, or perhaps just non-poisonous. Mr. John W. McHugh, A.I.A., that discriminating gourmet, will undertake the task of assembling the data necessary for publication.

Mr. McHugh, our sometimes "Food Editor", asks those members interested in good food to write him giving their recommendations of good places to eat. Considerations of the quality and price of food, the cleanliness of the place, the courtesy of the staff, the quality of the service—and whether the place has a blaring juke box, should be taken into account. When the Food Editor receives a recommendation, he will write to two other members asking them to visit the place and report their impressions. If their reports agree with the original one, then it will be published. Needless to say, all this must be done without the knowledge of the proprietor else the "typical" meals may turn out to be far from typical. No one, of course, is authorized to promise any proprietor that his restaurant will be recommended by this magazine, and no one should solicit free meals or other compensation in exchange for his recommendation.

Such a list would probably make more pleasant, and indeed prolong, the lives of our members and be a service to all our readers. In addition to this, it may even encourage a better cuisine in this area. A chef will be aware that unknown inspectors may be in his dining room at any time ready to report on any lowering of the quality. Then, too, when a new restaurant is started, the manager will not have to wait for months or years for people gradually to discover his excellence (or lack of it) as a published recommendation in this magazine will reach 3000 readers. Thus we hope to reward good quality and discourage bad quality in the eating establishments of this area.

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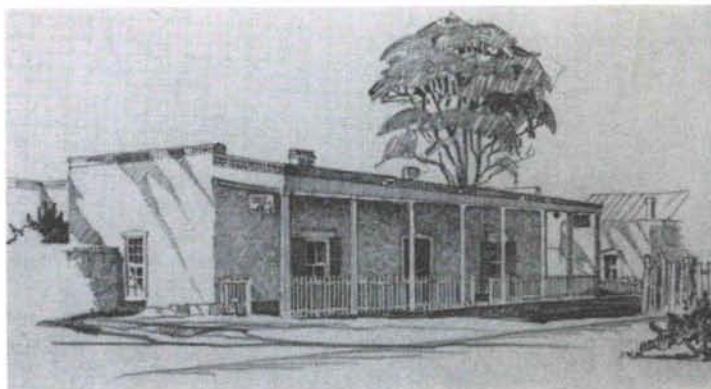
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filed. In it he specified that the property consisted of "an orchard of 14 trees and farming land" as well as this house. The rooms at the rear are the most ancient; the large one across the front, with its portal supported by tapered, handmade columns, was added in the 19th Century.



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Please address correspondence to Mr. John W. McHugh, Food Editor, 717 Canyon Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

LETTERS

July 20, 1962

Dear Mr. Conron:

You publish a very lively and amusing magazine! Thank you for sending me the three issues.

The tape recorder in Chicago seems to have been slightly hard of hearing since it missed (or reversed the meaning of) several of my comments; but I appreciate nevertheless that you thought what I had to say was worth printing.

May I send photostats of your concluding comments to my friends Franzen, Rudolph, and Johnson?

I was impressed by one other fact about your magazine which I have seen rather irregularly in the past: judging by the issues you sent me, there seems to be a revival of sorts in the use of adobe construction. Is this so, and if it is, are there any architects using this material in an imaginative modern way?

Thank you again. I appreciate your courtesy.

Sincerely,
Peter Blake, AIA
Managing Editor
Architectural Forum

LETTERS

Re: Solnit review of Jane Jacob's book

It is difficult in these days of trash mail, journalism students and crank letters to editors to know what to read. Not having the speed of reading power of JFK I recently adopted the policy of allowing book reviews to decide what I should read. Mr. Solnit has cured me. It is possible when reading a review, I believe, to tolerate a bit of personal prejudice or a little drum or chest beating; but it is not necessary to be subjected to criticisms of personal points of view which happen to be somewhat off the norm. (The review joined a long list of tirade against the book.)

Jane Jacobs is ridiculed by Mr. Solnit for having written more than 50 pages in the support of a more human habitat. Further she does not, as the reviewer suggests, confine her observations or studies to Hudson Street. Even if she did we need only to heed the advice which precedes the text.

"The scenes that illustrate this book are all about us. For illustrations, please look closely at real cities. While you are looking, you might as well also listen, linger and think about what you see."

Architects, despite what their periodicals are telling them, are not city planners, nor are they effective shapers of urban environment. Time should be taken to read "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" which can be made available in any bookstore in this area after a two week wait.

Charles W. Quinlan

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

The Historic Santa Fe Foundation has just issued a handsome little folder entitled *Historic Buildings and Sites of Santa Fe*. On sale for ten cents at major tourist centers, this is an extremely handy and useful guide to points of architectural interest within the city. Twenty-one buildings and sites are called to the tourist's attention, and an extremely neat and readable map indicates their exact location. The route between locations has been skillfully planned to conduct the visitor through a variety of Santa Fe cityscapes.

The information which is included underscores the historical rather than architectural importance of the structure. And without absolute violence to history, as much is made of the antiquity of the site as possible. The fact that much of the present appearance of a structure is due to relatively recent construction or remodeling is not mentioned. But, then, this is a tourist guide and not a historical treatise.

One thing that this timely little folder does reminds us of, however, is the acute need for a complete architectural guide to all of New Mexico where mention will be made of outstanding recent buildings as well as historic ones.

The Historic Santa Fe Foundation, founded in 1961, has as its primary purpose the preservation of unique buildings in the city. The production of this leaflet and the marking of several old buildings with "worthy of preservation" plaques are substantial steps toward educating the public on this important point. The Foundation is to be congratulated on this pamphlet with particular commendation for Sylvia Loomis who designed and edited it.

—BB

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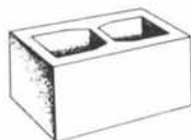
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POST

AN INVITATION

As president of your host Chapter, I extend to you a most cordial invitation to attend the Regional Conference. Members of our Chapter are enthusiastic about the program and about Sun Valley as the site. A record number of Utah Chapter members will be on hand to greet you and help make this a memorable Conference for you.

Accommodations at both the Lodge and the Challenger Inn are excellent. All facilities at Sun Valley will be reserved exclusively for our Regional Conference.

Since our last bulletin the Institute has advised that the speakers at the opening session on New Architectural Practices will be Welton Beckett, FAIA of Los Angeles, Robert F. Hastings, FAIA, of Berkeley, Michigan and Robert Alexander, FAIA, who is also scheduled to speak Friday forenoon. These, plus C. O'Neil Ford of San Antonio and Institute President Henry Wright assure provocative and interesting speakers.

Many suggestions that Salt Lake City's Downtown Planning Project be discussed have resulted in scheduling a seminar of this interesting project on Saturday morning. The activity is a joint effort of Salt Lake City's leading businessmen and merchants and the Utah Chapter.

Two business sessions have been set for the ladies. An exceptionally able woman speaker is being sought for the opening morning and a seminar program is scheduled for Friday forenoon to present the Utah Women's Architectural League program including their eminently successful annual home tour of architect-designed residences.

The entire program promises to be stimulating and rewarding. In keeping with our original format, the forenoons are crowded with work sessions. The afternoons have been intentionally left optional so that you can view movies on architecture that will be shown in Sun Valley's fine theater, arrange informal shop-talk sessions, discuss problems with our speakers or engage in recreation.

Recreation opportunities are abundant at Sun Valley. There is skeet shooting, golf, swimming, horseback riding, fishing, tennis or hiking through the easy-to-walk picturesque valley where Sun Valley is situated.

Don't miss a great Conference—see you in Sun Valley in '62.

M. E. Harris, Jr., President
Utah Chapter, A.I.A.

THE DATE: **SEPTEMBER 27-28-29.**

THE THEME: **ARCHITECTURE—
ITS INFLUENCES.**

NEWS

The Santa Fe Section of the New Mexico Chapter, A.I.A., entertained a number of Santa Fe City officials at The Desert Inn on Friday, August 17th. Guests at the cocktail and lavish buffet dinner were: The Mayor, The City Council, The Planning Commission, The City Manager, City Planner, City Building Inspector, and City Engineer. The new A.I.A. film, *Form, Function, and the City* was shown in the comfort of the State Land Office building's auditorium. A successful evening, and one which the Santa Fe Section hopes can be repeated each year.

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Herbert Bayer, artist, architect, graphic designer, lives and works in Aspen, Colorado. A graduate of the Bauhaus, 1921, he has designed numerous buildings, including the Walter Paepcke Auditorium, the Institute For Theoretical Physics both for the Institute For Humanistic Studies, Aspen, Colorado, and the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. He has designed posters, covers, charts, advertising, booklets, packages, and industrial design for a number of publications and corporations. His one man shows have appeared in the leading museums throughout the world.

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