

ARCHITECTURAL AND CIVIC-PLANNING ARTICLES

BY JAMES BRITTON II

James Britton, who was San Diego's most distinguished and opinionated architectural and cultural commentator from 1950 to 1983, was born on January 22, 1915 in Waterbury, Connecticut where his artist-father, also named James, and his mother, Caroline [Korner], were living in between sojourns in Greenwich Village, New York City, Sag Harbor, Long Island and Waterbury and Hartford, Connecticut. Sister Teresa, born in 1916, and Sister Ruth, born in 1919, completed the family circle. Finally, in 1925, the family moved to Connecticut where they lived in Waterbury and various other towns and cities. At the time father James had achieved considerable recognition as a painter and art critic for New York City publications, one of which, *Art Review International*, he founded and edited between 1919 and 1925.

A *San Diego Union* obituary claimed son Britton was not formally educated, which could only be true in the sense that he did not matriculate in colleges or universities. He was, however, a student, beginning at the age of four, in the Bank Street [Progressive] School at Greenwich Village, New York City, and a graduate of South Manchester High School in Connecticut in 1933. As a versatile high school student, he played tennis, acted in school plays, and defended and rebutted issues on a debating team. The Depression prevented him, as it did so many others, from attending college. Obviously he was well-informed in artistic, architectural, musical and cultural matters. A part of this came from his artistic parents and their wide circle of culturally-attuned friends and another part from his voracious reading.

In 1935, at the age of 20, son Britton became a sketch artist for the *Hartford Courant* and a year later for the *Hartford Times*, the same papers for which his father had written columns of art appreciation and criticism. The sketches were mostly of visiting celebrities, such as Katherine Hepburn and Noel Coward. A series of 84 portrait drawings of "Notable Men in Connecticut's History" he did for *Courant*, between January and October 1935, included a portrait of Samuel Colt, the inventor of the famous multiple-shot Colt revolver. After leaving *Hartford Times* in 1938 Britton continued to work as an artist, designer, illustrator and writer wherever and whenever he could. References in his later writings indicate that during this interregnum period, he spent sometime in Florida, though the location of his residences and the nature of his vocations are not known. In 1945, James Britton II and Julia Eleanor [Meagley] Britton were divorced. His son, James Stevens Britton, was a product of this marriage.

Sometime in 1948 James Britton II moved to San Diego, with his second wife, Elizabeth [Roberts] Britton, a pianist who had been trained in the New England Conservatory of Music, and two daughters, Barbara Roberts Britton and Ursula Roberts Britton. Though new to San Diego, Britton soon attracted a coterie of talented and influential friends from whom he acquired a grasp of local architectural, artistic and political conditions.

Having read, and possibly met, city-planner and philosopher Lewis Mumford in New York City, Britton applied Mumford's theories of civic development to local abysmal conditions. In short order, he went from anonymous writer for the *San Diego Journal and Point Magazine* to feature writer on *Point Magazine and Magazine San Diego* that later became *San Diego and Point Magazine* and finally in 1955 became *San Diego Magazine* only. He also contributed to the *Los Angeles Magazine* (1962-63) and founded, edited and published the *California Review* for a two-year period (1963-65).

Britton's winning of second prize in an American Institute of Architect's (AIA) journalistic competition and his receiving a grant from the Ford Foundation (both in 1959) took him away from San Diego in 1960-61. During this hiatus from his regular writing chores, he studied at Harvard University and scrutinized plans for civic improvement in New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and other cities. His abilities as critic and writer got him an appointment as editor of the *Journal of the American*

Society of Landscape Architecture from 1965-70 and in 1968 a position as Special Architectural Journalist for the AIA in Washington, D.C.

In December 1977 the last article by Britton to appear in *San Diego Magazine*, titled “The Stone Flower,” anent the University of California at San Diego Library designed by Los Angeles architect William Pereira, was a repeat of an article he wrote for the August issue of the AIA journal. His generally appreciative attitude toward the library’s stunning spheroid exterior was tempered by a detailed physiological description of its indigestible interior. The following year Britton became a full-time architectural critic for *The San Diego Union*, writing twice a month for the Sunday Home Section. His provocative, sometimes mocking, sometimes scathing, columns continued to razzle and rankle in the *Union* until he died of a heart attack on January 4, 1983. His wife, Elizabeth had predeceased him in 1977.

San Diego city planners and architects expressed sorrow at Britton’s passing and acknowledged him as the person who set the high standards to which they aspired. As Britton said of himself his mission was to keep the cause of city-planning alive and to make the city he loved, and in which he lived the longest, become a leader in all the cultural, philosophical and spiritual matters that made his life and—he thought—a city’s life worth living. To its credit the City of San Diego has tried with some degree of success and with some degree of failure to accept the challenge of civic improvement first postulated professionally by city planner John Nolen in 1908 and nobly continued by critic and scold James Britton between 1948 and 1983.

Why James Britton? He was a significant voice in advancing the causes of good architecture and city and regional planning in San Diego through magazines such as *Point Magazine San Diego*, *San Diego and Point Magazine* (1950-55), *San Diego Magazine* (sporadically, 1955-71), and *The San Diego Union* newspaper (1978-83). Some of his opinions reached a wider audience through *Los Angeles Magazine* (1962-63), *Journal of the American Society of Landscape Architects* (1965-70), and American Institute of Architecture (AIA) publications (1968). His own self-published *California Review* (1963-65) was really a *San Diego Review*, complete with flattering prose and handsome photographs. It lasted two years and failed because of a lack of advertisers and subscribers.

As a San Diego commentator Britton was both a guide and an irritant. His full-fledged guidebook, “*You See San Diego*,” was published in 1977 in conjunction with an AIA national conference in San Diego. While his prose has the appearance of spontaneity, Britton wrote many drafts before he sent his writings off to be published. His puns were both maddening and dazzling and his coinage of new words was the despair of orthographers and grammarians. His writing style may have been idiosyncratic, but he was conscious of what he was doing and was offended when well-meaning editors tried to correct what they—not Britton—perceived as grammatical or stylistic errors. His pronouncements sometimes reached impractical levels: a double-decker highway along Highway 101 as it skirts Mission Bay Park and another double-decker, paralleled by skyscrapers, on Mission Boulevard; skyscrapers and condos in Balboa Park; an Atlas rocket atop the entrance rotunda to the Ford Building; a railroad terminal in Del Mar, instead of San Diego; an earth causeway that would link San Diego and Coronado, a co-operative of blacks in Logan Heights, that would cure blight and social inequities; a Champs Elysee in University Towne Center that would be better than the original; an international airport in Tijuana, owned by the United States, to be acquired by giving Mexico the Tijuana River Delta that has been part of the U.S. since the signing in 1848 of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Whatever he wrote, Britton evoked a vehement response in his readers that was either hot or cold (No Laodiceans there!). Reading him caused his readers to chuckle, chortle or choke. His writing was alternately exhilarating and exasperating, but, unless his readers were inert, it never put them to sleep. He believed in esthetic greatness in all the arts and he urged San Diego to strive for architectural, artistic, musical and urban planning heights. His heroes were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Lewis Mumford, Frank Lloyd Wright, and—locally—

architect and designer Lloyd Ruocco. How much he understood about the waverings of these men may be questioned but he clung to their self-confident and ebullient spirits.

Britton's praise of pots and pans in Fine Arts Gallery Director Thomas Robertson's controversially-mounted exhibit, "Art, Utility and You," (*Magazine San Diego*, December 1950) was more elitist than democratic. ("See! There is Benevenuto Cellini holding up to the light our coffee pot and breathing incredulously the wondrous phrase 'stainless steel.'" This is the 16th-Century Cellini whose famous gold, enamel and ivory salt cellar ("Saliera") has been reproduced many times, possibly even in "stainless steel" to the great disadvantage of the copies.) He appreciated the glories of Nature—the capitalization was his—but, as a confirmed urbanite, he sought to provide a place for expanding populations to live with little or no disturbance to natural beauties.

Britton's support of the Save the Canyon movement was after the fact. According to him the movement began when Mission Hills residents agreed to an "open-space assessment to keep some canyons in their area from development to "protect" views. They were successful in this effort whereas residents in Kensington failed to prevent developer Harold La Fleur from scraping and filling a conspicuous canyon. (Sometime later, Kensington residents contributed funds to turn the ravaged canyon into a "cultivated" park.) The most decisive step in keeping canyons native came when the San Diego City Council voted in 1974 to acquire Tecolote Canyon as a natural park.

Britton had the strange idea that canyons could be used as places to dispose of sewage. He thought the ensuing piles of stinky glutinous stuff could be "converted" to landscaping and/or made into recreational ponds. (*San Diego Magazine*, September 1974). While more than 130 miles of sewer lines now flow through the canyons of San Diego, one shudders to think of the damage exposed and untreated human feces could do to nature and to human beings.

There was natural beauty in San Diego that tested the attitudes of newcomers. The extensive, many-shaded canyons and meandering, if infrequent, rivers and streams were there until men started reshaping them, but the arid native landscape was transitory and the land itself—despite admonitions by landscape architects like Samuel Parsons, Jr. and John Nolen—seemed to be pleading for the benefits of the cultivator. Britton wanted offsetting "trees and stuff"—his words---to be green, but not the glass, steel and reinforced concrete sky-piercing cities he praised—especially if the concrete was "raw"—a deference to the views of the French Architect LeCorbusier—and the towers opened up views (but not of one another). Something about red Spanish tiles, as in community after community along the Southern California coast, sent him into frenzies.

Like Sir Thomas Browne in "*Religio Medici*," Britton enjoyed pursuing his reason to an "O altitudo." where everything was possible. In many ways, his hopes and enthusiasms persist. His precipitous heights still beckon nascent Sir Edmund Hillaries or incorrigible Baron Haussmanns. His praise of reflective glass—because they made buildings disappear—derived from architects Philip Johnson and Lloyd Ruocco—became a fetish. This fetish was at its ripest when he declared that the Copley-owned Union-Tribune complex in Mission Valley was a better "architectural expression" than Henry Hobson Richardson's Trinity Church and Charles Follen McKim's Public Library, both on or facing the similarly-named Copley Square in Boston. Why? . . . because the Union-Tribune building reflected the "American experience" even as its "mystifying" mirror-glass raised the design "to the realm of magic." (*San Diego Magazine*, February 1974) (This bit of chauvinism peaks through whenever Britton is trying to be clever, which is most of the time.) His account of Architect Ruocco's glass-enclosed (or better, glass-exposed) residence near San Diego State College, hidden from view on the sides of a canyon, comes across as a maze of fool-the-eye deceptions, part *Alice In Wonderland* and part *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. (*San Diego Magazine*, March 1958) One of Britton's best pieces was a descriptive article—rare for him—about the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, some of whose awe-inspiring panes have in the year 2007 been defaced by graffiti scratched into the glass by

vandals. (*San Diego Union*, January 11, 1981) Britton found similar engaging aspects in the black-glass-enveloped 24-story Imperial Bank Tower at 7th Avenue and B Street in downtown San Diego that less impressed viewers have nicknamed “the Darth Vader Building.”

Edwin Self, publisher of *Magazine San Diego and Point* that later became *San Diego Magazine*, said that when Britton became associate editor (1950-60) he wrote many columns of art and music criticism, to the annoyance of other writers on the magazine who regarded these subject as their own. Britton’s art criticism made good reading as he had a capacity for putting himself within the work and feeling its stresses, tensions, balances and imbalances. He also saw a lot of it as merely “fun.” Consequently, he favored “advance guard”—his words—works that amateur or less astute viewers excoriated as “modern.” His close friendships with local artists—Clark Allen, Dan Dickey, Fred Hocks, Sheldon Kirby, Linda Lewis, William Munson and others spurred them on to create original and vital works that hold up well today.

In music, Britton’s attention was divided between the performers and the works they played. The impression of this writer—which may be disputed by people who knew Britton closely—is that, as in painting and sculpture, he favored more abstruse heavy music rather than light frothy stuff. There were not that many local composers—except in jazz, a field he depreciated—so he liked the challenge, range, emotional expressiveness and provocative nature of old and new composers, like Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Stravinsky, Bartok and Hindemith. A good orchestra could deliver this music with consummate skill, but only if had the support that indifferent San Diegans were not able to give. As a result, the local symphony—but not smaller string ensembles—often made chaotic messes of what, in better hands, would have been sublime moments or tumultuous climaxes. This last brings to mind that “momentous moments” was an alliterative if redundant phrase he used at least once (once was enough!). As with many of his neologisms, it sometimes seemed words were more important than the substance they portrayed.

As his health deteriorated and his hopes diminished, Britton saw in Mayor Pete Wilson, developer Ernest Hahn and designer Jon Jerde the definitive answer to his dream of a synthesis of beauty and business under the enlightened patronage of American capitalists. The caparisoned and colorful faux Italian hill town they helped to re-create in the Horton Plaza Shopping Center—that opened for business in August 1985—would be entertaining even though its subliminal purpose was to get shoppers to buy, buy, buy. The Center’s comical topiary, waving banners and slightly scary views from upper levels contributed to a discreet, carefully refined mix that could easily turn garish unless future managers and tenants keep it under tight control. Much the same foreboding was behind Britton’s recommendations for a Czar in Balboa Park who would keep the institutions in the park from spoiling overall architectonic effects with kitschy and superfluous additions.

Local universities, colleges and private schools sometimes laud the emphasis Britton placed on city and regional planning and on good design as a tantalizing lure for San Diego residents and tourists alike. Many local and national environmental organizations—Citizens Coordinate for Century 3, Trust for Public Land, Project for Public Spaces, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), successor to the Comprehensive Planning Organization—continue to embrace Britton’s pursuits.

As a newcomer to San Diego, Britton’s criticisms of the City’s failures in solving a multitude of traffic and parking problems and its penchant for erecting cheap, inefficient and ugly buildings were tinged with a call for excellence, particularly so if his imaginative, direct-from-Olympus solutions were followed. ‘Presto’—meaning “let it be done”—was one of his favorite words. Also, somewhere in the deep recesses of his brain, Lloyd Ruocco’s motto that “people should learn to live together handsomely” was plugged into a live socket. In an aside while discussing plans for hotels in Mission Bay (*San Diego Magazine*, July 1959) he said a good modern [hotel] building was good if it lasted 25 years; then it should be replaced. (The question: Did Britton mean it? My answer, maybe so, but not for all buildings and not for the best

work of his heroes LeCorbusier, Mies van der Rohe, FLW, and Lloyd Ruocco—though even in these cases architectural wonderworks have been devastated by time, by obsolescence, and by the wrecker's ball.)

Britton's call for perfection often floundered on slippery slopes because of his lack of personal on-site contact with achievements in the rest of the world. Except for what he had observed in Connecticut, in New York City, in Philadelphia and in Miami Beach, much of his knowledge of what was happening came from books or from conversations with others who shared their experiences and insights with him. (Reading Henry Adams' comments about the Virgin and the mentality of the Middle Ages was—and is—immensely rewarding, but it is in no sense an adequate substitute for being at Chartres in and outside the magnificent—and imperishable—Cathedral.)

Britton's prediction that San Diego is or could be the best in the world in buildings, traffic circulation, convention business, tourist attractions, and- cultural activities had a boisterous evangelical quality. This catering to local self-esteem may have energized followers because his fervor was contagious, but it also revealed a naive side of his nature that must have seemed callow to architects and social and cultural commentators elsewhere. Who but Britton would tell San Diegans (not New Yorkers!) that the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Guggenheim Building on Fifth Avenue would look better if it were moved across the street into Central Park! (*San Diego Magazine*, October 1960) On the other hand, like the boy who saw that the Emperor's new clothes were no clothes at all, Britton alone pointed out that San Diego's revered architect, Irving Gill, was sometimes clumsy (*San Diego Magazine*, January 1959), and that celebrated San Diego architect Richard Requa's praise of originality and functionalism did not conform to his own architectural practice (*San Diego Magazine*, June 1959). Here, too, Requa's fondness for red tiles may have had something to do with Britton's pique. A preacher with an impish sense of humor, Britton, on one occasion, assured his readers they could have "heavenly cities" with small "feeder airports" if they would put airport hubs for supersonic jets in "hell," in this case, in the hot and uninhabitable land surrounding Death Valley (*San Diego Magazine*, June 1960). Supersonic jets and supersonic booms and supersonic costs were slow in coming, however, and when they did arrive they presented so many problems that the Utopian project was left for another day.

As Britton learned more and more about accomplishments and changes in architectural thinking outside San Diego, his outlook became more cosmopolitan. The two or so years he spent studying architectural and cultural conditions in other cities, financed by a Ford Foundation grant in 1960, and his brief stint working in the national headquarters of the AIA in Washington, D.C. in 1968 helped to broaden his perceptions. His stance as a contributor to *Los Angeles Magazine* (three articles about Los Angeles and one about San Diego) acted as an interlude from his adroitly focused studies and work on the San Diego scene. As he became aware of the aspirations and problems in urban development in other parts of the country, he began to modulate some of his earlier enthusiastic expostulations. It was just possible that other cities might also be the best in those many aspects of city life and culture for which he had previously praised San Diego so effusively.

Many of Britton's likes and dislikes were reactions to contemporary controversies and events, some of which continue---the lid over the freeways; the relocation of the downtown and Miramar [Naval] Air Station airports; the concealment and/or elimination of automobiles; the rational platting of subdivisions; the transfer of revenue generated by commercial ventures in parks to city-wide park improvement projects and not to the City of San Diego's general fund; the need for a qualified art commission to select great works of public art; the bay to park linkage, first advocated by city planner John Nolen in 1908. Some of the regions nettlesome problems have been put to rest—the petrification of the Belmont roller coaster, the construction of a convention center, the use of canyons or Balboa Park as a place to hide or get rid of the convention, cultural and civic centers that concerned citizens wanted but no one wanted to pay for or of the automobiles that were bumping into one another and impeding

progress. Primarily an esthetic rather than a social critic, Britton believed that if the economy improved most social problems would disappear—which is not to say they would change.

Whether one agreed or disagreed with him—sometimes both in the same and in different articles—Britton got people involved. His sensibilities were formed by his artist-father and musician-mother. His principles . . . that good art was “soul” (Plato) and that “a thing of beauty is a joy forever” (Keats) were long-held. He seldom modified them; however, he knew how to adapt them in response to anfractuous realities wrought by politicians, realtors, developers and merchandisers—witness his parrying as the urbanization of Mission Valley juggernauted forward, which may have been the same as making the best of a bad situation as store after store, condo after condo and developer after developer moved in. There was something ironic about Britton’s advocacy of master planning or of hiring artists and architects from outside the City through competitions, for when the City did this, Britton found faults in the process and dismissed the results as being too short-term, political, expedient and visually or acoustically insensitive (see his demolishing remarks on the *Stanford Study of Public Assembly Facilities* in 1955 and his blistering ridicule of the *Bartholomew Master Plan for Balboa Park* in 1960.) In the year 2007 when so many city and neighborhood planning groups have been taken over by representatives or clients of developers, Britton’s confidence in their impartial far-seeing judgment seems the quintessence of innocence and gullibility.

Adopting an attitude of total acquiescence to the opinions of landscape architect Garrett Eckbo and his Community Facilities Planners firm (*San Diego Magazine*, April 22, 1955), who were hired to establish design principles for the Mission Bay Park that was to be, Britton found himself at the end of his tether regarding his favorite obsession; the design and construction of skyscrapers. He suggested that the about-to-be hotels (“botels,” he called them) could be higher but he did not say how high is high. In contrast to environmental architects who favor merging buildings into the landscape (and this includes Lloyd Ruocco), Britton preferred high rises because they offset the “monotony” of the flat topography of Mission Bay, accented special spots along the Bay, and offered tourists views they could not obtain at ground levels. (Ironically the views of the tourists are the very views non-tourists cannot have.) It was such forever upward reasoning (or simply opportunism) that led to the huge buildings that now disfigure sections of the Pacific Beach and La Jolla coasts. In fairness to Britton, he—and Eckbo—did not want a lot of tall hotel buildings, just a few juttings and gushings in conspicuous places. Left open was the question of what would happen to the “botels” when the owners disregarded the standards proposed by the Eckbo planners.

When writing of “the sins of the city council” (*San Diego and Point Magazine*, March 1958), Britton refrained from making the charge of collusion with outside profiteers or power brokers. (“Lobbyists” is the generic term in use today.) Rather he accused council people of “political nonsense,” a neat antithesis to people with “design sense,” supposedly planners and architects. What exactly these two terms meant is not clear, though “political nonsense” seems to imply stupidity rather than cupidity, and “design sense” seems to imply the appearance of things with the further—unfortunately unstated—idea that “machinery” is an indispensable part of “appearance.”

Even when San Diego erred toward mediocrity, imitateness and false—or necessary—economy, as in Mission Bay Park, Mission Valley and Balboa Park, Britton held out hopes for improvement. The shared private-public use of Mission Bay fascinated him. It seemed to offer something for everybody, and the tropical flourishes and exotic touches in landscaping and architectural details, particularly at Vacation Village (now Paradise Point) stimulated dreams of a good happy life for beautiful people who could spend their leisurely and luxurious days (and money) surrounded by an exotic staff of copper-toned beachgirls and beachboys. Having seen Mission Bay in its fledgling condition, Britton did not foresee the conglomeration of crude, tumble-down, undistinguished buildings in the southwest corner of Mission Bay Park. His first views of the Islandia (now Hyatt Regency) in this area were ecstatic; despite the commonplace, ice-box styling of the principal building—he liked its lattice-work rooftop projections . . . “a new kind of

sculpture, as it were, especially suited to the ever-moving populace”—*Los Angeles Magazine*, May 1963). Logically, if the moving motorist could see the “sculpture” as more than a blur, the moving pedestrian who got closer could not even glimpse this hidden treasure. From this “passing motorist” apex, it was—and is today—downhill to ramshackle, seedy commercialism along the “strip” at Quivira Basin where the intrusive 17-floor, Hyatt-Regency mocks its sprawling neighbors.

Britton’s dream of a collaboration between corporation investors and Comprehensive Planning Organization planners carried over into a quixotic plan to replace San Diego’s “outmoded” Miramar Naval Air Station with a new capital city that would replace the “mess” in Washington, D.C. while, at the same time, providing a center for all the blue-chip corporations that had left or were leaving squalid, crowded and antiquated New York City. The new capital would consist of mega-structure towers surrounded by open space, reminiscent of plans being advocated at the time by architect Paul Rudolph, and also—though Britton did not say so—by architects LeCorbusier and Moshe Safdie. (*San Diego Magazine*, May 1974)

In discussing the views of Hamilton Marston and of the Lynch and Appleyard, planners Marston and his aunt Mary had hired in 1975 to produce an “overview” of the San Diego region, Britton gave space for them to express their desires for greater cultural and business exchanges between the San Diego and Tijuana. Of course, Marston, as merchant, already knew how much San Diego merchants owed to the influx of wealthy customers from south of the border. Britton buried his account of Marston’s views in an imaginary exchange between Hamilton as Hamlet and Grandfather George W. Marston as a stand-in for the ghost of Hamlet’s father, going so far as to re-write Shakespeare’s tantalizing dialogue to suit his purposes. The whole parody or travesty, like an identification a month before (or was it just comparison?) of Lloyd Ruocco with “Saint” Francis of Assisi, makes a mockery of the points Britton is trying to make. In any case, Marston’s and Lynch’s and Appleyard’s tentative gestures toward friendship with businessmen and politicians from Tijuana appears to have anticipated the increased number of contacts between the two intertwined cites, that has produced, among other things, expansion of “maquiladoras” on the Mexican side of the border, acceleration of free trade, and collaboration in solving a sewage overflow problem that is damaging the environment and causing health problems on both sides the border. (*San Diego Magazine*, February 1975).

Defender of Erewhom, though he may have been, Britton could not, however, condone the opportunistic firing in 1950 (resignation?) of Reginald Poland as director of the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery (now San Diego Museum of Art) or his chagrin at the out-of-place building of the Timken Gallery (1965) and the west wing of the San Diego Museum of Art (1966).

His knowledge of San Diego history must have come from glosses. As a result, his comments about architect Bertram Goodhue’s brilliant design success on El Prado in Balboa Park were drawn from a Goodhue who never existed. (Goodhue actually despised most of the Prado designs that were done by—to him—plodding competitors. How much more interesting would it have been to know what Britton thought of the Spanish-Renaissance Phelps-Dodge “Ghost” Mining Town In Tyrone, New Mexico, that Goodhue and Company designed in the same years he designed El Prado.) Britton’s rhapsodies about the fading temporary structures in Balboa Park or about the grandeur of the Old Globe Theater because of its setting—not because of its architecture—sometimes reached into dizzying heights. His praise of the uninspiring CalTrans Building in Old Town that replaced the picturesque Spanish-Mission style Olive Oil Factory (later revised after the eyesore was built); his seconding of the proposal of consultants Pereira and Luckman to give Balboa Park to the University of California (in exchange for 1000 “commercial recreational” acres in Mission Valley); his advocacy of open-air walkways above the arcades in Balboa Park; his plans to put parking structures or offices under the seats of sports stadiums or in canyons; and his statement that the wing of an airplane sticking up in the air at Otay Mesa, San Diego County, designed by his alter ego Lloyd Ruocco, was “a modern equivalent of the [Christian] cross” were some of his greatest howlers. (Adverse critics will find others.)

More prescient, however, was Britton's advocacy of a rapid (mass) transit system (*San Diego Magazine*, March 1959) that became the forerunner of the trolley system that now operates from San Diego to Tijuana and through Mission Valley. What Britton and San Diego engineer Mathew Brady hoped for was nothing less than the remaking of American cities and spaces in between into a "multiple toll" package that included superhighways with suspended cars carrying passengers and freight; channels for heavy freight trains and trucks; ducts for carrying liquid freight and cable lines; and "barrels" (pipes? . . . canals?) transporting Mississippi water in the earth beneath the stacks of passes and overpasses. What the rest of the country and San Diego got was more pragmatic though the 2007 bullet trains and massive, but not yet electronically-controlled, highways, also (theoretically at least), relieve traffic congestion increase speed, decrease expense, reduce smog and promote national defense.

Except for Rohr Industries in Chula Vista, that experimented with a prototype of a vehicle supported and moved by magnetic forces located either beneath the vehicle or overhead (ROMAG) from 1970 to 1975, San Diego entrepreneurs did not pick up on Britton's idea of a new multiple-traffic and transport industry. The rapid-transit plants he recommended as extensions of local aircraft plants floundered (despite government subsidy) while, in 1994, General Dynamics, San Diego's major aircraft and missile employer, closed its plant on Kearny Mesa and moved what was left of its San Diego operations to Denver, Colorado. It should be noted that Britton later revised his views about the building of superhighways as he, and the communities through which they plowed (i.e. San Francisco, Los Angeles, Hartford and Boston) were beginning to realize their negative impacts, including the escalation rather than the relief of congestion and the splitting apart of neighborhoods, to which list can now be added the acceleration of global warming and the on-again, off-again reliance on foreign governments and/or companies for oil—problems that seer, though he was, Britton did not see. (*San Diego Magazine*, May 1974)

Like Uncle Toby in *Tristram Shandy*, Britton's hobby-horse romps took him to peculiar places. It was not for nothing that one of his best pieces for *Point* (January 19, 1951) was a description of a surrealist exhibit at San Diego State. He was all for it! As an amateur bricklayer, his comments about bricklaying in San Diego buildings show the discerning eye of a creative craftsman; not so, however, his praise of ceramic murals on public buildings because they had achieved the success of publicity in the University of Mexico or his fleeting fascination with the skeletal, show-it-all structure of Centre Pompidou in Paris. (Most of the ducts inside serve no useful purpose.) Something of Britton's tendency to glorify the impossible (and to turn logic on its head) was behind his prediction in 1974 that dirigibles would replace airplanes (and decrease the need for airports) because the latter were "inherently unsafe!" (*San Diego Magazine*, May 1974)

The Salk Institute in La Jolla, a much acclaimed masterpiece by architect Louis Kahn seemed to take Britton off-guard for here was San Diego's most distinguished architectural building that effectively molded space and supplied ample and flexible work facilities and yet it was the product of a humble architect who was not afraid to ask for advice. This was not a building tourists and indeed most San Diego residents were expected to visit; yet it has received accolades from architectural critics, historians, and students. There was nothing entertaining or whimsical or sweet about it. It was efficient, practical, classically-derivative and "austere," a word Britton used to indicate his personal discomfort. As was his wont, Britton decided to illustrate his piece on the Salk Institute by an analogy to the Parthenon from which the Salk Institute supposedly took structural hints and spiritual imponderables. The most telling point in Britton's analysis was his attribution of the stunning geometric and minimalist plaza—it most photographed feature—to Mexican architect Luis Barragan who saw in the simplified plaza a "façade to the sky" rather than the garden through which scientists were to wander. Since Barragan, Salk and Khan formed a trio it is idle to credit the striking plaza that opens up to the broad Pacific Ocean as well as to the skies above to any one person. As almost all the dazzling photographs of the plaza are without people, the implication seems to be that this is a work of art as marmoreal and untouchable as any work of art preserved forever in somber and intimidating museums.

Fortunately, the scientists-in-residence can view the plaza from their angled offices and thus find release from their intense work without being enticed into the byways of a busy scene. (I dissent from Robert Venturi's view that the open plaza, the fragmented appearance of the plan, and the incomplete buildings show an "American spirit" like that of the pioneers energetically pushing onwards and upwards, though Venturi agrees his case more cogently than Britton's glib resort to the "American experience" to explain the "magical qualities" in the Union-Tribune building in Mission Valley. (Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, *Iconography and Electronics upon a Generic Architecture: A View from the Drafting Room*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1996; *San Diego Magazine*. June 1957).

One wishes, sometimes, that Britton had more compassion for the underdog but his eyes were on tourists—the tourists that were so deftly satirized by Nathanael West in "*The Day of the Locusts*". (An Internet search of the attached articles shows that the word "homeless" does not appear anywhere.) Britton did rise to the defense of John Lloyd Wright, a talented architect and son of the famous FLW, who failed to get a license to practice architecture in California. (a misstep that was later rectified,) His friendship with the son won him an interview with the father, when Frank Lloyd Wright visited San Diego in 1955, seeking—pork-pie hat-in-hand—a commission to design a civic theatre. Like Britton, FLW was an ego-centrist, but, unlike FLW, who dismissed what he didn't like with snorts of disapproval; Britton wrote elaborate and searching essays.

The appeals Britton extolled of beautiful views and open sky and melodious music and harmonious composition and dream palaces—in Balboa Park—and welcoming and safe streets in sanitized settings that their great-great grandfathers and great-great grandmothers never knew—as in Disneyland, Old Town, Gaslamp Quarter. Seaport Village and Mission Bay Park—were those that tourists could appreciate. And Britton was San Diego's number one tourist. It's great in this 2007 jaded, pessimistic and forlorn period, with tax collector, banker, lawyer, mortgage fore-closer and accountant at the door and a globalized economy taking nations and peoples to they know not where, to be reminded of all that was beautiful in the exterior features of San Diego City and County that Britton saw with amazement, even as he conjured up ways to make this area the best that could be found anywhere in the world. Like the opera composer Donizetti, Britton offered San Diegans an "*Elixir of Love*." For a time, what an elixir it was!

NOTE: Permission has been obtained from *San Diego Magazine* to put the following articles on my webpage. As the *San Diego Union-Tribune* withheld such permission; articles by Mr. Britton that appeared in *The San Diego Union* are not included. As there is no existing index to these articles, I have included a brief [headline] notice of where they can be found. Opinions expressed in the above article are my own. As I admire the perceptions and prestidigitations of Mr. Britton, while also failing to attribute to him Delphic oracle status, the reader must judge if my views are relevant or distorted.

Richard W. Amero

Editor & Publisher JAMES BRITTON: Connecticut, 1915, uneducated; feature writer and illustrator, *Hartford Courant*, 1935; same, *Hartford Times*, 1936-37; artist, architectural designer, production illustrator, technical writer, 1938-48; writer, later associate editor, *San Diego* and *Point* magazines, 1949-61; writer *Los Angeles Magazine*, 1962-63 (intermittent); Second Award, National Architectural Journalism Competition, AIA, 1960; Mass Media Fellowship Fund for Adult Education, Ford Foundation, 1960-61, one year spent in travel and belated study in major universities

NABI GALLERY, 137 West 25th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001 (excerpt from the Internet . . . <http://www.nabiarts.com/Nabi/britton1.htm>)

(Exhibit opening September 23, 2004)

James Britton I (1878-1936)

James Britton brought his family out from New York City in 1922 and took rooms on Main Street [Sag Harbor, Long Island], upstairs from the office of the local newspaper, the *Express*—in the same building whose rear extension, fronting Route 114, housed the Nabi from 1996 to 2001.

During his three years there, while Carol Britton supplemented the family income by playing piano accompaniment to silent movies at the Sag Harbor Cinema, he painted many views of bay and sky, quiet village lanes and buildings such as the bootlegger's storehouse visible from his studio window. He continued, however, to keep a studio in New York, where he reluctantly commuted by train, and where he produced the portraits and art criticism that were his main livelihood.

In his autobiography, begun in 1935, a year before his death in Hartford at the age of 58, he recalled his "harbor of refuge" here as "a sleepy little village occupying a flat-nub of land which could easily be cleaned off by a good-sized tidal wave. The harbor was nothing now, but old timers told me that it had been more than a little piece of sad blue water—it had been a whaling port. But now the only marine excitement was clam-digging."

In those days, he wrote "everybody" went to Southampton; certain other went to East Hampton, and still others to Hampton Bays. No one went to Sag Harbor. That was as it should be. Very often I rolled in on the little steam train, in the dark, the sole passenger making the change from the New York train at Bridgehampton. I enjoyed the quiet, the solitude of this last lap of the journey from the city with its millions of rushing humans, its hideous noises, its whirls of never settled dust, its general continuous annoyances."

In Sag Harbor, he added, "there were no artists except for a few amateurs. Going back and forth frequently, New York provided sufficient contact with the art profession. I wanted to get away from the strutting exhibitioners, and when some of them talked about following me down east, I gave them no encouragement."

An illustrated selection from his autobiography and diaries, compiled by the artist's granddaughters, Ursula and Barbara Britton, are available at the [Nabi] gallery.

Timeline: 1930—Preliminary Plan for Mission Bay State Park submitted by Glenn A. Rick, Kenneth Gardner & Allen Perry

Timeline: 1945—State ceded its Mission Bay lands to the City of San Diego; Bond issue for Mission Bay

Timeline: 1946—City dredging operation created area then known as Gleason Point (not Bahia Point), Mission Bay

Timeline: 1946, 1948, 1949, 1950 Preliminary Plan for Mission Bay Park updated & revised

Timeline: January 1948—City agreement with federal government regarding Mission Bay

Timeline: May 14, 1948—Macco Construction Company started construction work of south jetty of the flood control channel, Mission Bay

SAN DIEGO DAILY JOURNAL, March 17, 1944 to May 27, 1950

MAGAZINE SAN DIEGO, October 1948 to August 1955, Vol. 1 – Vol. 7-7.

POINT Magazine, July 1950 to July 1955, Vol. 1 – Vol. 11-5.

1950, FRYE & SMITH OFFICIAL SAN DIEGO CITY DIRECTORY

Jas. (Eliz.) h. 2650 2nd Avenue

Timeline: 1950—Bond issue for Mission Bay

July 7, 1950, first issue of Point Weekly published.

November 1950, Magazine San Diego, 14-15, 28, How **Atom Bombs May Solve the Parking Problem**

In the 1940s it was discovered that the atom is composed of equal parts of good and evil, Priceless Paradox! One of the good things that that the atom holds out to San Diego is a quite new opportunity to solve a brace of parking problems including, of all things, the off-street parking problem, and to achieve unique levels of civic convenience and beauty;

By screwing itself up in the form of a bomb, the atom has impressed us all with the need for air raid shelters. To date little has been done either here or in any other American city. The first five years has seen also skirting action by governments at all levels. Reason: the cost of building shelters on a sufficient scale is enough to cause general paresis among taxpayers as well as officials.

Eastern cities are relatively well prepared with strongly built both underground structures such as multi-deck basements and subways San Francisco expects to rely on its famous underground parking facility at Pershing Square. Reasoning from these facts, retired Read Admiral B. C. Allen, the dashing pepper-and-salt member of our Planning Commission has asked the City Council to study the possibility of actually planning parking facilities with an eye to their thinking as air-raid shelters.

\ That would mean building parking garages down into the ground instead of up into the air. It would mean covering them with fireproof and radiation-proof earth. Logically, that earth should be unencumbered by surface buildings, thus providing liberal stretches in the congested areas .which could be planted to grass and non-combustible greenery. So, as a byproduct of fearing the atom, we might get a more peaceful, car-free city and—adding peace and beauty together—yet, even a more tourist-worthy city.

How has the City Council responded to Admiral Allen's thoughtful suggestion that it study these possibilities? Blankly, to say the least. The Council as a whole is not in the habit of dealing with ideas or their merits. Though some of its members and particularly the Mayor are capable of thinking in advance of the electorate, many of the excellent ideas generated by the city planning and traffic departments are dismissed by the Council there is little evidence of public support for them.

NO – TO ANYTHING

So far the Council is not willing even to entertain the notion of underground shelters, with or without parking. However, on the question of off-street parking by itself, the Council did decide to ask the voters this November to amend the city charter to permit issuance of revenue bonds financed by parking meter money. This amendment (Proposition F on your ballot) authorizes the Council by ordinance to acquire off-street parking facilities and have revenue bonds secured by receipts from those parking facilities and also from parking meters.

This looks like a democratic procedure—until you examine the voting habits of this often vegetative town.

As with other constructive city planning measures, this one stands a good chance of being defeated by the bulldozing tactics of willful men who control large chunks of the landscape for profit. Already, they have attempted to argue around the issue by maintaining that the city is promoting socialism, invading free enterprise. This method is familiar: a choice example of the big-misrepresentation technique good for a few

thousand “no” votes from the timid, the frayed, the easily herded—the very people, actually, who stand to benefit the most from orderly city patterns.

The big-misrepresentation technique can defeat a worthy measure in San Diego particularly because we have an extra large element of chronic “no” voters in any case (pensioners and small land-owners), and only a small stampede is needed to accomplish the will of the enemies of civic planning.

Obviously, it would be far more democratic for the Councilmen to do a vigorous job of demonstrating and selling to the public, plans for the well-being of the city as a whole, with this allowance for three or four million people who will live in San Diego County over the next 50 years. It would be cheaper of course: inefficient cities are enormously more costly in terms of the individual taxpayer’s pocketbook than efficiently planned cities, though voters seldom have enough information to compare the costs.

If the Council can’t bring itself to focus on underground parking, at least the reader can reflect on it. Here is an outline of one possible approach, unfortunately dictated by the mighty atom that could yield dividends in decent civic standards too—for decades.

1. Construct the Date Street Freeway, as visualized in the city’s official master plan. It would be sunken below street levels throughout most of its length and would have many access roads.
2. Burrowing into the banks of either side of the Freeway, build underground parking garages as the need demands and money permits. These would largely be for all-day parkers and, in conjunction with the Freeway, could not be beat for that fast get-away at the end of the day.
3. Building additional underground parking facilities, public and private, as opportunities arise, throughout the downtown area and in other congested areas.
4. A many-doored tunnel for the Santa Fe railroad would form an excellent air-raid shelter in the place and in the form most needed, in addition to solving many traffic problems. It would have to be soundly built anyway to keep out water and its cost could be largely financed by industry and the federal government.
5. Adopt a zoning policy encouraging a maximum of open-space between buildings bordering the Freeway and the railroad tunnel.

The ideal would be a sort of green belt, studded with architecturally superior Buildings, both public and private, landscaped in the best San Diego manner. This gorgeous belt would be encountered by residents and visitors coming into the center from all parts of the city. Thus, sectional opposition would be minimized.

Being clearly defined and bordered by beauty, the downtown area would be more likely to resist the creeping blight now in evidence there. With the exodus to the north of many stores, the center no longer will be the center, but merely a congested area given over to miscellaneous uses, including wholesalers and small manufacturers, who have scant incentive to keep up appearances and keep down nuisances. It is these users who creep and bring in the blight. Not only do they creep, they leap, leaving patches of decayed and useless buildings which for various reasons are never improved, and which pay little or no taxes.

Sooner or later a city has to make plans for its blighted or blight-threatened areas. Sooner is cheaper. The urgency of bomb protection looks like a good incentive for laying out patterns that will assure an efficient and tax-solvent future for downtown San Diego. A really vigorous newspaper campaign could tear down the false work opposition of the selfish interests, and assure the vote for off-street parking. It might be a good circulation builder for the town’s fledgling Chronicle—and a Godsend to the people.

As an exercise for the civic conscience, it is good to go through the motions of amateur city planning as we are doing here. It would be so much better if the principles of city design were accepted as widely as the principles of good housekeeping.

The first principle of good housekeeping is, of course, that “A house divided cannot stand.” Just so, “A city indifferent cannot remain livable; it must fall into the chaotic condition of Los Angeles.”

The indifferent San Diegan may escape being blistered by atom bombs, U.N. willing. But his city may well be choked in a decade or two by automobiles, unless he votes for constructive community action on parking and traffic problems.

Even discounting underground shelters entirely, support for the city's chance to acquire off-street parking facilities is support for the integrity of the city's master plan. It is support for good civic housekeeping, good city design. It means a better product for a better future at a lower cost.

Is that socialism, or is that the essence of the American dream?

December 1950, Magazine San Diego, 15-17, **"Art, Utility and You" . . . an exhibition of useful objects.**

Pictured above in the Fine Arts Gallery, a group of YOUs* are seen studying a specimen of UTILITY against a background of great ART. Fine paintings by El Greco, Velasquez and other "old masters" are recognized universally as art, they lie back against a museum wall and don't climb down to mingle with the crowds. But what about the vulgar hobnobbing coffee pot? What's it doing in the Fine Arts Gallery?

Horatio Greenough, a discerning contemporary of ours whose flesh died 98 years ago, pointed the course of American art. He spoke of the clipper ship, which was to the Nineteenth Century very much what the automobile is to the Twentieth—and object of general devotion. Let's paraphrase him closely, substituting only a few Twentieth-Century words:

"Observe an auto on the open road! What Academy of Design, what imitation of the classics produced this marvel of construction? Here nature spoke of the laws of locomotion, and man bent all his mind to hear and to obey . . . I contend for classic principles, not for classic things . . . If a teardrop shape outwits the wind, any other shape, though picturesque, must be given up. Streamlining is not only effective, it is beautiful, for it respect the efforts of the engine and does not uselessly tax it . . . If there be any principle of structure more plainly inculcated in the works of the Creator than all others, it is the principle of unflinching adaptation of forms to function . . . If this anatomic connection and proportion has been attained in autos, in machines, in bridges and in scaffolding, why should we fear its use in all objects?"

There you have a neat summary of the spirit that animates the serious contemporary American artist, as it has animated the true artist of every time and place. It appears to be the spirit as well of the Contemporary Arts Committee of the Fine Arts Gallery, sponsor of the current exhibition.

This committee was formed last year to explore the world of our own day and bring back for display at the Gallery specimens of vital art expression worthy both of the great American tradition (as expressed by Greenough) and of the larger Western tradition (as exemplified in the Gallery's wonderful collection of European paintings.)

The group's first enterprise was the Flower and Color Print Show of last April, which brought the most abundant display yet seen in San Diego of the magical twentieth-century processes of color reproduction, set against ravishing arrangements of the varied local flora.

Now the Committee has sent out man's little expedition into those alluring thickets, the stores of the modern city, armed only with their well-trained artistic judgment they have snared a fine variety of well made, well designed objects, all of which were found on sale in San Diego.

In preparing the exhibition, the Committee has arranged its finds around two broad domestic components, "Food Preparation and Dining Area" and "Living Area." The American revolution in interior design really begins in the kitchen (and, of course, in the bathroom—many out-of-date Europeans still think of American culture as consisting mainly of gleaming indoor porcelain fixtures and chromium-plated plumbing.) Our natural penchant for labor saving finds ready expression in kitchen gadgets, some of which take intriguing art forms. For example, roll your eye over the Dazy can opener, which has the same

voluptuous streamlining as an auto fender, and for much the same reason—to shed dirt. So long as you can find a good reason back of it, streamlining is a sound device—and very likely an artistic one.

Moving on to the dining area and restraining your urge to rush out to the nearest snack bar, you can fall under the spell of china ceramics, silverware and glass chosen for the way they all go together to form three-dimensional works of art, not mere place settings based on tired formulas. Tumblers from Thrifty Drug Stores are seen to be compatible with fine autographed originals, like the enamels of Jackson Wooley.

From the dining area we expand comfortably into the living area, which is so immense these days. Following the lead of that transcendent American genius, Frank Lloyd Wright, the Twentieth Century has seen the living “room” opened up to light and space—and living—until today, increasingly, homes are being built with great window areas to bring the outdoors in, with rooms opening into one another instead of boxed-off like coffins. Matching this new openness, brave new designs in furniture and accessories are winning the public away from its funereal reliance of machine-counterfeited copies of lovely originals from the age of handicraft.

Handicraft itself is coming into a great new usefulness. It is the perfect home companion to the new, machine-made furniture, which, indeed, is apt to look downright lonely without the humanizing touch of hand-woven fabrics or hand-fashioned pottery.

It does not take much imagination to visualize the great Italian painters whose works hang in the galleries above, gathered across the room from us excitedly discussing with their friends the advances that have been made since their time. Many of them were trained artisans (silversmiths and the like) who regarded picture-making in much the same spirit as the making of goblets and chafing dishes. See! There is Benevenuto Cellini, holding up to the light our coffee pot and breathing incredulously the wondrous phrase “stainless steel!”

The reunion of Art, Utility and You is being celebrated from November 10 through December at the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego. It is a novel and profitable experience.

*G. Jackson, John Dirks, Thomas B. Robertson, Mrs. Ilse Ruocco, John Zone, Don Dickey.

December 29, 1950, Point Newsweekly, **the fine arts**, 14, by James Britton

Why did the Fine Arts Gallery exhibition of useful objects, entitled Art, Utility and You, close a week ahead of schedule? Did the following situation have anything to do with it?

While the gallery is maintained and manned at public expense, its displays and activities are provided by a private corporation called the Fine Arts Society. Membership is open to anyone, but the 1,500 or so members have no more democratic function than to pay their dues and enjoy programs. The policy is determined by a self-elected board of 30 directors, mainly well-placed businessmen, or their sisters or their cousins or their aunts—people who are good at wooing donors and finding money to buy works of art.

Most of these people do not pretend to any up-to-date knowledge of or any deep understanding of art. The old idea of a museum—a place to display and talk about the work of past periods—appeals to them, and they have built up a collection valued by some experts at more than \$7 million. This includes an unusual number of first-rate historical works of fine art, but also the usual admixture of expensive junk lobbed-off on American museums by money-bearing patrons.

BUT THE NEW IDEA of a museum—a place to bring the public in touch with the full range of present-day art activities—fails to interest most board members, and some are downright hostile to it. They provide only a meager budget for special exhibitions and teaching activities. So we generally get minor exhibitions and polite speakers who don’t say very much. When a hot controversialist (like architect Soriano, who spoke here last month) or an intelligent exhibition (like Art, Utility and You) turns up, the

board is apt to hear—and heed—swooning sounds from old ladies of both sexes who bring to a museum the fickle support that a crooner gets from his bobby-sockers.

From the point of view of the large minority of the public who want to catch up with the world in which they are living, the board of the Fine Arts Society should have more members who believe in stressing and finding for contemporary work of all schools.

IF THE SOCIETY had not been relying so heavily on the elderly bobby-sockers, Dr. Reginald Poland, who did so much for the artistic development of the community, might have been persuaded to stay on as professional director of the Gallery. The board now has the problem of finding a successor who can manage Dr. Poland's trick of looking backward and forward at the same time. Since the public pays \$6,000 toward the salary for that job, and the society only \$2,000, perhaps the answer would be to split the job into co-directorships, one for art education, the other for acquisitions.

The art education man could serve the public interest at, say, \$5,000, independently of the acquisition man. The latter might be an international art authority, like Walter Pach, who should be glad to pick up two or three thousand dollars for recommending purchases, and lubricating donors, on a part-time basis.

The time is past when the citizenry should accept—and help pay for—a Gallery policy that subordinates living values to embalmed ones.

January 5, 1951, Point Newsweekly, **The Fine Arts**, 11, by James Britton

The people of Old Town are a mixed-up bunch, artistically—good, bad and indifferent, with the latter prevailing as in any other community. Four years ago the city sank a chunk of money for the services of Charles Eliot, famed city planner. He prepared something which, if followed, might gradually make historic Old Town into a charm spot rivaling Williamsburg, Va., as a tourist attraction.

But the plan has not been followed. Instead, some men of little vision, who can't see the dollars for the dimes, discouraged the City Planning Commission from exercising its legal right of architectural control over the area. So today eyesores flourish there like a setting or the Grapes of Wrath or Tobacco Road, Shanty Town.

NOW THE STATE HIGHWAY Department comes along with a smart new office building to displace the biggest shanty of them all, the old Olive Factory. And the men of little vision kick up a fuss. Along with some sincere supporters of the Eliot Plan, they have been writing letters to the governor, please, could they have some Spanish frosting on the new building (Recipe for Spanish frosting: hot and heavy red tile, where it shows, wavy stucco, with a scattering of arty plaster, cracks if desired.)

C. J. Paderewski, able local architect, who worked out the design with the State Division of Architects, points out that a modern building is both cheaper and more efficient than one that makes a serious try at being Spanish. Now that the plans are nearly complete, Paderewski says, it would cost about 15 percent more to reprocess the exterior. Even skimpy Spanish frosting costs money, though it only cheapens the appearance of an honest building.

If the ill-timed opposition continues, the building may not get started for many years, according to Edward E. Wallace, district engineer for State Highways. The question is whether Old Town wants to live with the authentic shambles of the olive factory or replace it with a clean workable building whose chief beauty will come from the well-tended landscaping that usually surrounds state buildings. Which is better for business? Which will serve better to set off the cozy reconstructed casas around the village green?

IF OLD TOWN'S Chamber of Commerce is really serious about lifting its collective face, a cheap and effective first move would be to post an award for suggestions on tidying up the hideous scramble of painted signs in the province. San Diego has many well-trained commercial artists who could

work out appropriate and consistent standards for lettering, color, etc. Their advice, if followed, would go a long way toward curing Old Town of its shanty town look.

That's my opinion. What's yours?

January 12, 1951, Point Newsweekly, **the fine arts**, 12, by James Britton

Did the Three Wise Men, after going through the desert, and Mary in the stable, after going through childbirth, look like freshly-painted department store manikins?

The "recreation" of the Nativity at San Diego's new Christmas Center used \$2,500 worth of figures made by Rudy Vargas of Los Angeles, brother of the Esquire cheesecake limner. Rudy decorated many churches in his native Mexico before shipping into the manikin mill of the California Display Co.

As a rule, Mexican religious art is far better than American. It is not made and sold wholesale, and the artist's devotion is not distracted by regular pay checks. So, probably with Rudy Vargas' Mexican work. But these Americanized figures of his were neither realistic nor expressive of religious mystery. They were, in this writer's opinion, abstract art of the lowest possible order—made up of clichés and conventions which have lost their meaning.

LEYON G. RANDALL, stormy president of the Southwest Artists' Ass'n. , thinks differently. He pointed out that the public seemed well pleased by the display.

"But it would be a good idea to give commissions like that to local artists when possible," said Randall, prompting the thought that the students of Donal Hord or Jean Charlot could have given us something pretty special. (Charlot, who taught at the Fine Arts Gallery last summer, is a leader in the Liturgical Arts Society which is trying to breathe new life into church art.)

Our morbid eye also noticed that the garnishing of the entrance pavilion at the Civic Center gave it a spooky resemblance to the God-masks found around the portals in Mayan architecture. Has Uitzilopochtli (just whistle the Aztec God of Atomic Energy) returned to exterminate Christian civilization four centuries after Christian civilization did the same thing to his people?

PUBLIC ART always is loaded with symbolism, positive or negative, as any admiral named Standley ____ . Its tricky stuff, not easily controlled by a design committee set up by the C. of C. A permanent Municipal Art Commission is called for in the current Magazine. San Diego should be expected to accentuate the positive. The Chamber deserves applause, however, for trying to commercialize the Christmas observance, and digging up \$12,000 to pay for it. And they showed good sense in using trees that had been struck by lightning and wouldn't live anyway.

It that's symbolism, make the most of it. And then see what you can do with the fact that the soil at the Civic Center is too sour to nourish the trees which the Chamber would have preferred.

January 19, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 14, **the fine arts**—Surrealism at State College

Journal alumni may remember a merry-round-robin in Readers' Editorials wherein Alice R. Johnson and I vied to define surrealism.

Mrs. Johnson thought art teaching in the public schools was twisting children's minds. I pointed out that we all grew up on such surrealist creations as fairy tales, comic strips and Disney movies, and that art teaching may help tell sound ideas from phony ones.

NOW IS THE TIME to drop everything and rush out to State College if you really want to know what surrealism is all about, or even if you just want to scoff at it. Jean Swiggett, of the Art Department, has set up an exhibit of 200 reproductions from books and magazines, covering six centuries of surrealism. He has lined up well-informed members of the faculty to give noontime talks on the subject from various

angles. Dr. Ernest Wolf, literature, and Dr. Elizabeth Brown, psychology, already have been heard; upcoming are Edith Sitwell in recorded poems Feb. 6; George Sorenson, music Feb. 8; and surrealist films Feb. 13. The public, if any, is welcome. An evening program of films may come later.

The exhibit is a stunning example of what Andre Malraux (author of best-selling “Man’s Fate”) calls “the museum without walls” in his \$25 non best-selling “Psychology of Art.” What Malraux means is that reproductions nowadays are so numerous that anyone who takes the trouble can assemble a complete background for any idea in which he may be interested—something not possible in previous centuries. As Prof. Everett G. Jackson, head of State’s Art Department, puts it: “This means that democracy has finally come to the art world.”

PERHAPS THE REASON the sincere modern artist makes so many mistakes is that he can make so many choices. Insight doesn’t come easy to him, anymore than it does to the citizen facing a modern ballot. At least he keeps trying, which can’t be said always of the people who “don’t know much about art, but know what I like.”

Included in the show are 16 original surrealist works from the collection of William N. Copley, a distant brother of the publisher. You’ll get a kick out of the one made solely from a cast-off rubber heel (an item of footgear worn in other parts of the country.)

January 26, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 14, **the fine arts**—WANTED \$1000

Every now and then POINT’S struggling competitor, the Copley press, bursts into rapture about San Diego County’s importance as an art center. For instance, the Union offered this information on Jan. 4:

“ . . . The back country between Carlsbad-Oceanside and Escondido . . . may be destined to become the Tuscany of America, with Carlsbad as a 20th century Florence. Here you find a colony of painters with international reputations.”

I search the current show of the San Diego Art Guild at the Fine Arts Gallery for signs of this home-grown Renaissance. As the biggest show of the year locally, this one should be a trustworthy index of our art activity. But it isn’t. The only Carlsbad entrant is a well-trained refugee from prim Philadelphia, Mildred Miller. If you like off-color jokes, don’t fail to see her picture which tells a racy little story about a baboon and a lady—a story worthy of Giovanni Boccaccio, who was himself a son of Florence, though illegitimate.

THERE MAY BE a whole colony of legitimate sons of Florence in the Carlsbad back country, but they certainly haven’t bothered to join the Art Guild. Chances are most of the painters up there are illustrators who paint what the market demands, or part-time amateurs who paint for pleasure and relaxation. Most such people could not pass the Guild’s newly stiffened membership standards, which require evidence of, at least, a striving toward freshness of viewpoint or depth of understanding—without which there is no creative art.

The southern half of the county doesn’t come off with soaring colors either. Many of the better artists sent in less than their best, because there was no jury to screen out the lemons. Of the 100 works on display, only about 35 look good enough to pass even the kindest professional jury. And only about a dozen show anything like creative originality.

An informed tourist wandering into the Gallery this month might well conclude that San Diego’s average output of art is the poorest of all cities near its size. This setback to local tourism could be changed in the course of a single year if some of our civic boosters would come forward with an adequate prize fund, say \$1,000 or so. Then the Guild’s next juried show would swarm with master painters from the far-away hills—in addition to local ones—and we’d have a nationally recognized art event, a first-rate tourist attraction to repay the donors.

WHILE LETTING its step-child, the Art Guild, flounder as above, the Fine Arts Society does itself up proud this month in announcing a new hoard of 38 old pictures. The Union, in breaking the news, loosely tags them all masterpieces. After checking with the experts, I'll report whether the Gallery is really batting 1000.

February – March 1951, Magazine San Diego, 14-15, 30, 261, **Soriano Started Something**

Five San Diego architects are stimulated by that lecture that shook the Gallery to look for what is good in art; by tape-recorder, we listen in.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The now-famous lecture by the enfant terrible of modern architecture, Raphael Soriano, at the Fine Arts Gallery, was heard in late November by an audience that is still trying to recover from the shock. Advertised by the gallery as a talk on modern architecture, furniture and art, the speech broke like a storm over every phase of contemporary American life. People who neglected to put firm foundations under their art opinions found them collapsed or blown away.

Soriano started his talk by whipping out a vivid orange necktie he had received as a gift and complaining because the beautiful simple weave had been loused up with an "appliqué" of metallic thread. He then proceeded to rip it out, with great flourish, on the spot. Having thus established the mood, he ripped on through the night clawing verbally at women's hats and dresses, San Diego's plans for a public library, "old master" paintings ("spit on them," he said) and, to the surprise and chagrin of many avant-garde artists in the audience, many modern paintings, sculptures, and buildings. A large part of this four-hour harangue was dominated by a raucous phonograph, which was supposed to show the audience the difference between good and bad music.

After the storm had passed, there was much assessing of its effects by professionals and the general public. It was evident, despite the clumsiness of the speech, that even top local exponents of the arts had been stimulated to review their basis positions. Accordingly, Magazine San Diego set out to get a cross section of professional opinion on the talk. James Britton, who has written several articles for us, brought together in his Mission Hills home, five of the city's most careful observers of the art scene, who had heard the lecture and tape-recorded the conversation. Here it is, with just enough editing to improve the flow. Participating are Ethel Ilan, painter, Bruno David Ussher, music and drama critic, Lloyd Ruocco, architect, Dan Dickey, painter and teacher, and William Davis, designer.

BRITTON: Lloyd, you're an architect, and Soriano's an architect, so perhaps you're in the best position of any of us to make out what he's up to. What was he trying to do in that lecture the other night at the Fine Arts Gallery—teach us or torture us?

RUOCCO: To me, the whole problem in this lecture is what does Soriano have in mind as a vision of society? Answer that, and then the parts mean something. You have to chop down the woods before you can see the plain upon which to build the new garden—and that's what he was doing. There's all kinds of muddle around here—all kinds of old buildings and junk and untended bushes and weeds that have accumulated and just got ingrown. And he, being a young-minded man and not having belonged to all that culture—or having it belong to him—comes in and knocks it all down first. He doesn't care for it; push it back, and now let's see what we can do. After all, suppose we didn't do anything—in things—but we have our vitality, our minds and the culture that's felt in our minds up to this point. We could start right out and do things afresh, and it would be good tonic for us.

BRITTON: Then Soriano's lecture tries to force our thinking about the arts back on the first principles. Like Plato, he seems to regard most art activity as mere image-making and shadow-play. Plato made the almost Freudian observation that we get in the habit of having our emotions played on by one or another artistic device, we get in the habit of living with shadows—we all keep rabbits named Harvey.

DAVIS: That last sounds like pure Britton.

BRITTON: If it's Britton, it can't be pure. What I'm trying to say is that the way it is today with the radio and the movies—and that unmentionable with the tall antenna—our mental energy and attention are drained. We have no energy left to focus on these rough but vital ideas which Soriano is throwing at us. The public generally cannot follow him because they're not in the habit. The layman is lying down with his dreams—like the opium eater. Do not disturb.

RUOCCO: I think the handling of his talk suffered from the things he advocated against in other forms of art. After all, to talk to a group is in itself an art. But I know that Mr. Soriano is intensely busy. He lives in the town of Los Angeles without driving a car, which adds to his confusion. And the buildings he designs he can't get built satisfactorily by the current run of contractors up there—so he supervises them personally and in great detail. All these things lead up to the fact that he has little time to prepare for such a talk. On top of that he is so positive-minded.

DICKEY: Opinionated.

RUOCCO:—or let us say he has such a stream of vitality in him that he is not unduly conscious of other people around him. That's the way it is.

BRITTON: A typical creative artist annoying everyone—including himself.

USSHER: I don't mind his being annoying, but I think he made too many misstatements—or sweeping statements. He passed too many judgments without citing the evidence, and—as far as music is concerned—it seems to me that he mixed up personal liking with appreciation or analysis—though he doesn't allow personal feelings.

RUOCCO: Yes. Many might think that there was no more to his criticism than: "I don't like it. It's no good. Throw it away."

DICKEY: I'm sure he made a number of misstatements of fact, and treated a number of first-rate artists like Frank Lloyd Wright, Paul Klee and Picasso unfairly. Yet his remarks about them—while annoying and of little factual value—had the very useful effect of contradicting some long-cherished and possibly sleazy opinions held by members of his audience. Sacred cows got herded off to slaughter—and as for myself, I was socked hard right where I live. But that's good!

IHAN: Yet a lot of people went away just plain angry or disgusted.

RUOCCO: It was his technique as a lecturer that aroused us. I read a very brilliant book not long ago by the great French architect, Le Corbusier. He had a very deft touch—he'd come up, pat us on the back and say what nice people we Americans are and how fine we are doing. Then he'd sock us under the chin in the next sentence and lay us out. And, of course, both the pat and the blow are right. He would lead us along—build us up. We'd think he was right there, maybe he's right here, and so on. But when you're only cut down, you hate all of it.

DICKEY: I consider Soriano my benefactor in socking me. The net result was that I returned to my cubicle and submitted myself and my frame of values on art, science and life to a rigid examination, and asked myself some severely pertinent questions. That's good, even if it should mean burning my work.

IHAN: I wondered if some of the painters I saw in the audience thought of going home and burning their paintings. There'd been some regrettable losses. I've gotten a lot out of the many things they've done. Their work has pleased me, puzzled me—absorbed me for one reason or another. If pictures do that, they can't be said to have no function.

DICKEY: Soriano, it seems to me, came to us with the intention of performing the role of Siva (Hindu deity standing for the principle of destruction and reconstruction) and he only half performed it. Of course,

I feel the role of the Siva is extremely important—that a certain measure of destruction must take place before re-creation can take place—as Lloyd indicated so well. But Soriano got only as far as the destruction, and after he had worn everybody down to a nub—three hours or more—there wasn't much margin for the audience to receive the reconstruction if he had offered it.

BRITTON: With the audience in that weakened condition, he brought in Soriano's architecture to be admired—and not much else that he approved except a few high-tension towers and a nice new pig pen.

USSHER: Though I think Soriano threw off too much of what seemed only mental fireworks, I was glad to have heard him. I am sure he is honest. He believed what he says so vehemently. He is stimulating and I think the Fine Arts Gallery deserves thanks for bringing him. The overflow size of the audience proved that he is an artist-protagonist worth hearing now and then,

RUOCCO: I do think, though, the audience might have appreciated it more if he had struck closer to his own profession. He might have made a few slashes at painting and a few swipes at music—just to give yes and no in both cases—and then gone on into architecture.

BRITTON: Dr. Ussher, what about Soriano's treatment of music? You said he doesn't allow personal feelings. Can you give us some details on that?

USSHER: Soriano dismissed all music which was national or personal or individualized in feeling, and at the same time he held out very strongly for folk music as pure—in contrast to concert music. Yet folk all began essentially as individual expression, and definitely as expression of personal sentiment which has become universal. He played—approvingly—music of Joaquin Des Pres, which he regarded as music without personal feeling—which I think is a misconception because it is definitely religious music. I think he assumed that because it is based on Gregorian chant, individual feeling is completely absent. The same applies to Bach, which he also played approvingly. Bach's music today is recognized as personal expression. I believe that whether you like Negro art or whether you like so-called abstract modern symphonic music, it's all a psychological reflex action stimulated by personal experience.

DAVIS: That's a good point. It's worth remembering that the modern artist has taken a lot of direct inspiration from the Africans—in many of the art forms: painting, sculpture and the dance, as well as music.

BRITTON: Which certainly shows that the basic language of art is universal. Apparently the basic thinking of critics has some common denominators too. I think Bruno Ussher sounds a lot like Plato.

USSHER: I think you generalize too far.

BRITTON: I admit that's a weakness of mine—but fortunately I'm armed with a book by that sturdy ghost. Let me read this little snatch from Plato's "Laws." The drama, of which music forms a part, is a mimic presentation of manners, with all variety of action and circumstances, enacted by performers who depend on characterization and impersonation." Can you think of a more up-to-date definition for a good movie? He goes on, "Music conceived in abstraction from the moral temper it presents is music with the soul of music gone." In other words, good music is always related to an idea. Isn't that about the same thing you were saying, Dr. Ussher?

USSHER: Practically.

BRITTON: Plato says good music partakes of soul, rather than imitating soul. "A man listening to good music finds himself, so to speak, in the music." One of his most brilliant strokes was to break down all human experience—all content of the universe—into three categories. The most important of these is ideas—basic ideas, basic forms, basic concepts. Then comes the practical application of the ideas—all the real things in the world, the real things of nature and the real things of man's making. And way down at the bottom of the list are those writers and painters and musicians who deal only in shadows and reflections—in copies no matter how elaborated—of the real things. Most such art to him is vulgar.

USSHER: I think Soriano's examples of bad music were chosen very extremely. I don't think the songs of Marlene Dietrich are to be regarded as music in the first place. Music in the Dietrich songs is purely incidental—purely a rhythmic or melodic line to which some verses or patter are attached.

BRITTON: Isn't patter a form of popular music—the kind of music Plato distrusted? Patter, soap opera, grand opera—aren't they all part of the same attempt to appeal to people's cruder emotions?

USSHER: Well, perhaps, basically—but I wouldn't lump grand opera into it. What I mean is if Soriano tries to establish a tenet or principle so severe that all music expressing personal feeling is impure, and takes on the one hand several such great artists as Bach, Joaquin Des Pres and such a great folklorists as Villa Lobos—then to bring in Marlene Dietrich is like bringing in someone from the slightly lunatic, very outer fringe. Qualitatively, Soriano made a very insignificant argument for any definition of good art. It may be successful entertainment which doesn't make it art at all.

NO ENTERTAINMENT ALLOWED

BRITTON: Of course, good art to him is as far as possible removed from entertainment in the common sense. For instance, in the picture-making field, his idea of a good painter is Mondrian, who has less content, less entertainment if you accept content as meaning entertainment.

USSHER: But I don't.

BRITTON: well, the story-telling content of a picture would be the entertainment of a picture—as far as the average looker is concerned.

USSHER: Oh, I see what you mean. Yes.

BRITTON: And in Mondrian there is none. It's Soriano's idea of art.

DAVIS: The common denominator between Mondrian and Soriano is geometry. The same thing would be true in music, where the abstract structure of a piece is what appeals to Soriano as an artist, though that sort of thing doesn't seem very entertaining to the layman.

USSHER: In the same way, I think he made the very sweeping statement that embellished or ornamented music is not good music. He talked strongly against what he calls "the appliqué," He generalizes. Now, if you take as embellished music of the 18th and 19th Century florid coloratura music of un-dramatic nonsense opera, so to speak—where the embellishment serves as an artificially developed means of showing off the technique of the singer with a superfluity of trills or grace notes of long figuration—then he is right. But there is a type of embellished music where the embellishment or ornamentation is very definitely an integral part of the form and the idea, as in Scarlatti or Mozart, where we speak of embellishment merely to distinguish between the finer means of expression and the basic melodic contour.

TO EMBELLISH . . . OR NOT?

RUOCCO: But at what point does embellishment begin in music? Music isn't like, say, a pan or a building. You can make basic building without knowing anything about art. You can be an engineer or a mechanic—and you can have a good building or a good pan.

BRITTON: A good pan is what Soriano made at the Gallery and a lot of people were sizzled in it.

DICKEY: For me, the question of embellishment—and appliqué—brings us face to face with an essential principle of any living organism—namely the principle of correlating parts to whole, with details always incorporated—never imposed. And a well-made work of art—whether a sonnet or a sonata or a painting or a building or even a pan—is as much a living organism as a well-made animal or plant. Any unincorporated embellishment is as unnecessary to its life as a wart, and possibly as fatal as a malignant tumor.

RUOCCO: But in building, there's always a definite point at which embellishment begins—or manipulation for artistic effects, no matter how subtle or how plain. In music, I don't see that same demarcation because music is always generated—right from the start—by an emotional need, not by any other need.

DAVIS: It seems to me that Soriano stressed rhythmic factors. You might say, perhaps, that rhythm is the most functional aspect of music, since it is the base from which most music operates—its most elemental form.

RUOCCO: Then it must have a function as part of a machine to accomplish something else—dancing, for instance. Then it's purely an instrument by which you accomplish dancing.

USSHER: But all music has sprung out of dance,

BRITTON: Why do you accomplish dancing? That, too, is embellishment.

RUOCCO: Yes. There you are.

BRITTON: In fact, if we ignored gadflies like Plato and Soriano, we could argue that the only value of any of the artists is embellishment or emotional satisfaction or amusement.

IHAN: I like to be amused. I'm amused, for instance, by Chagall's paintings with their subjective fairy tales—and lots of the music I like is romantic and emotional, like Brahms. I'm perfectly willing to have Soriano live without Chagall and Brahms, but as for myself—I'd rather not. And yet, anyway, my taste may change. In fact—it is changing—it is growing stronger—in the direction of objectivity. I'm sure that for lifetime enjoyment the simpler—more unified—in music and painting are more satisfying.

DAVIS: Simpler—more unified. Those are good words to describe the effects of really great works of art.

DICKEY: The work of composers like Bach or Bartok, or painters like Uccello, Miro or Picasso—or even an architect like Soriano—are simply operating organic wholes, but they are full of developed and vital complexities, like life itself. After all, art results from the specialized use of eyes and ears. So we may consider those organs themselves as valid embellishments incorporated in the human organization through the course of its evolution – by the good old reliable process of natural selection.

BRITTON: Just when I thought we could shake off the Greek mood, you complicate things by sounding like Aristotle. Maybe we'd better change the subject quick.

NOT FOR ME

USSHER: Well, didn't Soriano make the statement that all art which cannot be understood or liked instantaneously is not good art?

RUOCCO: By whom, though? There is always someone who can understand it, and there's always someone else who can like tripe.

BRITTON: It's typical of true creative artists to deliver quick, violent judgments against things, but that doesn't strengthen their own current convictions. Of course, the public indulges the same instinct—if you've ever watched them in a gallery of modern pictures.

USSHER: But, after all, is instantaneous liking of a work of art necessarily a particular merit? At that rate, Plato could be considered very inferior, because I defy anyone to understand him at first reading.

BRITTON: Plato's personal idea of good art was that it is essentially the same thing as philosophy—which might explain why the public has much trouble getting acquainted with advanced forms of art—or with Plato, for that matter.

RUOCCO: And yet Plato wasn't writing art. He wrote what he hoped was a practical thesis for a practical problem—trying to get people to live together handsomely.

DAVIS: Which should be an art—and plenty difficult.

BRITTON: That's just why a man like Plato is worth following until we run out of breath and drop by the wayside. And it's why a stout-hearted mental athlete like Soriano seems to be so close to Plato.

DICKEY: It strikes me that however much Soriano appears to resemble Plato—they are unlike in that Soriano inclines to more opinionated pontification, while Plato erects a fine framework of logic to support his premises. Yet there are certain instances where Plato too seems quite arbitrary and open to radical questioning. An example of this is his statement in "The Republic" that—as I remember it—"the introduction of a new kind of music must be shunned as imperiling the whole state since styles of music are never disturbed without affecting the most important political institutions." Foreshadows of the Third Reich!

BRITTON: Or the Soviet Committee on Arts, which isn't apt to approve a piece of music unless Stalin can whistle the tune. But Plato is full of double meanings. Maybe television would come under his idea of "a new kind of music." Many people today feel that teevee is capable of being a menace to democracy.

BRITTON: The big question hanging over this discussion seems to be whether there is a point at which life leaves off and art begins. Perhaps we are all agreed that the notion of such a separation is ridiculous—in the case of good art.

RUOCCO: What Mr. Soriano is interested in is where does art leave off because he thought we'd gone too far toward artiness. I think, though, at all times you have several kinds of people operating—including those who are interested in techniques and experiments, not necessarily in emotion. In other words, they are doing problems in their art. That's what Soriano is doing. That's what Mondrian did. Many, many experiments in painting have been going on in the last 50 years. And in architecture, too. Many of these experimenters wouldn't be considered artistic in the sense of the period before their time, because they didn't fill their work with emotionalism or pictorialism or picture-writing or anything else in the same way of content. They're just experimenting to see how they can manipulate life—or in architecture, how thin a column can be or what the appropriate spacing should be to make a mathematically simple—or logical—type of structure.

IRAN: How can we hope to live toward such high standards? You're talking about creative activity—which, of course—is what built this country—creative activity on the part of common people, not just highbrows. In the process there was always a lot of wasted effort, but it must seem to many people today that wasted efforts and misdirected activities have all but smothered the creative activities.

RUOCCO: The activity necessary on the part of everyone is to try to understand the age in which we live—and its varied forms of progress, its failings, its complexity, and above all its potential for providing not only a civilization of material plenty, but also one of intellectual and spiritual abundance. I have met very very few people who have ever thought much about just how utopian our living would be right today, with today's technology of science and art fully employed—and with today's timidity and cultural lag largely eliminated. We have everything except the imagination to see it, the courage to see it, the faith to believe in it and the will to do it. We have not yet sold ourselves on the thesis of living together handsomely, though our best thinkers sacrifice their energies to that end.

BRITTON: There are a number of recent books whose very titles show minds at work on your thesis. I don't know any better cure for that rutted feeling than to chew and digest such matter as "The Condition of Man" by Lewis Mumford; "The Next Development of Man" by Lancelot Whyte; "The Meeting of

East and West” by F.S. Northrop; “The Human Use of Human Beings” by Norton Weiner; “Ideas and Men” by Crane Brinton; “Man and the Modern World” by Julian Huxley.

February 16, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 14, **the fine arts** by James Britton

The Magnificent Yankee, Senior—Oliver Wendell Holmes—wrote in “The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table”: “The axis of the earth sticks out visibly through the center of each and every town and city.” It depends on what you take as the center. San Diego, being a special case, has two new centers where you can be caught up in the whirl of moving ideas, the Design Center and the Book Center.

DESIGN CENTER Fifth Avenue at Brookes Street, is the project—or projection—of Lloyd Ruocco, a sorcerer-architect who converts his clients’ prejudices into magical formulas for 20th century living. He and his equally spell-binding wife, Ilse, are convinced that the 20th century at its best is worth living in, and they refuse to live in any other. If you should ask them for a Chippendale chair, you’d very likely end up buying the chair Chippendale might have made if he were alive today. And you’d be proud of your conversion, too.

Design Center is a highly selective shop, marketing only honest designs in furniture, landscape and architecture. Organic-minded Ruocco seems to regard architecture as a spare bony linkage between the two basic aspects of man’s setting: landscape and furniture. Using glass as much as possible, he helps carry architecture toward its unbusinesslike goal: the best building is no building at all.

If the world is too much with you, and you have lost your peace of soul, take the cure at Fifth and Brookes. Design Center is a focus of strength, simplicity and straight-forwardness. Enter and regain your bearings.

BOOK CENTER is the project of Lafayette Young, III, who answers more comfortably to “Lafe.” Growing up in Des Moines, he soon put the tall corn behind him and struck out on extensive travels, developing his own broad education and expert collector’s sense of books. He is readily familiar with all the arts—indeed with many important artists, architects, musicians and suchlike odd-pots.

Lafe’s Book Center already has many items not generally available, in addition to the usual stables (best sellers). He plans to build his stock largely of enduring and exceptional works—all the way from 35-cent Pelicans to 3-figure first editions. He hopes they won’t endure too long on his shelves, and that’s where you come in.

There’s a well-established tradition that good bookshops shall look picturesque. This one inhabits a bulbous frame house left standing in the stream of “progress” at Fifth and Ash. Suitably cozy with a nice sidewalk alcove slated to get stalls in the Paris manner, it is already a lounge for intellectuals, even some frightening ones in beards. Lafe’s friends are full of ideas for art exhibitions, poetry readings, and just old-fashioned chair-warming on his premises. Chances are he’ll oblige them all, and still have a glad welcome for strangers, who just want to buy a book.

The promised evening of surrealism at the State College Art Department comes off February 13 at 8:00, Films, music and phosphorescent dancers. An eerie time will be had by all. Free.

February 23, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 14, **the fine arts**—YOU DON’T HAVE TO WRIGGLE

Little Egypt is a right improper name for San Diego. From the gob’s-eye view there is plenty of wriggling nakedness on sale here, and Little Egypt is the patron saint of wriggling nakedness. But there’s more to it than meets the gob’s eye.

Ancient Egypt besides being a stumbling block for American school kids, was a ribbon of isolated, even isolationist “civilization”—like the West Coast. Everything hung on the water supply. The people dabbled in the sun, and didn’t worry much about camel-raid attacks. They played with a fine frenzy the

game of “Heaven-on-Earth.” Their leaders were as materialistic as William Randolph Hearst, and took almost as many precautions to identify themselves with monuments that would outline their flesh.

Result: absolutely imperishable sculpture, something like Donal Hord’s. Hord is the Pacific Beach sculptor whose work in almost unworkable materials like jade and diorite had made him materially famous. Very likely it is the durability of Hord’s work that accounts for his popularity, both locally and nationally. A self-perpetuating outfit like the National Institute of Arts and Letters was surely influenced by that factor in electing Hord a member. Their publicity machinery spreads the word, duly echoed by newspapers that members are the “greatest living American artists”—though many members have turned out in the test of time to be second-rate.

ON “HORD DAY” last week in the Fine Arts Gallery, there appeared many people, among them publisher James Copley, who surely would have stayed away if we had, say, an Alexander Calder Day. (Calder—no member of the National Institute—is the American sculptor considered most significant by some European critics.

Hord himself is an unassuming, sincere workman. Life at Pacific Beach is just a long, hard grind for the determined sculptor, who is as much a slave to a block of stone as any Pharaoh-driven menial of the Old Kingdom. But he loves grind because it is of his own choosing. He can choose his own subjects too, and is not plagued by the narrowing compromises of portraiture. He often settles on such presumably timeless themes as Rising Sun, Descending Sun, Winter Rain, Summer Rain, and Thunder.

In treating the descending sun in sculpture, Hord must put over abstraction on the public. All one sees is a contorted human figure—wriggling nakedness—and this is so comforting that no one complains about the complete absence of the sun. Contrast that with the fate of Marcel Duchamp’s “Nude Descending a Stair,” where you get fine descending effect all right, but no familiar stair and no familiar nude. The public has been crying fraud on Duchamp for 40 years.

MANY ARTISTS blinded by the popular quality of Hord’s work, dismiss him as an academic. But their complain loses its sting when you reflect that this sculpture will be kicking around 1000 years hence or after the last atomic bomb has been exploded. Then it may speak to peaceful men of the struggle between man and the elements in the 20th Century and suggest at least the sculptor had faith that man was purposeful enough to win out.

Letters to **POINT**

Hey! Where did you dig up that guy Britton? His Fine Arts Column is the kind of long-hair prose us short-haired readers can understand. Jay Wempler

March 2, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 14, **the fine arts**—THOSE SUBDIVISIONS

Though many city planners, including our won Glenn Rick, have called attention to the insanity of jamming America’s target cities with more people, there is a real scramble on now to build at least 20,000 more housing units in San Diego. With luck most of this development will take place along the tablelands (including Kearney Mesa) north of Linda Vista, several miles from the bomb-worthy parts of town. Thus, the women and children, at least, will survive to mop up after the men.

Among the sloppiest of men are those realtors and “builders” who get in the habit of throwing down tightly-wadded subdivisions anywhere that suits their convenience. Despite the watchfulness of the City Planning Department, these people tend to make a senseless patchwork of the city, forcing schools, churches and shops onto makeshift sites because the quickest profit in a shelter-hungry time is getting there fustest with the mostest houses.

A FEW BUILDINGS, under the influence of architects, have learned they can make even greater profits by giving the people something more than a roofed-over plaster box. Carlos Tavares is the prime

example locally. His Clairmont layout is big enough (2,500 houses eventually) and well enough planned to give meaning to the slogan: "The Village Within A City," In fact, it is two villages.

The modern planning engineer's idea of a village is an area with enough children (750) for one elementary school, living within walking distance of a school. As set forth originally 22 years ago by Clarence Perry, this classic formula puts the school and other community facilities of a non-commercial nature at the center of a quarter square mile area, with all dangerous traffic streams directed around, instead of through the village. Shops are concentrated at the rim of the village, at major traffic intersections. (See cut).

Clairmont's southern half is amazingly close to this pattern, but the northern half, still in the planning stage, may find its school planted across a main highway from the houses. This is because the city owns some land so situated, and the path of least resistance is to use it rather than trading it for a better piece.

ONE INDEX to a builder's conscience is how he treats the Board of Education in its quest for school sites. Most subdivisions, including Fletcher and Cosgrove, usually operate on tracts so small that they can't be called to account for school sites, Tavares himself gets high marks for cooperation. On the other hand, E. J. Hubner, promoter of Redwood Village (about 900 houses) in East San Diego, hasn't yet absorbed the lesson Tavares found to be good business. Hubner told the teachers, in effect: "If you want any of my land for a school, you'll have to condemn it."

City Planner Rick, and his workhorse assistant Henry Haelsing, have laid out traffic arteries through Kearney Mesa in such a way as to permit orderly development of several human-scale villages along the Perry model. Whether the Federal government or private promoters do the operation, this fabulous stretch of landscape is going under the knife. Public interest in the art of city planning could prevent its becoming just another messed-up mesa.

March 9, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 11, **the fine arts**—THE ENCHANTED PLAZA

A favorite sport for lo these many seasons has been thinking up what to go with Horton Plaza. If you haven't yet taken sides, and if you're the kind that isn't satisfied with Father Horton's Shower Bath, what do you say for making it a grand showplace for the very best local talent in the visual arts—especially architecture, landscaping architecture, sculpture and ceramics?

Instead of tossing away maybe \$10,000 on a crummy cracker-box of an information booth ("it's only temporary") the city might pay that amount to our artists and architects, who together could dream up an enchanted garden that would eclipse Rockefeller Plaza as a tourist trap.

Actually, the San Diego Chapter of the AIA, offered to study the Plaza for City Manager Campbell, but in such a half-hearted way that nothing came of it. No doubt a swatch of green stuff would fan the architects' inspiration, but they could afford to pour their souls for free into a project that would advertise how architecture can bring enchantment to our daily affairs.

Landscaping also should be the last word. The Park Department's dull new plan might well be scrapped, and the architects allowed to choose fresh ideas geared to their overall conception. Commercial landscape architects presumably would outdo themselves for the honor.

It is the details that make a design come alive. Fine sculpture created hereabouts, like Donal Hord's immortal boulders, might be displayed on a rental basis, since the city cannot afford the prices that such works command. Similar provision might be made for a few exceptional paintings.

The ultimate magic could come from the use of original ceramics by San Diegans excelling in that work. This approach would do more credit to our Iberian heritage than the routine use of commercial tile. (One of the biggest tourist catchers in Brazil is a church, the outer walls of which are giant ceramic murals by the famous artist Portinari.)

THE WAY to wrap all this up in a tidy package is to pay some outside men of proven esthetic judgment (like Ernest Born, San Francisco art commissioner; Pietro Belluschi, Portland architect, or Dean Hudnut, of Harvard School of Architecture) to manage the thing in the form of a competition. Thus city fathers could harvest the credit for a triumph of civic pride, instead of branding San Diego with esthetic cowardice.

Hopeful note: City Manager Campbell has expressed himself as favoring properly run competitions to get the best results in civic architecture. He realizes that this procedure can bring much national notice to a city, and take away the curse of frontier mediocrity.

March 16, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 24, **the fine arts**—ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL—WHAT IT CAN DO FOR YOU

ARCHITECTURAL control is like figure control—most of us are all for it as long as we're not expected to practice it personally. City officials say that a majority of the people who know what it is approve of it. In those scattered patches of the city where it is now in effect, it was popular demand that brought it in the first place.

The reason for this support is that good looks in a real estate development or in a whole city pays off just as surely as in feminine form development. As applied in San Diego, AC (architectural control) empowers the Planning Commission to block the erection of eyesores which depreciate property values and make the city less attractive, less popular, less sought-after. In wartime, anything in a skirt gets by, but in peacetime appearance counts. AC is simply Appearance Control.

Current talk at Civic Center about outlawing AC is the result of a steady chorus of complaints from citizens who feel their building plans are being changed at the mere whim of officials. Two of the city attorney's bright young men, Douglas Deaper and Herman Landgraf, combed over AC for legal bugs and came up with the opinion that the city cannot legally block the building of eyesores unless it can show that they affect "the public health, safety, morals or general welfare." The city must set up hand and fast standards to guide officials who then may use the "police power."

IF SUCH STANDARDS are not set up, chances are City Council will heed the noisy minority and do away with AC. That would be in keeping with a recent trend of Council actions. Last month an ordinance was passed allowing business signs to overhang city streets, though it would be easy to show that they are a menace to safety (they sometimes fall on people), health (they addle the brain) and general welfare (they drive away the dollars of tourists who do not come here to wallow in the same mess they left at home.)

Last week a charter amendment proposal was passed reducing the qualifications for building inspector from structural engineer or architect "to civil engineer." (The civil engineers had made a noise.) When this reporter POINTed out that an architect usually knows more about building than a civil engineer, the harried Council quickly reinstated the word "architect" in the proposed amendment and City Manager Campbell spiked the rumor that he was tailoring the job to fit a friend of his with: "If it's true, I'd like to know him."

One of the court opinions quoted by Deaper and Landgraf says; ". . . The police power is capable of expansion to keep pace with the social, economic, moral and intellectual evolution of the human race." (Miller vs. Board of Public Works, 195 Cal 484.) Substitute "architecture" for "police power" in that quote, and you have a statement of what an enlightened city should be aiming for.

San Diego is now at the point where it may take the backward step of abandoning architectural control. We urge instead taking two steps forward by creating an Art Commission and giving the job of setting up standards not only to prevent eyesores but to encourage architectural progress, thus promoting the general welfare.

FOR A BELL-CLEAR idea of what architecture can mean to modern life, listen to the world-famous Richard Neutra at the San Diego Open Forum, Unitarian Church, this Sunday at 8.

March 23, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 12. **the fine arts**

HOTTEST NEWS of the century though it will not make (rather unmake) the front pages is that printing is on the way out. Until Gutenberg invented movable type about 500 years ago, the so-called fine arts (painting, sculpture, architecture) were the chief means of public education giving a monopoly of the mass mind to the king or bishop who could afford these expensive tools. Today pictures in the form of movies and television are regaining that power. Who will control it?

All over America, as in San Diego, parents are grumbling that their children can't read or write—and they blame the schools. A librarian says (in the February issue of :Tomorrow"): "Circulation of library books in New York City is down a million copies"—and blames television.

EDUCATORS thrown into a worried defensive position by developments like these, have banded together as the Joint Committee on Educational Television to pressure the FCC into setting aside a percentage of television channels for non-commercial, educational use only. Commercial telecasters fight this with the argument that educational material will go over best if it is slipped in among what they fondly believe are the "popular: programs of a commercial station. (The highest Hooperated radio programs only reach about one-fifth of set owners.)

Commercial people go in droves to conventions dealing with educational telecasting, seeking to embrace the teachers. It is not quite clear whether the latter are resisting the advances, flirting only, or falling in love. In San Diego, time was offered on KFMB-YV to the City Schools, but the schools can't afford receivers now—maybe later. The Speech Arts Department of State College concentrates on training aspirants for TV jobs. If there should be a big swing to commercial TV film production, as seems likely, State will adjust eagerly to that.

KEN JONES, Speech Arts Instructor at State, deplores the tendency of the mass media to do people's thinking for them. He argues that college-trained TV men will influence the industry toward more responsible use of its kingly power. Against this must be set the view of Burr Tilstrom, who feels that under present-day programming conditions no TV station would accept his widely-followed (and educational) program "Kukla, Fran and Ollie," if it were offered as an untried idea.

Some states are moving toward educational TV through stations operated by school systems and state colleges. California's legislature has never allowed even a college radio station—on the grounds it would compete with commercial outlets. City Schools Superintendent Crawford is reluctant to even discuss the subject. Yet Frieda Hennock, FCC Commissioner, who started the idea of educational channels, suggests that the tool of television, despite high initial costs, would reduce overall costs of education—that it would spread the good work of good teachers and lighten the load on less gifted ones. If her vision of making the public master of its own thought processes is to be fulfilled, she and the Joint Committee, will need your support in writing to offset the lobbying of the TV industry. Do you still know how to write?

March 30, 1951, Point Newsweekly, 12, **the fine arts**

I

DR. WILLIS MILLER, County Planning Director, has been called a lot of names recently—by people whose acres he has coveted. Hereby, POINT is probably the first to call him an artist. Not that he neglects his haircuts. On the surface he is reserved, business-like. But beneath there burns a steady devotion to the high principles of his craft—the mark of an artist, so help him.

His craft is geography. He learned it well—at UCLA and Chicago where he got his doctorate). He practiced it well—as research technician of the National Resources Planning Board, as chief technician of our State Planning Board (1937-42), and as teacher of naval airmen (1942-46).

Richard Neutra, famed architect member of the state board, says we are lucky to have such a man of such ability down here. Local acre-nursers, on the other hand, want him thrown out. Especially those who nurse the acres along the coastline between Torrey Pines and Carlsbad.

Miller wants as much as possible of the new Freeway 101 to hug the coastline so motorists will have an unimpeded view of the world's biggest tourist draw—the Unquarrelsome Ocean. He argues that water's edge freeway would be easier for fast travel and cheaper to build (except for land cost). Also it would both permit and encourage tourists to laze along on auxiliary lanes, with fine public beaches and landscaped parks to make the trip memorable.

Thus a goodly strip of the coast would return to its rightful owners, the U.S. citizenry as a whole, says Miller, and the coastal towns would expand eastward into the hills without traffic complications. (This would be very frustrating to those "citizens" whose great aim in life is to profit from congestion.)

Miller has not taken into account one prime psychological fact, too much of a good thing can be a headache. Thirty-one miles of ocean can burn the eyes and hypnotize the nerves. An inviting tour, like the inviting stage play, must have a variety of scene, change of pace—dips and jogs excepted.

One unexplored solution potentially acceptable all around would be to swing the freeway inland a few hundred feet at each of the five major towns and, by zoning and enlightened architectural control, create high-grade commercial touring facilities in the resulting pockets of coastland. The cultural buildings of the towns—museums, libraries, concert halls—could be planned there too, with all other factors of town life kept east of the freeway.

One member of the Highway Department Association (which supports Miller) said: "He should drop the 'Doctor' and change his name to Bill.

A more serious plea, that Miller, perhaps with the aid of the HAD, dramatize his splendid designs before the general public, and spell out unmistakably the advantages—including the financial advantages—of sound regional planning.

1952—POLK'S SAN DIEGO CITY DIRECTORY: Jas (Eliz) h. 3777 Albatross

May 2, 1952, Point, educators or educaterers! james britton on the living arts

THREE COLLEGE PRESIDENTS wrestled with the thought control problem last week in San Diego—Walter Hepner of State College, John Aseltine of San Diego Junior College and James Merrill of Good Hope College for Women. All three were under attack by self-appointed guardians of public morals. How each handled the crocodiles is instructive.

Let's look on Merrill first. He's only a character in a play, so of course we can observe his situation better than the others. The play is "Goodbye My Fancy" (at the Globe) and it's a pleasure to see even if you want to skip the message and settle for the comedy. The message involves Merrill's decision to show a realistic anti-war film to his students over the objections of his most important trustee.

The trustee, Claude Griswold, is the type who finds it hard to believe he's ever wrong because so many people tell him he's right. He says: "It's a good thing to make pictures about outlawing war as long as you're careful who you show them to . . . Life's tough enough . . . Let these kids have their years of fund . . ."

Merrill almost gives in. He rationalizes: "I have to run a college. That means I have to get money, endowments, buildings. So I've learned to compromise. I give in on smaller things here and there so I can win on larger ones. Suppose I fought Griswold . . . It would be a heroic gesture, but I'd be out of here tomorrow . . ."

Yet, in the end, through some telling twists of playcraft (including invention of the term “educaterer”), Merrill decides to show the film. The result is that many problems dissolve, and enlightenment radiates over everyone, including Griswold.

WALTER HEPNER, who retires this year as president of State College, is often criticized for catering to his board of advisors on “little things.” Certainly he has been noticeably successful in getting the “larger things” for his school—state funds, buildings. Many of his faculty feel he should be given credit for leaving them to their devices on academic matters. When the Drama Department planned to put on Arthur Koestler’s anti-Communist play, “Darkness at Noon,” Dr. Hepner reacted with distaste to some lines he considered smutty, but he left the decision on cuts to Director Ken Jones. Jones cut when he could without weakening the play, but the finished product was hardly calculated to please every mother’s son’s mother. Dr. Hepner has to screw on his most patient expression and waltz with a succession of yapping parents, persuadably the variety who hate to see their children grow up.

JOHN ASELTINE’S moment of test came also while his school was rehearsing a play. The play is “Pursuit of Happiness,” a Broadway hit of 1933 which uses the Colonial custom of “bundling” to show how the practical enterprise of sex—the pursuit of happiness—was carried on in the dry, cold climate of Puritanism. The suggestion that even Bible-cracking Puritans could “carry on” proved too much for some junior-headed students at Junior College. Instead of going to their president directly, the unhumored ones blatted to their elders who in turn called Mrs. Mildred Hale, school board member. Mrs. Hale called Dr. Aseltine, who saw immediately that the play was hardly designed as a public relations display piece for the city schools in a year when the hard-shelled bigots are snapping like mad. Thus was one of our most respectable and most human educators cast publicly in the role of seeming censor by a few unnamed Puritanical throwbacks.\

THE PLAYS THE THING wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the community. Broadway has long had a traveling salesman’s appetite for sex, and plays which were hits there often deserve trimming in the provinces. But most good plays also criticize or poke fun at commonly held habits of thought and action. That is the underlying reason for most complaints from the humorless fringe.

“Goodbye My Fancy” couldn’t have hit us with better timing. Congratulations to the Globe—our community theatre and guardian of our good humor.

March 26, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: A new birth of freedom (Norman Cousins)

Beneath photo of Fine Arts Gallery (not included in this collection). There is fire in the Fine Arts Gallery—lots of it. James Britton tells all about it in the accompanying article, a resumption of his critical reviews of the local scene which delighted Point readers in past years.

A sad, sackish-looking man, with a Hoody-Doody smile, skirting one of the keenest brains in America, held a San Diego audience in the palm of his blood-stained hand early this month. The program moderator later reported he had seen tears in the eyes of sobered citizens to whom Norman Cousins was selling the cause of the United World Federalists.

Blood figured mightily in the gripping talk. Cousins apologized for not being in good taste as he spoke of processing for identification the still warm bodies of two Americans killed near Taegu. In a world that has made Mickey Spillane a best-seller; Cousins might have skipped the part about good taste. It is doubtful whether less blunt reporting could have opened the tear ducts and the hearts of an oversized 1954 audience.

It may be that if Abraham Lincoln himself were among us, delivering for the first time his dignified Gettysburg Address—on TV of course—most people would switch to wrestling. Yet salesman Cousins, in direct spiritual descent from Lincoln, was carrying on the very much unfinished work to which Lincoln challenged us . . . “It is for us the living . . . to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us . . . that we take increased devotion . . . that we highly resolve . . . that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom . . . that this nation shall not perish . . . “

What has all this to do with a column on the arts? Just this: art in all its varieties is simply the way keen men strike their steel against the harsh materials of life and light beacon fires for the rest of us. Yes, art is a manly business, a lonely business, and you'd do better to look for sissies among the wrestle-watchers.

The beacon fire test is the one we intend to apply here. By that test a bit of jewelry made by a local craftsman might be seen to glow, or a historic painting, like Bosch's "Christ Taken Captive" (at the Fine Arts Gallery) will be seen to spotlight through centuries the struggle between the cruelty and the patience of man. By that test, the Gettysburg Address is a sublime work of art, and the dedicated writing and speaking—the selling—of Norman Cousins is beacon-lighting, too.

Cousins is editor of the Saturday Review, which has stretched in recent years from reviewing mainly books to reviewing all the works of the mind—the works of art, music, theatre, movies, TV, paintings, architecture, along with ethical and educational ideas.

The Review's new policy is striking evidence that art and life mean nothing if not taken together, that indeed art is the main business of life. The Lincoln-worthy magazine's circulation is painfully climbing, though still only 117,000 in a country of 155,000,000. Fortunately, it is well planted with advertising, that vital growth which keeps the topsoil of journalism from washing away.

Editor Cousins has a credo for magazines, "They must respond to values, create values and defend values . . . They must have clarity, curiosity, insight, incisiveness, integrity, good taste, good will, conviction, responsibility . . . They should reflect a sense of adventure and excitement about life."

The good editor says, "Honest sentiments, honest passions and honest indignations are among the highest expression of conscience . . . but cynicism is a waste of time. . . . Ideals are the main business of writers, but they mustn't leave out a sense of fun and humor.

If you want to square your thoughts as to the reasons for Point's existence, read the article by Alistair Cooke in the Saturday Review for March 13. Some paunchy lines: "I fear that there is at least one generation of Americans growing up that not only does not have much respect for diversity of opinion but doesn't know what it is. . . . It is an obviously unhealthy thing, and I should have thought very un-American, to have so many cities where there is only one newspaper or where the morning and evening newspaper are owned by the same company. . . . If our newspapers can remain diverse enough, and cherish even a cantankerous variety of opinion based on the same facts, then there is a good chance that we shall have the freedom to get off our knees in the year 2000 and feel that our enforced devotion to the century of the common man has not been, after all, a blind surrender of human individuality to the lowest common denominator . . ."

POINT, from its beginning as the brilliant idea of a group of men devoted to their city, has been a bold and very American answer to the flattening of minds going on about us, trying its best to measure the needs and achievements of the incredibly rich San Diego region as it grows. We gladly write out heads out for you. Do you love us, too? Well, then, let's have a new birth of freedom.

GOOD LISTENING: Two musical offerings of top quality last weekend made very clear some of the drawbacks of the Russ Auditorium. In this day of high-fidelity listeners much of the blame for poor attendance can be laid to the acoustics of the hall, which makes a gorgeous orchestra like the Los Angeles Philharmonic sound noisy if you sit down front and tubby if you sit toward the back. If you sit in the middle you get a noisy, tubby sound.

Architect George Hatch, a devoted patron of symphony, says, "It would cost an awful lot to make the Russ sound right. The board of education has tried, but the hall's just the wrong shape."

Still, some questions might be asked. Since it will be two years at least, and more likely ten, before we can build a better hall, should not the city spend whatever is needed to make Russ listenable?

After all, concert managers pay rent for the hall with its built-in listener repellents. And it wouldn't exactly hinder the educational work of the high school and junior college if the auditorium were improved.

ANOTHER drawback: the stage picture that a recital audience must share is about as uplifting as a Tijuana funeral parlor. Pianist Giles Bachauer is a handsome mate for the grand piano, and built along similar lines. She and a Steinway are an imposing picture, but all the Russ auditorium audience saw was a silhouette of the ensemble. Bad lighting. And either side of the silhouette, the eye could only fall on a baleful funerary bouquet bathed in green and magenta light. Bad taste. Sunday, 100 musicians were on the stage, but the thing you saw most was a dismal tenement blue backdrop. Just plain bad.

The answer is simple and cheap. Globe Theatre could advise on lighting, Fine Arts Gallery on colors and stage décor. Why not a hanging mobile by local designers? Why not glamorize the entrance, too, with redwood and colors? And amber lighting on the landscape?

Civic imagination plus a little civic action, please, and maybe the hall will start filling when musical genius braves the stage.

April 1951 thru January 1953, Magazine San Diego—no byline for James Britton

November-December 1953, Magazine San Diego, 26, 28-29. **THE CITY OBSERVED** (First signed column for Magazine San Diego)

This magazine's editor, who shares my passion for the fine art of city planning, has been after me to column my observations as San Diego goes about the heady business of growing to queen size among the world's cities. I tried to remain cool, but the passion won, so here I take my stand for a while to invite the spirits of true progress in this bulging corner of earth.

My qualifications? Only that I am an experienced social misfit, always trying to be different and to needle my neighbors . . . a full-time, well-adjusted malcontent . . . or, to pose briefly under a widely misunderstood sneer word, an artist. I'd be pleased if I could reflect in any degree the high, life-enhancing power of Americanism at its best. And in trying to make a useful page, I'd be grateful for any help offered by others.

I call city planning a fine art. I would suggest further that it is the very most significant of the fine arts, as well as the most difficult to practice. Indeed, in America today its practice is as difficult—and as urgent—as democracy itself. "The next America," to use the pregnant phrase of a good book by Lyman Bryson, must construct sounder, saner cities if it is to allow its people sounder, saner lives. City planning is an art not merely for specialists installed uneasily in civic centers, but for all men under the democratic sun.

Fantastic croppers

Queen city we may be and bulging, but does the bulging have to take place in the wrong places? Our biggest challenge is to disprove the stinging epigram of Frank Lloyd Masterbuilder Wright, who held that Southern California is the corner into which, if you tipped the continent up on edge, everything loose would roll.

Bulging, loose—or tight—or right—it is plain we are not doing all we might to insure and improve the quality of our wonderful region. I have been impressed by the talent and the good intentions among the planning personnel of the City and County, but I have been impressed also by the fantastic croppers to which come some of their best-laid plans. Some observers would explain that as the righteous

triumph of the people's will. Others might suspect that civically we are not much ahead of the bearded hermits, the feuding Hatfields and McCoys of the Appalachian hills.

“Make no little plans”

If most of us limit our city planning participation to tending private gardens, there are some among us who overflow with public spirit. William Shea, lieutenant of the only man muscular enough to publish a daily newspaper in San Diego, told the realty association several years ago that the papers and the realtors, together with a few other enterprises, control the future of San Diego. That might be a realist view, for it is often true that dynamic business operators are the elements in a community most likely to get things done. The laws of business expansion, however, do not guarantee a sounder, saner city. Informed interested citizens are the key.

“The long view” is the first law of city planning. “Make no little plans,” is the challenge that has rung through the decades since it was pronounced by Chicago's giant Daniel Burnham, design chief of the '93 World's Fair.

Let us practice the long view by focusing a few paragraphs on the fretted question of public buildings. Some scattered ones have been built here recently, but the future will bring more. San Diego architects, in union assembled, called last Summer for reconsideration of the politically poisonous subject of grouping such buildings. The Chamber of Commerce, which gives thoughtful study to city planning, has taken up the call. But the politicians twitch uneasily as they remember past failures along this line.

It is part of the critic's job to come up with constructive suggestions. Here, then, for the kicking-around, are my own specific—and independent—ideas on grouping public buildings.

Ground plan for date

As you may have noticed, Date Street grades gently downhill in a series of Bunyan-size steps from Balboa Park to the bay. Date Street also happens to be marked on the city's official master plan for reconversion into a freeway linking Highway 101 with a number of main arteries radiating north, south and east. Obviously, when that freeway link is built, its immediate neighborhood will be the region's most convenient area to reach from all directions. If there is to be any grouping of public buildings, the logic of the landscape screams, “Here!”

But, wait. This is an obsolescent area with plenty of small landowners who don't want to be budgeted . . . for one reason or another, fond memories, profits of congestion, or just force of habit.

Fortunately, large chunks of the area are owned by such agencies of moral leadership as the Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church, Baptists, Unitarians and Masons. If these would get behind a grand plan for the area—and I suggest it is their “moral duty” to think about it, there would be a real chance of carrying the cause at the polls and achieving an impressive center worthy of a major city in the next America.

Consider the possibilities of a grand plan. Imagine the Date freeway flowing gracefully from an interchange north of the Civic Center over or under the railroad, and the main north-south streets (6th, 5th, 1st, State, etc.). It need not follow a straight line but could swerve to meet property considerations and to give a better setting for important buildings now up along the route. Visualize various government buildings (the very best architecture, of courses) set back spaciously from the freeway. Visualize, too, the existing churches with the clutter now around them replaced by serene landscaping.

A grand plan need not, should not, be linked to public buildings. The main idea should be an architectural parade ground (like snatches of Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles), quickening to the spirit of resident and tourist alike. Churches, business buildings, big stores, hotels, whatever . . . provided only that they meet very high standards of planning as to parking, landscaping, esthetics and convenience. The aim should be an oasis of soundness and sanity, countering the present drift of confusion.

The land either side of Date Street is especially well-adapted to large scale parking arrangements. The step-like terrain favors basement parking under buildings or open lots set inconspicuously below street level. (The Date Freeway, even as now planned, will have many access roads.)

Ash to Fir public zone?

It seems to me that our valiant if unloved Planning Commission should define a zone on both sides of Date Street, perhaps as far south as Ash (or Beach anyway) and north to Fir (west to Civic Center, east to the park), in which all future public buildings would be located; with surplus streets within the rectangle marked for eventual closing as through streets, their vast acreage being put to more useful service as broad planning required. The commission could announce desirable standards for all private improvements, and try to get public approval of such a zone.

With or without the initiative of the Planning Commission, the architects could stir public interest by designing a good sized model making use of the ideas present here, or any better ones that may come forward. Art classes of the public schools and colleges could construct the model, which could be exhibited through numerous public-spirited organizations.

Surely, somewhere in the area described above, it would be possible to locate such handy items as a convention hall (6th and Beach, maybe?), an opera house (6th and Fir?) and a court house (4th and Ash?) in a way that would gain wide acceptance. In this scheme, by the way, Ash might remain a two-way street, with Date Freeway taking the through traffic.

True, my outline arouses memories of the Cedar Street Mall, which was defeated at the polls. But the Cedar Street plan was not conceived realistically or flexibly enough. It was associated too much in the public mind with the old-fashioned custom of walking, and it was all government.

By transposing from Cedar to Date, planning for motorized man as well as the vanishing pedestrian, and acknowledging the equal dignity of church, business and government, we might be able to lift the curse of confusion from the heart of town, fashioning as we go a unique crown fit for an American queen city.

Is it worth a try?

1953-54—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: no entry for James Britton

Britton, Eliz. B. (Mrs.) ofc. Secr. City Schools, h. 3777 Albatross

January-February 1954, Magazine San Diego, **THE CITY OBSERVED**: San Diego's Public Art

An up and coming city should have public buildings that are inspiring examples of architecture at its best. How does San Diego rate in this respect?

Thirty-eight years ago the then tiny city was seized with a mighty fit of inspiration and hired one of the country's most creative artists in architecture, Bertram Goodhue, to design the principle buildings for the exposition of 1915. Those buildings proudly stretched along The Prado (Laurel Street) in Balboa Park, are still today far and away the handsomest eyeful the city has to offer.

Nothing built since then in the public's name rivals Goodhue's masterwork in grandeur of scale or loftiness of spirit. As to grandness of scale, Goodhue had the advantage that much of the structures was temporary and therefore cheaply built. As to loftiness of spirit, Goodhue's legacy has so entered the hearts of San Diegans that they have clung for dear life to the temporary buildings, fondly patching and painting what has become the chief hallmark of the cities widely advertised excellence.

Let it not be said that the public generally has no appreciation of fine architectural effects. Who can travel up Park Boulevard past the San Diego High School (see cut) without feeling pride and satisfaction in the grand sweep of lawn crowned by ivy-clad buildings which in themselves are not much, but in relationship to their well-tended setting are the stuff rich memories are made of? This high school's placement in the broad of lawns with trees is the model of how San Diego's future public buildings should be planned.

Landscape not everything

Landscape, however, should not be relied on to take the place of good design in architecture. It is possible to put up buildings so ill-composed that they are as offensive as billboards on the landscape. The new war-memorial building on Park Boulevard near Morley Drive is such a building. Seen from a distance, across its great lawn, it is not more impressive, but only larger than the many dull stucco houses in San Diego's drearier subdivisions.

On the other hand, design gimmicks cannot be relied on to take the place of landscaping to create spirit-lifting architecture. In the case of San Diego's new public library (E and Eighth Streets—see cut) the architects, faced by a ridiculous site problem which forced their building to the sidewalk's edge, overloaded the carcass with ostentatious materials in the manner of the store-front trade. Result: the building starts life like a lady of the streets fighting for the passerby's attention with tinted hair, high rouge, loud jewelry, and clashing costume. Vanished is the architect's wistful intention to relate the library to the "Federal Style" Post Office across the street—the relationship is about as close as Mae West to Calvin Coolidge.

If the library architects had not been trying so hard to overcome the blight of site, they might have left the rough concrete wall in the raw with form-board marks. (The perfect lesson in this connection is the Los Angeles County Museum; the main bulk of the building—form-marked concrete—is wonderfully rich while the entrance pavilion is sterile as a tomb, "finished with stucco and travertine.")

Still casing the library, we find a lingering trace of San Diego's penchant for Spanish architecture in the form of brownish tile window surrounds and water table, ill-related in color to a red-orange tile used to sheath some columns. This suggests the question of why San Diego architects don't try to incorporate original work by the town's remarkable group of ceramists and enamellists, as a salute to the Spanish heritage of tilework.

An attempt has been made to break the boxiness of the building by masking the front with very busy stonework. As masonry, this is characterless, but its most disastrous effect is to overwhelm and imprison the relief murals modeled by Donal Hord.

Since Mr. Hord is the holder of the 1953 Fine Arts Medal of the American Institute of Architects, one might expect a world-beating result when he gets together with his hometown architects. The best that can be said in this case is that the architects should be credited for employing him but discredited for imprisoning him. His figure groups are placed too high to be seen comfortably from the library sidewalk, and will only be noticed from the post office steps. Anyone who knows Donal Hord and his deep immersion in the values of the Southwest, its Spanish heritage and its Oriental shadow, will wish him a better break time.

If my comments seem unduly harsh, please reflect that diabetes cannot be fought with sugar. It is necessary to speak out for the record when the character of San Diego's building projects is not worthy of a city trying to grow great. Because of our peculiar reliance on tourism as an industry, among other reasons, we should have nothing but the best public architecture the country can produce. Every public building we put up should be so good that one of the nation's four architectural magazines would want to publish it with approval. I am afraid this will not happen with the library, but if it should, I will gladly see that the coverage is reprinted in this space.

Fumbled opportunity

The same applies to the State Division of Highways building on Taylor Street in Old San Diego. Here was an opportunity to set a tone around which an architectural rebirth of the historic old town might develop. Here, as with the library, the chance was muffed of doing something fresh in a contemporary spirit that would compliment [sic] and carry forth of the Spanish heritage. I do not mean a fringe of red roof-tile such as some old towners would settle for. Rather, the cure could be found in present-day Brazil or Mexico where wonderful things are being done with, for example, ceramic murals on exteriors.

The able architects of the Highway building (Paderewski, Mitchell and Dean) are very well liked as school designers in particular. No doubt both his building and the library (Johnson, Hatch and Wulff) have many attributes of usefulness which reflect the skill of the architects. In this article, we are considering only the external visual impact of the buildings, and the architects should not be considered below average because of failure in what might be called the art phase of architecture—presently the most neglected phase of all, but everlastingly the most important.

The most apparent fault in the visual impact of the Highways building is a feeble color scheme of pistachio and strawberry, plus two colors of brick. Here again is a building that might better have been left in the raw concrete. Look at this building from the rear through the old trees left standing at the southeast corner of the block. It is a good test: a building that looks unpleasant seen through a frame of trees should have its face-lifted.

The brickwork is particularly unfortunate. In the first place, stack bonding may be justifiable as an interior decorator's device, but it defies gravity and sanity of large exterior stretches. Besides, it must be laid with perfect finesse or it looks mangy, as here. Perhaps the most astonishing thing about the basketweave of brick over the entrance is that it came about because the builders ran out of brick and when they got more it was a different color. Something had to be done, so someone thought of pleats. Another unfortunate but overpowering detail: the whole composition is accidentally dominated by the rounded form of a ventilating funnel above the entrance.

It is a pleasure to turn for a moment to a new public building that inspires sweeter thoughts. The Education Center on Park Boulevard strikes the eye as a well thought-out, unified concept, even. Here colored stucco has been used successfully—just one color, a strong terra cotta—and here also raw form-marked concrete has been used to very good advantage in the window overhangs. The overhangs are the dominant feature of the design, tying the composition together.

It is a remarkable fact, as evidenced by this building, that simplicity and good proportions can produce satisfying architecture, just as did the elaborations of Bertram Goodhue in Balboa Park. Especially so when landscape is wisely considered as it was in the Education Center. This is our best recent public building, Architect Clyde Hufbauer.

The drift of San Diego public architecture to date can be counteracted by holding national competitions for future projects, to smoke out architects who are passionately devoted to the art phases of architecture. In some cases, local architects might grasp the problem well enough to win such competitions. This was how it was with Bertram Goodhue, who remains after 38 years our best example in these matters.

EDITORS NOTE: The barbed prose of Britton attacking the art of several local architects is bound to stir up some counter-charges and defense. Magazine San Diego has already received a ringing letter from one of the architects involved and it herewith invites all others to use its columns for reply. Watch for it, in the March-April issue.

March-April 1954, Magazine San Diego, **THE CITY OBSERVED**

How well do our city officials understand their jobs? How wide awake are they? What do they read? Will they read Richard Neutra's new book, "Survival Through Design?" If they do, they may develop a more adequate sense of what is needed so that the city of the future will serve properly the public health, safety and welfare.

Health, safety and welfare are the key words used to define legally the right of municipal officers to regulate the ways in which citizens may jump on each other. Fearful of lawsuits, city officials are not inclined to stretch those words any further than public opinion demands, even though they know they are letting many things happen that are very much against public health, safety and welfare.

Richard Neutra, though, can explore the full implications of those words because he is a free-thinking American in the best tradition of inventive progress, seeking ways out for a humanity caught in the dreadmill of too much machinery.

It is generally understood that Neutra's field is architecture, but that word doesn't mean much in his case. For, reading Neutra, one becomes aware that architecture (building—well done) is only possible anymore when the human mind has wrestled successfully with a tangled and mighty chain of social factors. And, because this is so, significant design involves buildings (cities, in a word) more than just buildings themselves.

Therefore, the men who lay out the patterns of our cities must have designers' minds. Or at least they must pay attention to designing minds of the first order, like Neutra's, and employ them where possible. In that connection, be it noted with credit, City Manager Campbell recently invited Neutra to advise the City's Auditorium Committee—with beneficial results. Congratulations! Let's have more of that.

“Survival Through Design” is a subtle title, typical of Neutra's organic thought process. In place of design, read the synonym “intention,” and the meaning becomes even clearer—survival through intention. The ghastly alternative, of course, is extinction of the race—through bad intention or lack of intention through bad design or lack of design.

Preference for humans

The word “intention,” by the way, comes from the Latin meaning to stretch. The extraordinary stretch, or intention or design that Neutra gives to the concept of health, safety and welfare is best suggested by quotes from his book:

“Every city is a complex of solid and liquid bodies, teeming with several populations. The two most prominent are the human and, perhaps, the bacterial populations. There are, however, several others: entomological (bugs and termites), lower mammalian (rats, cats, dogs), vegetative (from lichens in basements to boulevard greens and a few trees in lucky backyards). In order to achieve a successful symbiosis—an ecological balance, a productive living together of ‘desirable’ elements, always with a marked preference for humans—large-scale planning must be applied.

“The adjustment of human beings to man-made environment is a much more complicated process than biological adjustment to a natural habitat. It is a process involving rapid readjustments; new frictions are continuously produced, and efforts are eventually made to alleviate them . . . Every new technological invention results in urgent new demands on the human nervous equipment.

“Through a tedious learning process, this nervous apparatus, naturally limited in scope and speed, tends to approach again and again a balance of the bearable; but we have it ever more in our power to change our physical surroundings and to step up once more the multitude of stimuli.

“We know all this from suffering under an avalanche of unassorted, so-called progress. Harsh neon signs, for example, in certain technically limited color combinations are splashed all over a commercial street. Their quick succession as we pass them in a fast-moving motor-driven vehicle would have been terrifying to people even one short generation ago. They may be nerve-wrecking to us, whether we know it or not.

“It has become imperative that in designing our physical environment, we should continually raise the fundamental question of survival, in the broadest sense of this term. Any design that impairs and

imposes excessive strain on the natural human equipment should be eliminated, or modified in accordance with our nervous—and more generally – our total physiological functioning. This principle is our only operational criterion in judging design or any detail of man-made environment, regardless of how difficult it may seem to apply the principle in specific cases.”

It is fascinating to watch this wonderfully wise and witty master unfold his reasoning, whether in spoken or written form. In a recent conversation, I questioned whether Los Angeles could survive in the way it is growing. Neutra’s staggering comeback was: “The danger is that Los Angeles is the only city that will survive.” There is something for us to ponder as we see San Diego drift more and more into the Los Angeles pattern.

Speaking of patterns bring us to another piece of desirable reading for serious city-savers: A “Regional Pattern for Dispersal” was presented before the Regional Council of America January 6th in New York, by the venerable planner Clarence Stein (who left his stamp on San Diego in 1915, when he served as site planner for the exposition that gave a beating heart to Balboa Park). Here follows an outline of that pattern, which Neutra and other logicians of similar experience might also have written. Magazine San Diego readers may get some satisfaction—or the reverse—by measuring San Diego’s changing patterns by Stein’s practical ideal:

1. A regional city will be a constellation of moderate-sized communities (25-50,000), separated by great open areas bound closely together by townless highways (i. e., throughways, turnpikes and parkways).
2. It will be planned, developed and operated as a regional entity.
3. Working places will be distributed in numerous towns and open places so that there will be adequate and varied opportunities of employment convenient to all workers’ homes.
4. The open areas between towns, while serving for spacious recreation, will be used mainly for farms, woods and grazing. Thus much food may be produced as close to markets and customers as is practical geographically and economically.
5. The towns in a regional city will have varied functions, character, forms and sites. Each will be large enough to supply all the day to day activities and equipment of a contemporary American community. All towns will be small enough to foster local loyalty and pride as well as closeness to countryside.
6. The male population of a regional group of towns and farms will be adequate to utilize and support central facilities equivalent to those provided by a *great* metropolis of today. This includes the best of universities, hospitals, museums, libraries, laboratories, wholesale markets, business centers as well as auditorium, symphony hall, theatres and an equivalent of the “great white way.”
7. These main central facilities will be in various towns, each of which will serve one or at most a few related functions. Thus, traffic loads will be limited and balanced and the deadening congestion of the obsolete metropolitan center may be done away with.
8. The time distance to all its main centers from any part of a regional city will be less than that from vast outlying areas of a present-day sprawling metropolis to its congested multi-purpose center. This is possible because of the townless highways with adequate terminal facilities in each town.

Paderewski rebuttal

Our criticism of the State Highway Building last issue brought a rejoinder from C. J. Paderewski, able head of the local firm which, together with a Los Angeles firm, the State Division of Architecture and the Division of Highways, reared the structure.

“ . . . Did you know that, when the architects of San Diego were asked to submit a list of buildings they considered best in San Diego (for the visiting architects at our last convention in Coronado) one of the two buildings listed by most of them was the State Highways Building? Don’t you believe that the architects should be considered the most qualified critics of building design?”

“ . . . Design is a debatable subject. Refer to the City Attorney’s statement regarding “architectural control” from the legal standpoint . . . As professional men, we do not mind criticism provided you direct it to us as individuals. However, as soon as it is published, where others may be influenced by one man’s judgment, resulting in damage to reputation and business, then we object.

“ . . . We have enjoyed reading Magazine San Diego. The photography has been excellent and most articles good reading. It is a credit to San Diego.”

C. J. Paderewski

Surely, “Pat” Paderewski would not follow his own judgment to its logical conclusion and emasculate all newspapers, magazines and books in favor of private letters of criticism. Would he now? J. B.

April 2, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: The crippler in the park (Reginald Poland)

Last week we gave the Fine Arts Society a good press. This week it will have to take a stiff doze of journalism medicine. For it seems that through the years the society has been harboring a monster, which even today has the run of the art gallery in Balboa Park.

The thing is a crippler. It has a nasty record of intimidating the gallery’s professional staff, including their health, and compromising their integrity. In one particularly sordid case, on which Point here lifts a long-standing press blackout, the monster forced a distinguished citizen out of his job and out of town. No less.

When I say monster, I mean the board of directors of the Fine Arts Society. It is a thing of many—too many—heads. It has a very little heart, clay feet, of course, and the sickening manners of a pander. Pander, not panda. On this ogre rests the responsibility for the course of events at the gallery, which is supposed to be run in the public interest.

Let me make it clear that I am not attacking the individuals who make up the board. As individuals, most of them earnestly wish to aid the cultural development of the town. The tragic paradox, though, is that as a group these good people have a record which justifies harsh words.

By its policy, or lack of policy, the board has done very real harm to persons hired to work for it . . . and stymied the gallery’s public service. The signs are that the board is unlikely to generate from within itself the improvement in policy needed to justify its existence as a public trust. So, it becomes the job of a reporter to lay out the painful facts in the hope that persons of strong and active civic faith will consider this their cause.

We make a serious charge, and we must substantiate it. We must go into the fate of Reginald Poland.

For 25 years, until 1951, Reginald Poland was the professional director of the Fine Arts Society, giving San Diego the benefit of his scholarship and his contagious appreciation of art values. Sure, he developed some quaint habits, like tip-toeing pictures into an exhibit after they had been rejected by a jury. The point is, he gave us such art leadership as we had, and it was good enough to win him an honorable doctorate from his alma mater, Brown University.

About the time he was trying on his doctoral robes, Reginald Poland got crossed up with the monster of the gallery. After 25 years of twisting and turning to appease the beast, he made the mistake of exercising his professional judgment and disapproving a batch of mediocre paintings that had been thrust on the gallery as a “gift” by two elderly spinsters generally spoken of in hushed tones as “The Donors.”

I have the word of a leading American art evaluator that the pictures were really poor stuff.

It should be understood that The Donors had been the mainstay and support of the gallery for years, supplying many of the most-valued pictures in a collection estimated in millions of dollars. But unscrupulous picture dealers were selling them shoddy merchandise, and the gallery had to decide between becoming a junk shop and offending The Donors. To its disgrace, the board of directors was paralyzed by the challenge.

Dr. Poland has not made public the injustice that befell him, but the story is confirmed by close friends of his. It appears that The Donors threatened to withdraw their support from the Fine Arts Society unless Reginald Poland resigned. He did so, with great reluctance, but hoped by the self-sacrifice to save the security of the gallery he had built up. The feeble board accepted, and Poland, in his sixties, was obliged to uproot from his chosen city and turn elsewhere for a job. He directed a gallery in Florida for a while, and recently shifted to Atlanta, where he was gratefully welcomed as a museum director of stature.

It is known that his wife, who is chronically ill, has suffered considerably from having to quit her San Diego home and friends.

Almost unique in the 1950's, Reginald Poland got his pushing around without a whisper of Communist allegations. He is thoroughly Republican, and Mrs. Poland is the sister of O. W. Cotton.

The banishment of the Polands would have been ironic enough if the blessed donors had thereby been made safe for the Fine Arts Society. But the rotten bargain soon collapsed. Within a year, The Donors sent word that they did not feel appreciated and withdrew their support entirely.

Reasons for their discontent are sometimes suggested as: (1) Poland's friends on the board did not wear the right smile; (2) a famous artist called one of the biggest gift paintings a copy; (3) Point printed unworshipful news and criticism.

Upon loss of The Donors, the board settled into new depths of self-mortification, studying how to win The Donors back, or, at least, how to attract other wealthy benefactors. Thomas B. Robertson inherited Poland's job—and his headaches.

Robertson is a basically gentle and kind man with a real aptitude for scholarship, Williams College, Phi Beta Kappa, who might be an effective director if he were freed from the curse of board politics. As things stand, he has been forced into any number of situations where he had to do things that alienated the more discriminating art followers and reflected unfairly on his professional ability.

A recent example was the hanging of portrait attributed to Gilbert Stuart, which is an insult to that early American master's reputation. A man of Robertson's training and discrimination could not possibly fail to distinguish a Stuart from a Phooey, but a man in Robertson's dilemma could not possibly say Phooey to the wealthy owner of a portrait.

Situations like that, endlessly repeated, must either wreck a man's health or cause him to resign.

I blame the board of directors, but perhaps a more generous view would be that the board merely reflects the general breakdown of community conscience. If pompous, reactionary people are the most vigorous citizens among us, then we deserve a pompous, reactionary art life.

If, on the other hand, people who believe in democratic standards of fair play and progress will interest themselves in the Fine Arts Society, the board might be converted from a crippler to a public servant. It should be possible, even, to raise funds by appealing for donors with money-plus-brains-plus-democratic-spirit, rather than donors with money-plus-vanity-plus arrogance.

In this connection it might be asked why the City Council gives operating funds to the Society year after year without insisting on fair management. Is the Council afflicted with ignorance, indifference, or both?

A HEALTHY Fine Arts Society is indispensable to a great city. May I suggest as a first step that the fair-minded—in and out of the Society—get together and demand the reinstatement of the wronged Dr. Poland?

I'm sure one of the first to welcome him would be Tom Robertson, for whom there should also be ample security and rewards in a progressing art center.

We will continue to praise the Fine Arts Gallery for activities tending to raise the quality of our community life—and to criticize it for policies promoting the general decay. The great American future may go up in smoke, mushroom-clouded, if it is based on hypocrisy.

April 9, 1954, Point, **ART OF THE CITY: Humanity? The Very Idea!** (Roger Revelle)

ROGER REVELLE is a college president who believes schools should have some effect on humans—preferably a humanizing effect. He is himself a humanist in the best sense. This means he minds not only the business of the campus, but of his city, his country and his time.

Scripps Institution of Oceanography is his professional bailiwick, but he circulates vigorously in his town of La Jolla, and is one of the most-to-be-counted-upon where civic projects—notably civic art projects—are concerned. He thinks of Scripps as above all an intimate part of the University of California, and he calls the latter, “a very jewel in the crown of California.”

Dr/Revelle's enthusiasm for the University of California gave rise to an extraordinary value judgment: “I have no doubt that twenty-five hundred years from now men will still remember what is happening in this university today as we remember what happened in Athens twenty-five hundred years ago.”

IT IS NOT the first time that the Athens comparison has been raised for one phase or another of California life. San Francisco art people, particularly like to think of that city in Periclean terms. It is an excellent historical perspective to guide San Diegans who may cling to hopes of equality as they watch the numerical growth of this place.

In support of his estimate of UC's importance, Revelle cites its eight campuses and far-ranging activities. . . . “from the Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico to the University Extension program for the armed forces in Japan and Korea, from its ships which roam the far-Pacific to the great telescopes which sweep the skies.”

As for the La Jolla campus, Revelle hopes it may continue to grow as a location for the experimental programs of the University. While waiting for that development, we may expect from time to time, under the Revelle regime, programs aimed at the public, having to do with humanity, if not always with oceanography.

SUCH PROGRAMS as last week's lecture by John E. Burchard, the very able dean of humanities at M.I.T., generally thought of as a no-nonsense engineering school.

Introducing Burchard, Roger Revelle ascribed to him a broad concept of education, a concept worthy of all full-souled teachers. It involves basically . . . “The forging, tempering and sharpening of the tools of the mind.” Beyond that . . . “the development of a consciousness of our heritage of the Western world, exploring the potential of man as a being who can build on the past and who has hope for the future.” Such education aims at . . . “the enrichment of life by learning how to enjoy the many wonderful things of the mind, things of beauty which are a joy forever.” And the most important discipline of all is learning . . . “communication with our fellow human beings.”

Burchard's talk was a beautiful example of that humanist educational philosophy in action. "I am going to try to persuade you," he stated, "that contemporary architecture, whether or not you like it, is in the main stream of Western esthetic development, and not a monstrous eccentric rambling."

HE REVIEWED the basic ingredients of sound architecture in any age, stressing the flexibility that is the special gift of our times, and noting the dangers of esthetic failure that go with such flexibility.

Observe the touch of the master teacher, Burchard showed a slide of Stonehenge, the prehistoric assemblage of immense rocks which delight each generation anew though its purpose is unknown . . . Maybe we need today to occasionally capture that effect of purposeless delight in our own building."

"Not everything that goes into a modern building goes into it for practical reasons . . . It is the great hope of contemporary architecture in its advance towards historical importance that it has finally become possible to do some things irrationally. Less hopeful is the fact that it still seems necessary to persuade some of the buyers of these ideas that they all rest on rational grounds.

"I cannot escape the impression that the greatest single weakness of the architecture of our day is that it has somehow not quite managed to come to grips with the painter and the sculptor who were so ubiquitous in everyone of the great previous periods of architecture . . . Still the effort must continue for the gap must be bridged. Indeed, the bridging of it is the main task remaining to modern architecture before it achieves the grandeur which is implicit in everything else that has happened and is happening."

AMONG ILLUSTRATIONS of efforts in that direction was a spectacular all-glass bank for the Manufacturers' Trust Company in New York, featuring a stunning sculptured wall by Henry Bertola, for many years a San Diegan.

Burchard concluded: "In examining the architecture of our times, and especially in examining the architecture that the next decades will present, it is wise to greet it with an affirmative effort to understand and believe. But if that is impossible for all of you, then at least you should say, as Hamlet did in the fifth act, 'If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now, yet it will come; the readiness is all.'"

Hamlet's words are easy to understand when applied to death. Applying them to progress, as Burchard does, requires more effort. Easy death or hard-earned progress—the choice of humanity.

Julius Caesar on film

TURNING from Hamlet to Julius Caesar, San Diegans can have a brief visit with that personage at the Adams Theatre. As you may recall Shakespeare's movie scenario makes Caesar a pompous, of Pompey's ass, who is knifed early in reel one so the plot can thicken

The high tension of the movie comes early, too, with Mark Antony's oration, delivered with the irresistible force of a Notre Dame tackle by Marlon Brando. Brando registers perfectly true Antony. He seems to be made for ancient history, and his greatest unwritten role is probably Alexander the Great.

Next best cast is John Gielgud as the sickening Cassius. James Mason interprets convincingly the major role of Brutus, but a more felective type (Leo Genn?) might have looked the part better.

PHOTOGRAPHY is good by Hollywood standards, but is not to be compared with such a masterpiece of face-searching camera work as Dreyer's 1926 "Joan of Arc." Art direction—which got an Oscar—is also fairly standard Hollywood. The crowd scenes are moth-eaten De Mille. This movie should have been in color, like Henry the Fifth; it is not suited like Hamlet to the gray treatment.

But M-G-M's "Julius Caesar" is beautifully read Shakespeare, a poignant drama ringing with the truth of poetry and of history. See it, for deep satisfaction.

Eisenhower to hang?

AN ORIGINAL painting from the hand of President Eisenhower will hang in the Fine Arts Gallery this month, if plans go through. The committee preparing a show of businessmen's pastime-painting has asked Congressman Wilson to talk Ike into loaning one of his canvases.

Even in Mission Hills

EVEN MISSION HILLS must change. First to go of the swell mansions proudly built on that precious peninsula from about 1910 onward is the one at Sunset and Pine, now in the hands of Wrecker John Hansen. Unlivable by modern standards, the big house most recently served as an exhibit gallery and clubhouse, finally sold for something like \$20,000, or roughly the value of the land.

The trees on the property will remain and Architect Lloyd Ruocco will build a glass house set in a garden surrounded by a wall.

April 16, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** Challenge of the hour (F. S. Northrop)

THE HOUR of Challenge . . . that is the series title of the forum-type programs current at the First Methodist Church. Last week's speaker was certainly on top of the main challenge of the hour—how to bring East and West to terms without an atomic equalizer.

He took a giant view of the prospects: "I'm afraid we're heading for a terrible tragedy, and would be even if the bomb didn't exist . . . I mean the tragedy of a majority of mankind being torn loose from old ways of life without getting the roots of new ways . . . utter chaos would follow."

It was Filmer H. S. Northrop speaking. His grasp of the subject is familiar to serious readers from his books. "The Meeting of East and West" and "The Taming of Nations." A professor of both philosophy and law at Yale, Northrop—not surprisingly—has developed a philosophical interpretation of law as the hope of the world. If you haven't thought of it yourself, you will be refreshed by his argument.

"THE UNIQUE achievement of Western culture," says Northrop, "is that we broke away from the ancient family-unit basis of society, and established a society based on contract law. Our chief loyalty today is to the playing of the game according to the rules—or laws—rather than to our brothers or our sisters or our cousins or our aunts.

"Nothing damns an American mother today more than not to have cut the apron strings," said the professor.

At this point, one woman actually got up and left the hall. It was not determined whether she went to adjust her apron strings.

NORTHROP calls our unique legalistic society "utopian." He traces its spiritual roots to Greek philosophers and physical scientists whose work helped shape "Stoic Roman law, the terminology of which is now a commonplace in every law school in the West."

He reminds us that "Europeans were Greeks and Romans before they became Christians," and "Christianity itself is as much Greek and Roman as it is Hebrew." He quotes both Old and New Testament to show that even Christianity supports the shift in emphasis from the family-unit basis of society to society based on law.

SO MUCH for the Western way. "In the East the family-unit is still the principle object of loyalty . . . No Chinese business firm consists of more than one family. Their families may equal fifty of ours in size. All our millions to Chiang Kai Shek didn't work because in choosing between the welfare of China and the welfare of the family, Chinese must choose the family."

Northrop indicated that one reason the Communists won control of China was that they made crafty allowance for family loyalty. "Their marching soldiers sang folk songs," he said.

As for East and West getting on working terms, Northrop said, "No leader, Western or Eastern, has yet learned to put the different ways together and make them work . . . The one thing that doesn't determine what happens in Asia today is what anybody else does."

While specifically tagging Christian missionary activity as unsuccessful, he left us with a paradoxical warning, "Don't let the Asians get our gadgets without also giving them the moral and spiritual machinery out of which the gadgets came."

Isaac Stern

CIVIC MUSIC, the bargain series for which you subscribe in advance, brought violinist Isaac Stern to the Russ Auditorium last Sunday. His reputation is riding as high as any this side of Russian Oistrakh, and besides that he deserves salute as an articulate spokesman for music appreciation.

His sense of musical design is not always as stern as it might be, or he would not have opened his concert with the Ysaye transcription of a Rameau suite that sounds strong and seemly on the harpsichord but loses its shape when fiddled.

A better performance than Stern's of the Bach D Minor Chaconne is surely impossible. The piece, when played with the understanding that Stern showed here, is a musical experience similar to the experiences of a great Gothic cathedral, notwithstanding that Bach is generally called Baroque.

Pointed arches in profusion, complex vaulted ceiling, sculptured porticoes, light filtering through stained glass, even chanting in the aisles—all are evoked by this masterwork. Nothing wrong with the design there.

Stern and pianist Alexander Zakin brought out fully the beautiful passion of Brahms' D Minor Sonata. After Brahms, Prokofieff's F Minor Sonata proved a little rough on the audience.

Difficult to play, difficult to digest, the Prokofieff contains a number of lumpy modernistic passages that don't lead to the light.

If the Bach was a cathedral alive, the Prokofieff was a bombed chancel, the last note a gasp of suffocation—ruthlessly right for recent history.

When first played in New York in 1948, it was called by the Times "one of the best piano and violin sonatas to have appeared in recent years."

Miss Julie

YOUR FRIEND, Bob Berkun has tried for many years to make his Ken Theatre the art film center of San Diego. His troubles are many. The theatre's location is bad for a center—way out on Adams Avenue. He has been getting foreign films on a sight-unseen basis, with little advance information to distinguish good from bad.

When he does get a good film, as often as not there are no materials to do a clear job of promotion. One result is that audiences don't know what to expect, and Bob doesn't know whether to expect an audience.

So, when a very strong movie, like the Swedish "Miss Julie" comes to the Ken it may fail to get the house it deserves. "Miss Julie" had an excellent review by Ed Martin in the S. D. Union, but that night less than 100 people showed up.

Though admission is only 75 cents, the Ken Theatre is as pleasant a place as any movie theatre in town, better in scale and acoustics than most, an altogether right place to enjoy a movie. Seven thousand dollars had just gone into renovation, though it hardly seemed necessary to the Ken fan. Point will try to signal the exceptional pictures to be seen there, hoping to get the word to you before the run fades.

“MISS JULIE” is based on August Strindberg, a lifter of Victorian skirts, who evidently cared as much about sex as Dr. Kinsey and Dr. Freud. The picture follows the twisted life of a girl to the manor born (Anita Bjork) and her involvement with a boor to the stable born.

Mature excellence marks story, direction, photography and acting. Anita Bjork has a trace of Garbo about her eyes, though her fire burns quicker. Ulf Palme (the boor) plays as a sordid caricature of Clark Gable. Maria Dorn is a comic talent on the Fernandel model, and Anders Henrikson (the Count) is even more whispily tragic than Otto Krueger.

Sexwise, the picture is often blunt like the painter Breughel, and you are the more sure of its base in life because it does not indulge in coy production code evasions.

Cheaper by the dozen

Is the mid-century vogue for plays of family reminiscence due to the drying up or gadgetation of Western family life, Dr. Northrop? Be that as it may, “Cheaper by the Dozen,” based on the Frank Gilbreth family, takes on more point seen in the light of your theories (page 4). Maybe there’s social usefulness to large and loyal families in America, perhaps as a curative to bureaucracy.

As played at the Globe Theatre, “Cheaper” lies very close to the heart of the audience. Main reason for its charm is probably the stageful of likeable kids, whose talents seem nicely proportioned to their ages, with Lynn Armour (at left) and Dennis Hopper (at right) as the oldest and most affecting. Peg Plimmer and Madge See are vivid in caricature passages.

Mother (Peg Evans) is all smiling sweetness, perhaps too much so. Father (Andy Anderson) is the commanding character, both within the play and across the footlights. Anderson, who was so deeply tragic in “Death of a Salesman,” manages a moment of pathos toward the end of “Cheaper” that unfurls the audience linens, and leaves even this light comedy anchored in Meaning,

A curious accident of casting, Anne Walker, who plays the maid, and Andy Anderson look so much alike as a set of identical twins. Director, of course, is Craig Noel, a very adroit fellow, comprehensive as a puppeteer. Pace, staging and lighting are all bright and right.

April 23, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: The hall of injustice (County Courthouse)

Caption: Grotesque contrast resulted from the makeshift planning which brought into being a severely modern annex in the Broadway front yard of the present hodgepodge county courthouse. The annex, completed in April 1950, at a cost of \$37,700, presumably will have to make way along with the main building if a new hall of “justice” is built on the site.

HERE WE GO again. Having just completed a public library that is a monument to San Diego’s inability to plan its future intelligently, we are fixing to run the same course of civic idiocy with respect to a new “Hall of Justice.”

Civic idiocy in these matters springs from desperation. It is not so simple as to say Civic Center is inhabited by idiots. After all, they are our representatives.

Give credit to your local officials that for years have tried to get a mandate from the public to proceed with planning of public buildings in an orderly way. They were conscious that civic beauty is an important asset in a place that has a heavy stake in the tourist industry. They were aware that efficient and adequate planning would mean enormous savings of money, time and nerves to you in the long run.

IT IS TRUE they did only a half-baked job of selling their ideas to the public. It is also true that a few selfish or narrow people cleverly sowed doubts among the voters. And no newspaper had the imagination or courage to treat the subject in a crusading spirit that might well have carried the day for civic progress.

Today these officials are a cowed lot, paralyzed, barely able to lift a wan smile when facing the subject of public buildings. It's as though they'd been through a Communist brain-washing. Now your local officials are conditioned to sell your city short in the matter of sound planning. And you asked for it.

IT IS NOT too much to say that public buildings are a sure index of a nation's health. New York has a city hall that was beautiful when it was built over a hundred years ago as an expression of idealistic growing America. Today, that city hall is overshadowed by a vast skyscraping hulk of a municipal building, the very form and shape of the giant bureaucracy which now outweighs idealism as the operating force in American life.

Most San Diegans came here to escape, consciously or not, the kind of oppression of the spirit symbolized by the New York situation. We were really herded like lemmings for the Pacific Ocean because it sounded so peaceful. But we sat down on the shore to bask in the sun. And promptly turned to vegetables.

Most tourists also come to California hoping to escape, consciously or not, the oppression of managed lives elsewhere, and to get a taste of something better than they left.

If San Diego's population were not so largely vegetable, we would realize that the secret of a booming tourist industry is to make San Diego the best designed city in the country.

We would start by insisting that our local officials—and our newspapers—fight for the best of all possible arrangements of public buildings. By “best” we should understand what is satisfying to the judgment of intelligent men, not merely what is satisfying to the bellies of ignorant political pressure seekers.

IN COMING WEEKS Point will set forth in detail a coordinated plan for public buildings that appears to be the most logical, the most practical, the most satisfying—in a word the best—that San Diego could produce.

For the moment, let's look at what is being pressure cooked up for us in the way of a successor to the old courthouse. Our illustration makes clear enough the urgency that has forced the Board of Supervisors to act.

The supervisors started out in what seemed an enlightened way. They went to architect Welton Becket of Los Angeles for a survey. But Becket was angling for the job of designing the building, and his survey puts more stress on politics than on architecture. He did not discover the key to sound coordinated city planning for San Diego. Instead, he dwelt on the need for using government-owned land so no one could scream that officials were narrowing the tax base by taking land off the tax rolls. Accordingly his first choice for a site was Lane Field. Becket's second choice was the present courthouse site ((Broadway at Front Street), and third was a four-block area of privately owned land that included the premises of the Catholic cathedral!

HAVING HAD NO WORD that the cathedral was in prospect of being vacated, and realizing that the Harbor Department had designs on Lane Field, the supervisors quickly narrowed their sights to site number two, the present courthouse site.

At least they could be sure of the support of the lawyers who are in the habit of walking the few blocks to the courthouse from their offices around Broadway and Fifth Avenue. Many of these potent persons had indicated they would resist a change.

But . . . the present courthouse site is hopelessly wrong for the sound civic planning we are advocating . . . as will be seen in future issues of Point. It is true that other public buildings could be cluttered about, but only at a fantastic increase in traffic and parking inconvenience.

One would expect lawyers to take a larger view. Time was in America when they as a class were the most reliable of civic leaders, but the profession has sunk pretty low when they consult their feet rather than their heads before taking civic steps.

IN SUCH an atmosphere of negation, a proposal is being readied currently at Civic Center for a November vote on bonds to build a hall of "justice" about on the spot of the old courthouse. A favored line of thinking is to propose two entirely separate units. The first to go up would include the jail and would ease the transition while the old courthouse was being torn down to make room for unit two.

Intimidated officials are actually trying to figure the ballot proposal in such a way as to rouse the fewest howls among the business interests that might be affected by the development. This consideration has to come ahead of maximum efficiency of planning, they feel, or the proposal may not pass.

Architect Becket advised that the county would need to buy three whole additional blocks abutting the courthouse block in order to provide enough surface parking for both official personnel and the public. He also advised the closing of Union and Front Streets between G and B.

But official thinking now is to whittle down this requirement in order to appease at least four groups: the tax-base watchers, the street-closing abhorrrers, property owners who might not wish to sell, and parking lot operators.

County officials do not dare close streets. They do not dare to force people to sell their land in the public interest. They figure they dare buy only enough land for parking official cars, leaving the public—and a majority of courthouse employees—to the tender mercies of the parking business operators.

YES, your local officials are a cowed lot. Because this beautiful town has no more civic moral fibre than a vegetable stew, it is degenerating rapidly into an unsavory mess like Los Angeles.

Point, at least, will hold fast to the attainable ideal of adequate, life-enhancing civic planning. Furthermore, we will show that it is the cheapest way as well as the only one worthy of the human part of the man-animal. Then, if you want to build a hall of "justice," that will be a monument of "injustice," why go ahead.

a generous act

The Fine Arts Society has given gallery director Thomas B. Robertson, three months leave with full pay, so that he may recover from a severe nervous strain brought on by, among other things, the monstrous and continuous crisis at the Fine Arts Gallery described here April 2. We are glad to give notice to a generous act of the board of directors, which we had to criticize sharply on some points.

While Tom Robertson never felt free to cooperate much with Point's pursuit of news about the gallery, it was always evident that beneath the pall of society politics that enveloped him there was a man of broad outlook, clear understanding and genuine desire for community service. We wish him full and speedy recovery.

the last words

JOSEF HAYDN, to me ranks among the first five composers of all time. The "Seven Last Words of Christ" is one of his most soul-warming works, your best bet this Eastertime of warding off the hydrogen blues. Hear it April 16 (8:00) at the First Presbyterian Church as performed by the sensitive organist Robert Amerine and the sound Westminster Choir directed by Harold Lutz.

April 30, 1954, Point, **art of the city**: From the ridiculous to the religious (Fine Arts Gallery)

Caption: “Christmas 1953 – A Bomb,” by Edward Kimports. An open book, lower right, quotes St. Matthew: “Many are called . . . few are chosen.” Matthew is also reported to have said: “By their fruits you shall know them . . . If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch . . . But the end is not yet . . . What God hath jointed together, let no man put asunder.

IT WOULD BE EASY—and wrong—to pan the show of paintings by business and professional people at the Fine Arts Gallery as unworthy of a museum that wanted to give art leadership to the community.

Actually, I think a free-for-all, first-come-first-served show like this should be commended as a desirable and wholesome activity in a democracy. It reveals that the Fine Arts Society is trying to break through the tight circles of general art lovers and embrace all San Diegans who are attracted to art.

Thomas Jefferson set the keynote: “We must cull from every condition of our people the true aristocracy of talent and virtue.” That means opportunity for all to raise their voices—or their pictures—for public attention. It means “vox pupuli” columns in newspapers. It means shows like this in museums.

Vox pupuli columns carry a great deal of childish and even idiotic expression. Many contributors merely reveal that their lives center on very simple and homely experiences. But sometimes an informed voice is heard with something to say that lifts the level of thinking around about—like the recent letters to the Union by Lawrence Klauber and Arthur Fischer explaining that there really are no deadly scorpions in San Diego.

SO IT IS with the show at the gallery. Most of the pictures tell you that when their authors think of the art of painting, they think of it only as a means of writing down in Technicolor the things they see and like . . . memories of landscapes, mostly, and of people secondly.

Perhaps no hidden genius has been discovered by this show, though it might have happened. Out of 60 pictures, only six make use of techniques that were not in common use before the 20th Century. The range, as might be expected, is from the ridiculous to the religious.

Which raises an embarrassing question: what happened to the art education of the past half century? Part of the answer might be that only a small percentage of the public is capable of following advanced art ideas, and if these people paint they are humbled by the problems of making good pictures and reluctant to show their efforts. One notices in museums that the people who dote on homely pictures of familiar scenes are the ones who scoff most readily at more advanced paintings.

Only two paintings in the current show are of the what-is-it school. Theresa Bustamente and Edmund T. Price deserve honor medals for exposing themselves to the scoffers. Miss Bustamente’s “Anonymous Waitress” involves a lot of dagger shapes, forks of lighting and a clenched fist—highly suggestive to me of waitresses I have angered.

Mr. Price’s dry humor combines a whale’s tail from the sands of his native New Bedford with pyramids from the sands of Egypt to express time, the fourth dimension, in a canvas suggestive to me of the paintings of Yves Tanguy.

MOST AMBITIOUS painting of the 60 is “Christmas 1953 – A Bomb,” by Dr. Edward Kimports, resident physician at Mercy Hospital. Obviously, it springs from sober philosophical and religious contemplation. Perhaps the very difficulty one has making out what is going on in the picture is a fitting commentary on what the bomb has done to the human scene. The picture has careful composition, and consistently rich paint texture, adding to its strength.

The painting and a naïve religious piece, “Dolorosa: by the Episcopal Reverend Robert Spicer-Smith, remind us of the immense religious influence of Georges Rouault and his “stained-glass” painting style.

THE POPULAR SENSATION—that is the right word—is Manuel Moseley’s non-religious “Temptation” (see cut). Funny on the Milton Berle level, it is perhaps the most foolish thing ever to hang on a museum wall. With this as precedent, it certainly will be illogical every again to bar a picture from the Gallery because of subject matter!

Also popular is “Huck Finn” by George Martin, completely devoid of painting skill but appealing to simple hearts for its subject. Among the landscapes I would rate best in painterly character those of Frances Robinson, Roy Palmateer, R. P. Williamson, James Phalen, Lee Palmer, David Tatman, Ruth McLain, Evadne Deardof. Numerous others show the touch of teachers like George Post, Eliot O’Hara, Earl Schrack and Cotton Dab.

Of a half dozen portraits, only Edward Wordell’s and George Thackeray’s have any more character than worked over photos. Thackeray, in particular, has a knowing way with the brush. Mrs. Tomi Ebert has fun and communicates fun with Picasso-like ideas in “Family Portrait.”

Howard Smith could have made a good composition with the wisps of log in his “City at Night,” but he let them wander aimlessly. James Rusk assembled objects to suggest “Wanderlust,” but they fail to make a good painting chiefly because the forms do the wrong things in relation to each other.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT, most participants in the free-for-all do not display much knowledge of painting. It is to be hoped, though, that they will join the Fine Arts Society (\$7.50 a year) in appreciation of the courtesy shown them, and take advantage of the many opportunities at the Gallery to increase their grasp of a difficult art.

On the other hand, it would not be right for a motley swarm of pastime painters to overwhelm the Gallery with demands for exhibition space. They are crowding pretty close. Long since, the Southwest Artists, a pastime painter’s group set up its bristling camp at the Spanish Village Art Center. Now the Men’s Art Institute, another pastime group, is assembled in a park building a stone’s throw from the Gallery.

The Gallery proper should be reserved for pictures that have passed some sort of merit test. This is important if the power to distinguish good from bad is not to die out. It is also important to preserve San Diego from the laughter of high-minded tourists.

ike said no

President Eisenhower denied a request for a painting of his to include in the show at the gallery here. He said he couldn’t fill all requests, so was filling none. Too bad . . . a circulating show of two or three paintings by the President would certainly put his talent to a merciless light, but it would also stir attendance wherever shown.

May-June 1954, Magazine San Diego, 17-18. **THE CITY OBSERVED:** Mr. Young on Right Track with Wrong Proposal

On the face of it, as covered in the newspapers, you might think that the offer of Contractor F. E. Young to build a “civic auditorium” with private funds in the southwest corner of Balboa Park was a reasonable and public-spirited proposal. After all the city officials had suggested that corner as a good location for such a facility. And the city stands little chance of raising public funds to build it.

Actually, in the present state of civic anarchy here, the Young proposal would be about the worst thing that could happen to San Diego with respect to sound planning and co-ordination of public buildings.

In the first place, the structure would not deserve the graceful name of civic auditorium. It would be primarily a sports palace packing up to 10,000 customers, a popcorn heaven suitable for monstrous conventions, yelling sessions and other gross forms of American masochism. It would have nothing whatever to do with opera, symphony and suchlike minority indulgences.

In the second place, the Young enterprise would take 20 acres of choice park land in the center of the city and turn the major part of it into a parking lot. This land, which would cost several million dollars if it had to be bought from private owners, would be loaned to Young and company for the grand sum of one dollar a year, and they would have control of it for fifty years.

Extension of downtown

Now, visualize if you please, that choice corner of park bulldozed and blacktopped into the brutal shape required for parking. Does it take much imagination to see what would happen next?

This is what would happen. Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue, as far north as Grape or Hawthorne Street, adjacent to the corner of the park turned parking, would enjoy a sensational boom in commercial building, with the parking problem solved in advance at no cost to the boomers. In a few years, the area would simply be an extension of the densely packed downtown section.

I don't know whether you call that socialistic government-subsidized solution to the parking problem or a striking case of free enterprise on the make, but certainly the idea was hatched by a businessman and not by a public official.

Committee may switch

Do not be misled by news that the city auditorium committee has rejected the Young plan. The committee is likely to swivel and go along with Young if he makes certain additions to the plans of the proposed building. If the committee approves, the City Council, lacing any better ideas, may try to put this one across.

In case the prospect seems to make civic sense to you, consider the following facts. As I have cited on this page before, the city's master plan calls for Date Street to be converted into a freeway link connecting Highway 101 with the various main arteries fanning north, west and south from the center of town. This freeway link would allow through traffic to by-pass the central city jam-up and it would also make its immediate neighborhood the most readily reached target area from all outlying communities.

Obviously uncontrolled commercial development in the immediate vicinity of the Date Street freeway link could produce a traffic nightmare unrivalled this side of Los Angeles. On the other hand, a spacious controlled development of this area would make logical use of the link without jamming it.

So, I would remind anyone who may have at heart the sound arrangement of his city's patterns that it is essential for the City Planning Commission to set up—and the City Council to adopt—a comprehensive scheme controlling the development of the area close to the prepared Date Street freeway link.

As described in Magazine San Diego for November-December, that development should include churches, hotels, office buildings, and stores as well as civic buildings. But the whole stretch, from park west to Civic Center, would have to be intelligently co-coordinated with reference to parking and traffic flow in order to avoid making a monstrous bottleneck of what is intended as a relief for a dozen already existing bottlenecks.

In a town that is now trying to shake itself alert to the possibilities of the tourist industry, the right handling of this area may spell the difference between life and death to this phase of our economy. Los Angeles can always intercept the tourists who only want boob entertainment.

If you remember that the hidden hunger of most tourists is for something better than they left at home, you will not be satisfied to offer them only a popcorn heaven with acres of parking and the world's fanciest bottleneck.

Traffic sanity

Among other things available for tourists to experience here should be the world's finest example of traffic sanity and the world's finest co-ordination of public and semi-public buildings in a spacious landscape. This is the design potential inherent in the nature of the Date Street freeway link.

It may well be that the corner of the park would be involved in such a design, but hardly as the free-for-all boomer's handout visualized by Mr. Young.

It is not too late for your generation to do something splendid in keeping with San Diego's tradition of fine planning embodied in Balboa Park. For heaven and earth's sake, wake up and get on with it!

As for the ingenious Mr. Young, give him credit for bold thinking. He is actually on the right track and it may be that his public spirit is equal to the occasion. Let us, therefore, ask him a reasonable public question. Mr. Young, would you be willing to build your sports palace in conformity with a coordinated plan for the Date Street region—if there were such a plan and would you build it on a slightly different site than the one you now contemplate—if the Planning Commission advised the change and if the city supplied the land free?

And here is a question for the Planning Commission: Gentlemen, will you please give your prompt study to the possibility of ranging public buildings along the route of the Date Street freeway link and regulating private development there with a view to orderly use of the link for maximum public convenience, safety and welfare?

And a question for the State Division of Highways: Will you please hurry up and build the Date Street freeway link so the reality of the thing will make apparent to all men of good will the correct type of development to make an end of chaos and a beginning of the greatness for San Diego's future?

May 7, 1954, Point, **art of the city**: Challenge and response (Hans Nordewin van Keeber, Ph.D.)

California Western University is making an admirable effort to liven the local art scene. Under the title of a "festival of the arts," numerous lectures, recitals, films, and even a Greek Theatre production of Sophocles' "Electra" are offered. See this magazine's On the Town department (page 2) for details week to week.

Hans Nordewin von Koerber is giving six on-campus lectures covering Asiatic art. The four remaining are at eight o'clock on May 7 and 21, June 14 and 18. The university announces that Dr. von Koerber, a Phi Beta Kappa, is listed in two Who's Whos, the American and the International, that he was a professor at USC and for 17 years curator of Oriental Art for the Los Angeles County Museum, where his gallery talks drew large crowds. He left the museum at the time of the drastic shake-up a few years back, when most of the Oriental collections were cashiered.

Dr. von Koerber first sank his geologist's pick into the Asian scene some 50 years ago in the service of the royal museums of his native Germany. He has lived in serene Tibetan monasteries and in a not-so-serene prisoner-of-war camp. He is a firm and positive voice, unscreened by his sponsoring school. His challenging delivery gave rise to the following exchange of letters.

DEAR DR, VON KOERBER: I was glad to hear your lecture on "Ways of Art." You have a vibrant style of talking that carries the listener along as though on a bobsled.

Your joy in words is so great that you fairly dance at the sound of “vitamins” or “vital,” both of which you relate to art. You carry us deeper into the meaning of words than we are likely to go by ourselves. How many of us have thought that “art” connects up with the Latin word for plow and the Hebrew word for earth? Or that the opposite of art is inert, unearthly?

I was especially charmed by your discussion of “perceive,” the “per” part of which means not only through but thorough (which you pronounce with unwitting poetic justice “Thoreau”). You gave us an organic understanding of the words perception and intuition, and rightly identified them as the gifts which distinguish great artists. You described the art of China, India and Japan as steeped in perception and intuition.

So far very good, but then your bobsled took a turn that seemed to me to leave joy behind and scrape along on rocky soil. For you said that we in the Western world—at least over the last 100 or 150 years—did not show much power of perception or intuition. You acknowledged that the West once had great painters. You mentioned Durer, Leonardo, Rembrandt, Rubens, Murillo, Michelangelo.

I was roused to some questions. I wondered particularly what had become of the 19th and 20th Centuries. You indicated briefly in conversation that you think the world is going through a black period and that very little of great artistic worth is being done, that even the genius of the Orient is largely suppressed by, among other things, Westernization and atheism.

Coming from a man of your training and experience, engaged in college-level teaching, such sentiments could have quite an impact on the community. So for publication in Point, I’d very much appreciate a fuller statement from you on these questions.

Do you find no intuition or perception in the work of famous 19th and 20th Century painters? What about contemporary painters in Europe and America? Can you lead me to some truly great works of recent creation in the Orient?

The latter interests me especially because contemporary Oriental work I have seen exhibited here was largely very poor imitations of the past or tentative apings of the West.

James Britton

DEAR MR. BRITTON: I thank you for your kind words of appreciation, but am sorry to learn that you had the impression my “bobsled” took a wrong turn. My bobsled will still on the right track, only you, as my companion rider, were at the end of the journey faster than the bobsled could do it.

The second half of the trip had still to be done when I concluded my first lecture. In yesterday’s lecture, it was performed and made all of us feel better because we had reached the goal originally contemplated by me.

Your questions were, therefore, taken care of. As you now came to understand with the “Western World” I meant the Indo-European Man, who became gradually inhibited in the use of his spiritual endowments due to the tremendous pressure of his intellectual application, so that intuition now rarely functions.

Of course, there are painters of the 19th and 20th centuries who definitely are of the perceiving kind such as Ludwig Richter and Jan Styka, not forgetting the ones in America who are appreciated within the scope of the Society for Sanity in Art.

Also, the Orient—better “The Far East:—still has artists of the perceiving quality, of whose works photos can be obtained, and I will lead you to the sources if you so desire. As my field is Asian art and not European or American art, I do not want to judge works of non-Asian artists; a comparison of two different products, though within the same field, always is apt to make one somewhat partial, even if it were only subconsciously. I want each work of art to retain its value unharmed.

Hoping to have other bobsled trips with you for our mutual enjoyment, I am sincerely yours,
HANS NORDEWIN VON KOERBER

Giving my guest the last word, I refrain from further comment except to say I will follow Dr. von Koerber's clues to photos to reproduce here and to urge art followers of all biases to take due notice of the professor's presence by attending his lectures with minds if not mouths open. J. B.

DEAR MR. BRITTON: Your article regarding the new courthouse left me boiling. Just who are you to blame the voters for the mess we are now in? Better look to the so-called city fathers that his town had for years—and is the present Board of Supervisors any better?

As long as I can remember, any progressive thought, any idea that might have helped our city grow up painlessly has been voted down, not by the people, but by these city fathers.

How many aggressive manufacturers have been refused space for their plants? How many industries started in San Diego have been chased out of town? Not by the voters, but by the powers that be who decide such things, the City and County Councils.

You seem to be so darn anxious to arouse the voters. You bawl us out constantly telling us to do something about the situation that neither you nor we like, but you don't tell us what to do. And what chance has a no-name person got? A letter to the editor of the Union-Tribune? Ha! What good does it do to go to Council meetings to enter a protest? All they are interested in is what the Mr. Bigs of the town think. They are afraid they will stop on toes and maybe lose their jobs next year and not get invited to the parties that the Mr. Bigs give. So, if you are going to insist that we do something about the unhappy situation, please be prepared to offer concrete suggestions.

Sincerely yours,

RUTH McELROY

DEAR MRS. McELROY: See Point next week and the following weeks for concrete suggestions on public buildings. Meanwhile, relax and chortle with City Planning Director Glenn Rick who last week got from North Park businessmen a lofty and far from concrete suggestion. They presented him with a model of a proposed civic auditorium. There it was hanging in mid-air suspended by a half-dozen balloons. J.B.

May 14, 1954, Point, **art of the city**: Key to the city's future (Cedar Street Mall)

Caption: This serene picture of America's least spoiled big city is from the wonderful photo files of the Union Title and Insurance Trust Company. From such perspective, Civic Center looks cool and collected by the bay, a fountainhead of good government. The street coming straight at you from the fountainhead is Cedar, with Beech and Ash to the left, Date, Elm, etc. to the right. Ideally, a portion of the freeway link discussed in the adjacent article should pass between Date and Cedar Streets. It need not go in a straight line, and it could be arranged to skirt gracefully past the Presbyterian Church or the Masonic Hall, though hardly both. Both institutions should rebuild facing the freeway if they chose, with adequate landscaping. Or, the freeway could go a block or two north of Date Street. This would be quite as good, but the same principles cited in this article would apply.

HAVING CHARGED that recent official proposals for public buildings in San Diego are unworthy of a great growing city, I have an obligation to come up with a better plan. Here it is.

To offset the arrogant sound of that let me say rearranging the city is comparatively easy for anyone who owns no real estate that might be affected or has no government position to protect. Property

owners or government officials, if free to approach the puzzle on its own terms, very likely would arrive at conclusions somewhat similar to the following.

The sound approach to the problem of public building serving the whole city must be from the viewpoint of design logic, not cold logic but warm logic, taking account of the human requirements of convenience, beauty and maximum value for the money involved.

It is a similar approach to the one used in designing a washing machine or an automobile, but with an important difference. While the public may be helpless to prevent a washing machine or an automobile being styled to go out of date and require early replacement, the public has a right to expect that a city plan be styled in increase in value with age insofar as possible.

And it is possible, if architectural knowledge is properly applied. The layout of buildings in Balboa Park, dating as far back as 1915, is a striking example. These buildings present some problems now, arising from their popularity, but it is inconceivable that the layout will ever be abandoned, though some buildings may be replaced or added to. That bold and courageous area planning, initiated in 1915, has been an immense bargain to the city, more valued today than ever.

Local officials had something like that in mind when they proposed in the 1940's the grouping of public buildings along a "Cedar Street Mall." That phrase is only a venom-splattered memory now, but it was brave planning in the right direction.

Too bad they didn't explore the subject a little further. They left the accent on a mall or promenade and that was unfortunate because surely people have forgotten how to walk. The officials failed convincingly to relate their plan to the probable automobile traffic flow patterns of the city. These flow patterns are—they must be—the key to the city's future.

TRAFFIC FLOW patterns have been proposed in a sensible master plan adopted by the City Council. A crucial element in that master plan is a freeway link roughly following the course of Date Street from Pacific Highway east to Balboa Park, where it would interchange with Cabrillo Freeway and other main arteries running north, east and south.

There are rumors now that the State Division of Highways may get that link into the works within two years, because it is urgently needed to relieve traffic bottlenecks in the congested downtown. There are also rumors that certain "citizens" are set to fight the project because they have projects of their own which would be affected, Will the City Council stand by its master plan? Good question.

Assuming the courage to proceed, what would that freeway link be like? It would border the congested downtown, permitting a motorist to choose whether he would venture into the shopping jungle or breeze on by to some other destination. Plowing its way through relatively inexpensive territory, mostly involving overage buildings, the freeway link would raise the value of adjacent properties, making desirable sites for grand hotels, churches, office buildings or superstores that wished to gain the notice of a steady stream of traffic. The appeal to big builders would be much the same as caused Sears Roebucks and Company to locate overlooking Washington Street Freeway.

The Date Street Freeway link will require numerous access roads to connect with busy north-south streets like Kettner, State, First, etc. That means the right of way for the link will have to be quite wide, possible as wide as a whole city block. As is usual with freeways, this will affect a certain amount of landscaping, and the whole development can be a marvel of engineering beauty.

A SERIES of large handsome buildings set in spacious grounds, rising up on either side of the freeway link could add up to a truly exceptional architectural pageant of American enterprise, graced at one end by a magnificent bay, at the other end by a magnificent park. Inspiring to live with, inspiring—for tourists—to write home about.

Another advantage of the area either side of Date Street, an advantage which will be detailed in a later article, is the step-like nature of the terrain, permitting very effective and even attractive parking arrangements in connection with large buildings.

Furthermore, the rightness of this area for large buildings will permit the closing of certain streets, a move which will profit the city in two ways—by sale of the vast acreage no longer needed for streets and by saving the cost of maintenance.

OH YES, the public buildings! Why, they would simply take their places at whatever points along the link seemed best in each individual case. Because land is cheaper here than down toward Broadway, enough could be bought to put up buildings of maximum efficiency. Further on in this series, we will discuss what these buildings should be like, by logical standards.

Not to be overlooked by any means is the possibility that the sale of acreage no longer needed for city streets actually would offset much of the cost of the land bought for public buildings.

In the case of the courthouse, suppose—to start an argument—it were to occupy the blocks bonded by 1st, 3rd, Cedar and Ash Street. That would not be unreasonable walking distance for lawyers from Broadway and Fifth, but if they liked they could move their offices to the Medico-Dental Building or similar structures yet to come.

NOT MERELY will it be in the interest of private enterprise to build only large structures adjoining the freeway link, it will be practically necessary if the link is to be kept from becoming a bottleneck. It will be a great advantage to the freeway engineers to know that fairly stable traffic patterns will obtain in the immediate neighborhood. Thus, it would be a great waste if downtown-type congestion is simply allowed to grow up around the projected freeway.

It should be clear that the thing needed right now is a definite policy from the City Planning Commission with respect to the area through which the freeway link will pass. Logic calls for a special zoning of the area, but this is not likely to come from a planning commission unsupported by public opinion.

To inform public opinion fully on the strange new necessary needs a broader crusade than Point along can wage. Architects and other professional groups, newspapers and channels, are hereby on notice to come to the aid of their city. If they want an intelligently designed city instead of multiplying chaos, they can have it in America by going to the voters in a big way.

artist vs. audience

“I am an artist and I’m proud of it,” said Agnes Moorhead from the Russ stage. “That pride is a warm deep feeling deep down inside.”

That remark goes a long way to explaining why anyone has the nerve to stand in front of an audience all alone and grapple with the confused strands of human emotion, taming them into a strong rope to hang hypocrites.

Mrs. Moorhead relied for some of her material on writers like Thurber and Lardner or Proust, adding her exquisite values of interpretation to their words. She went through her famous virtuoso solo, “Sorry Wrong Number,” written by Leslie Fletcher. This piece is a miracle of suspense when heard, preferably in the dark, with only the voice to guide you, but it is reduced to a monotonous exercise in distraction when seen on the stage.

The artist in Miss Moorhead reached its fullest expression in “Moses in the Bullrushes,” when she announced as the practically verbatim remembrance of a between-chores eruption by Daphne, the Negro maid in Miss Moorhead’s childhood Ohio home, If “Moses” is straight Daphne, it is a prize piece of folk

art, but one suspects it was considerably enriched in context by the theatrical wisdom of Agnes Moorhead and her director, Charles Laughton.

The Russ event was largely empty for the prime art event of the week. Some 250 of the people who might have enjoyed her attended instead a candlelight and black tie dinner of the Fine Arts Society.

May 21, 1954, Point, **art of the city: the creative mind**

Caption: The clipper chap, about three feet high, looks as though he might have come down to us from the Middle Ages, but actually the jaunty fellow is an native woodnote wild of San Diego's Jim Casey. Just after the photo was taken, the redwood kid was painted in hilarious colors and set on a pedestal in the Allied Craftsmen show at the Fine Arts Gallery. Casey might have been quite at home as a medieval wood carver, but right now has the high-key job of directing TV shows on Channel 8.—Photo by Robert Wayne Studio.

Caption: Here is an attempt to say something Emerson-style in sculpture. Virginia Weerts is a student of Donal Hord's and holds classes of his own at the Spanish Village. The small figures girdling the head represent Conscience trying to beat down the devil and awaken the Angel of Everyman. Though unfinished the graceful piece may now be seen at the Allied Craftsmen's Show. Miss Weerts' works are an impressive part of the décor at the Hut on Shelter Island, due to reopen soon.—Photo by Homer Dana.

Caption: The sensitive craggy face, the dignified spare figure of John Bush were a vivid experience widely shared by art followers in San Diego, and a very special delight to portrait artists like Mina Pulsifer, whose drawing is shown above. John Bush played a gentle courteous part in the local scene as operator of an art store. A solitary bachelor, he lived for many years in Mission Hills at the Sunset Gallery, which he fondly tended. This Spring the Sunset Gallery was torn down, and John Bush died.

ALL OF US have been exposed in elementary school to the majestic work of the creative American mind, The Declaration of Independence. How many of us have heard in school that Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote what was recognized at the time as America's Declaration of Intellectual Independence.

The talk was in 1837, the place was Harvard, the occasion an address entitled "The American Scholar" before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, Emerson intoned in a spell-binding baritone.

"Our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands draws to a close. . . . I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic, what is doing in Italy or Arabia. . . . I embrace the common. I capture and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low . . . Give me insight into today and you can have the antique and future worlds. . . .

"What we really know the meaning off? The ballad in the street, the news of the boat, the glance of the eye, the form and the gait of the body—allow me the ultimate reason of these matters and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany but has form and order. . . .

"We will walk with our own feet, we will work with our own hands, we will speak our own minds."

DR. JOHN DUNBAR, Harvard –trained teacher at Claremont Men's College, recalled vividly that bequest from Emerson in a talk on "The Creative Mind in America" last week in the Art Center of La Jolla. Dunbar's talk seemed to point to journalism as the great American art form, though he did not say so. Certainly the Emerson declaration at Harvard leans that way, as does the ethical thought of Emerson's essay on self-reliance, also quoted by Dunbar.

"Nothing at last is sacred but the integrity of your own mind. To believe your own thoughts, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men—that is genius."

Mull Emerson's statement over and you will see that to him human progress—or creative activity—was basically a matter of honesty, winning out over hypocrisy, good over evil. Emerson had great faith in democracy. He would not have been surprised that the struggle between honesty and hypocrisy has reached the almost unbearable pitch of the Stevens-McCarthy hearings.

Emerson would have been entranced by the creative journalistic “medium” of television which takes on a glow of divinity in terms of another observation quoted by Dunbar. “We be in the lap of an immense intelligence which make us organs of its activity and receivers of its truth. . . . From within or from behind a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing but he light is all.”

While Dunbar did not discuss the creative mind in relation to television, he did cite the numerous 19th Century American artists who set their hearts to do the kind of reporting-in- depth that television now can do. He mentioned the songsmith Stephen Foster, the sculptors John Rogers and J. O. A. Ward, writers like Bret Harte, Whitman, Howells, Twain and Norris, painters Bingham, Homer and Eakins.

IN THOMAS EAKINS, Dunbar found :”the American artist of his time who most firmly kept his eye on his own land and its inhabitants” and noted: “He did not please the taste of his time.”

Eakins, the thorough reporter in paint, did an honest and late portrait of President Rutherford B. Hayes on commission from the Union League of Philadelphia. The league was outraged because Hayes had not clothed in the fake clothes of smugness and pomposity. The honest portrait was hung only under protest, and in a few years was replaced by a suitable stuffy one, according to Dunbar.

Dunbar's ear caught Mark Twain echoing Emerson. Twain said; “What a man sees in the human race is merely himself in the deep and honest privacy of his own heart.”

The speaker recalled of Twain: “In his days as a reporter in San Francisco, he dealt savagely with municipal corruption. As a result he had to flee the cry and stay some moments with a friend in the hills.” Twain's honesty and the ripeness of his honest heart gave us that masterly measure of the human race, “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.”

John Dunbar finished with a statement of his own which deserves careful reflection by all who consider themselves journalists, all who consider themselves active Americans: “Knowledge or reality is not enough,” he said, :nor is an act of indictment enough. The two must be welded together in to a creative judgment on life.”

May 28, 1954, Point, **art of the city**: A time for harmony (Peterson's proposal for a “Perpetual Exposition of the Americas”

Caption: Here is a detail of the watercolor technique of Noel Quinn, latest addition to the parade of qualified teachers who give courses at Monty Lewis's Coronado School of Fine Arts. Oil painting, illustration and commercial art are offered this semester, but the feature is watercolor taught by Quinn, James Couper Wright and William Munson. Eight \$80 scholarships are provided, and Mr. Lewis notes with controlled surprise that more applications come in from Arizona or from the California hinterland than from out own city. There is no age limit, but four of the awarded—listed on merit—will be reserved for those under 25. Submit five examples in any medium by May 25. For details, write to the Coronado School of Fine Arts or phone HE-4-8541.

Caption: Christ appears to be slapping down the wicked in Michelangelo's dynamic conception of “The Last Judgment,” which rises above the altar in the Sistine Chapel of Rome. This is one feature of :”The Immortal City,” a film previewed on this page.

THE PETERSON PROPOSAL, on the cause and cure of San Diego's tourist dropsy (reviewed in Point last week) is the most exhilarating line of thinking to erupt here in years. It is deeply felt, makes generous use of imagination and is socially constructive on a broad scale.

It is among other things, the potential solution of the many problems that have concerned this page. Generally speaking, activities in the various arts fields have been crippled pathetically mainly because of the shabby economic understructure—which Mr. Peterson proposes to rebuild.

Only the Globe Theatre and the Starlight Opera can be considered solvent among art enterprises. The summer symphony, the Musical Arts Society and the La Jolla Playhouse are artistically successful, but only because of hard-won private subsidy.

The winter symphony, the Fine Arts Society, the Natural History Museum and the Museum of Man, for example, suffer various disabilities ranging from stunted growth to rigor mortis, because of the lean pickings financially.

Our public library—key to culture—has one of the poorest stocks in the country in proportion to population. The city treasury cannot afford to build up a library collection worthy of a major city because of the heavy demands for other even more pressing items of civic housekeeping.

THE CITY ITSELF—considered as a work of civic art—that is, as a well-designed framework for a satisfying human existence—is rapidly degenerating to an uncharming mess like Los Angeles.

Uncharming though it is, Los Angeles still manages to roadblock the flow of tourists down here. The Peterson proposal aims to outpull the competition by promoting attractions not available elsewhere. His “Perpetual Exposition of the Americas” is a splendid conception to that end, and should be supported by all San Diegans.

It does seem to me, though, to have a serious flaw: if it is proved successful, it could be duplicated in most details by an impolite Los Angeles combine bent on keeping tourists there.

Would it be enough protection to proclaim San Diego “officially” as “the permanent exposition center of the United States,” as Peterson proposes?

If the grand exposition prospect is to prosper and grow sounder with the years, it must be paralleled by a strenuous effort to maintain, restore and build the entire metropolitan region of San Diego as the most beautiful, the most convenient, the most soul-satisfying city in the Western Hemisphere.

San Diego has a whole must become indeed a perpetual exposition of the fine art of city life. That is something Los Angeles could never do. It is something the whole world is hungry for. It is our opportunity—uniquely.

One of the first required steps is an expanded park system. It is all wrong for the city’s park activities to be concentrated mainly in Balboa Park. Peterson’s plan to use Balboa Park buildings permanently for exposition purposes presumably would displace many San Diego residents who now use those buildings in various ways. In fairness, equivalent facilities should be provided for such people. It would be an injustice to shove them aside as so many crackpots. Besides, they couldn’t be shoved without a fight.

THIS IS A TIME for harmony of civic effort. It is a time for the muting of group jealousies and personal snobbery. In particular, it is a time for art and music leaders to abandon their cat-like maneuvers and give the Peterson proposal their keen constructive attention. After all, if a brave plan is really going forward as visualized, San Diego could blossom into the premier art center of the country, if not the world. Considering the galloping decay in other cities throughout the world, ours could become the sourcebook of renewal for the art of city life.

The Peterson proposal should not be dismissed by the fastidious as boosterism. Mr. Peterson has a convincing argument that the economic base of San Diego would totally collapse if it lost its tourist income. It’s a matter of life and death. Can you give a little?

'the immortal city'

JEROME CAPPI is a small-boned warm-eyed Sicilian in his forties who has soaked up the cultures of Rome, Florence and Hollywood. In the robust tradition of American free enterprise he thought up the idea of "The Immortal City," a technicolor movie which had its world premiere in Los Angeles last month and is having its second showing, anywhere here, at the Adams Theatre now.

"The Immortal City" is billed as the story of Rome, but there was a strong feeling among those who saw the picture here that it is essentially a celebration of the Roman Catholic religion, more concerned with the Vatican than Rome.

From a conversation with Mr. Cappi the other day, it would appear definite that the picture was not inspired by church authorities but was strictly Mr. Cappi's own way of expressing his devotion—and his enterprise.

He has created a work which undoubtedly will have even more widespread effect in advertising the faith than the great religious paintings of the past which Mr. Cappi has included in his film.

Mr. Cappi said he had no trouble getting bank financing for his production. Even if the picture were completely unacceptable to non-Catholics, there still remains an interested audience of more than a quarter million adherents of the faith throughout the world—an estimate which is mentioned twice in the picture's narrative.

Judged strictly as an art film or as a film on art, "The Immortal City" falls short of what a fan could wish for, despite much gorgeous filming of splendid art works. The picture opens with a fine brooding shot of the Coliseum, and the watcher is led around quickly to other ancient buildings of the great city. The narrator compresses a great deal of history within a few words, posing an uneasy feeling as to accuracy. Mr. Cappi says he himself wrote the main draft of the narration and supervised the camera work too.

Early in the picture, the gargantuan Vatican becomes the main subject of attention, and many of its art works are shown in dazzling succession, mostly too fast to permit much exploring from an esthetic angle. Resplendent if often unesthetic church properties are displayed as "eloquent proof of man's devotion to his God," and the camera moves on to grandiose ceremonies in which Pope Pius XII is the central figure.

At the end Pius XII stands by his desk and addresses the audience in English. His words, though intended as a general benediction, are curiously intellectual, and his very human eyes are curiously masked by the way the light falls on his glasses. This is a failure of direction primarily.

Jerome Cappi says English is the one major language with which Pius XII has trouble. Cappi says he tried for months to get the pontiff to solo for his camera, but was always stopped by Vatican red-tape. Finally he talked to the pope's major domo or orderly, who promptly got the papal assent. Then the kindly man stretched a 20-minute appointment into hours under the hot lenses, and promptly took to bed with a cold, according to Producer Cappi.

some pot shots

LAURA ANDRESSEN, the potter's potter, who talked at the Fine Arts Gallery in connection with the Allied Craftsmen show, does not think much of the tendency among mudworkers to decorate their works with pictorial designs. She made a slight concession. "The fish is one form the potters can use. . . . I think because it is so simple."

Andressen is saving up a here's mud-in-your-eye for Pablo Picasso. "His pottery is horrible . . . If I get to Paris sometime I'm gong to tell him so . . . He is the egotistical easel artist using pottery as a canvas to express himself . . . He has no feeling for, no understanding of the medium . . ."

Laura makes short work of Russel Wright. Holding up a cup designed by him with a turned-in rim, she said . . . "It dribbles . . . Here's a man sits down at a drawing board, makes a pleasing design, turns it over to a factory . . . it sells well and it dribbles."

June 4, 1954 Point, ART OF THE CITY: Nightmare at state college (campus architecture)

Caption: All right, so this is Beautification Week. Here is a standard to aim at, the house of John Lloyd Wright on Serpentine Drive at Del Mar. It has some of the breathtaking beauty of his father's famous Kaufman house in the woods near Bear Run, Pa. If you can't build your house in the woods, at least you can build woods around your house. Plant trees, that is. Then, in 40 years your children can sell the place for ten times the water bill. The Del Mar house has wonderfully textured brickwork, exquisite carpentry details, and it has white stucco walls too. The reason why these walls are beautiful, and why stucco elsewhere may not be, is found in the proportion of the walls, and in the character of the foliage which plays against them. Or rather, let us say, it is found in the genius of the architect who is a true artist. John Lloyd Wright, one of the most creative architects in the country, a member in good standing of the American Institute of Architects, is forbidden by a California law from calling himself an architect because he is not licensed here! That law does not apply to you and me, though. So, altogether now: John Architect Lloyd Wright Architect Wright Architect.

Caption: Here again a fine eye for beauty has been at work. Jeannette Murtin's house in La Jolla is built simply of rough second-hand timbers and adobe bricks. Glass is used bravely in the right places, and landscape—both wild and cultivated—is part of the pattern wherever you look. Edward T. Burke is the designer. This sort of thing should be remembered when it comes time to "restore" Old San Diego. Rather than build new phony antique haciendas, invent new uses for the historic Southwest material, adobe. Get thee an architect with a free mind.

WHEN RICHARD NEUTRA lectured at State College three or four years ago, a student asked him what he thought of our campus architecture. The master of arts made a typical Neutralizing reply: "I didn't think there is any."

There isn't.

Architecture is a word of honor that can be applied properly only to buildings that are designed honestly and intelligently. The Moorish nightmare "style" of State College is neither honest nor intelligent. Some of the buildings out there may be honest in one aspect or another, but almost all stand around making false-face spectacles of themselves.

The Boorish-Moorish mood was set in the 20's when not many people knew better. Now—the 50's, isn't it?—when sound principles of design are supposed to be widely understood, we have just built in the new music auditorium at State College what is probably the most boorish American public building of the year.

The auditorium offends both eye and ear. To the eye it presents a pastry shop prettiness. The wedding cake ornament, the sugary colors inside and out, are stale already to the educated eye. Nowhere is the subtlety that makes for long-term satisfaction in visual effects. Even the lighting is mishandled: it is "modern" technically, but about as relaxing to the audience as a dentist's spot.

Most remarkable visual miscarriage is the placing of the single stage door rear entrance. This might be all right of the "honorable buttocks-swinging actress" Marilyn Monroe were expected as a regular attraction, but it will be a little trying for the average visiting concertizer who has been trained to come and go with more traditional dignity, and who may have been feeding on success.

MORE SERIOUS is the effect on the ear. Last week, Nikolai Graudan, an extremely sensitive cellist, appeared in the new auditorium. He played beautifully, but my favorite musical barometer, Critic Bruno Usher, registered cloudy. Many others in the auditorium spoke of discomforts to the ear. Especially

ugly was the sound of the piano in loud passages of a Brahms trio. To me, there was a feeling that almost more sound came from the back of the instruments than from the instruments themselves. And the sound was garbled. It was not as weird as singing in the bathtub, but the same principle was involved.

These failures could be discussed in terms like “reverberation time” and “resonance,” but the thing to point out here is the fantastic disproportion between the stage and the auditorium. The stage is built like a bandshell of hard plaster, and thus acts as a megaphone large enough to fill with sound a hall the size of the Balboa Bowl. The auditorium, on the other hand, comprises less than 300 seats.

On the amount of seating, bad judgment was used. San Diego is hungry for good chamber music, and the opening events were jammed to the jambs. Also, the building is so placed that it will be quite impossible to lengthen the hall. (A separate 1200-seat hall is far in the future.)

The tragedy of the building is that it handicaps the music department in both its student program and its fine effort to reach the large community with good music. Students may well grow to believe here that all serious music is noise. And it is painful to think of Robert Shaw’s eagerly anticipated programs this summer trapped in this caterwaul hall.

The new noise auditorium is a prize example of architectural schizophrenia. The word is used carefully. By it, I mean that the State Division of Architecture, which as a hand on a hundred hands in every building put up with state funds, is out of touch with reality.

We are told that the Division—apt name—has experts in acoustics. On the evidence here, they must have given us half of somebody else’s building.

An equally stupid, wasteful botch was made of the air-conditioning system, which is both noisy and inadequate.

In general, a dizzy high level of incompetency has prevailed.

It is customary for state construction to involve also a local architect, in this case, Mr. Earl F. Gilbertson. Considering the juggernaut behavior of the Division of Architecture, Mr. Gilbertson probably should not be blamed for more than the sentimental visual effects.

THE FACULTY of State College must share the blame, I think.

Here is a body of highly-degreed men and women, many of whom are not roundly educated because they do not understand the important social art of architecture. I base that statement on the impression of an administrator that a majority of the faculty favors continuing the Boorish-Moorish treatment of State College buildings.

Those of the faculty who do grasp the educational, the life-enhancing value of sounder architecture—and they are numerous—apparently feel they couldn’t stand the social discomfort, the unpopularity of clamoring about something they believe in.

Architecture is a pitiless mirror of social conditions. The architectural feebleness of State College reflects feebleness in education itself. The only suitable position for a respectable college in a democracy is at the front rank in a community’s progress.

Educators should dispel our nightmares, not multiply them. Perhaps the local chapter of the American Association of University Professors will examine its conscience on the matters pointed up here. And maybe even take a stand?

June 11, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: Homogenize or not? (movie colony and industry)

IN CASTING ABOUT for industries suited to San Diego, we should not overlook the movies. Your first reaction may be that Hollywood has that sewed up, and besides it looks to be a declining business.

It's true that the mink-lined ruts of Hollywood are worn too deep to encourage the wheels of progress, but the life of the movies as an art form has only begun. If the future holds anything at all for humans, it holds a greatly intensified experience of art for all men. The movies are simply—and marvelously—the most flexible art form ever devised.

CONSIDER these thoughts by Milton Fox of the Cleveland Museum of Art (quoted from "The Enjoyment of the Arts," Philosophical Library, New York, 1944): "In many ways it seems as though the evolution of the visual arts (and the library, for that matter) of the West has portended the inevitable appearance of a medium such as we now have in the movies."

THOSE who know the history of painting will understand what Mr. Fox means. Those not so fortunate will have to take him on faith. He's right. He quotes an epigram of the painter Edouard Manet's: "The chief person in a picture is the light."

There you have the cue for the cameras.

Mr. Fox traces the Twentieth Century: "The artist became many things, but not a mere recorder. He moved around into and through things . . . He painted fragments, mere flashes of things. Scant identification of real things were buried in associations, and pictures began to whisper allusively to the deep recesses of the mind . . . Art movements rushed each other along in a succession of 'isms' and as the beating against the gates reached a climactic fury, the movies appeared on the scene . . . Perhaps this was the answer to the Muse's prayer."

Mr. Fox concludes his long exploring essay: ". . . We are yet the primitives of the movie art. But one day great masters will use its vast artistic resources—akin in so many ways to the ballet, to poetry, to the stage, to music, to painting—and yet so distinctly its own."

NOW San Diegans, when your Perpetual Exposition is a going concern (Point, May 21), bringing droves of tourists would not a movie colony and industry dedicated to the film future envisioned by Milton Fox be a suitable added attraction?

Great numbers of fine artists now identified in varying degrees of frustration with the movie capitals of the world would welcome a new movie industry environment where quality was the watchword. But we would have to set up safeguards against intellectual smog as well as the climactic type.

Such an atmosphere would nurture at home the talents that grow here, and would have a generally improving effect on the cultural tone of the region.

RIGHT NOW in San Diego—leaving acting talents aside—there are people sincerely reaching for the kind of creative expression called for by the movie medium.

There is Lynn Fayman, as nice a guy as ever focused a camera, known widely for his photo activities, seemingly always on hand when a free picture is needed for a good cause. Two weeks ago Fayman gave a pleasant talk at the Art Center in La Jolla on "The Free Forms of Color and Sound."

In this he showed that he was probing for a basic understanding of the phenomena which underlie the everyday business of seeing and hearing. He got a pleased reaction from his audience when he projected color slides of abstract forms, and turned on recordings of piano music by Anton Bilotti, Los Angeles musician, who had improvised as he watched the slides.

Fayman then projected some color movies of abstract shapes, which would make their appearance—come on stage as it were like erratic dancers—do a turn or two and move off.

This time Fayman was in trouble, for a miserable organ on the sound track, making the kind of woollywawl you might remember from between the acts of a vaudeville house in the 20's. This definitely did not please the audience, and the reason was not hard to trace, the organ was planting one set of motion effects in the brain and the film was planting another set, unrelated and at war.

LYNN FAYMAN has had the courage to strike out on his own, forsaking the standard—or academic—approaches to art and working largely by himself in a vacuumic atmosphere. He sets himself large and complicated problems. His progress would be the more pronounced if the town were alive with discussion and competition of ideas in the new directions.

Among the few other workers apparent here at the moment is the abstract film-plus-music field are Ettilie Wallace, Clyde Grant and Emily Romano.

a hopeful sign

THE FILMS COMMITTEE of the Fine Arts Society, mentioned in our main article, wound up the season with a profit of about 500 dollars. Committee chairman H. K. Raymenton announced publicly that the effort to attract Fine Arts Society members by showing the films at the Gallery was a futile gesture.

“It was the general public, not the members, that came,” said he. “Next year the showings will again be at the Puppet Theatre, where seating and acoustics are more comfortable.”

It is a further—and hopeful—fact that many young people were in the audiences. The series is a valued and vital Gallery activity. Congratulations are in order to Mr. and Mrs. Raymenton, Mrs. MacArthur Gorton, Jr., and the paid members of the Gallery staff, for persevering in spite of the Fine Arts Society indifference.

June 18, 1954, Point, **art of the city**; Will state college graduate? (John Robert Clarke)

JOHN ROBERT CLARKE is one man among us who habitually speaks his mind in public. It is quite a rare thing anymore, especially in San Diego, where even teachers—who are supposedly in the business of expressing their minds—find it easier to be accepted in the “right” circles locally if they confine their self-expression to shielded corners of the homes they know and love.

It is easier to understand this pitiful condition of San Diego's “intellectuals” if you ask yourself: what is there left of life in San Diego for a man who is not accepted socially, except he form a tight circle of his own? The measure of the city's cultural hollowness is the long list of fine people who have fled after one season of barren choices.

The measure of the city's cultural potential is the unlinked chain of sturdy intellectuals—native and immigrant—who do as much as their resources will permit to plant trees in the bald streets of civic smugness.

John Clarke has ingeniously brought together a circle of hearers for his lectures based on his inventive responses to the great themes of intellectual history. He is resourceful as Elbert Hubbard, with even a touch of circus-poster bravura in his phrase-making. In presenting him to you, I wish I had space to quote the transcripts of his lectures so you could judge the way his mind unfolds before a group. It is an unfolding as fascinating as a cobra's, and his mellifluous voice is the perfect instrument to conjure the performance. I can only suggest here that you watch page two of Point for announcements and attend for yourself.

Clarke, Stanford and Harvard trained, is a San Diegan by choice. He lives on a boat moored at Loma Portal, but that doesn't mean he's the hit and run type. He is just finishing a semester of teaching at State College as replacement for Dr. Frank L. Johnson (on leave). His courses were called Senior

Shakespeare, Literature and Personality, Imaginative Literature. He felt these gave him a fair cross-section of students and he had some vivid reactions about the state of State.

I thought his reactions should be made public through Point, but I reminded him of the job-security risk of being outspoken in San Diego. Without hesitation he replied: "If I am to be of any further use to State College, it will be because they value my mind and my expression of it."

So, here is the find mind of John Robert Clarke expressed by no torture but by thought.

BY JOHN ROBERT CLARKE

FOR MANY reasons, the liberal arts colleges today have a tremendous "selling job" to do if they are going to survive in any recognizable form.

From failure to redefine and sell their specific worth to the community, many colleges today are in effect continuation high schools, forced for the sake of survival to sell advanced cake decoration where once they sold philosophy.

The old educational aims are no longer appealing. Long ago, people were lured to college to acquire capital C Culture, and to this end men traveled afar to hang their raccoon coats in Harvard halls, while women did the same thing at Wellesley to prepare them for the strenuous participation in competitive mink opera.

In the more recent Years of our Taxes, however, the cry went up everywhere to "cut the frills" and teach students how to make a living in a business world, and to this end our colleges strove mightily.

And today they are still striving rather foolishly to prepare the student to make a living that he could make better if he through his mortar board away and took up the plasterer's trowel. It is little wonder that educators from one end of the country to the other are in despair concerning the ends and means of education.

During my teaching at State College, I have been impressed by the wonderful material assembled there for a continuous "learning center." I doubt if many San Diegans are aware of the gold mine in their midst, but there it is, continuously expanding its facilities and with a teaching staff of professors drawn from all over the world.

The number of dedicated teachers and leaders in various fields of learning now on campus is unusually large for a liberal arts college. If they could get together on the basis of redefined goals for education in our time, and if we had a newspaper willing to devote less news space to murder and more to the encouragement of educational experiment, State College would double in enrollment.

Whenever I am asked, "Should people go to college?" I answer in the affirmative, and add that in our day the college must go to the people. If the people could through features and news stories and public lectures, be exposed to the incentive-making personalities that are now relatively unknown on campus, this college would indeed thrive in the community.

As it is, the State College enrollment has been dropping, with results that will be felt, if not understood, in San Diego within this decade. Earlier marriages, earlier birthrates, and the overall increase in population will result this year in a demand for 3,000 elementary teachers.

This week at State College is graduation time, and the college will graduate only 165 of these teachers. Meanwhile, the city requires 1,000 new secondary school teachers, and State College will graduate 108.

Meanwhile, the community apathy remains intact, and I suspect that newspaper conditioning is partly responsible. Condition a people to the newsworthiness of vice, crime, competitive social teas, and

soft-pedal the conversational worth of educators, and you will gradually deaden the judgment of that people.

They will not know there is a college in town, not what purposes it serves, and when world-famous visiting lecturers come to town, as they have from time to time in recent years, they will know little about that, either.

Never did I realize these things so strongly as during this period of teaching. I knew that the students before me were products of community life, but I was not prepared for the result.

In the State College Library (one of the best in this part of the country) is a beautiful reading room, usually jammed with students. Yet I could never help feeling that in that room it would be heresy to commit silence.

To watch the students on campus was to get the impression of droves of healthy, athletic sleepwalkers who awakened only at examination time. Few knew where they were. They would like to have someone tell them and to that end they haunted the counselors' offices to learn what they were "fitted for."

Less than half my students could spell and almost none of them had any training in critical inquiry. They were not trained as judges, but as servants who had not been encouraged in the privilege (and, in a democracy, the duty) of dissent . . . They also had little awareness of historical perspective,

I found that European history had gradually given away to emphasis in American history, and began to suspect that ultimately the sole requirement will be a solid grounding in the history of East Chula Vista. They were still partaking of an education in how to make a living, not how to make a life.

It is time for teachers in the various departments of our colleges to get together and redefine the purposes of the education they propose to encourage. Departments today within our colleges seems to exist in unawareness of each other, as though each were the one sun surrounded by accidental satellites who get along on purely reflected light. There is little discussion among departments. Out here at State College, the teachers do not even have a faculty lounge or any other place to meet yet. In most universities, they don't care, in part because of this curious "one sun" conception.

What about the student? He is abandoned in a curious no-man's land from which the consultants have withdrawn to their feudal castles labeled "History," "Psychology," "Literature," etc.

At State College there is, however, a considerable critical curiosity among its teachers and an anxiety to promote a sounder educational pattern.

Ultimately it becomes a "chicken-or-the-egg question—must the community awaken to its educational needs first, and thus help our colleges by supporting their aims and purposes? Or must the college redefine these purposes and go to the people and sell them on the validity of liberal education in our time?

let music flow

FIRST QUALITY MUSIC begins to flow this week after a long dry spell. The Musical Arts Society of La Jolla opens its series at the La Jolla High School Sunday, with a late great symphony of Josef Haydn's; the first, but not the least of Beethoven's piano concertos; a rich Mussorgsky desert, and a new work by Robert Kurka. Whether the last names is trick or treat is for you to find out by listening. It was written on commission from the La Jolla Society and past commissions have all been enjoyable, rather than brow-knitting music.

The orchestra is made up of top-drawer and top-blower Los Angeles musicians. The conductor is Nikolai Sokoloff, the most broadly experienced in the American musical scene and the most rigorous in his standards.

THE GREMLINS scored here again last week. The film "Come in Jupiter," being made by San Diegans under commission from the American Association of the United Nations, has a script by Emily Romano, narration by John Theobald, and music by Christopher Maclaine of San Francisco.

June 25, 1954, Point, **art of the city**: Operation Painful Palette (at County Fair)

COUNTY FAIR management is to be congratulated for bringing to San Diego an exhibition called "Operation Palette", made up of 100 paintings by official Navy combat artists. The subject matter of the paintings is of intense interest here, and many local citizens will imagine themselves or their next of kin in the scenes.

FROM the strictly artistic point of view—and art is a strict mistress—one is forced to ask what the Navy thinks it is doing?

For these paintings as a group do not by any means represent the full power of American artists, or even American illustrators, to report what is going on in the world.

The pictures are, for the most part, quite mediocre technically. Many of them look as though they were painted far from the scene of action by unhappy slaves working from photographs.

In fairness to the artists, it should be noted they all most have exposed themselves to the perils of action, even if only to make hasty sketches.

CURRENTLY, a commission in the Navy to paint war scenes is attractive to few first-rate artists. Best of this group is perhaps Hugh Cabot, Boston blueblood who gets some emotion mixed with his pigments.

Most interesting background, perhaps, belongs to Albert K. Murray, direct descendant—gene-wise if not artistically—of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

His photo (left) by an anonymous Navy lensman, suggests that a show of Navy photographs would be another wise choice for the Fair. Very likely it would be far superior as war reporting.

Sammy's Adventures

SAMMY PASTO has given up bartending, but he still manages to avoid getting stuck with a daytime job. Now, our versatile hero is bringing home the midnight bacon as clarinetist in a jazz band. Sammy is happy with the arrangement—it leaves daylight hours for a little golf and a lot of painting.

Sammy really loves painting pictures. A Pasto or two can usually be found in any San Diego area exhibition. Sammy even gets a sort of road show going around the country—he always seems to have a canvas exhibited in one or another city. In New York last year he had a one-man show, which really takes love (and money) but which gratifies the soul if a man gets constructive press notices, as Sammy did.

SALES are few for most painters (Sammy included) but honors may be many, sometimes with cash attached. Pasto has won his share. He is a frequent award winner at the County Fair Art Show. Both the pictures reproduced here have been seen at past Fair shows. There is no question which was the most popular.

“Clown Boy” is Sammy’s own son . . . At one time or another just about everyone in the Pasto family has made a graceful public appearance, painted in the honey-sweet style of “Clown Boy.” The style was developed in Boston where the Museum of Fine Arts runs a good school.

AFTER service in the Navy, Sammy stayed on in San Diego and spent a year at State College under the G.I. bill. He credits Everett Jackson and Lowell Houser of the college art department with opening his eyes to the fascinating game of painting pictures in which the idea is to keep a family resemblance between all the shapes, all the lines, all the colors. The “subject” painted was no longer so important.

For the jazz musician, it was a whole new world. Now he could get as much fun playing over a canvas with a brush as playing over a theme with a clarinet. Some of his popular appeal dried up, but at least other artists appreciated what he was trying to do.

NATURALLY—naturally—most people who are at all interested in reclining nudes would rather have a Marilyn Monroe calendar than the doodle-bug shown on page 16. But that only means that most people would rather not use their imaginations too much when it comes to looking at pictures. They will settle for being reminded of somebody or something that they like to remember.

Actually, Sammy’s “Reclining Nude: is a quite elementary example of “modern” art. What is shows is that the painter is trying to grow. As you can see by looking at “Clown Boy,” Sammy could do slick pin-ups if he wished. But—evidently—his wish is to paint pictures that can be loved for themselves alone. He has rich adventures ahead of him.

July 2, 1954, Point Magazine, **art of the city: The Wit and Wisdom of Robert Shaw**

Caption: Robert Shaw has made a deep impression, too, on the symphony association members, whose hard work is necessary to assure finances for the big musical enterprise. Many of the following random paragraphs, which reveal the mind of Robert Shaw, in his own words, were taken from a speech he gave at the campaign luncheon early this month. Others are from a paper intended for national publication.

ROBERT SHAW (see cover) is surely one of the best things that ever happened to San Diego. He comes now for the second summer as conductor of our symphony orchestra and as source of current for a choral workshop at State College. Already he has given a distinct lift to San Diego’s national reputation as a center of enlightened music, and thus as a center of enlightened living.

Enlightened music is not the same thing as “light” music. At 38, Shaw has unique status in the world as a choral director, and he is intensely rapt in the process of widening his command over orchestral and chamber repertory. He has Toscanini-type passion for dynamic excellence in performance. The American actually surpasses the revered Italian in esthetic range.

Shaw’s programs are balanced easily between old and new music, with emphasis on integrity rather than popularity. Nothing could better illustrate the scope of Shaw’s mind—and his faith in the San Diego public—than his choice, for the last of this season’s outdoor concerts of Haydn’s rarely heard, but divinely written, dramatic oratorio, “The Creation.” His “chamber” series at Hoover auditorium will include Schubert’s song cycle “Die Winterreise” and Bach’s “Passion According to St. John.” With such goings-on, San Diego breathes maturity.

Not least of Shaw’s powers is understanding the people with whom he works. Musicians, who may have tangled with each other and with other conductors, find peace under shepherd Shaw. “He is a musician among musicians,” says double-bass expert E. G. Mann, champion of local prerogatives. “He has a deep understanding of the score,” says Carlos Mullenix, who left a distinguished New York career to play and teach here.

By ROBERT SHAW

THE CONDUCTOR and the preacher have this much in common—each is smart enough to know that he can't carry the outrageous personal display without significant help. The preacher has the lives and writings of the prophets to balance his own insufficiencies. The conductor has the sounds and orders of great creative masters—and the ministrations of musical slaves—to bridge the chasms of his own ignorance.

IN THE PERFORMANCE of a great work of art, there are as many possibilities of error that no one man can make them all.

AN HONORARY DOCTOR'S mailing address becomes the property of all sorts of advanced cultural services—alumni societies, literary guilds, record-of-the-month clubs, bird-of-the-month club, bath-of-the-month club, birdbath of the month club.

MUSIC IS ORDER . . . Order is the contradiction of chaos . . . In order for sanity . . . It is a “wholeness” which has the same root words as holiness.

I HEARD in New York last year, within a week or two, a contemporary orchestral composition called “Ideas of Order: and Haydn's “The Creation,” the opening movement of which is entitled “A Representation of Chaos” . . . There could be no doubt in which of the works were the greater ideas of order, and in which lay the greater confusion . . . Music is order.

STRAVINSKY calls himself an interpreter of music . . . A sound unexpected but rigorously observed, may cry for development, but that development is an exercise of the intelligence and the will to fabricate . . . Not so much the work of an artist as an artisan.

ON MUSICAL COMPOSITION, just as it other human endeavors, no amount of bellowing, bullying, bluffing can obscure for long the absence of genuine ideas—or indifference to truth. (Do you swear Senator to tell the truth, the half-truth and nothing but . . . ?) There is room for the small “voice: . . . Bach can say more with two flutes than a Mac . . . Dowell can with a whole orchestra.

PERFORMING BERLIOZ' Requiem is a little bit like Mount Rushmore National Monument in South Dakota . . . God's esthetically impoverished peaks ennobled by four Gargantuan life-defying figures—Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt . . . Do you know how long Teddy's mustache is? Forty feet . . . Isn't that a bit of lip?

WAS OUR COUNTRY ever so desperately in need of political figures with wisdom and literacy and modesty and humor—of Jeffersons and Lincolns?

ADLAI STEVENSON in a speech at Columbia University granted himself and his audience an absolutely charming aside. He began a long sentence: “I wonder if all these alarming concerns are not American surface symptoms of something deeper—of a moral and human crisis in the Western World which might even be compared to the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Centuries when the Roman Empire was transformed into feudalism and primitive Christianity, and early Christianity into the structure of the Catholic Church; or the crisis of a thousand years later when the feudal world exploded and the individual emerged with new relationships to God, nature and society—I sometimes rather wonder . . . “ Here Stevenson paused, made a wry face, took a breath and said: “. . . I rather wonder if that sentence sounds as wise at Columbia as it did on the farm when I wrote it.” And he joined in the laughter.

(For political balance, it should be noted that Shaw followed the above with a long familiar Lincoln story—“Every jackass wants a government job:—at the expense of the Democrats.)

I WORRY a lot about speaking to people . . . Think of the responsibility of ordering the air of a room into sound waves of such and such consecutive relationship that they make sense to the ear drums of several hundred people.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES undoubtedly will find their way into legitimate music service . . . Though I am constrained to observe that the way to lick the liquor problem in this country is to put a Hammond organ in every bar.

THE GREAT MUSIC of the world has been written for people no less than for instruments. And even if the world's greatest violinist makes a recording of the Bach double violin concerto by himself, recording the two solo parts on separate tapes and superimposing these tapes in an electronic mixing room—no matter how perfect the performance, something's gone out of the music. Bach wrote his music for two human beings not for the solo engineer.

MUSIC HAS MEANING . . . It is a distillation of the human spirit, and a representation of truth . . . Now that may not come as no great shock to many of you, but I assure you it is an esthetic position accustomed to considerable opposition.

All OF US would grant that when joined with words, music tells a story, ponders an event or proposes an attitude . . . But that music without text has meaning and is a representation of valid reality is a position more difficult to defend . . . But these understandings may be capable of expression and apprehension only in terms of music.

A PRIMARY ASSUMPTION of music is that human beings can and should understand each other with reference to the whole esthetic-spiritual produce of the human mind and heart . . . It affirms that a man is one of a community of men upon whose understanding of himself and his ideas—the meaning of his own existence is predicated.

MUSIC IS GREAT because it carries something so native and true to the human spirit that not even sophisticate intellectuality can decay or destroy its miracle.

POPULAR MUSIC is not the people's music. They think so little of it that they tire of it in six to sixteen weeks. There is music which is calculated to make us forget, and there is music which allows us to remember—to remember our humanity and whatever liberal conscience may ascribe to divinity.

A GREAT COMPANY of human spirits inhabit the world of music and they cross the boundaries of place and time to the here and now. It is our privilege to seek their company, and dare say our responsibility to see that our fellow human beings (and our children) cannot escape at least the opportunity of meeting these master artisans of beauty, these giant men of good will.

CHORAL MUSIC stands in unique and precious relationship to the meaning of all music . . . The choral art processes its own law of gravity which draws people who sing together closer and closer to its deeper understandings.

WITH THE APPEARANCE of a weak piece, an ashamed and foolish disinterest takes over the chorus . . . The contemporary plague of Marlotte's "Lord's Prayer" cannot for long convince anyone who has to sing it—much less the Whom it concerns—simply because it has a wow of a lyric.

ALONE of the musical persuasions the choral art has remained substantially amateur.

TO BE AN AMATEUR artist means, I suppose, to be unwilling or unable to set a price upon the effort and love which attend the creation of beauty . . . When you get right down to it, to be an artist is to be an amateur . . . One can no more think of being a professional musician than a professional thinker, a professional lover, a professional human being . . . To be an artist is to arrive at some sort of position in the idea-versus-matter struggle . . . It's a yea to the proposition that there are human values lasting beyond our own mortal limits and that it is a necessary part of being human to seek, treasure and transmit these values . . . To be an artist is no privilege of a few, but the necessity of us all.

July-August 1954, San Diego Magazine and Point, **THE CITY OBSERVED:** "The Son of the Father Who is on Earth," by James Britton.

There is little room to doubt that the most forceful contribution to the world history of art is the creative original architect Frank Lloyd Wright. What it means to be a creative original architect can be studied until July 11 at the very special exhibition of Wright's life work in Los Angeles (Barnsdall Park, 1645 North Vermont Avenue).

Wright's career is also a prime American instance of the classic struggle between the dynamics of gifted individuals and the smugness of average society. Among the smuggles ringed against him were many little architects, some of whom hated him because they felt obliged to borrow and not return his ideas.

Frank Lloyd Wright's struggle is fictionalized roughly in Ayn Rand's popular "The Fountainhead" (Bobbs-Merrill, 1943). And it is side-lighted in a wonderfully human little book, "My Father Who Is On Earth" (Putnam, 1946), written by John Lloyd Wright. "Son John," as the book calls him is also an architect who has struggled with the smugness of average society. Since much of John Lloyd Wright's struggle occurred—and is occurring—in the San Diego region, we will go into it here.

Son John's personality is quite different from Father Wright's. It is dominated above all by a sense of fun and humor, which has a very happy effect on his architectural design, giving it a lyrical esthetic which is in a class by itself. John's laughter is a unique music, and his smile is almost ever present. You wouldn't expect him to tangle seriously with any fellow mortal. There isn't a sweetest spirit on your planet.

He is admirably unpredictable, like so many artists of worth. There is a vivid passage in his book rippling with self-laughter, but ribbed with philosophy, which describes how young John forsook a promising career as a full-time prankster and "settled" down to learn architecture. It happened in San Diego. Broke and untrained, though acquainted with universities, aged 20 (1912), he went to his room to think things out. His mind was haunted by a piercing challenge of Dad's that no one should be an architect who can be anything else, but John professes a light-hearted decision.

" . . . Why not be an architect? That was the life—dances, cotillions, clambakes, picnics and interesting people. Why hadn't I thought of that sooner? I started down the main street of San Diego to be an architect. Bold letters across the top of a storefront read 'Pacific Building Company.' Drawings of bungalows and a card reading 'Draftsman Wanted' were displayed in the window.

" 'I'm a draftsman from Chicago,' I told the man in charge.

" 'OK, you're hired.' So a draftsman from Chicago was the right thing to say. I took off my coat, grabbed a T-square and triangle like the ones I'd seen in Dad's drafting room, picked up an architect's pencil and went to work on a bungalow.

"The Pacific Building Company completed one of these 'dream castles' each and every day. Each and every day I sold to the people for a dollar down and their pay. My work was drawing elevations.

" 'I drew cobblestones day after day. One day, I got right in the center of a window. From then on I was Chief Designer. The business of architecture was a cinch. Right then and there I decided to give my services to the biggest architectural firm in town, Harrison Albright was the man. He was the architect for J. D. and A. B. Spreckels, the sugar kings.

" 'What experience have you had?'

" 'I'm chief designer for the Pacific Building Company.'

" 'Can you drive a car?'

" 'I certainly can.'

“ ‘Then you’re hired.’

While in Albright’s office, John designed a very Wright-like house for Mrs. M. J. Wood of Escondido, and a four-square, three-story hotel of reinforced concrete, which still stands at Fourth and G Streets, and is now called the Golden West.

San Diego fades as the scene of John Wright’s activity until 1946, when he built his hillside home in Del Mar. Between dates with us, John blazed a trail far and wide and handsome. He served an “apprenticeship” under his father for five years, during which time he superintended the construction of the Midway Gardens entertainment center in Chicago and served as chief draftsman for the Imperial Hotel project in Tokyo—F.L.W. masterworks both.

John Wright set up his own office in Long Beach, Indiana in 1922. His progress there merited significant honors—an award from the Chicago’s Builder’s Exhibit for the best house built under \$12,000 (1929); appointment by the American Institute of Architects as one of three American delegates to the International Congress of Architects (1935); selection by an international jury as architect of the Indiana version of the Solar House (1945).

Wright is particularly proud of the Cool-Spring School he designed for La Porte County, Indiana (1938). He says the cost per pupil capacity and the cost per cubic foot was less than any other school built in Indiana that year. The editor of Architectural Forum, top professional magazine, noted in the January 1954 issue that certain features of the Cool-Spring School were 14 years ahead of their time.

Most charming of Wright’s creations is the famous construction toy, Lincoln logs which has planted the idea of American ingenuity in young brains all around the world.

Why this recital of accomplishment? Because I feel, from what I know of John Wright’s experiences since he returned to San Diego in 1946, that this genial gentleman has been the victim of shameful persecution compounded of whisperings, plottings, and legalistic abracadabra.

If anyone feels that I have interpreted the situation wrongly, and is forthright enough to present a signed rebuttal (short of libel), I’ll be glad to publish it here.

Before touching on the tangle of recent developments, I want to note the ever-tightening coil of regulations governing architectural practice that has developed since Albright hired Wright because he could drive a car. Architects themselves have laid the coil through the AIA and through pressure on state legislatures. Much of the legislation protects the public interest, but sometimes the way it is administered merely protects mediocre architects, who are resentful of un-harnessed long-hair architects, and who develop a powerful urge to clip the latter’s locks.

Locally, it would seem that certain architects can’t sleep Wright does not operate by rulebook as thoroughly as they themselves presumably do. They don’t like his casual attitude toward local AIA chapters and state licensing rigmarole. One San Diego architect had to be censured by the AIA in its official publication for testifying in a lawsuit against Wright’s standards of drafting and specification writing, but the whispering against Wright’s standards continue. The meanness of the mediocre spirit never showed more plainly than when John Lloyd Wright was driven from his post as instructor at a University of California extension course here in 1949. The year before, Wright had taught a class as Consultant in Architecture, but between seasons local rulebook wavers intimidated the giant university into shifting his course to the Art Department. Wright quit as a matter of principle.

At the present moment, Architect Wright is before the courts of California, charged with advertising himself as an architect. That sounds silly, but there is a law making it a crime unless a man is licensed by the state. It doesn’t matter how accomplished he may be. Wright is also charged with designing (Shades of the Golden West) a concrete building and a building more than one story in height. These acts are now “crimes” unless one is caparisoned with the right licenses.

No one should conclude that the charges are true until the complicated court case is decided. And if a violation is proved in court, it should be balanced publicly against the man's measured worth. Among his virtues is a great respect for sound laws.

Other architects freely admit that John Wright could qualify for a license if he chose to go through the proper channels. (He already has one in Indiana, Nevada and Texas.) They think of him as simply stubborn, and some of them expand with the pride of pygmies as they recall the similar troubles of Father Wright, whose impatience with red tape was such he once applied for a California license by simply tossing at the board of examiners an issue of *Architectural Forum* that was devoted in toto to his great works. The world's champion architect lost that round to the rulebook wavers.

What should most concern the public is that the elaborate machinery of government, designed to promote the general welfare, is not sensitive enough to protect the values of creative originality, but tends instead to make the world safer for mediocrity. Sensitive law is more needed today than it ever was because the relations between people have become more, not less complicated and tricky with the "advance" of civilization.

John Lloyd Wright is one of the light bringers to our jungle. If you should visit the garden of this friendly man, you would discover the special quality of that light. For there, the artist-architect, worshipping the promise of tomorrow, has created a mood of joy triumphant by the imaginative handling of edge-lighted and luminous sculptures, placed against the dark welter of California vegetation. It is one of the most satisfying—and architectural experiences—available in our region or anywhere else. John Lloyd Wright, like his father, deserves honor from us.

July 9, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: Joseph Padgett's Vision

Joseph E. Padgett, current president of our city planning commission, has come forward with a magnificent line of thinking, relative—very relative—to San Diego's future. The County Planning Congress, a discussion group composed from the planning commissions of nine cities plus that of the county itself, was the first to hear the highly original paper which we happily present below.

Though a beret is his favorite headgear, pin-neat Joseph Padgett hardly would expect to be taken for an artist. Yet in the finest sense he is just that. . . . He has mulled the products of his experience and shaped of them a concept quite unique. . . . It is not known that anyone before has advanced the central idea of Mr. Padgett's air-conditioned thesis.

It is necessary for those seeking a real grasp of modern city problems to read widely and deeply. On the evidence of our picture, Mr. Padgett is not afraid of books. He reaches out eagerly for sound literature, and is undoubtedly one of a very few people in local government who have plowed through the profound writings of that foremost American city-ologist, Lewis Mumford. (Mumford's "The Culture of Cities" is the best mind-opener as to what cities have been—and what they might be.)

Joseph Padgett's other invaluable aptitude for city planning is his talent for industrial management. Trained as an engineer in New England, cradle of American enterprise, he spent his battle years in Midwest industry—automotive. He was vice president of Solar Aircraft Company here at the time he "retired." His is the kind of creative "capitalist" outlook that has propelled America so far, and can still move us if we are not too spellbound by our past good luck.

The words that follow are worth careful reading and weighing.

Metropolis, 1976

by Joseph E. Padgett

Two hundred years after the date when this great country began to go its own way in the world, I can see the start of the world's first truly great metropolitan city. This will be located on the western slope

of the mountains surrounding San Diego Bay, and extending perhaps fifty miles in each direction. It will include what is now San Diego and the cities that now lie adjacent to it.

This will not be a sort of junior city located at the end of the line of transportation but will be the keystone of a vast new empire that is now in the process of building. On one side (to the north) lies the new empire of the West which will have been building for many years and which has been the goal of the earth's great migrations . . . a flow of people that has filled the Los Angeles area to the point that future arrivals will be diverted to the San Diego area in increasing amounts—probably accelerating the growth in this area to an extent not now visualized even by those who are making population studies for large projects such as the proposed sewage disposal system.

San Diego is at the end of that empire and, in the vision of the past, it has been expected to remain there.

However, another new empire is beginning to stir to the east of San Diego, an empire that will stretch 2,000 miles east through the Imperial Valley, Arizona, New Mexico and a part of Texas.

One day this will be a vast scene of industry as well as agriculture, a modern equivalent of the great ancient desert civilizations of Babylonia and Egypt.

This will come to pass because of two ideas that are taking root. One of these is the transport of huge quantities of water from the mountains to the desert as we are now doing in California and as was done in the Babylon of old. The other is the discovery of means to cool and condition the air so that people can live in comfort during the hot summers and enjoy the delightful winter climate.

This latter seems strange when we think of it in connection with more than an occasional store of residence, but it is not at all new in principle. The great belt of industry in the east central part of this country is built on the idea of air conditioning.

In that area the summers are good but the winters are much too cold to permit people to work well or live with comfort. Because of the discovery of coal with its ability to heat all homes and places of business as well as its ability to furnish power, and its availability close at hand, this region became the center of a new empire that was growing fast before our civil war.

In like manner, the oil and gas supplies of the Southwest—and, one of these days, the use of energy from the light of the sun which is available all of the time in this Southwest—coupled with the newly-acquired to cool the inside of buildings, will cause this new empire to grow beyond our most fanciful imaginations.

Already we can see industries that are located in this area and are cooled to a comfort level in the summers. We read about the new automobiles that come equipped with refrigerated air-cooling taking their power from the engine of the car. I note that a trial is to be made of cooled houses in Austin, Texas, houses that are valued at only \$12,000. This is getting down into the edge of the mass market.

This empire, as well as the empire of the West, must have outlets for its industrial and agricultural specialties. Put a low level highway or tunnel between San Diego and the Imperial Valley where the western mountain chain is the narrowest and this city of ours will become the keystone of a great arch, the center and not the end of the line. With its fine natural harbor, the only one between San Francisco and Houston, San Diego will become the natural center of the whole.

In the past, our eyes have looked toward Europe in the matter of trade, but that will not be so true in the future. At the present time we are in conflict with some of the nations of the Pacific, but that will not last forever. The nations that border the Pacific need each other too much for conflict to last. One day, the trade with South America, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, and the many island nations, probably including Siberia also, will be tremendous, and much of it will channel through our harbor.

In view of that vision, we now have the opportunity to create here the first truly modern city, or rather metropolis, because we are at the beginning of our great growth and can direct it before it is too late.

Two opposing forces must be considered in a great city. One of them is the apparent need for centralized power so that great projects can be carried out in the best way.

The other is the loss of personal contact and understanding which makes a huge city an impersonal machine that does not and cannot know the needs of the neighborhood areas, that must operate with sufficient uniform rules over the entire city even if these do not fit in many cases, and that invites the operation of vice and crime and bribery because the people are too far away from the political organizations to know what is going on or be able to do anything about it.

A group of small or medium-sized cities cannot work well together on the great projects for there is no effective way to resolve the differences of opinion that must arise in such matters, and a single vast city will fail in its ability to understand the people and provide the best place for them to live and be happy.

Water, sewage, highways, even major zoning and planning for the use of the land must be considered and decided on the basis of the metropolitan whole. Parks, local zoning and planning, perhaps even fire and police, and other matters, should be controlled on the very local plane where the people of a neighborhood can be personally interested and active.

This could be realized here because changes in state law make it possible to establish the borough form of government, in which the metropolitan whole can carry out major functions while the boroughs can even have their own councils, planning commissions and administrative organizations. San Diego might be divided into six or seven boroughs while the adjacent cities joined as other boroughs.

It is not an untried style of organization. It has been forced on large industry in recent years by the pressure of competitive necessity. There was a time when corporations were operated as a single chain of command with everything decided at the top and everything uniform in the various plants or offices.

This seemed to produce tremendous results. It was dramatic and powerful but it was not the best. Other competitors felt it stifled initiative and produced fatiguing frustrations. They tried the idea of a loose control at the top where the very minimum of decisions were made, leaving the individual plants and offices as autonomous as possible.

This latter idea was so much better that these corporations far outstripped the old idea.

I have tried both methods in my own experience in industry and I have seen the vast difference in their effectiveness. If our metropolitan community can adopt these new—and proven—ideas, it will be possible to achieve both the soundness of collective action and the happiness of personal neighborhood participation in local affairs . . . the world's first truly great metropolitan city.

Shaw and Fry

SHAW AND FRY—top originals of drama—are heard together now at the Globe Theatre. “The Great Catherine” is really Irishman Shaw himself in a suitable stage shape going about his business of preparing a specimen Englishman for the Shaw museum of natural history. Bruce Torbet and Neil Rankin give engaging vitality to the roles of butterfly and collector.

“A Phoenix Too Frequent,” finds Christopher Fry laughing to mask off a Greek “tragedy.” DeOn Anderson, Gwen McCants and Jackson Woolley all sound good in the Fry word-music. Miss Anderson frequently comes in the shape of a pudding and says, “I know I’m dead because the boss took all the bones out.”

July 23, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: Making the World Wright

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT is distinguished above all for being himself. He has tried heroically to re-form the world in his own image. So, he is that most important type of twentieth century man, the one who fights for the renewal of human values, while the multitudes give in to machines, from their pedal-happy feet to their sponsor-stuffed heads.

At 85, Wright spoke at USC this month. As usual, he spoke without hesitation and without notes. Much of what he said was familiar to many of the devotional audience. It was not so much what he said, but the fact that he said it, that attracted them.

Here was the supreme egocentric, who could bring down the house, not by concluding with a note of thanks for listening, but by asking firmly, "Have I made myself clear?" The answer, of course, is that he is one of the most clearly and most completely expressed humans who have ever lived.

Wright has fantastic power to awaken the sense of individuality in others. This, indeed, is his greatest function. He had done wonderful works of architecture, and has shown unsurpassed aesthetic judgment many times. Even those works of his which are rejected in terms of today's polite good taste are tremendously vital "failures," much more humanly stimulating than the "successes" of lesser men. Whether he has spurred them to action or reaction, he has fathered the whole army of present-day workers in architecture, here and abroad, with respect to the basic features of design.

Who can you find in all Twentieth century art activity to compare with this archetypal American enterpriser? An ironic sidelight on the safe government: Architect Frank Lloyd Wright never had a municipal, state or Federal commission—though he is being considered to design the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs. Incidentally, he has never had a commission of any kind in San Diego County.

SIM BRUCE RICHARDS is one of perhaps a half-dozen San Diegans who have studied directly with Wright. (Others include: Judy Horton Munk, Frank Liebhardt and Loch Crane.)

Richards is an ideal example of the Wright influence. Born in Oklahoma, in large part of Cherokee stock (and related to Will Rogers, like all good Oklahomans), Richards was living in Phoenix at 15 when he discovered Wright for himself in the public library (Wright's books are the same egocentric magnets as the man, curiously like Gertrude Stein, only warmer.)

So Bruce went on to study architecture. At the University of California, he designed French Provincial gas stations to appease his backward teachers and hooked rugs of American Indian spirit to appease his Cherokee soul. Wright saw the hooked rugs at an exhibition and invited Bruce to his training-ground in Wisconsin.

From those years, Richards has come forth in the world, talking and designing like Wright, and developing accents of his own. Says the disciple: "There is still a great deal to be done with the old architectural triad—wood, stone and glass. . . . I am reminded of Brahms, who said, when accused of not using the latest models of musical composition, that he felt that the major triad had not been fully explored." Here, Richards is reflecting the Wright who is not an innovator merely, but the transmitter of really important discoveries of the past.

Notable in Richard's personality is a critical humor which allows him rapid growth through recoil against his own work. Of the LaMotte Cohu house (page 10), he can laugh with the people who claim it looked like a Navy flat-top straining to move into the nearby Pacific. Of the Cohu house fireplace—not bad looking for Arizona flagstone—he can say he spent hours mothering the masons, but he would never use the material again.

The fool-the-eye effect in the Cohu house came about because Richards made a "logical" design in his own house (photo below). The house has a great impressiveness from the street and does not appear to be going anywhere, even though Richards claims he was trying to achieve a floating effect.

Says he: "I was intrigued with the abstract proposition of making a house float visually . . . yet tying it back into the earth design-wise. An air of floating and an air of mystery are very important psychologically on these two-small city lots. In my house, these airs are justified by the desire for privacy on a corner lot and because the wind and sun conditions seemed to demand almost no windows on the south and west.

"Gates opening into new spaces, walls folding away to reveal more and more—these are the keys of my design."

Richards has the Wright idea of landscaping, too. He observes of the Japanese garden, for example, "There's the element of mystery and surprise in an old thing."

Richard's clients, if they are like Bernice and Alan Soule, find living in his houses an adventure with rewards. Starting with a suspicion that he was too daring, Soules now follow keenly his developing work and wish they could be his clients all over again. Especially good examples of the ripening Richards style can be seen at 3243 Harbor View Drive and (right next door) at 887 Golden Park. Here is a man who is contributing very positively to the uniqueness of San Diego, with due credit to Mister Wright.

JOHN REED, fluent young architectural associate of Bruce Richards will show color slides and talk about the work of the late architect Rudolph Schindler at the Fine Arts Gallery Friday evening. Yes, Reed and Schindler both are strongly marked with the Wright outlook.

July 16, 1954, Point, **art of the city:** A Meeting of East and West

THE BISHOP'S SCHOOL is not sleeping. The correct Episcopal girl-polishing school in La Jolla soon should be planning new buildings. One hopes they will be buildings of infinite glass to take in completely the enchanted outdoor campus landscape.

Snobbism is not the main preoccupation there. The Bishop's School is expanding its concern with the world. Students from various countries will mingle with the daughters of America.

Reliable index to a school's growth is the character of its arts department. At "Bishop's" the art department is Miss Luise Elcaness, product of Brooklyn by way of New York's famous High School of Music and Art and Syracuse University.

Her broad approach and sure instinct for the more important creative elements in art activity have proved exciting to her students here. She teaches assorted arts and crafts courses, as well as art history.

Particularly attractive is her ability as a dancer and dance teacher. Her special interests are : "modern" and Hindu dance forms. In the latter, she has won much spontaneous admiration for the authentic "feel" of her work.

LUISE ELCANESS not only understands the action of dance, but its purpose too. Of "modern" dance she says: "It is 'our' dance medium—our infant—our way of expressing 'us,' as individuals or as a generation."

Of Hindu dance, she explains: "It is an integrated expression of ideas—of man's connection with nature and nature's forces—using the body as a branding iron to imprint man's spirit with the spirit of life, to identify him with his universe."

Miss Elcaness is impressed by the genuine appreciation she finds wherever Hindu dance is exhibited. "No one, no matter how disinterested in dance generally seems to be exempt from responding to the graceful expression of elemental concepts in Hindu dance . . . It appeals to the common sense of beauty in us all. Because of this universal appeal in a very ancient art form, Hindu dance is one of the most important human arts, especially in our tormented world."

Another notable aspect of this art form is that while popular, it still appeals to sophisticated and even esthetically “advanced” people. A number of the most discriminating art followers have formed themselves into a happy class of amateur Hindus, with Miss Elcaness as rollicking leader.

Caption: THE HANDY Pacific, favorite backdrop of figure photographers, was used by Howard Smith for the views (below) of Luise Elcaness in typical motions of Hindu dance. Smith is one of San Diego’s more venturesome camera artists, in business at “Colorsmith Photography.”

Slow Winslow Wins

LA JOLLA Playhouse opened its season of good current plays with Terrence Rattigan’s “The Winslow Boy,” which continues through Sunday. It’s an engaging story, doing the ever-needed job of puncturing bureaucracy and high brass.

A tender lad, played tenderly by Christopher Cook, curls up and goes to sleep on stage while his case against the British Admiralty is argued in high court offstage by Vincent Price.

Unfortunately, at about the same time, the play curls up and goes to sleep on stage, which is no wonder, after the tense build-up of the first act, wherein, toward curtain, of course, Vincent Price puts on a tour de almost literal force, perhaps, the best scene he had done in his three appearances on the La Jolla stage. (Edward Ashton replaces Price this week.)

Price flounders in the second act, as do most of the players, due to the unlaced wordage. Dorothy McGuire does not raise the general metabolism by her relaxed performance, but there are finely shaped enactments by Eduard Franz as a somber father, Richard Lupino as a comic-relief relative, and Sean McClory as a shaky suitor. McClory, by the way of Dublin, displayed a complete style of acting, starting from the toes and including voice in noble measure.

July 30, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: Radio turns human

August 12, 1954, Point, **art of the city**: When a Lot is Too Little (Lloyd Ruocco)

Caption: The smart camerawork of San Diego’s Ed Stevers illustrated the smart architecture of Lloyd Ruocco in House and Home Magazine for June. H. and H. captioned this one: “Glass above partitions makes roof seem to float on air.”

Caption: House and Home said of this view: “Simplicity of design and luxuriant landscaping—common to Japanese architecture—were relied upon by Ruocco for beauty.”

Caption: This view, not used by H. and H., emphasizes the distinction brought to a plain room when its outside wall is not only transparent but fully movable.”

EYES POPPED in some San Diego heads as they read House and Home Magazine for June. House and Home is a companion piece to Time and Life. Its mission in time and life is to marry the architectural profession to the house building industry.

A feature for June was the house designed by S. D. architect Lloyd Ruocco and displayed in Balboa Park two years ago in connection with a home show. The article was headed: Home Show House Has Mass-Production Potential, and the accent of the text was on producing a good house for a little money. Thus, an architect who is widely spoken of locally as designing only luxury houses on unlimited budgets is celebrated nationally for originating a house building idea pregnant with economies!

Eyes popped in some San Diego heads.

HOUSE AND HOME says of the Ruocco house that it “dramatizes the beauty and advantages of post-and-beam construction and introduces steel posts and a pre-fabricated roofing and ceiling system. . . .

As a first-rate prototype, it points sharply to post-and-beam possibilities on a mass production scale. Here's why: posts are standard 2-1/2" square steel, 12-gauge, shop-welded; entire frame was erected without cutting during assembly; plywood and hardboard components are pre-cut, 4' by 8' sheets; sliding exterior doors and glass walls were shop-finished; standard cabinet-making methods were used; most interior partitions and casework were shop-fabricated; it was built in a month without previous prehab experience."

The magazine continues: "From the lessons learned on this house, Ruocco believes he has worked out an economy all-wood structure, custom-designed for a client, with such basic luxuries as two long sides of glass, large sliding doors, central heating, storage partitions, fenced patios and wide overhangs—for from \$10 to \$11 per square foot."

House and Home quotes Ruocco: "There is beginning to be some interest in this type of house. . . . Time will tell. . . . In comparison with other industries, residential construction methods are as dead as a dodo. Inevitably, housing will come right out of package units made by several manufacturers. I can see the time when 4' by 8' by 3" sandwiches of wood, plastic or other materials, complete with ribbed bracing and insulation, might be picked from a catalogue by an architect . . . working with parts instead of pieces."

THE MORE PROMISING prospect of Ruocco's much-glass house was not touched on at all by House and Home. Because a house walled in with glass all-around requires a park-like setting to realize its full living value, it exerts a tremendous pressure against that dull unsocial convenience of real-estate officials, the standardized building lot.

If enthusiasm for living in a park setting catches on, it will mean that more homes will be built in groups in a carefully designed landscape, with due allowance for spacious privacy. Fewer people will be satisfied to build singly on an arbitrary lot for which neighbors crowding both sides, a public street in front and only the usually scrawny rear for indoor-outdoor living.

Ruocco's design thinking is somewhat in line with that of Mies van der Rohe, pioneer architect whose ideas are often described by the intriguing phrase (a quote from Mies): "Less is more." Certainly, the generous use of glass means that you have less wall space and more visual space, thus more possible beauty.

The Mies van der Ruocco approach is always on view at the Design Center, 3603 Fifth Avenue, where landscape and furniture are sold in an around a building of Ruocco's design. His architectural office is also there. . . . Yes, he owns the place.

IN MISSION HILLS right now, Ruocco is building for Max Rabinowitz a house like the one constructed in Home and Home and in these pages of Point. Rabinowitz, an orchid fancier, happens to be mad for landscape, so he hungrily set Harriet Wimmer, Ruocco's landscape associate, to work planting his site before the building crew got finally started. His site is half of the spacious grounds formerly occupied by the Sunset Gallery (Sunset Avenue at Auguello Street). He owns the other half and wants to sell it (\$25,000), preferably to someone who will build a house sympathetic to his own.

Rabinowitz is not building a budget house by any means, but he is pioneering an approach to housing that is especially appropriate in a city geared to outdoor living. The obvious challenge is for Ruocco and others capable of similar flights into purposeful design to get together on specific projects that will put the benefit of their clear-glass housing within average or upper-average reach. Building houses in well related groups is perhaps the secret. Our canyons lie waiting for the touch of the designer's wand; they might create bright clusters of glass houses that would bring a new wave of national recognition to San Diego.

It could only happen through eager cooperation of people whose first thought is optimum living patterns, not easy profits . . . people able to think of real estate with lot lines erased. In building the future's best houses, there are two equations to remember: less is more and a lot is too little.

August 19, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: Beating words into music (Musical Arts Society of La Jolla)

August 26, 1954, Point, ART OF THE CITY: New look in hotels (Hotel del Charro)

Caption: Maria English, San Diego's heartfelt sacrifice to the Deus ex Machina business of Hollywood, suggests by this picture how much La Jolla is become a suburb of the film capital. Maria was an obliging guest at the hotel when Charles Schneider, photographer, happened along. More and more hotels like this are the backdrop for releases feeding the nation's publicity maws.

THE HOTEL BUSINESS has been knocked flat lately – literally. Upstanding hotels of many stories and little or no landscaping—like the U. S. Grant in San Diego—find it impossible to keep their rooms filled. Even at the height of San Diego's tourist summer, the good gray Grant is said to have less than 60 percent occupancy. Thus, the feverish hurry lately to convert large chunks of such buildings to offices and stores.

Hotel men generally agree that the wave of the future, that is the waving of dollars by transients seeking shelter will favor garden-type or drive-in hotels, a crossbreed between hotel and motel, offering—to use the self-fascinated language of the trade—the service of a hotel with the convenience of a motel.

California naturally has been in the forefront of horizontal hotel development. Sacramento saw perhaps the earliest good example of the super-species, El Rancho. It was not long before others outnumbered El Rancho. As of today, the super-est of all is the Hacienda in Fresno, with 500 rooms.

San Diego sports a handsome series of drive-in hotels, a sufficient concentration of them in fact to have warranted a feature article in the New York Times recently. Generally, these enterprises are a definite enrichment to the local scene, because they necessarily involve intelligent architectural planning. It is a sure thing that if a drive-in hotel is badly planned it is herded toward early financial collapse—because others, more wisely planned, will drain off the business.

From the point of view of his lordship, Mr. American Traveler, that hotel pleases best which is most like his own home, or at least his dream house. Fact is that Mr. America is today highly educated as to the proper setting for gracious domestic life. If he may not have achieved it yet in his own property, he expects all the more to sample it when he motors far from home.

The horizontal hotels are doing good business even in overbuilt San Diego, where lesser motels and hotels trapped downtown may be in trouble. So good is business for the better-designed places that at least two new large scale drive-in hotels are approaching the ground-breaking stage here, one financed by a Phoenix firm, the other by the promoters of the Fresno enterprise mentioned above.

Point will present the principal hotels in some detail from time to time. We start with Hotel del Charro.

HOTEL DEL CHARRO has a colorful history redolent of horses. Main unit in the present sprawling layout in La Jolla Shores is a sturdy stable from which two sweet ladies conducted a genteel riding academy for years. In the late thirties they traded the place to Capt. Warren Beckwith, whose passion for horses was such that he motorized West with a favorite mount cradled in the rear of a Lincoln Continental. The Continental had been ripped open with an acetylene torch to provide comfort for the horse.

After 1943, bold Texas strokes paint the picture. In these years, James and Faye Marshall were out touring from Texas, when their fancy hit on Capt. Beckwith's stable. They looked him up same day, by nightfall they had bought the place (four acres) for \$26,000. The Marshalls are not ones to wait around on an idea. This year, living hard by del Charro, on a choice piece marked private prop (no period visible), they celebrate their 34th wedding anniversary. Mrs. Marshall is 48 years old—and we are not allowing typographical errors to spoil her figure.

The Marshalls converted the stable to a 15-unit motel, but when maintenance problems outbalanced pleasure and profit, they put the place on the market two years ago. Within a week another Texan, one of the boldest strokers of them all, Clint Murchison, took title. He paid the Marshalls \$165,000. Private prop, indeed.

The famous Murchison had been planning to build a house in La Jolla, handy to his favorite racetrack, Del Mar (which he was to buy later). He owned two acres just back of the Marshalls. His agent, Joe Stanton, sold him on building a hotel instead of a house. The Murchison mind probably reasoned like this: "I want to buy the track . . . I want to be with my friends at the track . . . I must have room to put them up . . . I am a Texan."

Serious citizens in La Jolla tend to feel that Hotel del Charro is a Texas enclave, not too much concerned with the town's welfare. Manager Allan Witwer argues on the contrary that his hotel is a very sound economic asset to the community, that it operates in the black, hires its employees locally and buys supplies here whenever possible.

Witwer says further that Murchison's friends and even Murchison himself pay their bills like anyone else staying at the hotel. That goes too for John Edgar Hoover and Joseph Raymond McCarthy, whose visits overlapped sensationally last year.

HOOVER, who formally patronized Casa Manana (now exclusively for the old and retired, hence no place for Mr. G Man in full flush), occupied one of the ingenious "bungalows" which are the best architectural feature of del Charro. Simple, but handsome frame construction, with high windows placed to catch the dramatic setting of mountains, the bungalows as a group are a good example of how houses can be placed close to each other and still look good in the landscape.

The bungalows have three rooms, three baths, three separate patios, and can house three couples in a pinch. At \$75 per day (in racing season), that is a popular arrangement. Other accommodations scale down to single rooms at \$15. Total beds: 80. Winter rates from \$6 to \$50 per day.

Another example of the free Texas hand: about a million dollars went into reconstruction of del Charro, including \$20,000 for a super swim hole. An additional \$350,000 was spent on interiors.

The restaurant (stables turned tables) is decorated with paintings and murals by Jon Helland. Feature, of course, is horses, fast ones—a different breed from the mild mounts installed on the premises in quieter days when Hotel del Charro was merely a source of horses for genteel riders.

September 2, 1954, Point, **art of the city:** The Measure of Man (Public Library); The Creation (Robert Shaw); Triple-Threat Shakespeare

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY has bravely put up a forceful exhibition, one supplied by Columbia University, as part of its strenuous effort to remind Americans of "man's right to knowledge and the free use thereof." That is the theme of Columbia's two-hundredth birthday celebration.

To explain the theme, a graphic exhibit of 60 panels, about 20 inches by 20 inches, was prepared by a committee including Leopold Arnaud, Henry Commager and Mark van Doren, and designed by the architectural firm of Ketchum, Gina and Sharp.

Our library shows 20 of the panels. They include a typical American town-meeting close-up (reproduced here).

Other panels quote major findings of the human mind illustrated with works of fine and applied, including journalistic, art. Samples:

St. John: ". . . the truth shall make you free." (A Durer engraving.)

Aristotle: "All men by nature desire to know." (A photo of the Milky Way.)

Editor William Allen White: ". . . Put fear out of your heart." (A page of the Emporia Gazette.)

Judge Augustus Hand: "Art certainly cannot advance under compulsion to traditional forms." (A stabile by Calder, a score by Alban Berg.)

Yale's President Griswold: "The only sure weapon against bad ideas is better ideas." (A sixteenth century painting: book-burning.)

Walter Lippmann: ". . . No official yet born on this earth is wise enough or generous enough to separate good ideas from bad ideas." (Rollin Kirby's cartoon of a lugubrious censor.)

Henry Seidel Canby: "If the bell of intolerance tolls for one, it tolls for all." (Diagram of an atomic chain reaction.)

Mr. Justice Jackson: "Those who begin coercive elimination of dissent soon find themselves exterminating dissenters." (Pictures of Socrates drinking the hemlock, of Buchenwald victims stacked like cordwood.)

George Washington: "The citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy." (Photo of the Newport synagogue where Washington said this in 1790.)

The Creation Comes Off

;ANTICIPATIONS were fulfilled when Robert Shaw produced Haydn's marvelous oratorio, "The Creation," in Balboa Park Aug. 17. It was by far the outstanding artistic event of a twelve-month in San Diego.

The audience was obviously lit up, irradiated by the strong rays of the music, at once as simple and complex as the sun itself. There is no doubt that Shaw's burning ambition was finding effect—he was rekindling, recreating, in his fellow mortals the confident joy in life that slants the race towards progress.

The effect was no accident. It couldn't have happened with just any conductor. It was a result of Shaw's fanatical (in the best sense) concern with the religious power of music. Not by whim but by design had the son of a minister shifted his own vocation from the pulpit to the podium. He had discovered that words alone are not enough to lift the burdened modern heart. He was confident of the leverage of music. So he became America's most persuasive revivalist, registering his caroled message—not to say singing commercial—where word jugglers like Billy Graham would meet only folded ears.

A specific example: Toward the end of "The Creation" occur the words, "This world, so great, so wonderful." "So what," might be your reaction unless you heard them sung on the 17th by Patricia Beems. Her voice, while soprano in range, has depth and purity of color suggesting Marian Anderson. The shafts of memorable voice borne on Haydn's choice of cadence must have renewed your faith in the greatness and wonder of the world, possibly even reinforcing your patience with its ills.

Shaw's passion for significant music-making led him to choose as soloists two of the most intelligent singers now in voice—Blake Stern and Mack Harrell.

Stern's tenor has a dramatic urgency that could breathe fire into a shopping list. Harrell's baritone is distinguished for color, pitch, range, but most of all for uncanny diction which seems to raise his text to a higher power than mere human expression. Without such singers, this "Creation" would easily have failed as miracle.

Shaw's precision engineering of choral sound was much in evidence, and the orchestra played well above its usual standard, avoiding the curved mirror effects which come when musicians are asleep at the pitch.

Final proof of the general triumph was to find audience, orchestra and chorus members walking around on fleecy clouds of high good feeling upon disbanding. "The Creation" was a rare example of community achievement in an art form that worked very definitely to the good of everyone concerned.

Triple Threat Shakespeare

IT MIGHT SURPRISE many followers of the Old Globe Theatre to hear that they have been supporting for years an aggressive liberal institution. Yet the liberal spirit is an inherent part of the playwright's vocation and all important plays are affected by it.

The liberal spirit of Shakespeare currently poses a triple threat against stuffiness that may lurk in Globesters. He mocks the pompous and vain in Twelfth Night, scourges the colorblind in Othello, and shames the anti-Semitic in the Merchant of Venice.

All three plays, as produced in the park, are worth seeing, as entertainment, or as purgative.

OTHELLO is produced dark and rich as fruitcake, gracefully relieved toward the end by the clearing voice of Dorothy Chace (Emilia) taking over for her big scene. Gerald Charlebois (Othello) is impressive up to but not including the climax. Jack Sowards (Iago) registers villainy all the way like a slashing knife. Donna Wegner is believable as Desdemona.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, hottest of Shakespeare's essays, banned locally a few years back by State College official squeamishness, now turns out to be an air-cleaning caricature of both Semitism and anti-Semitism. Charlebois (Antonio) is a convincing malcontent whose Jew-hating follows from his nature, Joe Hearne (Shylock) makes his Christian-hating lines sound preposterous, and manages to center the issue—with Shakespeare's help—on the equal humanity of Jew and non-Jew. Dorothy Chace (Portia) is again delightful, and Bob Halvorse (Bassanio) is more delightful than he need be.

TWELFTH NIGHT: A collidescope of comic effects, the play is not the thing so much as is the playing. Roxanne Haug (Viola) works dismay for gentle laughs, and Gretchen Grill_ (Olivia) lampoons the ever-willing-maid-too-long-in-waiting, Broad (sic) burlesque is supplied by Shirley Johnson (Maria), broader (hic) by Mille_ Bushway (Tony Belch), and broadest of all by Robert O'Neal as Aguecheek. Frank Kinsella's Malvolio (photo above) could only be believed if seen and maybe not even then. He has a condor-like way of enveloping the stage.

September 9, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** Best of Humor: you bet your life we serve bluepoints! (Harbor House Restaurant, Foot of Pacific Highway)

The Best of Humor

THE ABOVE is not a paid piscatorial advertisement. It rates free display here because it is San Diego's winning entry in the thirty-third annual exhibit of the Art Directors Club of New York. From under a pile of 11,762 entries, our oyster muscled its way into a select group of 427 items actually put on display. Of the 427, fewer than 100 received awards. Bluepoint showed up in that group too.

Pinpointing Bluepoint's quality even further, it was one of only 33 chosen by Art News for the first issue of its "Design Portfolio," included in the Summer, 1954, issue of that magazine. Art News made its choice without knowledge of the official jury's selection, and printed the San Diego bivalve among 10 models of humor and fantasy.

The artist involved in this heady climb up the arabic ladder is Patrick Fitzgerald. He is one of several artists working for the advertising firm of Washburn and Justice, who have done striking cartoons

on the Harbor House account. Some of the others—Will Goldsmith, Jim Boynton, could logically share his rung of the ladder.

Credit for the original idea of the Harbor House series, and for getting it across to the client, belongs to the late Preston Justice, one of the town's keenest appreciators of art values. After the war he set up his agency which was—and still is—the most willing of all locally to pioneer sophisticated humor. The firm is always glad to see the work of artists who think they have a fresh way with pen or brush.

Fitzgerald himself was a San Diegan only by courtesy of the Marines. While camped here, he dropped in on Washburn and Justice because it was the popular thing to do among artists of his acquaintance.

Humor of such quality in advertising has immense audience impact. Psychologically, it leaves an impression of a quality product even on the plainest reader. Surely there are a few Americans—or Hottentots, for that matter—so muddled-minded as not to relish a good cartoon. Yet a willing agency's biggest headache is clients who insist on dull, conservative—usually mediocre and unnoticeable—advertising art.

An achievement like this one we celebrate here is not so simple as it seems.

Hobson's Choice Choice

AFTER LOSING some \$5,000 on the high-guarantee, highly boring movie, "About Mrs. Leslie," the new Capri Theatre now has a show worthy of the handsomest picture house in town.

"Hobson's Choice" is a choice, prime English beef pie of a picture, succulent with the humours of shopkeeper-class morality. Lancashire in the 1890's yields characters, situations and settings which are immediately lovable for their old-shoe qualities.

Roughly the plot: Bootmaker Charles Laughton is forced—per adventure—to recognize the sudden strength of his daughter, Brenda de Banzie, who decides to thwart everlasting spinsterhood by capturing papa's industrious but repressed apprentice, John Mills.

Though the picture is billed, in America anyway, as a vehicle for Laughton, the Capri-goer quickly finds that the best performances come from de Banzie and Mills. They are actors who have a fine sense of disciplined movement, something Laughton lacks by nature.

Laughton is engrossing as only the gross-fleshed can be, but he overworks his familiar assets, tending to jump outside the frame of an otherwise beautifully balanced picture. It is a sure thing that Laughton registers best from the living stage, especially in corseted roles like his mesmeric reading of "Don Juan in Hell."

"Hobson's Choice" is a particular feast for the eye because of the evident great care in design and photography. Someone concerned with the production must be a re-incarnation of William Hogarth, so closely do the various scenes resemble the scenes of that English master's famous folkway engravings. This is not to suggest that you will see anything like "The Harlot's Progress," but "Hobson's Choice" belongs pictorially with Hogarth's "Industrious and Idle Apprentices" series, for example.

Altogether and despite flaws like occasional weak passages in the soundtrack, "Hobson's Choice" is an artistic film. That means it is entertainment that will tickle and stick to the ribs.

Vacant Vacant Lot

EVEN BY Broadway standards, "The Vacant Lot," unimproved, is not likely to go. While its authors, Paul Streger and Berilla Kerr have significant intentions, they may have not put together a

sequence of events that flow irresistibly one out of another. There are too many points at which the audience cannot follow the behavior of the five teenagers who comprise the cast.

Granted it is normal for adults not to understand teenagers. But is the self-set assignment of the playwrights to break through the barrier. Revamped drastically to that end, “The Vacant Lot” might work as play, because it is straining to reveal something about the crisis of growing up. A tough proposition.

In any case, all five actors would have to be whizzers. Of the cast at the La Jolla “world premiere,” only Cindy Robbins really shaped a role. If all roles were clearly motivated and as well-realized as hers, the show would have won its audience.

Director Norman Lloyd probably suffered thoughts like the above in realizing his production. Handsome Engle Englehardt, who was working on the main role during dress rehearsal until she was replaced night before dress rehearsal (by Sara Harte), was a casualty of the management’s struggle to achieve a quality worthy of their Playhouse. One or two of the others must nearly have suffered the same reversal in rehearsal.

Robert Corrigan’s set (below), an abandoned cellar converted by kids into a Hopi kiva, or ceremonial chamber, was much admired. Some theatre people feel that after a season of slavishly copying Broadway sets on orders from the Playhouse hierarchy, Corrigan should have been freed to do an impressionistic, rather than realistic set for this play. That, indeed, might have helped “The Vacant Lot” to move.

September 16, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** O ‘Dem Golden Hills

Caption: This half-baked drawing was submitted to the city and county officials by the Golden Hill Improvement Association, along with its arguments why the area shown is “the finest civic center on the West coast.” The proposal is similar to the second choice (Cedar Street was first) of the late city planner, Earl Mills, official consultant of San Diego.

GOLDEN HILLS Improvement Association deserves credit for being the only gang in this madly growing city to come forward lately with suggestions for grouping public buildings.

Of course, their plan is prompted by longing to see property values boom in their section—a blighted, stagnant section now. But their reasons, strong arguments why Russ Site, as they call it, is a good site are largely based on the analysis of an expert city planner who was hired by the City of San Diego itself in 1948. The late Earl Mills reduced the problem to two alternatives. The first effort was a belt along Cedar Street from Civic Center to Balboa Park. His second choice was the site south of Russ Auditorium now advanced by the Golden Hillers.

The association disturbed the calm of city and county officials recently with a twelve-page proposal illustrated by the “bird’s-eye” reproduced here. It was given loud play—without analysis—by both the Copley organs and the Independent. Let us try to pick it over for civic value. As we do, let us keep tough score, comparing the merits of Russ Site with Cedar Site.

It is worth bearing in mind that the Cedar Site was defeated at the polls by energetic opposition, which included persons associated with Russ site.

THE PROPOSAL claims “geographical accuracy” for Russ Site, meaning it is easily reached from so many outlying points, and will be even more so with the construction of new freeways. Rate Cedar Site equal with Russ Site on this account.

The proposal claims Russ Site is handy between the business center (Fifth and Broadway) and the population center (17th and University). So is Cedar Site, with proper planning.

The proposal claims Russ Site is easy walking distance to post office and library. Score one shaky point for Russ over Cedar, remembering that neither posts office nor library is satisfactorily located.

The proposal claims Russ Site proximity to department stores, hotels, restaurants, theatres, Russ Auditorium, San Diego High and Junior College, Balboa Stadium, Naval Hospital, various park attractions. Weigh these carefully and you will score just about 50-50 for Russ and Cedar.

The proposal offers 31 acres of relatively cheap land. The Golden boys suggest an average price of \$80,000 an acres. City property should average about the same price as Russ, judging by Mill's estimates.

The proposal argues that most of the present buildings on Russ Site are aged frame houses that can be moved and salvaged, rather than business buildings which are low salvage prospects. Cedar Site is not quite so happy a hunting ground for scavengers, and recent years have brought new buildings there.

BOTH RUSS AND CEDAR sites would be far more economical than the area around the present courthouse site—now being eyed by desperate officials for a public building group. The Golden Hill Association attacks sharply the announced intention of the Board of Supervisors to ask a bond vote for a new courthouse on the site of the old one.

Pointing out the Russ Site is about the same walking distance from most lawyers' offices as the old courthouse (so is Cedar), the Golden Hillers judge the old courthouse site (on Broadway) could be sold for \$600,000 to \$900,000, enough money to buy ten acres in Russ Site (or Cedar Site?).

THE GOLDEN HILLERS deplore scattering of public buildings, charging the "delusions of economy" cause officials to settle on land because it is available without cost. To them, Civic Center on the waterfront is a mistake—it is inconvenient, it interferes with port development and it occupies "land of vast revenue potential." Mills agreed in part with this contention, but he considered that since Civic Center on the waterfront is a fact, it is an overwhelming argument in favor of the Cedar Site. He did not consider abandoning Civic Center, but even that is not now inconceivable since the thing is outgrown already.

Cedar or Russ? Your choice.

PURSUING the economy line, the Hillers suggest a convention hall could be built near Russ Auditorium and the two used as a team. This will shock those whose hearts are set on a separate music and theatre facility—an opera house of superior quality. But the shocked ones should reflect that unless economy measures are followed generally in public building investment, priority for an opera house is way down the list.

Of parking, the Russ Siders show a logical grasp. They stress that cheaper land divides up into cheaper parking stalls, and that the number of stalls needed would be prohibitive to the public purse in the heart of business boomland. Another ringing, if grammar-tripped summary from the Hill "Cars and merchandise counters require each a space of their own."

The Russians sketch a lively picture of Balboa Stadium really jumping every night with football and auto race fans who presumably will be attracted by convenient parking development around public office buildings. Such a development would mean substantial income to the public treasury.

The association proposal states rightly that San Diego's small blocks multiply traffic problems, and thus mid-downtown is no place for busy public buildings adding to this dilemma. Both Cedar and Russ sites avoid this objection.

The Russ crowd report their site "far less vulnerable to airplane, commercial and industrial noise that sites farther west." The score on this point is clearly in Russ's favor.

ESTHETICALLY, Russ Site could be handsomely related to the park, but the Golden Hillers have made only a feeble effort to visualize this for the public. Same is true of Cedar Site. Local architects should

unfold from their empty pose as champions of grouping and donate a little T-square work to the cause of clarifying the possibilities. TV and newspapers should get into the act, crusadingly, exercising to the full their powers of projection.

Last words—for the moment—from the Golden Hill Improvement Association: “One more misplacement of a major public structure may leave us permanently stuck with wasteful scatter. And unless our grouping on low-cost land with room for expansion, the grouping will abort . . . Viewed from every angle the Russ Site plan is, of all those thus far proposed, the most convenient, practical and economical.”

Well, maybe so. The only way to make sure is for the public generally, and its officials particularly, to go over the ground more carefully, more imaginatively, that has yet been done.

September 23, 1954, Point, **Art of the City: Through the Looking Glass** (San Diego Public Library)

POINT PHOTOGRAPHER Bob Pauline likes the inside of the new public library as a camera subject because he says, “It is so abstract.” True, true. So true, in fact, that when the Sunday Union blossomed out in a page of pictures celebrating the opening of the library, someone got fooled by a photo of the entrance, and printed it upside down.

We can expect that to happen once in a while with abstract paintings, but when it happens to a building, we’d better ask where we are headed. What’s up? Surely, we must know up from down, still.

Abstraction in art design means differing from familiar appearances. If it’s handled right it gives new values to the human situation. But abstraction mismanaged can be a distraction, even a menace—especially in buildings.

There is no better example of abstraction in architecture than the use of glass to “break through” the mass of a building and let the eye see what goes on inside. Store fronts do it all the time, and so does our library. No doubt the library’s show window entrance performs as intended and draws people inside who just happened to be passing.

Certainly if the passerby ventures to touch the handsome glass doors, he will find himself inside for the doors (designed by surrealist Jean Cocteau, of course, and operated by invisible wenches or wrenches) open at the most tentative touch and suck in the curious. Seriously, the Cocteau doors are a great comfort to Twentieth Century muscles. More seriously, they are an excellent design for heavy-traffic entrance.

In case the sucking doors miss anyone, there is a giant scoop posing innocently as a marquee, geared to swoop down each hour on the hour and gobble up the contents of the sidewalk.

THE SHOW WINDOW entrance reveals the bustle of democracy on the make through books. It also occasionally reveals librarians fanning themselves against the heat, or—more rarely—swooning from it. (There is one instance on record.) The atmosphere within the building depends on a complicated air-conditioning system which—so goes the official weather forecast—will be working properly after a year of experiments.

Air-conditioning in a California public building is not intended as a slap in the face for the Chamber of Commerce, or a waste of taxpayer’s money. It was necessary here because large portions of the building are nowhere near windows and because a great deal of artificial heat-producing light is burning night and day. Hopeful technical name for the light source is “cold cathode,; but the product is merely less warm, not cold.

ONE ABSTRACT DESIGN feature that has had a stunning effect on some library patrons is the plate glass used in place of walls at the ends of corridors. This was a well-meant effort to get a sense of openness about the interior, but several corridor travelers, bent in bookish thought, have met the glass skull-first.

So far, the staff's answer to the hazard consists of a fiendish little taunt, lettered small on each pane: "Do not walk through the glass." We suggest adding in bolder letters, "Who Do You Think You Are—Alice?"

When the lady tried to get through the glass and only broke her spectacles, an embarrassed library spokesman told the papers it was the first time such an accident had been reported. Actually, officials knew of a least two earlier instances. Question: Why did not the much-vaunted library experts, Wheeler and Githens, hired to guide local architects catch the glass wall blunder in the blueprint stage?

THERE ARE other evidences of abstract design without the help of enough human sense. A perforated metal display wall in the second floor corridor, for example, is so dizzy-making a pattern that one look is enough for most eyes. Cork walls downstairs, on the other hand, make a good display background.

Most amazing abstraction is the pattern of light fixtures in the first floor ceiling—a fleet of glowing plastic shapes, four feet across. It does fantastic things to the room, causing the ceiling to vanish seemingly. Even the first floor seems insubstantial as it reflects the lights like a pond. The lights are cunningly engineered so as to cast practically no shadows. Fine for reading, but an unearthly effect.

Conceivably, some elderly tourist visiting Heaven-on-Earth—Mr. Magoo, maybe—will be impressed by the hovering flotilla of lights and will write home: "My dear, you never saw anything like San Diego . . . Simply out of this world . . . Why, right now, they are holding—in the public library, of all places—a convention of flying saucers."

PUBLICITY RELEASES of the library claim many advanced features which will set standards for the nation. They were not referring to the esthetics, certainly not to the abstract miscarriages noted here. Art-conscious observers generally deplore the exterior appearance of the library. On the interior appearance, opinion is more evenly divided. But neither exterior nor interior decoration can mask basic faults in building design.

Main cause of the failure of the library as architectural design is this: To get the required floor-space in a too-small site, a warehouse-type structure had to be designed. So it was the site that was the bad bargain in the first place. Our politicians should have settled for nothing less than enough ground for a sprawling one-story, or at most, two-story library. Then the very best (and cheapest) light possible—skylight—could have been used extensively and plain old nature—trees and such—could have been brought into the picture in a big way.

It is grotesque for California, which popularized the indoor-outdoor idea in houses, to backslide in its public architecture toward building types that ignore natural advantages.

September 30, 1954, Point, **Art of the City**: Let 'em decorate cake (Dan Dickey)

Caption: "Self-Portrait" by Dan Dickey of Pacific Beach. This serene presentation—to use the artist's favorite term for paintings—is surely one of the most original works of art ever made in San Diego. A triumph of inventive design and composition, it proves its creator well equipped to conduct a "composition and design clinic," as he will this year (Thursday evenings at the Fine Arts Gallery.)

DAN DICKEY'S painting on the next page is here called a self-portrait for reasons that will appear later.

Don't get me wrong. Dan is no facile impersonator, nor is there anything else effeminate about him. It just happens that he is an acutely sensitive artist. The painting reflects his complex nature, and thus is a portrait in the literal sense of the term. That is it "draws out" the essential character of the person involved. And Dan is very much involved.

Dan uses no model for paintings like the one shown here. He simply—well, not so simply—sits in front of a canvas for long hours, for days, for years, and invites the muse. He schemes to fill the vacant plot of canvas with visual effects that will please him, and he is hard to please. Often he will construct out of his memories and sketches a somewhat female figure because she can be relied upon to carry the lyrics of his imagination.

Dan is fond of man-made music, so instruments often appear in his paintings. But he stands in awe of the voices of nature, so here he places a human finger to his lips while the wind reaches down forming a plectrum of its own to try the strings.

The literal-minded will gag on such interpretations, but the literal-minded will never get the hang of good painting anyway. They may complain of this picture, for example, that the upper hand is too large and masculine, but they will be missing the point.

Seen esthetically, the hand controls the composition as the bow controls the ribbon as the central actor controls the stage. And the cunning ear—seen esthetically—stands out in a way that heightens one's appreciation of its familiar-muscle function.

Sharp observers will notice a lightened mood in the hand on the keyboard. Does the lightened mood suggest that human instruments can improve on the ponderous cues of nature?

That may not have been Dan's intended meaning at all for Painter Dan is a cryptic man. This is a cryptic picture. It is a self-portrait.

DICKEY is one of the art teachers in the adult-education program of the city schools. I would endorse him as the best of the group, with Clark Allen a highly intelligent runner-up.

Apparently it is an accident that the school program, surprised me with his explanation of how art teachers are selected. I could agree with him that "First of all a man must be an artist." But he went on: "We consider a man is an artist if he can sell his paintings." And he indicated he felt a man who sold a lot of paintings was a better artist than one who sold only a few.

That set me thinking of Van Gogh, who sold approximately one painting in his lifetime; of Rembrandt, who died broke; of many sound American painters who live—or lived—like mice on a bit of cheese because their work is—or was—beyond the grasp of the buying public.

Perhaps one aim of adult education should be to improve the public's grasp and tolerance of art subtleties, and make the world safer for creative artists. Is San Diego's adult program critical enough of its own standards?

IF YOU WANT to explore the mysteries of creative painting, Dickey and Allen are the ones to go to. If you only want to dabble in colors and make superficial likenesses (let's not misuse the word "portrait") of people or landscapes, there are "teachers" for that too. Without displaying names, it should be noted that several of the most popular instructors, judged by their exhibited works, will not complicate your life with problems beyond the range of good, healthy twelve-year old adult. But they adulterate your adulthood with false teachings.

In between these extremes, there are several competent teachers who can be relied on for sound introductory training in a wide variety of art forms. If anyone wants more specific evaluation of a particular teacher's abilities, I would suggest talking to the San Diego Art Guild: Margaret Price, Belle Baranceanu, Jean Swiggett, John Dirks, George Sorenson. (I have not consulted them about this and they will probably require you to swear you are not a member of the Ku Klux Klan before they will talk.)

In its democratic variety, the adult education program ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous. Near the end of the scale is a sweet little project which at least has the virtue of not pretending to be more important than it is. It can be recommended as the safest course for "adults" who have only a light frothy

interest in art. It takes place at Point Loma High School on Thursday evenings and at Montgomery Junior High School in Linda Vista on Wednesday evenings. It is a course in cake decorating.

October 6, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** The Fountain and the Stream (Austin Farley, Howard Brubeck)

TWO MUSICIANS of unusual culture are teaching University of California extension courses here this year. Austin Farley probes "The Esthetics of Music" Monday evenings in a San Diego High School room. Howard Brubeck encourages "Appreciation of Contemporary Music" Tuesday evenings in the public library's third floor meeting room.

Farley and Brubeck are sharp contrasts. Both move easily over the general ground of music, but their experience, their outlook and their methods of teaching are so different that anyone seeking increased musical understanding could take both courses without wasteful overlap.

Both will require stretching the mind into unfamiliar reaches. For those who want to stroll'n strum in a less trying musical realm, there is San Hinton's Thursday night survey of "American Folk Song," also at the public library.

These courses run to \$18 and two university credits each. San Diegans not wishing to spend money or gain college credit have many opportunities for music study through the adult education program of the city schools.

AUSTIN FARLEY is known chiefly here as our region's persistent harpsichord recitalist, with emphasis on early European music. He is also a chiropractor of semantics, which means he pushes words around so that they will set more squarely in the mind, a radical, which means he gets to the roots of things; an iconoclast, which means he breaks up clichés.

Does that sound like a prescription for a dull evening? Well, a session with Farley is about as dull as a bull session in a red china shop. He has a kinetic vitality that brushes out all over the place, whatever the place might be.

You would not soon forget it if you had heard him stir the stale air of a La Jolla church—where he was booked for a genteel harpsichord recital—with an account of a composer who "early set his course for a drunkard's grave, and made it," while the minister sat on the platform with folded arms. If you had a tendency to nod in church you would have been jolted awake by the explosive Farley voice speakings of "sons of Bach-Sebastian" in a tone vaguely suggesting reflections on someone's mother's moral standing.

Local legend is that Farley once started a group of La Jolla ladies on a course of music-appreciation by sending far-fetchedly to the kitchen for a potato. The entire tuber was passed around from well-groomed hand to hand and the elegant ladies were invited to express their appreciation of the qualities they discovered in their first good look at the inelegant vegetable.

Farley began his first session in the university extension course last week by tearing apart the very title of the course, "The Esthetics of Music" became "An Esthetic of Some Music,"

The first cliché to crumble under the Farley hammer was that music is a universal language. "No such thing," said the iconoclast. He explained that our culture ("Excuse me if the word culture comes too often.") is mainly conversant with music of a particular time and space—roughly from 1775 to 1900, mainly in Germany, Italy and France.

The chiropractor then came up with a handful of spiny words, we didn't know existed. He quoted Semanticist Ben Whorf's awkward definition of music: "Music is a quasi-language based purely on patterment, without having developed lexation."

Neither “patternment” nor “lexation” is in a normal dictionary, but Faricy used English to explain the semanticist’s terms. “It is raining” is a patternment, or figure of speech. In the sentence, “I went down there to see John,” John is lexation, believe it or not.

Faricy promised this would all clear up before the end of the course, and then abruptly interrupted himself, to cock an ear in the direction of some silly sounds coming in from another classroom. “We have a rich and interesting environment here,” said the image-breaker.

Following are snatches of the wisdom Faricy imparted the first evening. Missing is the quiet hilarity set up in the listener by the Faricy manner, as when he illustrated his quotation marks by shooting both hands in the air in a V-for-victory sign.

“Each of us does something to a piece of music, if only by inattention.”

“Any culture—any is too strong a word—most cultures have two streams of music, the illiterate or non-literary and the literate . . . They sometimes mingle, as when Tchaikovsky’s B-flat minor piano concerto makes the hit parade, or “Stardust” becomes immortal . . .

“Folk music is like getting around your own backyard with a map . . .

“Literature is like the older sister of a family—brilliant, sought-after, imitated . . .

“In the 13th Century you wrote a piece of music, you might have asked: ‘To what words?’ Now, if a great serious piece goes popular, it is put to words . . . The largo from Dvorak’s New World Symphony is made into a pseudo Negro spiritual: ‘Goin’ home, goin’ home.’ Better you should sing, ‘English horn all forlorn’ . . .

“Test of successful dance is that it makes sense when done in practice clothes, without music . . . Dancing doesn’t stand on its own two feet if it stands on music . . .

“Huxley’s phrase ‘judgmental awareness’ is the right attitude for music . . . To suspend judgment calls for real effort . . .

“Evaluation too soon is the occupational hazard of critics . . . they have to get their phrases ready . . .

“Life offers no worse situation than being discovered liking the wrong thing . . .

“Principle thing to do with music is to shut up.”

So Faricy shut up and played recordings to check listeners’ responses against composers’ intentions—such things as Beethoven’s storm music, Debussy’s water music, Wagner’s fire and dawn music.

Austin Faricy, the Cardiff (Calif.) mental giant, is clearly a knowing guide to wider awareness not only of music but also of that related phenomenon, the world of man.

HOWARD BRUBECK compares to the spouting fountain of Faricy as a clear, quiet, deep stream. No doubt, following his course would be like following a river until in the end you could face the bewildering sea of contemporary music with a real sense of where it came from.

He bases his exposition of principles on the writings of Aaron Copland, a master of clear thought and clear composition. Opening night at the library, Brubeck played a recording of “Appalachian Spring” and asked the class to note the simple Shaker tune on which the Copland music is based. Then he led the group in an effort to sing the theme from memory. It was marvelous to hear the group’s confident full-

voiced start trail off to the vaguest moan half way through. After several passes, everyone present had Brubeck's respect for the complexity of even simple things.

Brubeck is himself a composer, a good one, and the product of a good mentor, Darius Milhaud, whose "Suite Provencale" was also played. The group was asked to write reactions to a passage of the suite. Brubeck stuffed the resulting pieces into his briefcase. The fox thereby had a reliable index to the musical aptitude of his students.

The school of Milhaud et al is not deficient in humor. Brubeck has an album of Milhaud's "Protee," a gift from composer to composer, the color of which sports a naked round-bellied mythological figure. Across the wildest part of the anatomy, the portly Milhaud had written: "Not my portrait."

Study with Brubeck will lead you down at least one of the mainstreams of contemporary music.

Rome and a Barrack

A BALANCED DIET of entertainment can be had this week by booking yourself into the Capri Theatre for "Rome, 11 O'Clock" and into the Globe Theatre for "Stalag 17."

"Rome" is mostly women, well-formed ones. "Stalag" is all men, mostly formless in their long underwear, That makes an unfair contest for the audience.

"Stalag" is having a slow start filling seats. Some observers say the public has had enough of war stuff. The audience last Thursday seemed mildly gratified with the evening's timespend. "Stalag 17" is not the Globe's best work, though it gets the usual light swift direction of Craig Noel and is not overlong.

The play might be called a drawing room comedy of American manners, by stretching a few points. The drawing room is a prison camp barrack. Making up the action is the rough interplay of American Types, tested together in the shadow of Hitler. German army characters are inevitable, and they came off convincingly, especially the Corporal Schultz of Roland Haworth.

Of the American Types, best were Cleto Fracchiolla as a New York Schnozzola, Lee Burton as a Boston tough, Frank Davis as a loudmouth from Anywhere, U.S.A. Curiously ineffective, for one of well-known nimble talents, was Bruce Torbet playing an actor imitating other actors. Torbet did not mark the distinctive character of his own excellent stage voice.

"Rome 11 O'Clock" is also a study of the interplay of characters caught together in a dire situation. The special, sexually open warmth and richness of Roman street life is reflected in the adventures of scores of girls applying for a single job. Catastrophe strikes the crowd, and all souls are bared.

An official investigation gets nowhere, but the psychological investigation undertaken by writers, including Cesare Zavattini and Director Guiseppe De Santis is a credit to the race of Dante and the great Renaissance painters.

This is a picture to see if you value the work of universal artists who are your contemporaries.

October 14, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** Freedom's Forum Forum

OFFICIAL PROCLAMATIONS don't get much attention from the citizenry anymore, but often they are nuggets of what ought to be common-sense. Take—and digest—Mayor Butler's words on Newspaper Week (October 1-8): ". . . I commend to the attention of the entire community, to the schools, to business, to industry and the professionals as well as to the publishers and their staffs, the full significance of the theme of this week—'Your Newspaper—Freedom's Forum' . . ." "The bold face of course is Point's.

In the annual preening for the week, the Copley M'nopley press printed a choice column of street interviews from which the prevailing San Diego sentiment might seem to be that editors warp the news but the warping isn't serious. One man said we "can turn to a competing newspaper." If he smiled, it wasn't reported.

Actually, Freedom's Forum is more likely to be found scattered among the area's less mighty publications—Mr. Copley's competitors, like mice to an elephant.

THE SOUTHWEST JEWISH PRESS (fortnightly), for example, is a sensitive litmus of racial feeling in San Diego. Last issue, the front page featured a delicate proclamation by Mayor Butler calling upon "all citizens of San Diego to observe the 300th anniversary of Jewish settlement in America "in the spirit of true Americanism."

The Catholic mayor called for occasion "a unique opportunity for all Americans to review and re-evaluate their part in American life, and to reeducate themselves to the principles of a free society which guarantees to men of all religions and races equality, security and freedom."

Same issue, page 4, Editor Max Kaufman had to slap gingerly at a situation in the Town and Country Club. Seems that Jews are accepted on a quota system, and that some Jewish members of the club approve the system. Seems further, according to Max, that the Jewish community at large is divided pro and con in such matters.

The pro and con-ness of Jewish feeling about the current state of anti-Semitism got a thorough airing in the last four issues of the Press.

Berenice Soule started it all in her "To See or Not to See" column with a pleased review of Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice." Berenice called the local production "the most pleasurable Globe experience of the year." She said: ". . . Most welcome is the interpretation given this oft-time objectionable play . . . Director Philip Hanson, faced with the problem of handling an ancient prejudice in a modern light, lost none of the drama of Shakespeare in seeing Shylock as a man of worth whose fate is of utmost concern to the audience . . ."

Of Shakespeare in general, Mrs. Hanson observed: "You find truths in his words that never existed until you unlocked their meanings . . . he wrote for popular consumption as do movie and television writers today . . ."

WILLIAM B. SCHWARTZ got off a hot letter to the editor: "It seems hard to discover truth in his words and unlock hidden meanings. It's pure and simple anti-Semitism and it reeks of hate, and no amount of 'handling' and 'interpretation' can change its popular concept . . . I am sure that very few people will disagree that his portrayal of the Jew is false and an outright lie . . . Should one recommend it to attention?"

"Apparently, Berenice doesn't feel that all that Shakespeare wrote is holy . . . She thinks 'Twelfth Night' silly, dull,' and would like to pretend that Shakespeare never wrote it, and 'Let's just ignore this one.' Ah, but The Merchant of Venice, there is a masterpiece that moves you to 'private and intimate emotions' and is written just for you . . . I hope the Globe Theatre will relegate that part of Shakespeare to oblivion."

Berenice tried sweet reason: "Surely, Bill, you do not wish to convey the impression that all of his artistry must be condemned because we object to one character or one play."

She quoted the comment of a Jewish scholar, George Brandes, that from the humaner view of a later age, Shylock appears as a scapegoat, a victim. "It was from this 'humanist view' that I derived my 'pleasurable surprise' . . . I find anti-Semitism in any form objectionable."

Mrs. Soule revealed that before the play was announced the Globe people asked her opinion on possible reactions and "I strongly advised against producing it."

NEXT ISSUE, Esther Moorsteen wrote in to agree with Bill. “I saw nothing new in the venomous anti-Semitism . . . I felt sick in my stomach, and heart, and would have walked out except I did not wish to make myself conspicuous . . . I think this play had best be left out of any Shakespearean celebrations . . . It does not win friends . . . It showed poor judgment on the part of those who made the selection . . . “

Same issue, Craig Noel was in the act. The resourceful Globe director said: “We predicated much of our planning upon the experience of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival which found that, over a period of years, of the various plays, Othello, Hamlet and The Merchant of Venice enjoy the greatest popularity.”

Noel had another reason for choosing The Merchant. It is a play that Charles Coburn always wanted to do, and Noel had hopes—later dashed—of starring him.

Noel said that after Mrs. Soule advised him against doing The Merchant, he talked closely with Director Philip Hanson, who had already been signed for the play. “Hanson saw the prejudice of the haughty and unbending Antonio as the motivating force of the play. To Hanson, Antonio is the villain. I felt that if The Merchant of Venice could be given an inoffensive performance, this would be it. The season began as announced.”

Noel added: ‘Mrs. Soule’s review of the play seemed to me to be the most interesting and correct evaluation written by any of the critics’

He observed that the Globe was accused of being pro-Catholic for producing Rain, anti-Catholic for A Family Portrait, Communist for The Beautiful People and The Mad Woman of Chaillot. Noel wrote dryly with a straight pen: “It is impossible for the San Diego Community Theatre to be any or all of these things . . . “

BY NOW the controversy had its essential shape, but several lengthily letters followed. Rabbi N. I. Addleson said Shakespeare’s portrait of a Jew “has no warrant in reality . . . If the Jew of the Middle Ages hated the Christian, it was because of the hate which the Christian bore the Jew . . . Jews have always been taught to forgive their enemies.”

Lillian G. Buck, commending Craig Noel’s answer to criticism, said: “We Jews are so wont to experience unpleasant twinges whenever a Jew is pictured in an unfavorable light . . . Must Jews always be portrayed as great and heroic characters?”

“I do not think we need to protest the play . . . When Shylock stands up to his tormentors, one feels a great respect for him . . . Truly the villain of the piece is the sanctimonious Antonio . . .”

Muriel G. Goldhammer said: “Craig Noel made a fine defense . . . Consider the audience which attended Shakespeare—usually a literate, intelligent bunch, not likely to have their racial and religious attitudes change significantly by an evening of theatre, particularly when the characters are well drawn and well interpreted. Are we not demanding too much of our Christian friends to expurgate unsympathetic Jews from the English literary tradition?”

When last seen, The Globe’s bust of Shakespeare still wore its more inscrutable-than-Sphinx smile . . . The master had done his work for Freedom Forum.

October 21, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** Where are the supports? (“Rear Window” at Capri)

PEEKING THROUGH WINDOWS is a cultural activity most people will happily indulge in—if they can be sure they won’t get caught. That accounts in part for the nationwide box office run on Alfred Hitchcock’s current movie, “Rear Window.”

Whether “Rear Window” will fill all seats for a six week’s engagement at the Capri Theatre here in nonetheless in doubt, for San Diego is an extremely fickle town in its attention to the box office. “Rear

Window” is the big test for Capri owner Burt Jones’ policy to show only top quality pictures aimed at discriminating audiences.

To date, Capri films have been generally good, but audiences have been depressingly sparse. It may be that many people balk at the admission scale of \$1.25 (loges \$1.50), which is necessary if a small house is to bring expensive pictures. Also, there may be considerable talking at “wide screen” in a small house, especially when pictures designed for standard screen are distorted to fill the wide one.

(Theatre owners in general should realize that the relationship between the size of the screen and the distance to the spectator from the screen has a great deal to do with comfort. A wide screen does not necessarily give the best effect of a movie. It may indeed strain the nerves of the watcher if it is too big for the eye to sweep with ease. An even worse strain occurs—when a film designed for standard screen is trimmed top and bottom so it will be the right proportions for the wide screen. My own greatest satisfaction at the Capri came from “Rome 11 O’Clock,” which was screened in its original shape, ignoring the full width of the screen.)

If “Rear Window” fails to draw at the Capri, Burt Jones will probably decide that his handsome house is an elegant white elephant and he will be forced to adjust his standards to the lower common popcorn eater. And the town will be the poorer culturally. San Diego will have demonstrated once more that it offers no easy hospitality to men of high artistic conscience.

BURT JONES might be well advised to build his audiences on a subscription basis, but that doesn’t come off easily in San Diego, either. Take the sad case of the Philharmonic Society.

THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY, after several erratic years, set up a neat office several months ago in a handsome corner of Lloyd Ruocco’s Design Center. Under the efficient executive vice-presidential hand of big, square-talking retired Navy Captain H. E. LeBarron, the society sailed through preparations for a big fund campaign.

In late September an elaborate appeal for subscriptions was mailed to 10,000 persons, along with a questionnaire on policy problems. By Tuesday, October 3, only 60 odd subscriptions had been received, and only 16 to 17 people bothered to answer the society’s questionnaire. A gloomy Philharmonic board announced that no concerts could be given unless \$4,000 materialized quickly. No one expected to see the money, at the moment of this writing. If the concert scheduled for October 17 comes off, it will only be because of the sudden appearance of a flight of angels.

The Philharmonic board decided that at least they could and would pay for one of the four children’s concerts planned for the season. The first of these is October 16, and most likely will be conducted by Alex Zimmerman, music administrator of the city schools. The musicians’ union has indicated that it will sponsor and pay for the remainder of the children’s series if the Philharmonic Society fails to revive.

WHAT HAPPENED to winter symphony for adults in San Diego? What caused the fiasco whereby a Philharmonic Society that raised nearly \$40,000 in its first season could only scare up about \$2,000 this year?

There were several factors. Disharmony within the cumbersome organization was a main cause. It took many forms. Rapid turnover of board membership because of a few feverish martinets was a feature. The current letterhead is astonishing for a long list of names, but even more astonishing are some of the omissions.

George Scott, the town’s most generous supporter of music, has not contributed this year to the Philharmonic cause. A strong believer in unity and efficiency of symphonic effect, he was pushed around by the martinets and left (with three other fellows) holding a note for \$3,500 over and above his contributions two years ago.

Werner Janssen, the Philharmonic's sensitive conductor, has felt pushed around, too. His differences were not with the society, but with some of the musicians. The squabble was disheartening all around. At one point two years ago, Janssen refused to finish his season unless he could get rid of two local horn players, Perry deLong and Larry Christianson. Later, he objected to Edwin Mann as personnel manager. Both issues were resolved by Czar Petrillo, knocking heads together from Chicago on a three-way phone hookup, but neither orchestra nor conductor is overjoyed with the other.

While an attempt is made to pretend publicly that all is harmony, and while the Copley papers "cooperate: by suppressing the essential facts of the story, conditions like those reported here have a way of getting known to people who might like to invest substantially in symphony, if they could believe in it as a useful civic property. Few donors are going to throw money into a cockpit to see it torn to shreds by sharp claws.

Is it so surprising that last year the disorganized and demoralized Philharmonic could not get up steam for any kind of campaign, and that this year the effort was a flop?

If all other factors were favorable, local symphony would still be hard to finance. Society-minded people here give their energies and monies to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to the San Francisco Opera, to the La Jolla Musical Arts Society and the San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association (which produces outdoor summer concerts).

THE PRESCRIPTION for San Diego's symphonic future must be merger of the Symphony Orchestra Association and the Philharmonic Society—if there is anything left of the latter to merge. The word Philharmonic should be dropped out of the picture altogether to avoid confusion with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The right-to-work of local musicians must be respected provided they measure up in quality and the musicians' union must recognize that music fans will not stir from their record changers to hear mediocre symphony concerts.

If these conditions are met, the city and county governments might reasonably put more money into symphony, in view of its value to the tourist economy if for no more exalted reason. That would spell the difference between a second year-round orchestra and one struggling on the edge of poverty.

The United Success Drive is a working idea with respect to general community welfare services. It could work also in applying community values in the arts—which are more necessary to the general welfare of a city than many of us realize.

CAPTION: Werner Janssen, distinguished conductor, is willing to work without salary to build a San Diego Symphony orchestra. Whether he will appear October 17 as scheduled is a tormented issue as Point goes to press.

October 28, 1954, Point, **Art of the City: Laughter Is Not Enough** (Art Guild Show in Fine Arts Gallery)

CAPTION: "Masquerade," an oil painting by William Munson (left) and an abstraction by Paul Burlin.

CAPTION: Seemingly related in black and white, these untitled paintings by John McLaughlin (left) and Marjorie Hyde are quite different in color.

CAPTION: This squirmy fragment of nature is typical of the items making up the popular driftwood show at California-Western University. Last year, 2000 people came to see exhibits which included caricatures, lamp bases, bowls, carvings, driftwood arranged with flowers and fruit and what-not, or just driftwood left alone in its natural "abstract" state. The show is free, October 23-24, 1-5 p.m., at the Point Loma campus.

LYMAN BRYSON, teacher extraordinary, with—incidentally—a San Diego background, remarked over the air October 10 (Invitation to Learning, KNX, 8:30 a.m.; KFMB 10:30 p.m.) that today it

is almost a criticism of painting to say it tells a story. He was talking primarily about the shift of emphasis in historical literature from narrative writing to analyzed writing. He suggested that a similar shift had happened in the art of painting.

If that is true, then it follows that the most up-to-date pictures in the current Art Guild show at the Fine Arts Gallery are the one that pry beneath the surface of appearances—the kind that superficial people most readily laugh at.

Reproduced here are three paintings from the show, together with one by Paul Burlin, senior American painter, who is honored with a one-man show in an adjacent room at the gallery. The average editor would gag at reproducing these pictures, because they don't look like much on the printed page wrung dry of color, but it would be almost impossible to talk about them without illustration.

Talking about such pictures is indeed a tricky business. Painter William Munson, whose "Masquerade" (below) is the most gorgeous picture in the show, tried explaining Burton's work to a patient knot of listeners at the gallery October 10th. Of course he got involved with words which themselves may be as baffling as the paintings to the unwary.

BILL MUNSON found in Burlin "a vitality of exploration of the unknown" and said of him: "He reports with mature facility on the metaphysical nature of men in relation to their present environment . . . He has a spontaneous ability to draw upon the vast store of unconscious knowledge . . . He uses a remarkable variety of line, form and color to create movement and tensions, including an awareness of the dimensions beyond the material and physical world to which people so often limit themselves . . ."

My own reaction is that Munson himself is a more affecting explorer of paint than Burlin, though the latter is undoubtedly an honest and intensely sincere man. Munson's use of color is almost always attractive to the eye, while Burlin's is often harsh and repellent.

The lines and shades in a Munson painting usually work together to produce a real feast for the eye that studies them. The lines and shapes in Burlin's abstractions, on the other hand, often were meaningless, all fouled up in triangles and contradictions.

It would be easy to say—but hard to prove—that Burlin's ugly tangles are a realistic reflection of our times and that Munson's handsome compositions are merely romantic eyewash. In any case, we should be willing to look squarely at both what we like and what we dislike. I recommend close comparative study of Burlin and Munson.

Paul Burlin's exhibit got to San Diego by way of UCLA, where he taught last summer. The Art Guild Show was judged by three members of the UCLA faculty. Fine Arts Gallery management appears to be unduly impressed by the UCLA crowd, who have been down here often to exhibit or to lecture. Other local observers are not so impressed, and consider the judging of the present show a particularly haphazard job. It would appear that neither at Berkeley nor Los Angeles does the University of California have an art department worthy of its standards in other fields.

Munson's ruddy "Masquerade" started to get painted when Bill was all fired up about mccarthyism. He insists there are bad guys and good guys discernible in "Masquerade," but obviously he stepped his brushes when the paintwork looked good to him, leaving it to the viewer's imagination to find meaning in the picture and in its title. Responses vary: one watcher saw The Last Supper; another saw all crowded humanity in one bloody masquerade.

Bill Munson is one of the truly gifted painters of San Diego. He is not tied by academic restrictions as are so many painters, and if he works seriously, as he believes he will, he should go places. That doesn't necessarily mean that he'll go away from San Diego as have so many before him. He would like to stay here, but a painter needs challenge and opportunity which a smug community doesn't easily supply. Munson is the only San Diegan, of a dozen applicants, accepted for the important California National Watercolor Show, due to open here October 30.

TWO OTHER PAINTINGS in the Guild show illustrate a sensitive way of exploring advanced problems in paint. Mustachioed John McLaughlin goes along from year to year carefully laying down neat patches of solid color on squares of white board. His cool collected effects greet the gallery-goer like a breath of fresh air, even ozone. For those who must ask what his pictures mean, it might be suggested that John is trying to capture the likeness of a neat little white collar man who always keeps his clean socks in the third drawer down and never leaves soiled ones lying around. John himself might simply say that he paints this way because he likes to paint this way.

MARJORIE HYDE is another case like Munson's. She fell in a bucket of paint at the age of three and has been trying ever since to shake off the stuff. When she looks at a naked canvas, she doesn't visualize trees and hills, but brush strokes and paint patches. A clear teacher and talker about art, she is keenly alive to what goes on in a picture, not merely what goes in it. The abstraction reproduced here has to be seen in the original if one is to sniff its delicate bouquet of colors. Anyone who has found delight in Frost on windows could find delight in Hyde on canvas—if he would take the panes.

WHILE THE PAINTINGS shown here are the kind that get only a laugh from many superficial citizens, the same people might troop out to California-Western's exhibit of driftwood (see cut) and be inspired by the beauty of rough textures and writhing shapes found there. It seems that when a visual experience is put in a frame and called a picture, it is hard to tolerate unless it looks like something other than itself.

IT might be that serious painters today go in for puzzling effects because they are trying to analyze some fragments of the universal grand design that have drifted into their experiences. Their efforts deserve to be rejected only if careful consideration fails to show the face of truth. Laughter is not enough proof.

November 4, 1954, Point, **Art of the City: Promise or Compromise** (Clark Allen)

Caption: Clark Allen did this self-drawing especially for Point, In a typical eruption of energy, he made some 30 sketches of his own face before he got one he liked.

Caption: Some idea of Painter Clark Allen's range: from tender landscapes like "Soledad – Mexico" (above) to a Henry Moore-ish "space-form concept," sub-titled for your guidance, "Intimations" (right). A cross-section of his work can be seen this month on the mezzanine of the San Diego Federal Savings and Loan Association.

CLARK ALLEN is a marvel of versatility. The young (29) and native San Diego painter is also a folksinger. In the latter role, which is really at least a dozen roles, he exhibits an ability to range from country to country and lose himself in appropriate mood and style. His singing is marked by intensity which means the shell of the singer has disappeared, leaving the song exposed direct to the hearer.

Allen's chameleon nature may account for the warm, not to say hot, reception he got in Paris a few years back when he studied there and paid his way by singing in night spots. It could also explain the reception he got at the Old Globe Theatre a few weeks back when he sang and guitarred with a group of "real" Spanish gypsies.

The Globe was packed (with a fair proportion of Spanish-speaking people) and the transfer of mood back and forth across the footlights was such that Craig could say: "I never saw a more responsive audience in San Diego."

Allen convinced some watchers that he was more real than the "real" Gypsies. And so did his wife. For Margarita Allen, Mexican-bred of Spanish mettle, danced that night. Point's Roberta Ridgely, a cute and acute observer, said of her: "She has a wonderful back . . . She is certainly the equal of the best Spanish dancers who have come this way lately . . ."

If local enthusiasts have their way, the Allens will stir the whole Southwest, at least, with their echoes of Spanish culture. There is talk of lining them up with the Edna Stewart concert agency.

ALLEN THE PAINTER also erupts in any of a dozen directions, and usually with an effect of being quite at home with what he's doing. He can paint a slick portrait of an over-mantle full-rigged schooner for the esthetic imbeciles who want them, or he can paint an abstraction good enough to enter the collection of a sophisticate like Vincent Price.

He is also adept at covering whole walls. His proudest effort in this spacious mural business was done for Hultgreen's Paint Store on Camino del Rio.

Clark Allen, living in Mission Hills, supports his family pretty largely on his earnings from folk-singing and painting plus his classes in both subjects under the city's adult education program.

He is not above turning up at outdoor "art marts" with a sheaf of pictures selected to meet the low-level taste of the milling public.

"**I COMPROMISE**," says Clark, as though beating himself with a length of baloney. Truth is, the dynamic lad is jumping with talent. If he should fail to arrive at a high mesa of sustained significant work, it would probably be because of society's well-known tendency to glorify compromise and penalize truth-seekers.

I am betting on the promise of Clark Allen.

November 11, 1954, Point, Talk about love (Faye Emerson)

November 18, 1954, Point, The Queen and the Crown (Constance Herreshoff)

November 25, 1954, Point, **Art of the City: Etille Wallace's World**

CAPTION: Etille Wallace holds some odd rolls of colored gelatin in front of the ground glass screen on which she projects moving images by way of a fantastic activity involving lights and transparent "sets" on the other side of the screen. The results are filmed, producing the unique art described here.

"**ETILIE ETTA MAE, Etilie Etta Mae**," says it out loud and it sounds like a kaleidoscope shifting its gift. Very appropriate.

Etta Mae Wallace worked for years on the uneasy women's pages of the San Diego Union. As a writer, she could tell the difference between women who were doing something and women who merely wanted to be done by.

When the mysterious forces that shape Union policy placed a man at the head of the women's department, blight befell the flower garden. Etta Mae and her sister, Alice Sue (Mrs. John) Hardin, were among those who chose to leave the paper.

The Wallace-Hardin household in Mission Hills has about it a glow of purposeful living that suggests the Alcott family in Concord or the Mark Twain family in Hartford. One feels that these human beings would have been at home in the "Brook Farm" circle around Alcott or among the "Nook Farm" neighbors of Twain.

Wherever there are important currents of art activity in San Diego, the Wallace-Hardins may be counted on for enthusiasm which takes the form both of support and participation.

Etta Mae became Etille probably because the carefully tuned lady liked the sound better. It happened when she was developing an unusual art form which seemed headed for public notice.

ETTILIE WALLACE nudged the family car out of doors and claimed the garage for her experiments. She gathered a group of like talents who could get excited in an art way, about the relationship between lie and motion. It was absorbing business. For years friends could debate whether Etilie or her friends were the more abstracted.

Chief co-workers were Clyde Grant, a designer now in Hollywood, and Emmy Scott Romano, a writer now in Albuquerque. Out of that group came the name for the novel art form, "Kaleidolight" means beautiful light.

At first, kaleidolight was packaged as a box containing lamps and homemade clockwork which caused colored lightshapes to flow across a ground glass lid. The general effect might be described, without depreciation, as a sort of condensed sunset.

Packaged kaleidolight has fantastic possibilities. It is the most easily digested form of abstract art. It could find a place in home entertainment equal to musical recordings, matching the phonograph's range from jazz to profound mystical contemplation. The very best project of all is kaleidolight and music together. This is the direction in which Etilie Wallace will turn her energies next—especially with an eye to supplying the anticipated needs of color television.

WHEN Etilie started putting her kaleidolight abstractions on 16 mm. film, she entered a field in which there were already many imaginative workers. Yet her distinctive approach to this illusive medium impressed officials of the American Association for the United Nations, who also took more of Etilie's comprehensive outlook to the world. They commissioned her to put her nicely colored outlook into a movie short promoting the UN idea.

"Come in, Jupiter" was previewed here several weeks ago at a UN dinner, but largely because of faulty projection, it did not show up at its best. It is an effervescent little piece, and could have extraordinary value to the UN. Wherever a program about the UN is scheduled, there is a place for this film. It is champagne to guard against the heaviness of "meaty" speakers.

One criticism from a respected local UN enthusiast needs to be noted and rebutted. He said of the Wallace film, "It's a fine idea but it should be turned over to Disney and the professionals."

My feeling is that "Come in, Jupiter" is a work of true and generous amateur standing. It is from the heart. It is honest. It is sufficiently stimulating without being overwhelming. Its specific distinction is that it treats the audience to a display of abstract art effects which subtly induce attention to a narrative as telling as a French tale or a Greek myth.

I am not sure "professionals" could better encompass the roundness of the world.

AS THE STILLS from "Come on, Jupiter" at the right show, elementary human figures lace through the film to thread the narrative. The important ingredients of light and color and motion, of course, cannot be reproduced here. We can give you some samples of the narrative, spoken by a reporter from the planet Jupiter, which, for present purposes anyway, is an advanced planet.

The reporter from Jupiter speaks:

"Fellow Jupiterians . . . Earth is interesting enough to visit, but I'd never want to live there . . . The varied beauty of this planet is a prime source of paradox—that it should be so green and bird-haunted and the stars so clear, and yet few of the denizens are ever found alone under the stars, or communing with their wonderful astonished trees . . .

". . . The situation on Earth poses no real threat to the rest of the solar system . . . Actually, their knowledge of atomic power is so rudimentary that all they could accomplish with it would be to commit suicide . . .

“Relatively soon after their final ‘war to end war’—that is what they call their large periodic conflicts—Earth would be a lovely little place for pictures . .

“It would be a real shame if they do annihilate themselves . . . I talked with a number who showed unmistakable impulses of kindness, kindness . . .

“They are clever with their hands . . . They made primitively-powered machines, with which they made other machines to do work, which gives them time to sit and watch still other machines . . .

“On the whole, they seem more confused than vicious . . . For one thing, they are all color blind . . . Somehow they managed to get themselves parceled off into divisions called ‘races,’ which they have labeled Yellow, Black, White and Red . . . Actually, the Yellows are a sort of beige, the Black range from cream color to dark chocolate, the White also range from cream to brown, the Red are in beige tones like the Yellow.

“The racial groups would be confusing enough, but within these large divisions are sub-groups, termed ‘nations,’ which continually try to grab land from one another . . .

“Each nation has spokesmen or diplomats who usually come together and talk quite a bit while the nations are getting ready to fight about a piece of land . . .

“Then they fight! . . . And destroy!

“Then the spokesmen get together and talk some more until the nations are sufficiently recovered to fight again.

“You will appreciate the irony of this warring when I tell you that these Earth dwellers are all alike . . . Each has two eyes, a nose and a mouth . . . They cook their food, they sleep at night . . . All have families, relatives, friends and are fond of their children, whom they instruct after a fashion . . .

“They even have established orders of government within their separate groups . . . They have laws . . .

“Earth people are alike to the point of monotony . . . which makes it hard to understand why they fight so much.

“Of course, they may learn to settle their fantastic quarrels without blowing themselves up. If not, as I have said, in a few years, Earth will be a lovely little place for picnics.”

WHILE Etilie Wallace was the prime mover, the director and producer of this “Kaleidolight Production,” she is careful to spread the credits. Clyde Grant designed and constructed unique “sets.” Emily Romano, wrote the narrative, gaining a poetic phrase or two from John Theobald, who spoke the piece. Music was composed by Christopher Maclaine of San Francisco and Lloyd Von Haden of Vista, and played mainly by a San Diego string quartet. Robert Barkley did the actual filming.

Key to the mood of the film was found in a statement of Albert Einstein’s: “Our defense is not in armaments, nor in going underground. In the light of new knowledge the human race must adapt its thinking.”

December 2, 1954, Point, **Art of the City:** Messages in Paint (California watercolor exhibit in Fine Arts Gallery)

CAPTION: Uncertain Way by Ed Graves.

CAPTION: Paris Rooftops by Roger Barr.

CAPTION: Roman Banners by Constance Stengel.

CAPTION: "Retrospection," by William Munson of San Diego, and a photo of his subject, an abandoned theatre in the Spanish Village, Balboa Park.

THE CALIFORNIA Watercolor Society Exhibit began its tour of the West with a month's stand at San Diego's Fine Arts Gallery (through November). The opening reception reminded observers of "old times," meaning the period before World War II, when it was quite common for gallery functions to attract substantial, animated and interested crowds.

More than half of the animated reception crowd came from the Los Angeles area, and most of the paintings in the show came from there too.

The money-poor Fine Arts Society deserves only praise for exerting itself to bring a show that tells something of what is going on in the art world outside San Diego. The show is valuable and welcome; even though there is little in it that could stand with the most important painting being done today.

The overall impression is of many energetic, talented people painting according to a few well-established modern formulas. (Another word for "well-established" is "academic.") Painting according to modern formulas must have much the same sort of appeal as playing jazz . . . a lot of excitement, plenty of color and startling effects, but not very much message.

THERE'S NO ESCAPING the fact that important painters pack messages into their canvases. Some idea of the current state of message-painting may be had from a recent lecture by Lewis Mumford. "Irrational Elements in Art and Politics" was delivered early this year at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington and is included in Mumford's latest book, "In the Name of Sanity" (Harcourt Brace).

Says Mumford: ". . . One cannot understand the general state of our civilization without interpreting the art of the last 50 years . . . It has disclosed the new multidimensional world revealed by science and carried into our daily lives by invention . . .

"For us today, reality can no longer be represented fully by surface images. The invisible is as real, as present, as operative as that which is open to our immediate gaze . . . At the first try, many of these manifestations of modern art might seem as difficult for a layman to interpret as the latest equation in nuclear physics . . .

"One part of our art has responded to the formative and rational elements in our civilization . . . The other part has responded to, has recorded, has intensified the horror and misery and madness of our age . . . Plainly the narrow path, the path of order, rationality, discrimination, the path of mature and loving elemental development, fruitful and creative in every occasion it embraces, has become ever narrower, and the effort to follow its upward course has become lonelier and lonelier . . . While, on the other hand, the broad path, the path that leads to destruction—to the corruption of the human, to the denial of love, to systematized disorder, to non-communication and non-intercourse at any level—has become wider and wider. So it is in art; so it is in politics . . .

"The glorification of brutality characterizes all the arts today. Both highbrows and lowbrows have become connoisseurs of violence. The enemies of the human race are no longer isolated tyrants like Hitler and Stalin. In the very act of opposing their programs of revolutionary enslavement by the same means these dictators employed, we ourselves have increasingly taken on their inhuman or irrational characteristics . . .

"As if the cult of violence were not a sufficient threat to our very humanity, the painting of our time discloses still another danger: the surrender to the accidental and the denial of the possibility of coherence and intelligibility . . . Paintings that we must, in all critical honesty, reject as esthetic

expressions, we must yet accept as despairing confessions of the soul, or as savage political commentary on our present condition . . . “

PERHAPS there's some message, even many messages, in the California Watercolor Exhibit after all. The Fine Arts Colony this month is a good place to visit in a reflective mood with Mumford's statements firmly in mind. The examples illustrated here carry greatly different comments on that most tortured of all art forms, the modern city.

Something New

AMBITIOUS plans for developing the Del Mar Hotel as a tourist attraction over and above its turf and surf activities include an art gallery and art colony, run by the wife and daughter of the late John Decker.

Mindful of the profitable Laguna Beach art stir, they offer 90 rooms to serious artists, from \$25 a month up. Joker to some of the more serious may be that each guest will be given a can of paint to decorate his own room.

The Decker Art Gallery opened last Sunday. It will be reported more fully here later.

December 9, 1954, *Point*, **Art of the City**, Christmas and the [San Diego Allied} Craftsmen . . . Phyllis Wallen, president. (James Britton will be out of the city for several weeks. During his absence, he will send some articles for publication and, in other cases his page will be handled by others on *Point's* staff. This week's article is an assist by another staff member.)

December 16, 1954, *Point*, Florence Hord's Christmas

December 23, 1954, *Point Newsweekly*, **Art of the City**: Bringing Museums to Life (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium in Metropolitan Museum of Art)

CAPTION: A Rodin bronze and a Manet oil face each other in a typical vista at the dramatic new galleries of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

CAPTION: The Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of the key reasons for the great new aliveness of the country's largest museum. It sees a continuous parade of lecturers and musicians and is perfectly adapted for television. Voorhees, Walker, Foley and Smith, Architects.

CAPTION: This is where the "common" man may dine, along with the cultural elite, cafeteria style, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

TAKE THE MUSEUMS away from San Diego and it would be a dopey adobe village appended to a commercial nightmare and a sportsmen's paradise. Take the museums away from Manhattan and it would be a bleak rock of a city indeed.

Not enough San Diegans realize the importance of their museums, which enjoy a constant struggle for support. The news about Manhattan is that more and more people—by the millions, no less—are learning to cherish their museums as keepers of the flame at a time when fires are being smothered in individual souls the world over. Besides, they are good places to get in, out of the cold weather—a civic service not required in San Diego.

The people who run museums in New York are deep in grand plans for improved performance. The total impression created by all the stir is of an island growing stronger as a center of vital culture, probably the greatest in the world for the next half century at least—the time that concerns us most.

Many forces either than museums contribute to this life-saving development. But museums must be in the forefront, or the yeasts of creative activity don't leaven the large audience which is needed if the arts are to fulfill their social purpose.

San Diego's pursuit of cultural maturity seems wistful enough when measured by the Manhattan scale of values, but it is this scale we must match if we want to be worthy of the whole country's attention. San Diego rose to such a scale in 1915 with its famous exposition of that year. It is past due to rise again. Reports from New York may suggest some directions of progress.

THE METROPOLITAN Museum of Art, biggest in the country, is handicapped architecturally—as is the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery in a smaller way—by an “impressive” building that isn't very manageable for the ever-changing patterns of museum activities. The old hulk has just been put through one phase, costing almost \$10 million, of a long-term construction program.

Many architectural fans would either see the \$10 million—and more millions to follow—in a new building. Critical reaction to the job done so far is not at all rhapsodic. Acute eyes notice, for example, that the simplified walls and heightened lighting of the picture galleries tend to bring up the ornate frames at the expense of the pictures themselves. Perhaps the Met will dare one day to strip the pictures of their frames and give them the stunning starkness that makes the Guggenheim Museum, across Fifth Avenue from the Met, such a great optical success.

FINEST ELEMENT of the reconstruction to date, and probably a fair index of things to come, is the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, a miraculous small theatre built entirely within one knuckle of the old Metropolitan, replacing the lecture hall.

Since I have not “heard” the new hall at this writing, I will relay and rely on the comments of a most gracious connoisseur of the good life, John Mason Brown.

“It represents not a step but a leap forward in auditorium building . . . It has a large foyer, a nearby pantry and kitchen to serve those who, at openings and on other special occasions may hunger and thirst for more than culture . . . To enter it is to feel at once that experts have been at work, men as aware of the spectator's comfort as of the museum's aims . . . For me, it has a beauty of its own, the beauty of being right to the point of inevitability . . .

“The virtues of the Rogers Auditorium are inescapable and many. Its intimacy is warming. (It accommodates 708 on the main floor and balcony.) Its seats are built on the wise assumption that nature has not done the upholsterer's work for him. Its sightlines are perfect and its acoustics are so good that a person talking in conversational tones on the stage can be heard with ease in the balcony . . .

“The stage can accommodate a full symphony orchestra . . . There is a portable pipe organ, direct telephone lines to radio and television stations . . . In addition to fine facilities for slides and a projection booth with apparatus for showing 35 mm and 16 mm films, there is a large television studio adjacent to the stage . . . “

POINT READERS may wish to try to shape San Diego's auditorium dreams so that they at least equal the virtues of the Rogers Auditorium. A special watch should be kept over plans for reconstructing the Federal Building in Balboa Park. If done properly, this could be an even finer asset to San Diego's museum life than the Rogers for the Metropolitan. It is not altogether a matter of money. The Rogers Auditorium cost only \$1,200,000.

ANOTHER LESSON from the Metropolitan for San Diego is found in the high-styled 300-seat restaurant made from the museum's spacious old Roman court. San Diego has a graceful counterpart in the Café del Rey Moro, handy to our museums. But the masterstroke of democratic planning in New York is that a visitor can dine in imperial splendor for as little as 75 cents and carry his own tray with the best of 'em for no one gets special service here!

The restaurant surrounds a great pool which will be filled with sportive fountain sculpture by Carl Milles. It takes little imagination to see that something on that order involving Donal Hord would be right for San Diego. Perhaps serious attention will be given the project for a Hord sculpture garden recently sparked by Alice Craig Greene and James Casey.

VICTORIOUS CAMPAIGNS could bring San Diego to life museum-wise. The Metropolitan has risen in membership from 3,776 in 1942 to over 12,000 this year. This fall's campaign, making generous use of the malls, brought in 1000 members, whose dues amounted to more than twice the cost of the campaign.

As in San Diego so in New York, the city contributes funds to museum support. One auspicious thing that happened in New York this year for the first time: the entire City Council and the mayor paid an official visit to the Metropolitan. That has not happened yet in San Diego, but it is a good idea.

December 30, 1954, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City**, Phyllis Decker's Art Gallery (Alice Craig Greene pinch-hits this week for James Britton, who is in the East.)

1955, POLK'S SAN DIEGO CITY DIRECTORY: no Eliz; no Jas.

Timeline: 1955—Disneyland opened in Anaheim, California

Timeline: 1955—City Planning Commission adopted 1953 version of Master Plan for Mission Bay

January 6, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City:** Good Listening

CAPTION: This is how a stage should be equipped for good listening. Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, N.Y.

THE ROGERS AUDITORIUM OF New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art is almost as delightful as John Mason Brown's description of it in the December 23 issue.

Article mostly about Knickerbocker Chamber Players in New York City and the desirability of the Fine Arts Society sponsoring chamber music concerts in San Diego; some hints on how to improve acoustics at State College auditorium; complementary remarks about Musical Arts Society of La Jolla.; proposal that Station KSON play more contemporary American serious music.

January 20, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City:** Matters of Taste

CAPTION: HENRY MOORE: Family Group. The Museum of Modern Art.

RUSSEL LYNES, managing editor of Harper's Magazine and carrier of a humanism like the late Frederick Lewis Allen is one of the sharper penmen on the New York scene. He has been etching deep lines in the national conscience through his biting writing on "Snobs," "Guests," "Highbrow, Lowbrow, Middlebrow," "Husbands—the New Servant Class," published in various periodicals. Judged by style and subject matter, it is surely he who writes "Mr. Harper," which tries to separate good from bad examples of the taste of Americans.

Not that Lynes claims to know the difference. In his new book, "The Taste-makers" (Harpers, of course), he says: "I do not know what good taste is. I do know that taste is not constant and that it is a creature of circumstance . . . It seems appropriate that not only is one generation's good taste very likely to be the next generation's bad taste, but one individual's ideas about what is good taste and bad taste changes as he matures . . ." This point is made graphic with a chart on which Whistler's Mother is seen slipping over the years from the affections of highbrows through the middlebrow's embrace to her present homey place among the lowbrows.

Yet Lynes, like any coherent person, constantly makes choices which show his personal taste preferences. By advertising his choices in clear words, he has himself become one of the taste-makers—the esthetic moralists, as he calls them. It’s a good phrase. It would apply to a Toynbee, and to Lewis Mumford, John Kouwenhoven and Oliver Larkin, three too-little read American history weighers, whom Lynes credits for much of his book’s worth.

MORALITY has a large part in Lynes’s definition of taste. “It seems to me that taste is made up of three things that are common to everyone. One is education, which includes not only formal but informal education and environment. Another is sensibility, which Webster defines as ‘the ability to perceive or receive sensation.’ And the third is morality—the kinds of beliefs and principles which direct one’s behavior and set a pattern for judging the behavior of others.”

After reviewing a colorful, entertaining parade of tastemakers, Russell Lynes concludes: “I doubt that taste has improved . . . We have a tremendously diversified basis of morality, education and sensibility . . . Conflicts of ideas and tastes give the arts of our country vitality . . . “

Almost at the beginning of the parade of tastemakers who had any wide-scale success, yet only a little over 100 years ago, was James Herring, a portrait painter who started the American Art Union on a lottery gimmick and got over a half million visitors at his Apollo Gallery (410 Broadway, New York) in his best year.

Toward the end of the Lynes’s review come present-day art dealers, crawling over each other “more like the members of an Oriental bazaar than like American merchants . . . Art dealing is free enterprise in one of its most lively dog-eat-dog manifestations.”

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART gets the Lynes paw and claw. It “has been the most provocative art institution of the past 20 years and has had the greatest influence on taste . . . It has seemed to many to look upon itself as a crusader in whose hands is entrusted the sword of contemporary esthetic truth . . . They have made ‘modern’ not only palatable, but a cause, and a genuine delight to a great many thousands of people. They have also made it chic . . . There is no question of the power of the Museum of Modern Art in the art world, though its mannerisms sometimes seem like those of a woman of fifty who wants to be treated with the respect due her age—at the same time she tries to act and dress as though she were still only twenty . . . “

Lynes does not neglect to mention the virtues of this museum. One of its most shocking virtues is the constant replaying of significant ancient films, so that onrushing generations and we the fading can taste of the 10’s, the 20’s and the 30’s.

This December, for example, New York was exposed to *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921), introducing Valentino; *Variety* (1927) with Emil Jannings, and an incredible series of newsreel excerpts showing such taste-burdened phenomenon as Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks (Sr.) mobbed (in a loving way) at a Moscow railroad station, or Gloria Swanson mobbed (in a flower-tossing way) upon her return from abroad to Hollywood, The 20’s, of course.

The Museum of Modern Art—fittingly enough, since art should anticipate the direction of social progress—maintains a balanced collection of paintings and sculpture from many nations of the 20th Century world. It is distinctly international in scope, yet an American idea—the grandest triumph of American tastemaking to date.

HENRY MOORE, perhaps, more than any other modern artist, speaks nicely for the range of the museum’s collection. English-speaking, but not American, accepted on “The Continent” but not European, he is the true universal artist. His “Family Group” (bronze, 1945) is a subtle balance of traditional and modern values.

It is a piece that is modern in the sense of pursuing form for its own sake, and traditional because it attempts to communicate to the observer. Moore hasn’t spelled out his motive in words, but it might have

something to do with the fact that Mom wears the pants in the family, such as they are, and Pop is all mouth, crying to Heaven for guidance, and wide-open for manna. The general pigheadedness and facelessness certainly fit the tendency of the times, when such faces as people have are often false and often unimportant in the working out of their mechanized destiny.

Heads without refined features are most logical for sculpture originating in clay (as did “Family Group”), which should not look as though parts could be easily broken off. “Family Group,” newly minted, appears as though it has weathered a thousand years. Compare its contours with those of the La Jolla Caves or those of “Thunder,” the jade carving by Donal Hord in the Fine Arts Gallery. Hord, so different from Moore, also understands sculptural condensation.

Moore is indeed English-speaking when he is obligated to say anything about his art. In this respect he is not representative but almost unique among modern artists. Here are some notes by Moore from the catalog of an excellent recent show at the Curt Valentin Gallery.

“It is likely that a sculptor can give, from his conscious experience, clues which will help others in their approach to sculpture . . . Appreciation of sculpture depends upon the ability to respond to form in three dimensions . . . Certainly, sculpture is more difficult than the arts which involve appreciation of flat forms, shapes in only two dimensions . . . Many more people are form-blind than color-blind . . . For its personal safety and practical needs the child has to develop (partly by means of touch) the ability to judge roughly three-dimensional distances, but, having satisfied the requirements of practical necessity, most people go no further . . .

“The sculptor must strive continually to think of, and use, form in its full spatial completeness . . . He mentally visualizes a complex form from all around itself; he knows while he looks at one side what the other side is like. He identifies himself with its center of gravity, its mass, its weight. He realizes its volume, as the space that the shape displaces in air . . .”

Henry Moore clearly has good taste in words. Many observers think he also has good taste in sculptural form. Do you?

January 27, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City:** Some Entertainments—Review of “The Detective” with Alec Guinness at Capri Theatre and “Affairs of State” with Jack Mosher at Old Globe Theatre; comments on paintings on display in the foyer of the Capri.

April-May 1955, Magazine San Diego, 32-33, 52. How to Bury Educational TV for San Diego

April-May 1955, Magazine San Diego, 22-24, 37, A City in Perpetual Crisis: A Panel Discussion sponsored by USC and Magazine San Diego

April 1, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City:** The Good Life . . . review of *The Age of Conformity* by Alan Valentine (Regnery, 1954).

“What San Diego has to sell is The Good Life.” City Manager O. W. Campbell.

. . . THE RELEVANCE of all this to San Diego development is surely clear. If “the key to good government by the people is a devotion to high quality in culture, our work closest at hand is to build a great city of highest quality—where conformity and social pressure are not allowed to choke virtue and talent.

April 8, 1955, Point Newsweekly. **Art of the City:** A Wright Theater for Us?

This will be a “May Dayish” report, for I was privileged to spend a morning, noon and night last week in the presence of an indestructibly great man. Frank Lloyd Wright is probably the nearest American living equivalent of Sir Winston Churchill. Each received titanic leadership because he was able to see and

boldly express basic needs of the times. It would mean nothing to protest that the one is a mere artist, the other a statesman. Both are prime ministers to the Lord of Creation.

At the invitation of architect John Lloyd Wright of Del Mar, I waited at 8 a.m. for the descent of Father Wright at Lindbergh Field. He came from Phoenix in a TWA air beast that looked grimy enough to have flown from another planet. When he appeared at the plane door, the unearthly accent heightened. Here was a being that radiated superhuman poise, even at a distance—and at the age of 85. He did not stumble from the plane like his scurrying fellow passengers. He alighted. Before seeking out his little knot of greeters, he turned and swept an appreciative eye over the beast that carried him. He—at 85—was the only passenger to do so.

The alertness and sense-ability was continuous. When he entered the back door of the terminal, he stopped and said: “Why so many?” He had already found a fault in San Diego architecture: too many columns cluttering the interior!

As we went out the front door, he stopped again. “There it is. . . They always put it right in the middle; smash you in the nose with it. . .” He was attacking the flagpole!

9:30 a.m.—A press conference convulsed the Copley press men as they scratched down Wrightisms they knew would meet a Copley Linotype: “Crucify the realtors! . . . They are the worst enemies of progress. . . Politicians (and he named McCarthy) know if you scare the people, they’ll give you anything you want. . .”

11:00 a.m.—A tour of the city, escorted by City Planning Director Glenn Rick, Planning Commission President Frank Hope and G. Aubrey Davidson. Relentlessly the lord and master of architecture laid on strongly condimented comments. Of Architect Hope’s San Diego College for Women: “Is it a college or a glorified prison? Of the Town and Country Hotel: “The new brutality . . .” Of Torrey Pines Public Housing: “Man’s inhumanity to man . . .”

Wright called “mediocre” the site officially proposed by the planning commission for a civic theater (Park Boulevard opposite zoo parking). He liked the proposed La Jolla theater site on Scripps Institution campus (but not the Scripps buildings).

Mr. Architect, his head full of ideas of his own, could not see remodeling the Federal Building (originally intended as a theater). He distinctly fell in love with Promontory Point (in the park near Sixth and Grape Streets). This is the spot referred to in his lecture as Aubrey Davidson’s idea. Actually, Arthur Marston has talked up this one most, and it was for years first choice of the City Planning Department. Wright made it clear he favored the site for a theater, not a convention hall. “Conventions, I’d like to see abolished.”

1:30 p.m.—Lunch at Hotel Del Charro, guests of beautiful Mrs. Alan Witwer, longtime friend of F.L.W. Wright said he had withdrawn from circulation the definitive exhibit of his work that was seen in Los Angeles last year, because the models and drawings are getting beat up. But Pare Lorentz, incomparable film director remembered especially for “The River” and “The Plow That Broke the Plains,” is constructing a color movie based on Wright’s buildings in use. Said F. L. W., “There never before has been a good film on architecture.”

8:30 p.m.—The Lecture. The most invigorating cold shower since Raphael Soriano, another good and “arrogant” architect, spoke and sputtered six years ago at the Fine Arts Gallery.

Frank Lloyd Wright gambitted straightface: “I don’t want to sound as though I’m selling you my theater design, but what else can I talk about? . . . I’ve been trying to build my idea of a theater for 40 years, but have been stopped by one thing or another.

. . . When I was with Adler and Sullivan in Chicago, we built The Auditorium, and some thirty other theaters. Not one was bad acoustically. . .

He described the theater he designed in 1949 for Hartford, never built because of local bigotry. His driving idea is that “The Theater needs perfect equipment to put in on a par with the movies.” He believes in arena-type theater, sculptural in impact rather than framed like a painting.

The Hartford design is hexagonal in floor plan. One angle of the hex holds a revolving stage, divided in the middle. The hidden half can be lowered to the basement for “setting” while the front half is in use.

Said Wright: “We made a single ceiling that would go over player and listener. The ceiling is a drum really. It is subject to tension, as sensitive as you please. The floor of the stage is also a drum-head, can be tuned as desired. . . . Here we have perfect acoustics . . . Every nuance can be heard. . .”

I have seen the drawings and model of the Hartford theater, though they were not shown to me by the Wright family. It appeals to me as one of the best of Wright’s master ideas, and will be the crown to his singular career—if ever built.

Strangely enough, it looks more in keeping with the terrain and building types of San Diego than of Hartford, and is perfectly suited to our park. Point will shortly carry more details and pictures.

While the august architect and work hurler wounded as many civic leaders as he enchanted, at least one key citizen to whom I talked is infected with the idea that the Wright theater should be built here—privately if not publicly. It would not solve all our needs, but there is no question that it would magnetize residents and tourists alike

The audience stood spontaneously when Frank Lloyd Wright entered the lecture hall. Could San Diego do better for itself than to indulge the fondest dream of a proven immortal?

April 22, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Without Imagination Is Downtown Doomed?**

CAPTION: The proposed layout of a downtown parking district—First to Ninth at A to G Streets. “X” marks the logical blocks for parking garages under this plan.

CAPTION: This (Seventh to Eighth, B to C Streets) is one of four blocks which could be covered entirely with parking on two or three levels, according to proposals of the Parking District Survey Committee. Would it be wiser in the long run to put cars below ground with a grass-plus-tree park at street level, a la Pershing Square, Los Angeles?

BECAUSE of Point’s concern with basic underlying currents of civic development, the magazine is often in a we-told-you-so position. When Sears Roebuck planned its move to Hillcrest five years ago, we didn’t find it hard to forecast a sharp decline of downtown San Diego.

Later, pedestrian traffic counts made by the Realty Board showed a drop of almost 25 percent of the population that turned up near Fifth Avenue and Broadway in 1952, the year Sears moved away! This is relative decline we are speaking of, and it was not so apparent to the casual eye because population was increasing rapidly.

The decline in been in progress less drastically for years. The future is likely to bring even more drastic decline unless Something is Done.

This week we examine a Something that has been proposed by the persons most worried, the downtown merchants and property owners. It will not be possible for Point simply to bless the Something and wish it success. We have to look at it in terms of the greatest good for the greater San Diego.

A TENSE MOOD of emergency was in the air last month as the latest plan for downtown parking was made public. Real Estate Investor Ewart Goodwin had just delivered a characteristically snappy speech

to the Downtown Association. He urged plans “that will make downtown San Diego interesting and dynamic as it was 40 to 50 years ago.”

Said Goodwin: “The downtown district must accomplish the ultimate in making itself serviceable, attractive and convenient for those who come downtown to work, to buy and to transact business.”

Franklin Archer, of the J. W. Robinson department store in Los Angeles, also pep-talked the Downtown Association. He explained that it is no good to rely on free-enterprisers tearing down old buildings to make blacktop parking, as is being done extensively in many cities. Besides the ugliness of the result, Archer said: “better parking creates a demand for new offices and stores, which in turn will absorb the very areas of blacktop parking that made the demand for the new construction.”

Archer cited the Pershing Square underground garage as “proof of the way Los Angeles would prefer to handle parking.”

A FEW DAYS later, The Union publicized the thinking of a “Parking District Survey Committee,” with a full page of sketches, proposing tentatively and delicately that four specified blocks be acquired by the city and that the city build multi-level garages on them.

Hamilton Marston is the plan’s father, if it has one. Marston himself prefers to stress that he is only chairman of the committee, and he gives credit for design ideas to D. J. Faustman, traffic engineer of Sacramento, hired by the committee.

The plan leans heavily on the State’s Parking District Act of 1951, and currently a struggle is underway to amend the act to create more favorable terms.

To make the plan charming to the sore-taxed public, and thus encourage the City Council to put it into effect, a complicated financing arrangement is contemplated, the charming feature of which is that it should cost nothing or almost nothing of public money. Idea is for the City to issue bonds, payments on which would be made in part from income of the parking garages.

An important key to the proposed financing is an increase in curb meter rates, most of the increase being applied to paying off the bonds. Hamilton Marston says the plan probably could not be realized without this feature.

If income from parking garages and parking meters is not enough, property owners in the proposed district will be tapped for an agreed-on contribution—up to \$1 per \$100 of assessed valuation. Merchants are also expected to continue the present practice of paying customers’ parking charges, to encourage use of public garages. All this would not be so painful to merchants as it sounds. Some of them now pay up to \$3.60 per \$100 of their assessed valuation to maintain nearby private blacktop lots.

IT IS NATURAL, under the circumstances, that the plan proposes only the minimum buildings needed to make efficient use of the new-found parking space. Thus Realist Goodwin’s formula for a healthy downtown—serviceable, attractive and convenient—is served on two counts. Only attractiveness—a rather serious omission—is unaccounted for.

Architect Sam Hamill was engaged by the committee to make preliminary studies, the basis of the published sketches. It is not his fault that attractiveness is not part of the picture, though one might ask whether he really thinks this is architecture.

Foundations would be built to carry second levels, but only enough levels would be built initially to care for current demand. One or two underground levels have been considered, but they may be abandoned because they are more expensive—involving lights, ventilation and sprinklers.

Clearly, these structures, occupying whole blocks and placed according to the proposed street plan (see diagram), would do a fine job of supplying handy parking for anyone who cared to go downtown.

THE BIG QUESTION, as we see it, is whether people are going to be wooed downtown, merely by ease of parking. It is very clear to trend-watchers that the psychological growth of the American people is not only toward convenience and comfort but toward joy in beautiful surroundings—even as they shop.

This trend is already being ridden to tremendous success by Victor Gruen, foremost designer of super shopping centers, or shopping towns, as they are now called.

So significant is Gruen's work that the American Federation of Arts circulates an exhibit of his shopping town ideas. The Municipal Art Center of Long Beach had the wit to show this recently.

Our own progressive George Scott has been working with Gruen on a shopping town near Lemon Grove. When the Scott-Gruen team moves into action, downtown merchants really may have themselves a bawl in the empty streets. Last week financing was announced for the project, and it was revealed that the Walker-Scott store there will be "substantially larger" than the firm's downtown store.

THE GRUEN IDEA is well-expressed by one of his clients, Foster Winter of the J. L. Hudson department store in Detroit. Says Winter: "Modern, responsible merchants have taken the lead in developing shopping towns containing not only shops and stores but, beyond that, offering places for meetings, for recreation and entertainment, making them focal points for community life . . . This gives ample food for thought also in connection with the other important problem we face: the conservation of our downtown areas,"

Would Foster Winter or Victor Gruen or George Scott or Edward Goodwin or Franklin Archer or Hamilton Marston or Sam Hamill or anyone say that the proposed garages without additional planning will make downtown a healthy central city?

For those who wish to chuck the whole subject at this point and simply let downtown go to seed, we'd like to say that there are plenty of studies showing that run-down sections automatically and relentlessly increase the burden on all of a city's taxpayers.

THE HAPPIEST THING about the district plan is the location of the four blocks in relation to principal stores and offices. Each destination inside the proposed parking district of 48 blocks is within one block of one garage, or within three blocks of four garages! This is not merely a cute mathematical miracle. It is a high standard of traffic convenience, though there is nothing about it to assure a growth in attractiveness of the district.

The plan could be raised to something like the Gruen ideal of a "shopping town: if the four parking blocks were handled in the Pershing Square manner—parking underground, parks on top. An important feature of this approach is that space under the streets can be utilized, making fewer levels necessary.

Imagine one such green town square—with trees, fountains, benches—adjacent to the Library and Post Office, opposite the YMCA and the Fox Theatre (which may have a future as an opera house); two more green park squares further west on blocks that have no distinction at all right now. Four such squares with parking underneath would provide relief from congestion for shoppers and a great deal of park frontage to encourage handsome new stores and other construction as the years go by and the trees grow up.

One's first reaction to this may be to laugh it off as costly. Yet, over and over again, planning of such scale has proved itself real cheap in the long run. Balboa Park is an example. What would our tourist industry be without it.

Specifically, a spectacular system of downtown park-plus-parking squares would greatly raise property values of the whole district and beyond, with corresponding increase in tax yield. Even tax money could be invested wisely in such a sound scheme.

The construction of scattered public buildings of mediocre design is the only public “planning” now in the works for downtown. This incompetent program is not going to provide the needed attractiveness, but rather will make future citizens marvel at the feebleness of their precursors.

AN ADEQUATE PLAN for downtown San Diego will have to start from private initiative or not at all. The Planning Commission is way down at the bottom of a deep rut as far as vision is concerned. The City Council quails at any idea of exercising its right—and duty—to condemn private property for public purposes. And the Park Board, struggling to take care of what it has, hardly dares dream of bold new plans, let alone advocate them.

ONE ASSOCIATE of the parking committee (not Hamilton Marston) tried to talk us out of it when he learned Point would advocate a more ambitious plan than the committee dared. His fear was that any discussion not controlled by the committee might kill the whole thing.

Fact is, the committee’s modest plan doesn’t stand too good a chance, no matter how much praise is blown over it. General intelligence plus a few virulent antagonists can kill this, as they did many plans before it.

Chief antagonists at the moment are O. W. Cotton, who owns some parking blacktops, and has done very well out of the chaos, thank you; and Herbert Kelly, a lawyer speaking for sundry opposed property owners. Kelly offers no plans of his own, but almost daily showers all committee members with pages of fantastic eloquence.

A favorite device of the plan’s enemies is to tag it as the device of big merchants serving their own interests at the expense of the little fellows and the city generally. But Hamilton Marston patiently points out that if the merchants don’t initiate action on parking, no one will, and he insists that the committee was thinking of the community welfare above all.

Indeed, the Parking District Survey Committee itself has spelled out the community issue. A statement prepared under Banker Graydon Hoffman’s direction, said:

“Nothing is so important to the future growth and continued wellbeing of the American city as an active, convenient, functional and attractive central district. . . . It should therefore be the one spot of most easy access to the metropolitan area as a whole.

“The central district expresses the city’s personality. By it the city is judged and evaluated, not only by visitors to it—who frequently see little else—but also by the citizens themselves.

“If its values are kept sound, the central district makes a great contribution—a subsidy, it might be called—to the operation of the whole community, through its large tax rolls, because its demands upon the public budget are small in relation to the taxes it pays. It is a matter of community interest on many counts to see it kept vigorous and healthy.”

POINT’S PLEA is that the Parking District Survey Committee improves its plan so as to better carry out its own honorable objectives.

April 22, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City**: 13; (Reginald) Poland Regained? . . . urges reinstatement of Reginald Poland as director of Fine Arts Gallery following resignation of Thomas Robertson.

JUST a year ago Point laid open the hideous secret which the newspapers did not think was any of the public’s business, though it concerned the fate of one of San Diego’s most distinguished public servants. Reginald Poland, having performed notably for 25 years as director of the Fine Arts society, had been squeezed out of his job and was obliged to leave the town he loved in pursuit of employment.

As this is written, the trustees of the Fine Arts Society are pondering whether to re-hire Reginald Poland for his tough old job, which again became vacant when his successor, Thomas Robertson, resigned in despair, yes despair. They have Poland's application, along with those of some 30 others, including a much admired younger man from New York's Metropolitan Museum.

The trustees are trying to come to a decision by the night of the annual dinner, April 23. Some of them are for Poland without equivocation. The surprising thing is that there should be any question in any minds. Simple justice clearly demands that they rehire the man who was banished by a very peculiar form of injustice.

WITH ALL DUE respect for other applications, it would best become them one and all to withdraw their applications and urge Poland's reinstatement—if they know the facts.

This is no proper time to weigh Poland's qualifications—his age (62), his previous condition of servitude, his charm, his tact, or the number of buttons on his shoes. Even the fact that he wants to return to the city he helped build, or the fact that his chronically ill wife pines for home should not be governing factors in the trustees' decision.

The only thing the trustees have to consider, if they are guided by conscience rather than expediency, is that Reginald Poland would still be head of the Fine Arts Society if he had not quite as a sacrifice play for what was mistakenly thought to be the welfare of the society.

The massively wealthy Putnam sisters, the society's chief donors or angels, were the key to Poland's fall—as they had been the key to his strength in building up a collection of old paintings. The sisters and their advisors turned on Poland when he gagged at accepting some junky pictures that had been lobbed off on them. They threatened to withdraw if Poland didn't. He did and—irony of ironies—so did they a few months later.

As a result, the society has dragged along from crisis to crisis in the last four years, and might have got to the point of closing up shop except for the strenuous efforts of Mrs. Frank Marcy, president of the board. So rare are persons willing to take on the burden that there is a general demand for Mrs. Marcy to keep the presidency another year.

IT MAY BE wondered why a board of trustees supposedly conducting an operation in the public interest, using a publicly owned building and getting operating funds from the city treasury, allowed the operation to fall victim to a private tyranny.

The answer may be that the board is not representative enough of the various art interests and that it does not make a broad enough appeal for funds. Instead of seeking its main support on the basis of the public's stake in a flourishing museum, it tries to coax funds out of moneyed individuals. When emergency funds were needed early this year, appeals were carefully confined to former donors. Was the prospect of explaining things to newcomers too embarrassing?

A majority of any museum's board are likely to be lawyers, investment advisors, administrators, businessmen, or the wives of these. Sometimes they are dedicated to the idea of making art a big thing in the community. Sometimes they are merely cutting a social figure.

Artists, educators, and dedicated amateurs from all walks of life are usually a minority on museum boards. Yet these are the people most likely to move their community into first-rate involvement with the great world of art.

Perhaps, in San Diego's special case, it would be an improvement to reverse the percentages, giving the majority on the Fine Arts Society board to people of proven knowledge and enthusiasm for art above all. Should the City Council encourage this as a condition of granting funds? It won't happen spontaneously.

THIS EDITORIAL should not be considered a piece of pleading in behalf of a particular man. Reginald Poland is no special friend of mine. In fact, I found him hard to talk to, as did many others. And none of his advocates has approached Point.

The painful subject is brought up again on this page because it is an issue of public policy, no matter how much the trustees might prefer to keep it under wraps. The affairs of a public museum should be conducted in an open, forthright manner.

The paid director should not be a weakling, putty in the hands of the board. He should be a man of knowledge, of ideas, of vigor. He should be given a contract of three to five years, subject to renewal unless the board can show objectively that he is not up to the job. For the period of his contract he should be supported in every possible way by his board.

As of 1955, Reginald Poland stands alone among candidates on good principle. The trustees who will decide whether to re-hire him are: Mrs. Frank E. Marcy (president), Lyle S. Powell, (vp), Walter Hepner (vp), Harold A Taylor (sec.), Standord Steinbeck (treas.).

Mifflin Ward, Clark Cavanaugh, W. Templeton Johnson, James S. Copley, Willis Fletcher, Sam W. Hamill, Everett G. Jackson, Frederick Lek, Thomas McCarty, W. Allen Perry, Edmund T. Price, Barney Reid.

Miss Helen Abel, Mesdames Mariott Redding, John Jeffers, Ellis Barron, John Sheale, Douglas Gilder, D. Jackson, H. H. Ferris, Jr, James D. Forward, Jr., Hervey King Graham, Frederick G. Jackson, Donald A. Stewart, G. Gray Stewart, Robert Maw, Herbert Kunzel.

May 6, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City:** They Who Got Pushed

Credit for Copley: Point often criticizes the Copley papers for falling short. It is proper to compliment them for things well done. The three-to-one vote for harbor bonds probably can be credited in large part to the Union's extensive campaign, amounting to a crusade.

TWO MEN of distinction who have been getting pushed around in unusual ways are Reginald Poland and John Lloyd Wright. Except for Point's reports, the truth about neither would be public knowledge. In the case of Poland the newspapers have said nothing. In the case of Wright, the papers have been grossly inaccurate.

Sources in The Union and The Tribune, April 22, garbled the results of Wright's latest appearance in the Oceanside Municipal Court. (He had been there before because the State Board of Registry for Engineers and the Board of Architectural Engineers had charged him with four breaches of state laws governing the practice of architecture and engineering.) Judge L.W. Cottingham had knocked out two of the charges, but two remained. The more serious of these two could not be proved by the District Attorney's office, and Cottingham ruled Wright innocent. There was strong evidence that Wright was fully within the law.

The one count on which Cottingham ruled guilty was that Wright had displayed a sign to indicate that he was licensed as an architect in the State of California. This was by far the weakest of the charges brought against him, and it gives rise to a complicated constitutional issue—can a state take away a man's right of free speech, namely to advertise accurately about himself?

Wright's advertising was accurate. The sign in question said: "John Lloyd Wright, A.I.A. Design, Supervision, Owner's agent." The letters "A.I.A." signify a member of the American Institute of Architects, which Wright is.

Because of certain legal precedents, the judge felt obliged to decide that the sign tended to indicate Architect Wright was licensed in California! In prior California cases, it had been decided that an

unlicensed man may not call himself an “architect” or a “builder and designer,” though he is allowed to function as such within prescribed limits.

The semantic problem is so tricky that Cottingham said: “I am reluctant to find the defendant guilty because I feel that the statute is inaccurate.” He agreed to an “arrest of judgment” asked by defense attorney Louis M. Welsh, meaning he would reconsider this Thursday before fixing judgment.

Welsh says he will appeal, if necessary. Even prosecutor Arnold Steele, in the D. A.’s staff, feels that the Wright case may become a “cause celebre.” He notes that the architectural magazines have taken it up. Steele also feels that architectural law is badly drawn due to lobbying by contractors’ groups. Steele’s view: “Any hayseed can now design buildings.”

Steele was not referring to Wright as a hayseed. Wright is an architect with long experience. Licensed in Indiana, Nevada and Texas, he has been denied a license in California for reasons that appear to include personal malice and professional jealousy. This writer has challenged Wright’s accusers to justify their case. They have not answered in public print, and in the courts they have lost all but a shaky thread of their case.

The Union and Tribune stories did not explain the count of advertising on which Wright was found guilty. Both said he was found guilty of “practicing architecture without a license,” when, in fact, he had been cleared of all such charges. As we went to press, efforts were being made to get corrections printed.

REGINALD POLAND’S application for re-instatement as director of the Fine Arts Society has been coldly received by the board of trustees, though they have not yet said a final no. His is one of six names being considered. It might be well for those who appreciate his long service here to pepper the board with requests for Poland’s return. President is Mrs. Frank Marcy, 3910 Henry Street.

Neither The Union nor The Tribune has carried any account of this public business, though their publisher, James Copley, one of the Fine Arts Society trustees, has been in New York interviewing a Metropolitan curator for the San Diego job. There is a substantial, we might say hard, corps of the board which would prefer a man of such background provided he seemed likely to charm money out of the reluctant rich.

It is a miserable fact that this hard corps believes that the proper way to finance our public museum is to get back into the good graces—and into the will—of the Putnam sisters, the Society’s erstwhile chief source of gifts with strings attached. The attitude tends to paralyze the Society, like a mess of needy relatives waiting around for the funeral.

Point has heard from a reliable source that last year Putnam Foundation manager Fred Parker offered to restore the Fine Arts Society to the Putnam will, but his offer was incredible, he wanted to run the Society with a board of his own choosing!

To their credit, a majority of the board, including Mrs. Marcy, turned down this bargain that would have made the Fine Arts Gallery a private fiefdom.

It was the Putnam sisters who became displeased with Reginald Poland causing his banishment. Even now, though gaining nothing, they try to crack the whip. Their latest complaint: it was improper to hold an Easter egg hunt in the Gallery.

Undoubtedly a majority of the board respect and even “love” Poland—and to the town—when he was banished to appease the Putnams, the City Council—or maybe the Grand Jury—should be concerned.

The City Council is the conscience (ha!) of the community. It should demand an upright posture of the Fine Arts Society, to which it will be asked to give around \$40,000 this year. Specifically, it should

demand the re-instatement of Reginald Poland, and an open-faced policy attracting donors on the basis of public, not private service.

America is the place where you start from scratch rather than bow to tyranny.

May 27, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City**: Clearing the Channel

BIGGEST NEWS about local educational television is a wake-up-and-live-word from Frieda Hennock, the FCC member who is the commission's chief champion of non-commercial channels. Miss Hennock corrects the emphasis in San Diego's understanding about Channel 12, which was taken out of the San Diego picture several years ago as a result of the State Department dickering with Mexico.

The impression has been circulated that the State Department would have to be approached about restoring San Diego's right to use of the channel. Not true, says Miss Hennock, the FCC made the decision to disallow Channel 12 in the southwest corner of the U.S., and the FCC has the power to change its mind and approve the channel for U.S. use without consulting the State Department.

In other words—Point words—if San Diego's Citizens' Committee for Community Television could ever get out of the diaper stage and articulate a petition to the FCC, there is a perfectly good VHF channel lying idle and waiting for the proper suitor.

At the time Channel 12 was disallowed by the FCC, there was general expectation that Mexico would be using it. Clearly, someone had to bow out or there would be a fine Katzen-jamming of signals and pictures. It now seems unlikely that Mexico will use the channel at least for some years. Thus the prospect is brighter for San Diego—if San Diego is bright enough to seize it.

The May 5 meeting of the Citizens' Committee, Dr. William Rust presiding, no newsmen present, approved a lengthy list of prospects for a board of directors. Next meeting, June 7. All who show up then will rate as "charter members."

So much for the baby's first steps. As for effective pursuit of a channel, we might ask: If Summer comes can another summer be far behind?

Meanwhile, in the livelier centers of the country, subscription television is being eagerly discussed as relief from the commercial blight. Much of Frieda Hennock's time now is taken up with that cause. If "tollevision" becomes a widespread reality, it will mean sharp increase in the use of UHF channels and the marketing of more TV sets to receive UHF. This, too, is an urgent matter for a fully functioning Citizens' Committee.

Word has just come from Washington that at least 50 percent of a board of directors for an educational station must be bona fide working educators, or the FCC won't play. This has caused drastic revision of the proposed local board line-up.

Miserable Fountain

MISERABLE is the condition of the fountain in Horton Plaza at the center of town, even more miserable is the design of the thing and its relation to its surroundings. It is one of the worse among many atrocities erected in our fair land at a time when many brazen Americans had delusions of grandeur like Rome's. In respect for the dead, the names of donor and designer should be carefully forgotten.

Though built to honor some person or event or idea, monuments are unfailing tests of the people who tolerate them, let alone the people and the pigeons who coo over them. In this regard, the present generation of San Diegans shows a far meaner spirit than the fountain builders. Not only did we allow the fountain to go to pot, but the plaza surrounding the fountain became a messy clutter, and so too did the downtown district surrounding the plaza.

Far from symbolizing the pulsing heart of a great city with a sure destiny, our fountain symbolizes civic disease and decay. Official embarrassment has finally become so acute that the city fathers have reacted as drastically as they dared. "No more billboards in the plaza!" "Clean the fountain!"

Cleaning is not enough. The fountain should be psychoanalyzed. If it can't be trained to contain itself in public, it should be committed to an institution, preferably the city dump.

The classical mind should ponder especially the fountain's habit of aiming its waters at the faces of the city's founders. For, as our photos prove to the hard-of-believing, at the base of the thing are bronze bas-relief portraits of Cabrillo, Serra and Horton, exposed these many years to continuous shower baths in the name of civic beauty.

At the very least the bronze portraits should be moved to a dignified place in the sun. But, official imagination being what it is, don't expect notable improvement in the concept of civic beauty. When the mess gets too bad, just clean it up a little and watch it run down again.

Brubeck & Theobald

AN UNUSUAL DEGREE of audience raptness was noted at the joint recital of Howard Brubeck, piano, and John Theobald, poetry. Listeners at the Fine Arts Gallery were invited to make comparisons between works of Bach and Shakespeare, Beethoven and Shelley, Ravel and Dylan Thomas, and even original compositions of Brubeck and Theobald.

It is an excellent formula for getting up audience interest where piano or poetry alone might prove too routine for some. The words were presented separately and the formula worked well, though the relationships got harder to accept toward the end of the program.

Dylan Thomas distinctly belongs in the company of Debussy than of Ravel. Brubeck's "Sketches for Piano" were wrung thoroughly dry of emotion, but Theobald's poetry was bursting with grandiose soul-struggle that seemed silly in reference to its writing, an Oxford boat race. The team's high standards collapsed completely at the end when Brubeck played Debussy's "Reflections in the Water" while Theobald shouted a lugubrious spook-piece compounded of door knockings and hoofbeats.

Theobald is a terrific rough-hewn reciter. Brubeck is a pianist of inward integrity, not outward show.

July 8, 1955, Point Newsweekly, *Mission Bay: America's Foremost Aquatic Park, Or a Business Venture?*

CAPTION: Landscaping, as it may be expected to develop at Mission Bay Park. This view was made from the Bahia Motel.

CAPTION: General view of Mission Bay. The channel to the ocean is at upper right. In the left foreground is the area—west of the golf course and north of the trailer park—where a dozen or more promoters would like to open a drive-in theatre. A curious, little-known fact: The area is not officially part of Mission Bay Park, although it is owned by the city.

CAPTION: When the dredges finish, will fishing remain one of the major activities at Mission Bay? The channel widening and deepening will be completed and the entrance to the bay will be opened in time for the Mission Bay Park Festival July 24.

WATCH the development at Mission Bay. That does not mean merely keep your eye out for the girls, as Point's photographer, Bob Pauline, did to doll up our cover. Pretty murmur-maids like Jo Johnson do not have to be scattered on the jetties and beaches by the Chamber of Commerce. They gravitate there of

their own accord along with thousands of plainer San Diegans who have discovered the assorted attractions of what is intended to become America's foremost aquatic park.

With the park dredged and filled to about 55 percent of its potential water and land acreage, many users have felt the pressures of crowding. As the air filled with reports of new commercial projects that might be given leases in Mission Bay, Copley press headlines came out screaming that the Mission Bay Commission wants a re-study of the City's intentions.

Is Mission Bay going to be for use mostly by residents or by tourists? Will it be essentially a public park maintained by tax money, or a collection of commercial facilities that pay impressive sums into the generally empty city treasury?

The headlines and the real division of opinion within the commission so rattled the Chamber of Commerce that it whipped up a luncheon for all news media, carefully including the county weeklies which together have greater circulation than the Union and Tribune. Smartly, the chamber set its tables in the restaurant of the handsome Bahia Motel, the most advanced commercial enterprise yet operating in the park.

THE LINE-UP of opinion within the commission can be judged from remarks made at the luncheon. Chairman George Scott, a canny combination of visionary and realist justly celebrated as the man-who-does-most-for-his-community, managed a balancing act, though he seemed basically satisfied with the present City procedure of leasing large areas of the made land to commercial enterprises, while preserving some 75 percent of the shore line for public use.

Scott threw the assembled newsmen a tantalizing bone, one of the biggest businessmen in the country had approached the City with a blanket proposal for dredging and developing the remainder of the bay. "He was turned down . . . It would have been bad business for us," said Scott, adding: "I'm not going to tell you his name, but if you knew it you would be astounded."

Your Point reporter's immediate guess: William Zeckendorf, the New York promoter who likes to work with king-size chunks of real estate, and who figured in development of Clairmont (overlooking Mission Bay). Zeckendorf's firm, Webb & Knapp, is credited with being the world's largest real estate company.

GEORGE Scott said of the commission: "We've watched the growing appreciation of the public as to what this means not only as a way of life but as a means of income . . . We're united in our goal but not always in the means to the end . . . That's a good thing."

Commissioner Harry Burnaugh: "We must seek the ideas of the majority of the people . . . An orderly progression requires that we know what kind of park this is going to be . . . tax-supported for all the people, or a commercial park pouring money into the City's coffers . . . It won't be answered until the people vote on a bond issue."

Commissioner Richard Nelson: "People who don't know are apt to think something fishy is going on here . . . Personally, I wonder about the importance of revenue in relation to the welfare of the people. I believe very much in free enterprise, but maybe there should be a little more of the park developed under some government control."

Commissioner Richard Shea: "I'm a little bit of a visionary . . . I like to think that Mission Bay will be for the whole United States."

Commissioner Muriel Tolle, an advertising career woman, reported that she had been in Washington trying to speed up federal action on completing its end of bay development. She announced an elaborate Mission Bay Park Festival for July 24.

THE FESTIVAL may give some visitors a sense that this is their park, planned for their recreation. It may also cause the maddest jam of traffic yet seen in San Diego. In any case, it should impress many citizens with the absolute necessity of sound planning in Mission Bay and in the surrounding metropolis.

Sound planning with respect to Mission Bay cannot ignore the necessity for sound planning of a whole network of parks in the city and county.

Flushing the population of the county into Mission Bay may be a festival-throwers dream, but if it were to happen the traffic tie-up would be something like the one that occurred when a bridge collapsed last month on the Los Angeles "freeway" system. Our fluid population simply cannot be sluiced into the ocean through the flood control channel.

Possibly the time has not yet come when Mission Bay can lure crowds of paralyzing dimensions. But unless the problem is recognized in advance, it will surely overtake us.

Sound planning cannot be merely a matter of setting up a super crowd-catcher. Indeed, just as fire laws prevent over-crowding in theatres, laws aimed at public safety should limit the concentration of monoxide-belchers in any one section of a city, especially in a section mapped for pleasure.

If, then, Mission Bay is to serve the welfare of the people of San Diego, it must be planned as a balanced attraction for both tourists and residents, with definitely charted limits on both. It must be carefully correlated with planning of traffic arteries, and counterweighed with public attractions in other locations.

This above is an argument for a regional planning body broad enough and strong enough to set up a sensible framework for crowd movement over the whole metropolitan region and beyond in the country. Yet the trend appears to be in the opposite direction. Mayor Dail wants a strong Mission Bay Commission doing its own planning, certainly separate from the City Park Commission. Park planning other than Mission Bay, lags far behind public need.

The promotion forces behind Mission Bay seem worried whether the present debate will divide the public in voting on the next bond issue (not yet scheduled). The Copley powers, which probably are the key to public response, would do well to advocate the inclusion of Mission Bay in a metropolitan park planning program, with emphasis on adequate neighborhood parks in this and other cities.

Balanced planning should be sold to the public on its merits; not merely on the basis of investment in crowd profits—whether by individuals or by the City of San Diego.

July 22, 1955, Point Newsweekly, San Diego State Society to avoid complete strangulation.

July 29, 1955, Point Newsweekly, **Art of the City:** Progress and Poverty

THE PLAZA FOUNTAIN is back in the pages of Point this week because the silly babbling eyesore betrays so much about progress (?) and poverty on the cultural front in San Diego.

Several weeks ago the City Council had the fountain cleaned as part of a program (costing several thousand dollars) feebly planned to improve the appearance of the plaza. We noted then that it was an incompetent improvement program, and suggested that the plaza would look no better after than before.

Unfortunately, we were quite right. The fountain looks almost as badly stained as before cleaning. It still spatters its aimless water on the bronze portrait plaques of historic San Diegans and on passing pedestrians.

Also, the replacement of the tall palm trees by shorter specimens of the same ugly brand was a public example of cynical “public servants” going through the motions of office without any heartfelt conception except to show they are on the job.

PLANNING for civic beauty in San Diego is riddled with such tired incompetence, though 40 years ago San Diego was very much in the forefront in such matters. It cannot be argued either that civic beauty is necessarily more expensive than civic ugliness.

Our one notable esthetic success in recent public building is the Education Center. Yet, it was unusually low in cost per square foot, much cheaper in terms of usable space than the new public library, our most monstrous esthetic and planning failure.

The library, ugly as it is and costly as it is, gives the keynote for the kind of inadequate thinking likely to prevail in other public building projects here. The courthouse, now being “planned” by three (3) architectural firms is almost sure to be the same sort of expensive botch. A state office building will come along soon, and there is no person or group of persons either competent or in a position to insure that it will be a building of esthetic quality.

The City Planning Commission has the legal right and obligation to pass on standards, including appearance standards, for all public buildings, but if this group ever had the heart and mind to argue for design quality, it has long since abandoned the fight.

Point’s unpopular comments along these lines have comprised just about the only voice raised consistently in behalf of civic architectural sanity. If it was our purposed to ‘get along,’ to “succeed” in a small way in a small town, we too should have been strategically silent. For there is one thing we have found which is probably the greatest drawback to cultural progress in San Diego: qualified people are simply not speaking up in public. Indeed, they often join in breaking the spirit of the few who do.

I am not just pressing sour grapes. The case that probably illustrates the San Diego cultural curse better than any other is that of Thomas B. Robertson. A well-endowed professional in the art museum field, Robertson came here as assistant to Reginald Poland, director of the Fine Arts Gallery. It wasn’t long before he learned not to take stands—no matter how intelligent—on controversial issues of city planning. He did so once and was threatened with the loss of his job. When Poland got driven out of town for taking a stand becoming to a professional museum man (while his “friends” kept discreet silence), Robertson inherited the job. As recited in Point before—and only in Point—the compromises and torments of conscience were such that Robertson’s health broke down. So, Tom Robertson has been deprived of his chosen career. He is now editing a company newspaper for Solar Aircraft Corp., whose president, Edmund T. Price, possibly had a respectable twinge of conscience about the way Tom was pushed around by San Diego’s alleged art lovers.

It is surpassing strange that the new head of the Fine Arts Gallery, Warren Beach, bears very close physical and background resemblance to Tom Robertson. Even stranger is the way Beach had sounded off in print about the responsibilities of a museum director. We can’t help wondering whether he was given any idea of the waves of intolerance and partisan pressure that will wash over him when he arrives in San Diego in September and tries to do a job.

Beach’s sounding off was in the form of answers proposed by Bob Nichols, brainy Sunday editor of the Union. Beach wrote his replies from his present home in smoky Columbus, Ohio. He has not yet breathed long and deep of the clear deadly San Diego social air.

Said Beach, sounding for all the world like a Point writer, “In the spirit of community responsibility, a gallery should be and frequently is represented on the city planning board and its corollary agencies . . . While the director of the art gallery is not trained to pass on purely business or engineering problems, there arise few problems purely of this nature. The art or visual aspect goes far beyond the mere location of statues for parks or murals for public buildings. It is an integral part of most rehabilitation and layout problems of city planning . . . “

About the management of a museum, Beach was even more outspoken: "Many institutions today have their storerooms crowded with works of art which are not of museum quality, and which the museum is committed to keep if not actually to display. Much of this material came through pressure from wealthy and usually well-meaning though poorly informed patrons . . . Today, museums try only to accept works of top quality. Where there is a question, they will only accept the work with the written permission of the donor to sell it, if this later appears advisable, and put the proceeds to some other use, for which the donor will of course be credited."

FOR UTTERING sentiments similar to the above, Point's art writer has been hanged in effigy in many a pleasant San Diego patio. As uttered by Warren Beach, they show a good man thinking and speaking on a professional, not a political level.

The big question is whether Director Beach will be allowed to function on the level of his own professional intelligence. The same question, incidentally, applies in the case of able Pat Malone, the new director of the Art Center in La Jolla. Pat's answer to the same set of queries in the Union were not so outspoken, which is surprising for a man from Chicago. Has Pat already been discouraged from cosmopolitan thinking in deference to San Diego provincialism?

BOTH the board of directors of the Art Center in La Jolla and the board of trustees of the Fine Arts Society have shown refreshing wisdom in the selection of directors. It remains for all of us who value cultural progress and shudder at cultural poverty to support the brave efforts of such true men as come among us.

Point, merged with Magazine San Diego, is pledged to keep up the good fight for the good life, even to carry the battle from greater strength than before. As far as our performance goes we may beg that readers will be watchful enough to let us know if we do not appear to be doing all we should?

**POINT becomes San Diego + Point Magazine, August 1955 – February 1968,
Vol. 7-8 – V. 20-4.**

August, 1955, San Diego Magazine and Point Magazine, 18-19, 68. **THE CITY OBSERVED**, by James Britton on revived emphasis on converting the Federal Building (in Balboa Park) into a civic auditorium

The point is that daring and original architects could bring a grand new sense of order to the choked section of the park around the Federal Building. By diverting most of the parking to the rear of the cluster of buildings there, the plaza on which they face could be freed of parked beetles and restored as it deserves to gardens and promenades. Ideal place for sculpture and maybe a fountain.

August 1955, San Diego and Point Magazine, **THE CITY OBSERVED**

Charming as is the Old Globe Theatre, it is only a sample of the fabulous variety of staging facilities that would exist in San Diego if all the good intentions were steel girders. Sifting through proposals past and present, is how the future may be expected to shape up—if high standards prevail.

Most likely to succeed in reaching reality is the project of the La Jolla-San Diego County Theatre and Arts Foundation. The thinking of the group is on the highest level, and it will be a great surprise if they come up with a mediocre solution. Foundation president Marian Longstreth has expressed the intention of drawing upon the very best talents of the architectural profession. Such an announcement of intentions is nothing new. The new thing will be adhering to them. Signs are good. An architectural commission is headed by Robert Mosher, one of San Diego's keenest architects in the esthetic sense.

Not least of the literate, sentient personalities connected with the enterprise is Roger Revelle, president of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Revelle eloquently urged the University of California regents into marking off 15 Elysian acres of the Scripps campus for the foundation's theatre. In return, Scripps will make partial use of the theatre. This too will be an expanding public service, because it is

Roger Revelle's intention to increase the activity of the local UC branch with emphasis on humanities and arts.

Humanist Revelle has a sound idea of what constitutes good architecture. One of his favorite architects (and his good friend) is William Wurster, now dean of architecture at Berkeley. It happens that Wurster is not only very much alive currently—despite the fact that he is a dean—but a historic leader in connection with the distinctive world-shaking Bay Region variety of architecture. Wurster will be advisor, at least, on the La Jolla theatre.

The intention is a theatre of 12 to 15 hundred seats, scaled for easy listening and seeing. It is likely to be a flexible space with a proscenium arch that can be hidden when not needed, and moving platforms to bring the action among the audience. The theatre ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright made a deep impression among the La Jolla planners.

It won't do any good to look for clues as to the prospective theatre's design in the existing buildings at Scripps. These are execrable architecturally, and were foisted on Revelle through bureaucratic politics.

Anyone doubting bureaucracy's power—like fallout ash—to create monstrosities is invited to look in—and listen. If you can hear it—to the new music auditorium at San Diego State College. This Moorish boorish addition is intolerable on a dozen counts. Its acoustics are about as well balanced as your bathroom.

The State College misfortune is mentioned here because it could happen again. Whenever government takes part in the planning of buildings, chances are the results will be less than the best.

San Diego city officials have bumbled and fumbled for years about building a civic auditorium. As of now, Mayor Dail and others close to the hassle are known to feel that a civic auditorium doesn't stand much chance of getting built with public money until after a convention hall has been provided—if them.

The public generally tends to confuse auditorium and hall, but public officials have learned the difference. They understand that a 3500-seat auditorium for music, music-drama, and opera should be a unit quite separate from anything serving as a convention hall.

Currently, Stanford Research Associates are surveying the confusion as a cost to the city of \$15,000. They will prepare a report including recommendations as to the number, size and locations of halls or auditoriums required in San Diego. Danger is that the report will be "business-like" and safe, not allowing for the infusion of imagination and boldness that alone can raise a city to world notice.

The direction of the Stanford report is unknown at the moment of this writing, but here are some of the conclusions of the city observer.

A convention "hall," or haul, should be combined by a genius architect with a baseball stadium and the package set down amidst terraced parking in some canyon or other close to the network of freeways, but not too close to residential areas. The parking terraces would correspond to the various levels of stadium seating, minimizing stairs and open-field running for customers. It could be provided with a sliding roof, left open, except when noise had to be shut in or weather shut out.

For the sake of argument, underline argument, my own choice is the canyon which empties into Cabrillo Freeway, just north of Date Street bridge.

City officials may go for something soon convention-wise, but they will be hard put to spend much money on a civic auditorium. To be plain about it, the percentage of the public vitally interested in the activities that would thrive in an auditorium is depressingly small, though it may comprise the torchbearers for the cavalcade of Western progress.

So, look for revived emphasis on converting the Federal Building (in Balboa Park, second building north of Ford Bowl) into a civic auditorium. The Federal Building was given to the city years ago with the express expectation that it would be converted into an auditorium. Its foundation, strong enough to carry seating for 3,000 or more, were planned so the flat floor could be ripped out and a sloping floor installed. Needless to say, the superstructure, while solid concrete, could be revised to conform with any new vision.

It would be far cheaper to start from that base than to start from scratch. The danger here is that a half-baked conversion plan will slip through. A decade ago the City had plans prepared for converting the Federal Building, but the plans are pedestrian, perfunctory, unimaginative—not necessarily the fault of the architect, Louis Bodmer.

Here again is a challenge for architectural genius. A great auditorium, a unique auditorium, in a setting as wonderful as the Old Globe's could emerge under deft designing hands, left free to design.

Most persistently heard objection to the Federal Building location is that parking areas around it are already overtaxed. The solution is to convert for parking the nearby mesa which now supports a misplaced riding academy. Circulation between parking areas and auditorium could be eased by a handsome bright (either auto and foot or just a foot bridge), and the bridge might even have moving sidewalks. Incidentally, a system of light electric taxis would be useful in the park, even as it now stands.

The point is that daring and original architects could bring a grand new sense of order to the choked section of the park around the Federal Building. By diverting most of the parking to the rear of the cluster of buildings there, the plaza on which they face could be freed of parked beetles and restored as it deserves to gardens and promenades. Ideal place for sculpture and maybe even a fountain.

The very real prospect of action on a theatre in the most enterprising corner of the city (No, La Jolla is not a separate city), is another reason why city officials may be expected to take weak action, if any, on a civic auditorium. Conversion of the Federal Building is the most economical bet for them. But even that may require prodding by especially interested citizens—of whom readers of this magazine are the cream.

As to securing the highest order of architecture, very special prodding will be required to assure that the City does not settle for mediocre designs by political favorites who will listen to political reason rather than to the voice of the future.

Mediocrity we have plenty of. Only architecture of rare distinction will make a theatre or auditorium of rare distinction. We pay our everlasting respects to Shakespeare because he apprehended neatly the design of the universe. Architecture worthy of the world's attention—and worth your money—must aspire to the status too.

October 1955, San Diego and Point Magazine, 38, **ART OF THE CITY: THE STANFORD'S REPORT'S ARCHITECTURAL MONSTROSITY.**

The Stanford Report is a pious fraud. The expression is used with due thought, though it should be quickly understood that as far as the individuals who produced the report concerned, the fraud is unintentional, unwitting.

Yet, the Stanford Research Institute—the group which made an elaborate \$15,000 study proposing a solution to San Diego's need for public assembly facilities—is something of a fraud itself. That is, it is not what it seems to be. It is not an official part of Stanford University, though it originally was underwritten thereby. It is not engaged in disinterested academic research. The research it does is part of a service it offers for a price. It is not, strictly speaking, an institute, but rather a profit-seeking company of efficiency consultants who advertise to solve the problems of confused businessmen and city officials.

Our city officials, being thoroughly confused in the matter of public assembly facilities, thought to get the problem out of their collective hair by passing it on to the impressive-sounding institute. Their hope was that any solution proposed by the dignified strangers from the North would get overwhelming support from the San Diego public. It was no longer a question of seeking solutions that would assure San Diego's future as one of the best of all possible cities. It was now a desperate matter of getting any solution that could be sold to San Diego's current dim-visioned people.

The Sanford Research Institute did its best to oblige. Its report breathes expediency on every page, and is dominated by the logical weaselings that are usually referred to as playing politics. Again it should be stressed that the individuals who worked on the report are not themselves responsible. They were only doing their jobs. Actually, the report is a glaring example of the job doing the man—that fatal reversal of form which characterizes so much of modern civilization.

It seems that the strategy of desperation is working. For the reception of the Stanford Report to date has been wave of relief and approval. Even groups that should know better, like the Opera Guild and the Women's Philharmonic Committee, have been pronouncing their blessings on the architectural monstrosity conceived by the efficiency consultants. Other groups that should know better, notably the architects and artists' associations have been quiet when they should be raising reasoned objections.

The reader may wish to dismiss this column as the work of a sour grumbler. Perhaps the only strategic answer is to accept the miserable compromise offered by the Stanford report. Certainly it is the popular attitude. But anyone seeking high standards in the name of art and progress cannot follow what is merely popular.

For those who wish to stay the course, here follows more specific critical reaction to the Stanford report. First, we should note that, within its limitations, the report is sweet and reasonable. It is good enough of its kind, even if its kind is not good enough for San Diego.

In its first sentence of summary the Stanford report stresses that San Diego is unusually dependent upon its convention and tourist industry as a source of income. The compilers of the report do not seem to have discovered another crucial cue for the word "unusually." Nowhere does the report suggest that San Diego's convention and tourist industry will depend on *unusually* good public assembly facilities.

But it is a fact. With other California cities increasing their bids for that business, this tag-end city will not get a lion's share of the convention and tourist dollar unless the city and its facilities are magnificently outstanding, unless San Diego is a lion among cities. Not a weasel. Not a magpie. Not a mouse but a lion.

The trend of the Sanford report is to encourage San Diego to plan in the safe and "sane", the mediocre scale common to American cities. The nature of an outfit like the Stanford Research Institute is to prepare save and sane reports, guides to "sound" management, based on experiences elsewhere. It is not the nature of such an outfit to catch fire with imagination and project daring conceptions into the future.

City Councils and city managers are not apt to catch fire with imagination either. Why invite the label of crackpot and the loss of one's swivel chair?

Yet without the element of imagination, exercised on a far bolder scale than is anywhere suggested by the Stanford report, San Diego's bid for tourists and conventioners will be the weaker because it will be pretty much the same sort of appeal other cities are making. That will be selling San Diego short, even if one thinks only in dollars.

It cannot be repeated too often that the dollar future of San Diego will depend heavily on the *quality* of the town's attractions. On questions of mere quantity, almost any large city can outpull us, if only because we are so far from everywhere.

Thus it is that the Stanford report makes its biggest mistake in recommending that cultural and assembly facilities all be lumped in one place. With a show of scholarly care, the researchers labor many reasons why this would be so. Listen to the voice of the god Mediocrity as he speaks through the ponderous language of this report.

“Some consolidation of events in multi-purpose buildings is both necessary and desirable to achieve a maximum of economy, flexibility and utility. Facility managers, show promoters, and other authorities throughout the country are almost unanimously of the opinion that consolidation is best accomplished by providing a single combined facility, ideally consisting of four distinct and integral units: an arena, an exhibit hall, a theatre-concert hall and a little theatre or assembly hall.”

Among its reasons for consolidation, the report holds up a nightmarish picture of “maximum patronage.” The combined facility serves as a community center (! – Ed.) and the focal point for recreational, cultural and entertainment activities. People become accustomed to patronizing the center for all activities, and this custom makes a full program of events possible, with an expectation of good attendance.

After much weighing of pros and cons, the Stanford report settled on a four-block site in a comparatively blighted section of the downtown-district. Very soon after they announced it, the State Division of Highways came forth with the information that carefully worked-out plans for an exit ramp disgorging traffic right through the middle of the Stanford site! This, in itself, casts an interesting reflection on the harmony of the various planning energies forced on San Diego.

City Planning Department members, who have lived with the traffic headache for a long time, were privately appalled at the parking jam implied in the Stanford proposal. Publicly, the department simply asked the Planning Commission to consider the parking question before endorsing the Stanford plan.

The Stanford report does a masterly job of torturing and evading the parking question, though at one point it admits that full use of the combined facility which it advocates would require parking equivalent to at least 14 city blocks. The report assumes widely scattered parking with considerable walking by patrons.

Even Glenn Rick, retired City Planning Director and as appalled as anybody, declines to be critical in public. Yet, under his regime, the Planning Commission had taken a much sounder attitude. Their stand was cultural facilities in Balboa Park, sports facilities in Mission Bay Park, convention facilities downtown. It was expected that the latter would be financed and located by private interests.

The real underlying reason for consolidation is found in this paragraph from the Stanford report: “The flexibility of the complete facility makes it ideal for conventions and trade shows, because the building can accommodate with equal ease almost any of them, large or small, that the city might attract . . . If a little theatre or assembly hall is available in the building, the principal meetings for most conventions can be held there. Larger conventions can be accommodated in the theatre-concert hall, and very large gatherings can be held in the arena.”

Here we have the key given the Stanford plan by businessmen and their organ, the Chamber of Commerce. Their most urgent interest is in convention facilities. At long last, this is the way to get such public financing. They are offered seemingly ideal convention facilities, made the more attractive by detailed promises that all the rest of the city’s public assembly needs could be met in the same location. “Facts” and figures are arrayed to suggest that cultural and sports activities will pay the bulk of the maintenance costs of this “community center” and even turn the City a slight profit. Conventions, even though they may be expected to have priority on any and all space in the center, will pay a major percentage of the rental income.

It may make good sense for major sports events to share facilities with conventions and trade shows, but it is definitely an inferior arrangement to squeeze cultural activities into the same package.

Incredibly, the Little Theatre proposed as part of the Stanford package is very little theatre indeed. The sophomoric report actually specifies that the “Little Theatre” should have a flat floor with portable seating (600-700) and “limited stage facilities.” Reason for these un-_____ can also serve for dances, banquets and receptions.

This would seem the prize example of the Stanford report’s amiable ____dulence—planning essentially for conventions, but planning something for everybody, including a little theatre that couldn’t possibly function as such.

It is quite possible them, but not very likely that a Theatre-Concert hall (3000 seats), built as part of the Stanford consolidation, may be a masterpiece of acoustical engineering and may have other features of high quality. Even so, it cannot be in the very first-rank of modern architecture because it has no adequate setting. On this count, even Russ Auditorium has the advantage of a park-like location. Incidentally, the Stanford location will be just about as awkward as Russ on two counts: public transit access and parking.

The jumbo jumble of public assembly facilities offered in the Stanford report will require most of the four-block site, leaving precious little ground for landscaping. Views from the jumble are likely to consist mostly of commercial clutter.

Distinction of setting plays a very important part in making the theatre-going experience attractive and memorable. Tourists may go home raving about Balboa Park. They will not be so apt to rave about, or even well remember, going to a Stanford plan theatre in San Diego.

The site they did select (1st to 3rd Streets, Cedar to Ash) may be justifiable if limited to an arena and other suitable halls for conventions and sports use. A “Theatre-Concert Hall” and a “Little Theatre” should not be built there, but planned within Balboa Park.

Amazingly, we have in Balboa Park a skeleton for the most distinctive and memorable arts center in the wide world. Thanks to a tremendous surge of civic imagination and energy 40 years ago, we inherited a splendid network of public buildings there which are now partly in use, but at nothing like the range of activity they deserve.

Some of the buildings need to be reconstructed. Others need to be eliminated. New ones, including theatres, need to be built—though there is one potentially marvelous theatre already half-built (the Federal Building). Parking needs to be worked out more intelligently within the park. Access roads and circulation within the park have to be improved.

Most of all the activities and programs and exhibits within the park must be ultimately expanded in the direction of quality and significance. The place is running over with great ideas right now. What’s chiefly missing is great financing.

If adequate financing were attracted to Balboa Park’s cultural potential San Diego would be a serious rival to Paris as a tourist Mecca. With museums enough to contain a walking encyclopedia, and entertainments ranging from zoo to opera—all within easy distance of downtown centers—Balboa Park would surely tip the balance with many convention planners, who might otherwise settle for cities easier to reach.

Next month we will explore in detail the possibilities of new dimensions in culture by way of Balboa Park. Meanwhile, support for the Stanford conception of public assembly facilities should be measured according to what you can expect to get, not merely what you are promised.

We owe it to ourselves and progeny, even apart from money-making considerations, to build up our city the best way possible. In the long run the best way will turn out to be the most profitable, even in money terms.

September 1955, San Diego and Point Magazine, 29, 67, **ART OF THE CITY**

“He has a great reputation in the East. It’s a great lift for the area to have him here,” said Vincent Price, speaking voluntarily about Patrick T. Malone. Patrick T. is the new director of the Art Center in La Jolla. Vincent P. is the Yale-trained Jekyll and Hyde whose acting career has ranged between the callow tallow horrors of the wax museum and the intellectual rigors of Melville’s “Billy Budd” or T. S. Eliot’s “The Cocktail Party.”

At bottom, or rather at top, Vincent Price is a genuinely cultivated man in the sense that his senses are alive to the subtle values of experience. It is his somewhat lonely dimension among Southern California citizens that he collects modern paintings, and collects them under the momentum of his own intelligence, his own selective powers, his own enthusiasm.

He is not merely an easy mark for wily art dealers, with whom the Beverly Hills woodwork is populated.

Pat Malone would like to collect modern paintings too, collect them that is, as Director of the Art Center. He expects to develop an acquisition fund (something new) out of the Center’s income from investments, but mainly he hopes to acquire a wealth of canvases through gifts from people who have gifts of the kind marked you can’t take it with you.

Problem is to control the quality of paintings entering a collection. Vincent Price doesn’t have to make any compromises of his own judgment, can only blame himself if his collection should occasionally lapse in quality. A perfect sense in collecting paintings is not much more likely than batting 1000 in baseball. In both fields you get a lot of curves thrown at you and the fun of the game is in taking chances. In the long run, a good player can make a fortune, incidentally (?)

Unlike the private collector who knows his own head, the museum director can only move as freely as his board of directors permits. This column stands for the principle that the professional museum executive should be completely free in passing on the quality of paintings. If, after a period of years, it can be shown that his batting average is unduly low, he can be turned out to pasture. Meanwhile, heckle if you must, but don’t tie strings to his bat.

Pat Malone assures me that it will be the policy of his budding museum that no gift will be accepted unless it is understood the Art Center reserves the right to sell items not worthy of his collection. In such cases, the money will be used to buy items of higher quality in the name of the donor.

Malone’s long-range objective in building a collection is to pivot it around twenty or thirty really important works from all periods, to be acquired, he hopes, within the next 10 or 15 years. He adds, however, he would not balk if someone wanted to give him a dozen Van Goghs.

Among people who really care about art in relation to the community, there is much questioning whether an institution like the Art Center should bother at all about building up a permanent collection. Teaching activity and a wide rich program of temporary exhibits are considered more vital in relations between the living artist and his supposedly living public. The Long Beach Municipal Art Center is cited as an example of that happy emphasis.

Chief holders of this view, with good reason, are the serious artists who often must live outside the chrome fence of our Cadillac economy. Of course there is less objection among these partisans if museums include among their purchases the works of living painters, especially the works of lesser known living painters, not forgetting those within the range served by a particular museum.

Pat Malone appears to keep these factors in mind as he moves toward an acquisition program. Next year, he plans to budget five times as much money as this year for changing exhibits. And when Sherwood Hall is built (no schedule as yet), it will include classroom space, thus releasing the upper floor of the present building for the permanent collection.

Malone's standard of judgment for modern paintings can be gauged from some of the things he especially likes. An example is the painting reproduced here, "The Prodigal Sphinx," by Leon Golub.

Please note that we call this a painting, not a picture. In making that distinction we are mindful of one of Painter Dan Dickey's favorite observations; "Many people make a mistake of calling a painting a picture, and then expecting it to be a picture of something."

So a painting is a painting. It may not be of something. It may or may not have a title which helps you understand it. It may be an elementary exercise in putting colors and shapes together or it may have a vast richness of esthetic values. While the Golub might strike the unpracticed eye as more like a Glob, the subtly trained eye of Pat Malone finds great satisfaction in it. If put to the test, Pat could, I'm sure, pick out a Golub from among a dozen Globes.

Other trained eyes find satisfaction in Golub's work too. He is one of the five young Chicago artists about whom Pat Malone (with Peter Selz) has written an article due in the next issue of Art News. The article was written a year ago, and since then substantial honors have come to three of the five, including Golub.

It may reasonably be said that Pat Malone knows a good thing when he sees it, both as a matter of investment and as a matter of esthetic vitality. I hope he will be encouraged to continue the kind of promotion that means distinction for San Diego and a larger appreciation of all sensitive contemporary artists, not forgetting "local" ones.

Time magazine blossomed out with a proclamation August 1 that the San Diego Symphony Orchestra—its conductor (Robert Shaw), its players and its audience—had suddenly come of age. That much of the story was pleasing all around, but several of the Tines-style details soured some local breakfasts.

Symphony association president Florence Goss was surprised to hear from Time that Shaw is plowing back all his salary and some \$5000 more into the orchestra to get the talent and programming he wants. Mrs. Goss flatly or roundly denied to this reporter that Shaw has given his salary (\$5000 plus \$500 other expenses) or any other money to the symphony association. Even the money-losing indoor concerts are the association's contractual obligations, she said. Shaw does pay the expenses of certain personnel of his own choosing over and above the normal requirements of a symphony orchestra. And this year, for the first time, he may be stuck for the cost of overtime rehearsals.

Rehearsal time has always been a straining point between conductor and players. Last year the musician's union granted one free rehearsal to every four paid ones. This year the union drove a harder bargain, eliminating the free rehearsal. Union officials tend to take the view that if Shaw would program less exacting, more popular works, he could get by all right.

Orchestra musicians gagged on Time's claim that in previous sessions they treated the new conductor as a kind of musical Boy Scout, frequently were noisy in rehearsals and harried him with unimportant questions. But this year they defer to his authority with respectful silence, pass their questions up through the concertmaster.

The fact that improved rehearsal discipline is a direct result of the reduction in rehearsal time. Personnel manager E. G. Mann persuaded that if they are going to provide less rehearsal time, they should allow Shaw to get the most out of the time he has, and while unimportant questions have been reduced in number, all musicians remain free to converse with Shaw.

Still the Time story was a handsome local boost. It was written by Robert Nichols, formerly a Luce minion in New York, now Henry's San Diego correspondent, From Luce minion to Copley minion,

Bob is also Sunday editor of The Union. He it is who accounts for the new look and life in the “leisure and arts “ section of the paper.

As president of St. John’s college where the Great Books are the Bible, Bob Nichols is at home with large ideas, though he has his share of trouble with petty details, as do we all. The fact that some of his staff refer to him as Czar Nicholas does not mean he’s a bearded Russian agent or a royal boor. He is one of our more enlightened and valuable younger (30) citizens.

The symphony season generally has been a genuine musical success, the orchestra frequently playing well beyond its previous quality and penetrating that sound barrier of indifference set up by the public’s electronic familiarity with great music greatly played. Difficult works like Hindemith’s “Mathis der Maler” and Stravinsky’s “Firebird Suite” failed to take proper shape, but Lukas Foss’ piano concerto, almost as difficult, was shapely done. Remarkable renderings were made of Robert Kurka’s “Epilogue to Julius Caesar” (commissioned by Shaw), Vivaldi’s “Seasons”, Purcell’s “Dido and Aeneas”, concertos by Bach, Mozart and Beethoven (with Rudolph Serkin). Grandest offerings scheduled were Bach’s “St. Mathews Passion” and Berlioz’ “Requiem.”

Robert Shaw’s o’ervaulting musical ambition has given us of rare musical experience. His contract has one more season to go. After that it is a moot matter whether he or the symphony association will make the first move to break the match. Anyone conscious of the virtues of virtue will study how to keep this still growing jinni and genius at work in San Diego.

But such appreciative people should be warned that they will be up against a lot of pressure from donors who have been supporting the orchestra and feeling cheated because Shaw’s artistic grandeur is far above their own slightly musical heads. These donors will be clamoring for “lighter” music, thus inviting San Diego to sink back to musical mediocrity.

Good talk

Gerald Heard got a respectful audience of respectable size (400+) when he spoke here on March 6th when he spoke here on ‘Meaning in Modern Art, to benefit the Contemporary Arts Committee of the Fine Arts Society Committee meeting. His coming then was due to the initiative of Etilie Wallace. Miss Wallace (CY 5-4360) has now lined up Gerald the Heard for six more dates with San Diego—alternate Wednesdays at the Unitarian Church, from August 31st. The cost to you will be a voluntary matter.

This man of large understand, this St. George of the intellect, will take on six dragon-size questions: What does the universe mean? What does life mean? What is man? Is progress possible? Is morality practicable? Is religion premature?

Another original mind, if not as seasoned as Heard’s, is that of John Robert Clarke. For several years he too has pursued the inner dragon in the lecture platform. Sometimes he seems to be winning. Sometimes the dragon appears to have the upper hand. It’s at least as much fun as wrestling on or with TV. Watch for his announcements of a new season of struggle at the House of Hospitality.

When Benny Goodman catapulted on the stage at Balboa Park Bowl in early August to match his famous clarinet against the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, he raised an old question in some local minds, does jazz rate as music?

Eugene Barnett Price, native San Diegan, braces the wrath of his hip townsmen by saying below what he thinks of jazz. There should be some sizzling reaction, including plenty of quarrels with his definition of the term. The wave of reaction will be featured here next month.

Mr. Price speaks from musical experience going back truly to the cradle. His mother is Alice Barnett Sterenson, composer. Gene, himself, is a pianist, Juilliard-trained. Shortly after writing his peppery opinion, but not because of it, he retreated with his beautiful family to the nether hills of Mexico, San

Miguel de Allende, where he is taking part in a keen (and presumably sober) musical activity centered around the conductor Robert Lawrence.

(Article by Eugene B. Price not included in this collection.)

November, 1955, San Diego and Point Magazine, 19, 47. **THE CITY OBSERVED:** Civic Theater, Continued; two modest proposals for the park, by James Britton (illus.).

Last month we found it would be a great mistake to expect exceptional facilities for music and drama to develop as part of a downtown convention facility. It was no part of our intention to minimize the great necessity for convention facilities, but rather to make clear that cultural facilities should not be cast in the role of step-sister.

A report by the Stanford Research Institute, now being taken too seriously in many quarters, does just that. The Institute suggested lumping theater facilities with mammoth convention facilities on a single site. There is little chance that satisfying theater architecture could be achieved in that situation within a half-way reasonable budget—if at all.

Mindful that the City Planning Commission, after extensive study, had endorsed a theater site in Balboa Park, we here explore a couple of very wonderful and definite possibilities along that line.

Starting with the specific piece of park favored by the Planning Commission (Park Boulevard, opposite zoo parking), Architect William Rosser worked up a theater design based on beautifully simple geometry (see cut). The exterior appearance would be of a great glass drum. In the daytime this would glitter wondrously as a jewel. At night it would reveal dramatically the swarming humanity within on several levels of circular promenade, and the humanity within would gaze out upon the far-strung jewels of city lights.

Parking in Mr. Rosser's plan would use flat land, stretching north and south of the theater, and the zoo parking directly across Park Boulevard. The sea of cars would be pushed back at the main approach, where a formal reflecting pool would heighten the spectacle of citizenry drawing to a focus on the stage arts.

The building itself would have crowd-making magnetism.

Mr. Rosser's basic idea is very splendid, and has the merit of conforming with the expressed decision of the official planners. A newcomer, Rosser could not be expected to realize that the planners often abandon their preferred positions.

Something like the Rosser design would mean starting from scratch on raw ground. Something considerably cheaper and quite as satisfying could be achieved by remodeling the Federal Building.

The advantage of remodeling the Federal Building is that you start with a reinforced concrete structure, the foundations of which were designed to carry a sloped-floor theater of 3000 seats or more. The fact that this structure was never completed as a theater makes it a monument of ingratitude because it was given to the City by the Federal government expressly for theater purposes. It now has a flat floor, installed originally for exposition use, so the Park Department has happily latched on to it to serve as a gymnasium.

Esthetically hip architects could take this shell and convert into in an attractive theater, big enough even for symphony and opera. Other nearby buildings could be gradually converted in ways adding up to a glamorous entertainment center, a worthy supplement to the museum center discussed elsewhere in this magazine.

For example, the building (another gym) now wedged awkwardly between the Federal Building and Balboa Park Bowl could be transformed into a restaurant. Its stucco walls would give way to glass, and the structure would then be discovered to occupy a superb view site.

This plan implies finding or building some other housing for gymnasium capers, and might be hard to sell to the Park Department, whose head, Leo Calland, is especially proud of his busy indoor sports program.

Just as the buildings along Laurel Street cry out for development as a unique museum complex (see page 20), so the Federal Building and its neighbors around Pan-American Plaza could add up to an equally unusual theater complex. Indeed, theaters and museums would be charmingly interlaced if the potential were fully developed. For one thing, the Ford Building is ideal for an aviation and industrial science museum—another local dream so far aborted. Or a museum of theater and motion pictures.

The horror that always rears up whenever conceptions like the above are discussed is parking. It is too bad that Pan-American Plaza has to be a parking lot. The aim should be to reduce the amount of parking in choice spots, yet the City Council has just condemned another beauty spot (back of the Alcazar Gardens) to be black-topped. Park Commissioner Mary Fay is disturbed enough about the trend to suggest with her inimitable straight-faced humor that the name be changed from Balboa Park to Balboa Parking.

Park Director Leo Calland likes the idea of confining parking pretty much to the fringes of the park and providing circulation within his gorgeous acres by way of open-sided buses such as were used during the exposition. This fleet could be decked out in handsome style and could be supplemented by rentable electric two-seaters and even horse-drawn carriages.

Another desirable of traffic control within the park is to build a through route to lighten the jams on Cabrillo Bridge. Tentative plans exist for such a road. It would go through canyons just south or north of Cabrillo Bridge and tunnel under one or two built-up spots.

When all convention activities are siphoned out of the park into a proper downtown facility, the present parking pattern relative to the Federal Building should be quite adequate. If more is needed, it can be developed eastward from the theater. At any rate, parking questions are not enough reason to dismiss a really wonderful prospect. The Federal Building could be made to yield far more impressive results as a theater than could possibly be had nesting in the shadow of the gigantic convention arena now being promoted for downtown.

It is quite fitting, even obligatory, for theatre and music lovers to support the financing of convention facilities. But a decent bargain should be struck, the convention promoters should also support a suitably graceful solution of our theatre needs. The Federal Building stands begging for a little attention, and promises to be modest and gradual in cost. William Rosser's plan, or something like it, would also be in conformity with that urgent necessity—a San Diego glorious enough to be a pace-setter in the future of America.

One of the other of these sound prospects of great theatre should be taken seriously.

The City Council now hopes to amass a public building fund from the sale of City-owned lands. If the device goes through, the Council will be in an excellent position to decide how to spend the money—whether to put it all on following the Stanford report to the letter or whether to divide the funds and develop a great theatre center in Balboa Park. If the Council does go for the theatre in the park, it will be showing a proper respect for its own Planning Commission and for the best pre-Sanford thinking of many citizens.

On April 16, 1954 a "City Manager's Auditorium Location Committee" submitted its report. Among its observations: "The facilities for a convention hall—municipal auditorium and those of a civic theatre should be separate buildings and could be separate sites . . . At (our) January 29 meeting, Richard Neutra and Gordon Whithall, planning consultants from Los Angeles, were in attendance. Following their presentation, the committee definitely agreed separate locations should be considered.

The committee that had those thoughts included an impressive selection of business leaders. The whole committee: Harry Hargreaves, Wilder Baker, and Charles T. Leigh of the Chamber of Commerce; Forrest Raymond and Mitch Angus of the Convention Bureau; Carl Lichty and Jack Drown of the Hotel Association; Curtis Coleman, Walter Ames and Harry Silke of the Downtown Association; Max Oslo, Roger Revelle, William Kobusch, George Bergman, Paul Hartley, Vernon E. Taylor, Thomas B. Drake, Don Stewart, Sam E. Mason.

On November 1, 1954, according to city records, City Planning Director Glenn Rick told the Planning Commission: "Balboa Park is known as the cultural center of San Diego and it is obvious that a municipal theatre should be properly located in the park."

If handled right, the total impact of Balboa Park upon the world's curiosity would be such as to make Los Angeles (including Disneyland) something a traveler hurries through to get to San Diego. We could have in our park a permanent exposition—neatly balanced between service to permanent residents and service to visitors.

A major reason why many of the park's structures (including the Federal Building) have been kept comparatively undeveloped as flat-floor barns is that local business interests have held themselves in readiness to stage another colossal commercial exposition, conceived as necessary to the San Diego economy.

It may not be generally recognized that there simply are not going to be anymore full-scale expositions in Balboa Park or any other park. Commercial expositions are dead. TV killed them. Major advertisers have discovered they can best put their products before the public in their own living rooms.

One thing still vaguely possible is a "regional trade show" in the park. As talked about downtown, this would last only three or four months, and profits from it would be earmarked for park improvements.

So, this is clearly a time for the partisans of culture—that is the partisans for fully conscious life—to assert their cause in full voice. A culturally complete park would be a permanent asset in every respect, including economic aspects. This means theatres and museums operating at a level unheard of elsewhere. We're half way to that goal now. Let's go the rest of the way.

November 1955, San Diego & Point Magazine, 21. 51. **ART OF THE CITY**

"Balboa Park—a Mecca of Culture—was a banner headline this October in the San Diego *Union*. The *Union* believes in promoting culture, and spreads many a rich table of contents in the cause.

The Mecca story sketched the attractions and activities of the Museum of Man, the Fine Arts Gallery, the Natural History Museum, the San Diego Zoo, the Old Globe Theatre, the House of Hospitality, the Spanish Village. Rightly, the paper stressed the educational value of what writer Lester Bell called (with poetic license) "the biggest campus in San Diego."

In line with old habits of the *Union's* coverage, there was not a critical word in the story and it must be classed as boosteristic promotion rather than as objective journalism. The aim was to put the best face on everything, even if it meant using masks.

The *Union* apparently has not adjusted its sights in the light of the analysis of museum promotion by syndicated critic Emily Genauer, featured in its own pages a few weeks earlier. She interpreted a survey of American museums which showed the sufficient newspaper publicity can induce practically anyone to visit a museum—once." The survey also showed that "the more visitors brought in by publicity, the higher percentage of those reporting themselves dissatisfied."

Miss Genauer went on: "Again and again visitors complained to the interviewers of the insufficiency of guides, lectures, wall labels and other aids to understanding . . . Why were people bewildered or left cold by what they saw? How shall museums be guided by their knowledge?"

To which *San Diego and Point Magazine* adds the question: how shall newspapers be guided by this knowledge? The obvious answer to that one is: by balancing boosterism with objective journalism, which inevitably means critical writing.

Emily Genauer suggests a basic answer from out of her long-standing and passionate devotion to art: “The results of the interviews<” she said, “may be summarized so: the public is antagonized by what is strange. In art, as in the theatre, in writing, in all other forms of creative expression, an audience must be able somehow to identify itself with what it sees.

“A museum’s dilemma can be resolved if it approaches its job honestly, believing that the public’s ability to learn is even greater than its seeming ignorance, that *education is a museum’s greatest responsibility, and that showmanship is not a dirty word but an important tool.*

We have italicized Miss Genauer’s formula for the brighter future. Please note the accent on education and showmanship.

Balboa Park’s cultural housekeepers generally understand that “education is a museum’s greatest responsibility” and that “showmanship is . . . an important tool.”

The two most successful park institutions, the zoo and the Old Globe Theatre have built-in showmanship, which is the main key to their success. The Globe simply produces proven hit plays, and the zoo simply produces animals.

Our museums have made brave if fitful attempts at showmanship, though the energies of their directors are necessarily divided in many ways, and their personnel are none too numerous.

Clark Evernham of the Museum of Man has jazzed up some of his exhibits ingeniously, even going so far as to install a juke box which plays for a nickel the music of many primitive peoples, not including the Manhattan Tunesmith tribe. “Only exhibit which ever paid for itself,” says Evernham.

The Museum of Natural History, Col. Arthur Fischer in command, has not come up with so many novel ideas, but some of its stuffed-animals-at-home groupings are equal to the best anywhere.

The Fine Arts Gallery, which should be the leader in this matter of display showmanship, generally exercises quiet good taste, and has not been inspired in new directions except very occasionally. A hopeful note is that Ilse Ruocco and Gil Watrous of the Contemporary Arts Committee are designing a new scheme of display for some of the Gallery rooms. Money is the missing ingredient.

The specific job for the newspapers in sharpening up the showmanship of the museums is to evaluate critically in public print the display technique of each new exhibit. For example, the Fine Arts Gallery might be knuckle-rapped for dull or inaccurate labels, the Museum of Man for its tendency to sink to the Third Avenue Saloon School of design it is cabinetwork. In this connection it is enchanting to see *Tribune* art columnist, Naomi Baker, speaking her mind with increasing freeness.

As things now stand, all three museums offer much that is of great value, but showmanship is definitely on the sketchy side. Spacious publicity in the *Union* may induce practically anyone to visit these museums—once. Repeat visitors are mostly those who have caught on to the schedule of free movies offered, or those who have unquenchable interest in specific museum activities.

The unquenchable are a substantial crowd. Each museum had platoons of enthusiastic volunteer workers, who carry much of the program on their shoulders. Also, each museum has conscientious and eager paid workers. If the museums are operating far below their potential, it is not because of these people.

The root is money.

With all the skills and good intentions available in San Diego right now, I am sure that Balboa Park could sport the leading museum attraction of this earth, if only sufficient financing could be devised.

Probably the public of San Diego could be tapped for a very sizeable fund if a tremendous fund drive could be launched.

A tremendous fund campaign, or rather a tremendous campaign for funds, could get off the ground only if all three museums went in on it together. And possibly the package appeal should also include symphony requirements and plans to build Bruno Ussher's famous civic festival theatre.

At any rate, the three museums should be united in a fund drive. But there is one slight mile-high hurdle to their getting together. Each museum is now run by a board of directors which is very jealous of its autonomy and sovereignty.

It is the nature of such stiff boards to scheme and compete against each other for every likely dollar. It might be impossible for any of these boards to make an effective move toward united action, though some board members might wish it.

The City Council is the agency that should initiate united fund-raising action by the museums. The Council has a very direct financial stake in the idea because it is the Council that now pays the basic maintenance expenses of the three museums. Obviously, if the museums can grow to irresistible world-wide appeal—like our zoo—they will represent a maximum return on the public's tax investment.

At present, the museums get their tax money by annual begging bees at the budget office. A better arrangement would be a guaranteed percentage of the tax dollar, such as the zoo enjoys. The zoo gets 2 mills of each tax dollar and this amount (\$150,000) is 20 percent of the zoo's budget. The advantage of this arrangement for the museums is that it would give them a reliable base from which to spring their futures.

If the zoo was a worthwhile tax investment in terms of the total San Diego economy, as is generally agreed, then how much more would the same end be served by a unique new museum conception which unfailingly inspired the editor with the magnificence of the human animal!

We see that the trend of commercial entertainment enterprise is toward monstrous exploitations like Disneyland. With a little stirring, San Diego could gather all its cultural energies into a truly captivating center of education with showmanship designed to embrace, not repel the human spirit.

The amazing thing is that we already have the buildings to develop the great idea. As our featured quote from Warren Beach suggests, there is no better architectural set-up anywhere in the country. Also, there is no really advanced combination of art and science museums, least of all the Los Angeles County Museum, a politics-ridden mess.

We have had our buildings for 40 years. Beautifully laid out along Laurel Street or El Prado in Balboa Park, the old exposition buildings are in various states of repair. Some of them are on an uneasy lease of life. The Public Works Department wants to condemn them. The Park Department wants to save them, if only for their picture postcard beauty—a tourist asset in itself.

A long-term development of the world's greatest museum center would have to include graceful replacing of these fragile buildings. But it should be remembered that the basic layout and setting is just about ideal for museum purposes.

A museum master plan, using all of these buildings eventually, should be projected now, and the buildings or their sites earmarked according to the plan.

There will be powerful pressures from well-placed individuals wishing to block a unified effort for selfish reasons. It is for interested citizens to talk to their councilmen on the basis of their own thinking,

possibly aided by the ideas expressed in these pages. A large result can come only from the pressure of disinterested people.

The San Diego *Union* should be disinterested too. If it is, it may wish to develop and print its own line of thinking on this question of a greater museum deal, and thereby a great economic deal for that old Mecca, San Diego.

November 1955, San Diego & Point Magazine, 'IF THE CITIZENS . . . REALIZE . . .'

"I know of no comparably close physical concentration of cultural and recreational offerings in the world to what we have in San Diego's beautiful Balboa Park. Here one of the four or five top zoos in the world rubs elbows with a distinguished Natural History Museum, a Gallery of Fine Arts, which compares favorably with those of cities of similar size and a lively Museum of Man. Even without this park's fine theater, major musical events, intriguing plantings and other recreational facilities, we would have a rare thing here.

"if the citizens of our growing city recognize that this is unique and desirable, if they realize the tremendous development possible here, this complex should grow into ever greater world-wide fame. There is sufficient space in logical proximity to the institutions of this park to allow was to expand its plant, to grow and contribute increasingly to the physical and cultural well being of us all.

"The City has shown rare foresight in its partial support over the years of these institutions and every taxpayer may point to his share with pride. We hope that the City will continue to share the portion of this burden which the wide public use of these facilities suggests. Wisely, the City has not attempted to give the complete support. It has left to those persons with a particular interest in some one of these institutions the chance to share in its support and growth."

WARREN BEACH
Director, the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego

1956—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO CITY DIRECTORY:** no entry for James Britton or Eliz.

Timeline: 1956-1957—Mission Bay Quivira Basin and a portion of main channel dredged

Timeline: 1956—Bond issue for Mission Bay

June 1956, San Diego & Point Magazine, 21-23, CORPORATION WITH SOUL

The American prophet Henry Adams shocked good Christians 50 years ago when he suggested that the unholy dynamo had replaced the Holy Virgin as the inspiring force of progress. But Adams cherished his Virgin and said, "All the steam in the world could not, like the Virgin, build Chartres.

If he were around now, Henry Adams probably would be calling for, looking for corporations with soul, capable of lifting the general level of life. He might enjoy inspecting with us the soul of General Atomics, a vast firm that started literally as a manufacturer of dynamos back in Adams' time, and which includes now an immensely significant division, General Atomics, dedicated to exploring the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In the great new awakening of American corporations to their social responsibilities, General Dynamics in 1956 takes a spectacular lead with its plans for the city of San Diego.

The remark is credited to Gerald Heard that since Convair painted its plant yellow, we can't possibly have anything to fear. Actually, the paint job was a laudable practical move to cheer up a gloomy scene, and it can stand as a symbol of industry's proper concern with the human touch.

Convair Division of General Dynamics is planning a \$40,000,000 plant on Miramar Road, near Miramar Air Base, an area described in this magazine last month as "the center of the city's likely growth pattern." In that spot of 280 acres will be manufactured "the ultimate weapon," the intercontinental

ballistics missile, a considerable social force itself in that it is the world's best hope of curing the messy war habit.

When Convair's good customer, the U. S. Air Force, announced the project, the U. S. Navy called everyone's attention to the painful fact that the plant as planned would conflict with flight patterns of the naval jets using Miramar Air Base. Forgetting the question of why the Navy and Air Force didn't work closer together (or further apart) before the contract was set, we can cite this as very concrete evidence that Miramar Air Base doesn't belong in the center of a growing city.

Crucial to the health of future San Diego is that the missile plant should be done *right* and Mission Air Base should be done away with—moved, that is, to some handy enough area which is not straining toward heavy population.

Important as is the missile plant to San Diego's prosperity in the teeth of peril, it does not compare as a civic value with the relatively modest (\$10,000,000) project of another General Dynamics division, General Atomic. It is General Atomic's wish to build the world's most important laboratory in the pregnant yet virgin hills shown in color on pages 20-21. The site is on the east side of Highway 101, a little south of Torrey Pines Park, and was selected by Dr. Frederic de Hoffmann, General Dynamics' vice-president and General Atomic head.

We learned directly from Dr. de Hoffmann, famed nuclear research pioneer, how he happened to land in our front yard. With the whole country to choose from, and with delegations from various areas—including the governor of Florida—wearing out the doormat of the New York office, peddling free land, de Hoffmann set out to make a selection in terms of his own likings. He was confident that what he liked would also be attractive to the 300 highly selected people he would have working for him.

Fred de Hoffmann very clearly knew that he must insure the utmost in desirable living conditions in order to outbid the rest of the industry for scarce top personnel. "I know these people," Dr. de Hoffmann told me. "They will not be satisfied to look back in ten years and say they have made a lot of money. They will want to say they have lived wisely and well."

The legend

A history-making move should always give rise to a little legend. Hereby we furnish the ingredients, a story we heard from a top city official, and which we deliberately avoided checking for fact. The day City Manager Campbell took de Hoffmann on a tour of possible San Diego sites, he clutched the director's arm when they arrived at the Torrey Pines spot. "Freddy," said Campbell, pointing to the hills; "See that large speck up there? That's Palomar Observatory." "Ah," said Dr. de Hoffmann, in tune with the infinite; "That is where we must be." It was the luck of the Scotch, one of the few days clear enough to glimpse Palomar.

Not least of de Hoffmann's reasons for liking San Diego is the prospect of increased University of California activity here. In turn, let it be noted well that the presence of de Hoffmann's laboratory here would speed the university project as much as anything.

Because of ready action at Civic Center when de Hoffmann approached with his quest (San Diego officials made the first move, a telegraphed invitation), General Atomic is already well along with its local plans. The disused Barnard School off West Point Loma Boulevard was quickly smartened up for temporary headquarters, and is today alive with 'brains' such as would make most school kids swallow their bubble gum.

Architects Pereira and Luckman are pushing plans for the Torrey Pines site. But, as we go to press, a question still hangs in the air. Do the people of San Diego welcome the laboratory? The June 5 election includes a vote on this point, Proposition H.

If the vote is unfavorable, it would be logical for Dr. de Hoffmann to set up house in some city where the welcome is clear. Monterey, California was a strong and interested runner-up.

Arguments one hears against the laboratory don't hold up well under scrutiny. It is true that the laboratory will concentrate in one place a fair proportion of the world's first-line physicists, but it does not follow that San Diego thereby becomes a more attractive target area in case of war. An enemy might more wisely aim to capture than to kill such personnel. Besides, the missile plant, now wanting to build on purchased land, has already settled our hash, if hash it must be.

It is not true that General Atomic will get the land free. Rather, the company will pay \$200,000 for offsite improvements—roads, water, sewer. The completed laboratory will be a major taxpayer.

It is not true that the laboratory will create any nuisance whatsoever, not smoke, nor noise, nor radio activity, nor explosion. Fred de Hoffmann says radioactive waste at one of the largest AEC laboratories is carted away by railroad twice a year or so, packaged in safe-to-handle drums.

It is not true that the laboratory will resemble a factory in the old repulsive sense. Rather, its atmosphere will suggest a small college with campusy accent on lawn and trees. The buildings themselves will be at least 1000 feet back from Highway 101, and in the space between we may confidently expect to find in due time planting as thick and refreshing as that along Sixth Avenue in Balboa Park. California Institute of Technology, in the heart of Pasadena, might be taken as an example of what to expect as to mood, though not as to architecture.

It is true that any extensive modern building will bear a superficial resemblance to a factory, due to the strong pattern of repeated windows. But the alchemy of landscape can turn all buildings into castles, and we are guaranteed such alchemy in this instance by the expressed attitudes of Dr. de Hoffmann, followed by his actions.

So important does he find landscape that he ordered a dozen of 25-foot olive trees planted in great redwood boxes right on top of the asphalt at his temporary quarters in the once-desolate Barnard School. While this may sound like a spendthrift gesture. It is really quite economical, for the trees will be moved to the permanent site.

Dr. de Hoffmann's delight in landscaping is only a hint of his concern for human values. We spoke to him of both yearnings for an FM radio station with superior programming. He lit up: "How can we help? . . . We'll be very interested. We spoke of the need of putting more planners and sculptors to work in connection with important buildings. He said he would want to consider that in connection with his permanent establishment.

So here we have Frederic de Hoffmann, one of the key figures in nuclear science at the age of 31. For all his involvement in reshaping our world, he's the kind of help-minded fellow you'd like for a neighbor. He grew up in Vienna, where people seem to take special joy in each other. Poetically enough, Fred de Hoffmann reminds us of our old friend Franz Schubert, Mr. Vienna of 1828, and has the same kind of instantaneous ignition over ideas.

If properly located, the Convair missile plant can mean an impetus toward superb planning of a vast new northern reach of the city which is now mostly unencumbered soil. There will be no excusing it whatsoever if this great stretch becomes another urban clutter, because enough Americans by now have had enough sad experience of clutter to chart only sound city patterns evermore.

Yet weeks before the site choice was revealed, speculators went out there, gobbling up inaccessible holdings, paying \$500 and more an acre for what shortly before cost \$5. A phantom queue of lusty enterprises is poised to dance through Civic Center shortly, trying to put over private ambitions that may or may not conform with optimum development of the area. A very serious question is whether a well-intentioned officialdom will have the strength to hold the line for design once the site is settled.

The missile plant itself ought to be a model piece of planning, though our conversation with a Convair planner indicated that esthetic factors may suffer especially because of the stern, crash-speed move of the building program.

One of the sure things on the blueprint will be to girdle any site with that ugly wire fencing which is so good for security purposes. This could, however, be covered with vines to snatch the scene away from Brutality and give it back to Nature.

The passing eye on Miramar Road, if original plans go through, will glimpse two six-story office buildings, each 200 feet wide, separated by a one-story entrance pavilion. This group will be set back from the road 500 feet or so, affording a splendid space for nerve-collecting landscape. Present plans, however, call for acres of parking across this front. Give that scene to Brutality, unless management switches most parking to the rear.

There is some official talk of storing water needed for fire control in a decorative entrance pool, though this may prove inconvenient. Our plea is that the frontage of this key plant should be developed as a magnificent park with pond—even at the cost of some inconvenience, in order the more surely to offset the grim nature of the business within, and to inspire a similar scale of land use for miles around.

Of course it is one thing to plant landscaping, and another thing to water it. Very likely this industrial operation could nurse a small force by diverting its waste water from sewers to trees.

Convair officials say that the noise level of the plant will be negligible outside the boundaries of the property. Even within the buildings noise will be curbed as much as *humanly* possible, we stress *humanly* because in 1956 the humans who must work in factories are royally touchy about shop conditions, and management has increasing difficulty hiring competent personnel if the housekeeping isn't the best.

Of the 6600 employees required for the missile plant, an unusual percentage will have to be people of superior education and sensibility. That means an additional leverage toward planned quality in the plant and in the community.

Quantity—and quality

There is incredible growth in prospect, quantity by way of the missile plant, quality by way of the laboratory. While Fred de Hoffmann and colleagues pioneer peaceful use of atomic energy, an invaluable by-product may be new standards in people's use of the land and their use of each other. In the long run and the wide spread, San Diego can contribute substantially to rebirth of a nation and recovery of the world's moral balance if General Dynamics Corporation lives up to the implications of its plans.

A very critical element in the health of our future is the health of our government planning activity. The City Planning Commission has funds authorized by the City Council to set up an ivory-tower trio who will do nothing but long-range planning, which the present department is too swamped to handle properly. A veteran of the department is a good bet to head the trio, but where are the other two going to come from? Planning Director Harry Haelsig has been combing the country with little luck: there is a foreboding shortage of qualified planning technicians.

CAPTION: The Pereira-Luckman Look: The Grossmont Community Hospital of La Mesa (upper and middle pictures) and the Bureau of Standards Laboratory in Boulder, Colorado (lower) are typical products of the enormous architectural firm headed by William Pereira and Charles Luckman. Their designs are usually a neat mixture of sensitive and sensible elements, neutral enough in style to suggest that they will look well many years hence.

June 1956, San Diego & Point Magazine (excerpt from *Ilan Lael*, Vol. 1, No. 1 date unknown)

“If my kid painted pictures like those, I’d give him a beating,” said one customer. That’s only a sample of the intolerant reaction heard by officials of the Security Trust and Savings Bank when their handsome new Hillcrest branch opened with innocent, elegant paintings by Marj Hyde on the wall.

How did the paintings get into the bank? It was architect Lloyd Ruocco’s idea, and he seems to have hypnotized bank officials with his sharply focused, insidious chatter about clean design, light design, bright design, right design. When it came time for the finishing touch of grace, Ruocco asked Miss Hyde to select painting of hers that would complement the architecture. She understood they would hang for a month, after which another local painter of integrity would be dangled before the eyes of the money-changing citizenry.

Bank officials may have been hypnotized, but they snapped out of it when the lowbrow complaints started buzzing in their ears. They quickly ordered the paintings taken down, though only two days had elapsed of the month Miss Hyde expected. Said Manager M. A. Herbert: “Only three people made *favorable* comments on the pictures.

Probably unaware that they were slapping a genteel young lady who happens to be a passionately sincere painter, the bankers had proceeded naturally enough on the assumption that there is no point in upsetting good customers. The thought could hardly have been expected to appeal to them, as it appeals to us, that a little upsetting is just what such customers need.

Why should bankers be expected to carry the torch for quality in art? The obvious answer is that bankers are recognized pillars of society, and pillars make fine support for torches. . . .

Bankers have often supported advanced art, even finding it good for business. American history boasts many banks that were pioneer architecture, and architecture is the most abstract of arts. . . .

Miss Hyde’s well-bred paintings, not in the least wilted by their turndown at the bank, can be seen until June 10 in the magnificent foyer of the Capri Theatre. Capri owner Burton Jones, the outstanding businessman-connoisseur, always has “modern” art on view. He finds that his customers mostly enjoy the gaiety of it all and seldom complain of pains. Moral: bipeds in the mood for entertainment are more likely to enjoy color-works than those tearfully venturing forth to negotiate a loan.

December 1956, San Diego Magazine, 24+, The people no; Galleries: the iceman cometh; Art: I like icons; Theatre: China in the bull shop.

1957—**POLK’S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas (Eliz.)—Associate editor San Diego & Point Magazine, h. 2811 Reynard Way

January 1957, San Diego Magazine, 34-37, 58-60, How green will your valley be? (excerpt from “The Battle of Britton,” San Diego Magazine, March 1983)

“Dream of valleys and you dream green. When a city has its geography parted by a great river valley, that valley naturally should be the greenest sensation of the city.

“In the vast time before the San Diego River received its name, it carved a graceful path to the sea, some 400 feet below the nearby tablelands. The path itself is called Mission Valley for a sweetly poetic historical reason. Padre Junipero Serra had come upon it gratefully in 1769 after his parching foot-course north from Mexico. He planted the seed of California growth at what is now “Old Town,” and as firmly planted the first of many Catholic missions six miles eastward before the running waters.

“The river flowed visibly throughout the years until 100 years ago. Living men know it only as a ghost that comes back at unexpected intervals. When the ghost comes, it is called Flood, and shrunk from. When it disappears—underground to plot its next trick—men grow careless and lead their enterprises to nestle in the riverbed.

“Always there is water below the surface of the incredible valley. So it is beautifully fit that cows should graze there, that garden crops should sprout. One of the enchantments of San Diego is that flourishing farms still stretch serenely across the ever-thickening freeways in this valley that is so much at the geographic center of a great city.

“But the days of the midtown cow are numbered. ‘Progress’ demands more profitable use of the land. Tremendous economic pressures, more threatening even than flood, may destroy the character of the unique valley unless enough people care to save it by supporting sound planning measures.

“Up to now, property owners in the valley have stood together against invasion by man-made nuisances, with more than average success. Truly notable is the absence of billboards for miles, until the valley enters County jurisdiction.

“Recent commercial construction has been held mainly to spacious good-living facilities: Mission Valley Inn, Town and Country Hotel, Mission Valley Country Club. Participant sportsmen (golf, riding), who kept the land open, were as welcome as cows.

...
“Ethical victory for San Diego’s citizenry, present and future, would only be possible if the City Council turned the May Company away from the valley. In so doing, the Council should offer the May Company another site as nearly equal as possible to the one the Company is after. It happens that the city itself owns the ideal alternate site, over 100 acres bounded by Highways 101 and 80 and by Midway and Rosecrans streets.

“The sad fact is that all the political force at Civic Center is aligned in favor of giving the May Company exactly what it wants. Not only the Council, but City Manager Bean relishes the prospect of early tax returns from the immense shopping center, and the lid of the public coffer shrank when David May threatened that his operation would not come to San Diego at all unless he could have his chosen site. The men who make the city budgets are under constant pressure to bring in spectacular chunks of tax money from big business in order to relieve the load on the small taxpayers. Therefore, even to slow up the coming of a May Company would take more strength than office holders are likely to have, even though a series of capitulations will turn San Diego into another dreary asphalt jungle sooner than we realize.”

January 1957, San Diego Magazine, 37, 44-45, ART OF THE CITY: Galleries: Alfa Romeo makes the grade; Music: In Southern Slobbovia.

February 1957, San Diego Magazine, 42-45, ART OF THE CITY: Lady from Seattle; Success Spoils Rockwell; La Jolla Revolution

February 1957, San Diego Magazine, 34-39, 65, HEART OF THE CITY . . . BALBOA PARK FUTURES by James Britton

Balboa Park can be called the heart of San Diego. The blood passes through and gets a new impulse to carry on. Sometimes it seems all the blood gathers there at once. Flow problems are spectacular. Valve flutter. Clots. Arteriosclerosis. You name it, we have it. Of all the city’s traffic problem areas, none is more choked than these 1207 complex acres owned by everyone.

And traffic is only the frame of the park puzzle. How to divide the acreage to serve a thousand public interests is a politician’s opportunity and despair. Mayor Daly has met mounting park crisis by laying the maps in the laps of some half a hundred citizens, ordering them to come up with a plan for the park future. They have until April 1.

The committee has an orderly setup. Under the general chairmanship of Dr. Douglas McElfresh, there are six subordinate committees: Buildings, Landscape, Traffic, Recreation, Cultural and Educational, Commercial. A City Councilman rides with each committee, as does a Park Board member, and experienced city employees sit in as technical advisers.

At the outset, Dr. McElfresh made a statement which has a beautifully democratic ring. "One important phase is to obtain ideas from within the community. In this regard, we hope that individuals having helpful suggestions will send these to the Mayor's office, and he will see to it that they are given consideration by the appropriate committee."

Thanks to the U.S. Department of Agriculture photo service, we can take a really detached view and see the park as through a cosmic microscope. The most astonishing thing revealed by the photo printed here is not in the park at all, yet has a great deal to do with park planning. We refer to the pair of canyons running diagonally through the built-up areas near the northwest (upper left) corner of the park.

Taken together, these canyons are the natural bed for a freeway that would carry traffic smooth and fast from the heavy-concentrated junction of Highway 101 and Laurel Street up into the populous residential area called North Park (east of the park). This could absorb much of the traffic that now struggles up steep Laurel Street hill and through the park for want of a better route east. If such a freeway ever comes, it will not be for at least 20 years. It is not even in the city's master plan.

There are more immediate ways—5 to 10 years—in prospect to lighten the load on Laurel Street. A freeway now on State drafting boards will cut across the southwest corner of the park. Eventually it will connect with a freeway going northeast through Switzer Canyon. These routes are shown on red on the map, right.

North of the park, Washington Street, University Avenue, and Robinson Street will be improved to increase east-west traffic flow.

Lightening the load on Laurel Street is the key to traffic sanity within the park. As Laurel Street enters the park and crosses Cabrillo Bridge, it is known as El Prado. (See map.) *Prado* in Spanish means *walk*, less we forget. The buildings ranged along this walkway were designed to be discovered and enjoyed by pedestrians. Clearly a first order of business for park planners is to restore the original atmosphere of El Prado.

Restoring El Prado means getting through traffic off it. The Mayor's park-traffic subcommittee agreed early that widening El Prado to accommodate more cars would be a wrong move. Just what to do with cars that poke their noses into the park is the biggest problem before the subcommittee and will not be decided quickly. Substantial interest is developing in exposition-type public conveyance in the park. Anything is possible from electric two-seaters to topless buses, not omitting horse-drawn surreys.

Road systems for the park have been thought up in great variety over the years. A persistent idea is to snake around back of the buildings that line both sides of El Prado. Architect Sam Hamill, devotee of our park heritage, recently made a careful study of such a system that would permit banishing of cars almost entirely from El Prado and other areas of the park which have heavy foot traffic. Mr. Hamill is chairman of one of the park's subcommittees (Buildings) but made the traffic analysis independently months ago.

In Sam Hamill's scheme (also shown in red on the map), parking areas would be close by, but in back of the various museums and other much-used structures. The front courts, now choked with parking, would be returned properly to landscaping. His road layout is a tentative routing, of course. He shows an east-west drive into an expanded Florida Drive, conceived as a busy north-south freeway link. Whether Florida Drive will actually become such a rushing stream is not yet decided. It will be under much pressure if a civic theatre is built east of Park Boulevard.

Park Boulevard itself may be tied in—through a fancy interchange north of San Diego High School—with the freeways due to clip the southern borders of the park. One of the big headaches for the Mayor's committee is how much resistance to put up against freeways chopping up the park.

The freeway system in the vicinity of the park is still very much unsettled. Just on design matters, to say nothing of right-of-way, engineers are tearing their hair over a project as complicated as anything built or proposed in American freeway history—and that includes Los Angeles.

Consequently, there is not much prospect that the Mayor's traffic subcommittee can solve the park traffic riddle altogether by April 1. The most likely conclusion is to recommend principles like those embodied in Sam Hamill's logical scheme, and to call piously for the early freezing of freeway designs.

In another part of the forest, an especially useful traffic feature would be a turnoff for southbound cars on Cabrillo Freeway just north of the park, as shown on the map. This would follow a natural canyon course and admittedly clip yet another corner of the park.

Clipping of park corners is not necessarily disastrous. Foot crossing can be provided over freeways. The long-range result of clipping off the southwest corner that contains San Diego High School and Junior College will be to define a self-contained campus of impressive dimensions. Eventually the high school will be moved elsewhere, leaving a college of some dignity.

Golf will continue to hold swing and sway over the eastern third of the park for many years. When Switzer Canyon freeway goes in, Pershing Drive will be plowed up, and there will be more golf, not less. Bridle trails may be banished when the freeway comes. At least the riding stables are doomed; freeways are aimed right through the barns.

Field archery is another likely casualty of more intensive planning for Balboa Park, though probably not until the last arrow has been released in the direction of officials.

The fact that some natural park activities will have to be reduced in Balboa Park suggests that the City's master plan for parks should go a good deal further than it actually does. Rather than relying on Balboa Park as our main and larger park (except for the aquatic Mission Bay Park), the City should plan on acquiring a vast tract—maybe ten times the size of Balboa Park—in a suitable location to absorb the accelerating recreational demands of our accelerating population.

Having sketched the traffic complication, we turn to the cultural activities and their buildings, the next biggest problem. We see the museums along El Prado as fated to grow together into one of the world's astonishing complexes—if they get financing and management equal to the idea. Mr. H. K. Raymenton has been a leader in pushing an Inter-Museum Council. We are delighted to present his thesis on page 40.

Quite seriously we suggest that the museums may one day acquire prosperity and fame equal to the San Diego Zoo's. A good start would be to give the museums the same kind of tax support we give the Zoo, a tiny percentage of the tax dollar. Even more important, again using the Zoo yardstick would be to set an admission charge for the museums. Members, of course, would get in free, and there should be provision for those who cannot afford to pay.

In this connection, we have the word of Zoo Director Schroeder that when the entrance price went up recently from 50 cents to 75 cents, attendance didn't drop, it rose! Of the Zoo's \$1,500,000 operating and expansion budget last year, 92 percent came from gate receipts and sales counters *operated by the Zoo staff itself* (not by concessionaires). Let the museums absorb that lesson, and start themselves on the way out of the doldrums.

Buildings of sorts, the park has in good supply. Many of those facing El Prado should be torn down and replaced, provided the spirit of the originals can be preserved or improved upon. Until replacement can be done right, they should be kept as is. Money can be put into repairs with justification since razing and planting of the sites would cost about ten dollars per square foot.

When the buildings are redesigned, the work should be fitted into a master design conception for all park buildings. The assignment should find its way into the most capable architectural hands in America. The way to find the most capable architects is through a design competition, advertised

nationally. This procedure would have the virtue of telling the world we aim for the best. If local architects are good enough, they can win the competition, but they should not be handed civic buildings just on the basis of knowing the right people politically, no matter how many times that mistake may have been committed in the past.

As for the content of the buildings, we visualize a continuity of museums, one opening into another in everlasting surprise, along El Prado. Zoo Drive (see map) should be diverted at the point where it interrupts the continuity, and the Museum of Natural History could be expanded west to link up with the other buildings. Somewhere in the continuity, a branch of the public library should be established, and this would eventually be the city's principal reference library, especially on cultural matters. For one thing, libraries in the various museums should all be concentrated in a single place.

On the Palisades Area, rhyme and reason calls for a concentration of recreational facilities, since we have a good start in that direction already. Along with indoor sports and various community assembly activities, there is room for museums of the popular arts: science, industry, movies, etc. Fiesta del Pacifico hopes to dig in deep in the Palisades Area, but as much as possible, as soon as possible, commercial conventions should be banned there.

Finally acknowledging the advice of the City Planning Commission, the Mayor has moved to build a civic theater east of Park Boulevard. This probably will be accepted by the voters in April. Unless the design of this building is to be awarded through competition, it should be handed to the man who has had the most conspicuous American success in theatre design. His name is Eliel Saarinen. With his even more distinguished father, he designed the music facilities at Tanglewood and the Kleinhans Music Hall in Buffalo, notable acoustical successes. Among the younger Saarinen's recent work is the Auditorium at MIT, which is so good that recording companies now go there to get their best results.

Best results. That's what we should settle for in our main park. When April 1 comes around and the subcommittees will have pushed through their reports, it may well be that professional design talent will be called for to sketch a future of logic and beauty, based on the citizens' ponderings.

At this point again we would stress that unless the City is prepared to reach out and get a man generally acknowledged to be at the very top in design, there should be a competition. Competition is a favorite word in America, and it is a better route to excellence in design than relying on commissar's nods and becks.

February 1957, San Diego Magazine: **RED NETWORK IN BALBOA PARK**

The base map in black shows Balboa Park as it exists today, together with a few ideas entertained tentatively in recent years by the Park Department. The red network was added by this magazine to suggest a possible pattern of new roads and parking areas.

Starting at the top, the road designated "A" is a much-needed exit off Cabrillo Freeway for cars coming south. Roads "B" and "C" would bridge canyons and make Upas Street continuous along the northern border of the park.

Road "D" is a logical way to keep through-traffic off El Prado (Laurel Street), which for years has been the most choked artery in town at peak periods. Starting from Sixth Avenue on the left, it cuts under Balboa Drive, bridges over Cabrillo Freeway, tunnels under the Mall (in front of the Organ Pavilion); it also tunnels under Park Boulevard, and then connects by interchange with Florida Drive, "F," which may become a major artery.

Road "E" branches off Road "D" to provide circulation back of the Globe Theatre ("T") and the Fine Arts Gallery ("U"); it also connects with Quince Street bridge which leads out of the park, left, and with Zoo Drive on the right.

Parking area "G" is the beautiful parking lot already in service, shown on page 34. Area "H" is the present park site back of the Organ Pavilion, shown considerably enlarged; the southerly tongue of Area "H" is a canyon suitable for a parking structure of several decks as described here in December.

Palisades area "K" could be another beauty like "G." Parking area "L" could be one or more levels built in conjunction with the civic theatre soon to be voted on. Area "M" could be rusticated parking back of the Fine Arts Gallery.

Possible sites for the civic theatre are "P" and "R." "P" is at the end of El Prado, and is a splendid site to complete the axial grandeur of the park center. Site "R" is attractive to city officials because it is opposite the vast parking area "S" used largely Zoo visitors daytime. (Zoo Director Schroeder would like control of parking area "S"; he would spend Zoo funds to landscape it.)

The complicated freeway pattern across the lower part of the map is still under study by the State Department of Highways, but something along those lines is definitely to be built within a few years. Coming in from the left is a new routing of Highway 101 around the central business district. Switzer Canyon Freeway is shown lower right.

(map not shown in this collection)

February 1957, San Diego Magazine, 34-39, 65, MUSEUMS: WHO NEEDS THEM? by H. K. Raymenton

It is sometimes said that the term "culture" does not have a popular appeal, and that any move to promote it is doomed to failure under that name. It is said that practical men look upon culture as something that concerns only dreamy young men incapable of earning a living, and women who have nothing else to think about.

If culture has fallen into such disrepute, it might be well to examine it. The briefest and clearest definition of culture is "growth." For a prefix before it, call it agriculture or horticulture, and it becomes acceptable to the most practical men. As applied to human beings, it is the sum total of the achievements of a people in science, art, religion and government at any given time. We can speak of the culture, or the cultural level, of ancient Chinese or of modern Navajos and, by this measure, compare them.

Disregarding culture, if that is an unpopular word, it is a fair question to ask why museums are worthy of support in this or any other city. It may be asked what they contribute to a community in return for such support, and what relation they bear to the important details of gaining a livelihood.

Museums are repositories of evidences of life on the earth on which we all live. The present has little significance unless related to the past, and no course for the future can be charted without a thorough understanding of both the past and the present. These evidences are all about us, but they can be seen and studied only when concentrated and made available. Museums accomplish this. A library is a museum of the written thoughts of men through the ages. A zoo is a museum of animal life other than human, and a botanical garden is a museum of life that is not animal.

Let us return for a moment to our mythical man to whom the word "culture" is supposed to be so odious. He toils in a practical manner until he has accumulated a sufficiency beyond his immediate needs and has earned the leisure to enjoy it. His first thought is usually then to travel to Europe or the Orient, where he spends most of his time in museums, churches and temples, promoting his personal culture. Every year thousands of practical Americans do this, and distribute millions of good American dollars among the delighted foreigners, many of whom can thus garner enough for them to come to America to visit our museums.

Are museums, then, only a diversion for tourists? No one considers Cleveland, Detroit or Pittsburgh tourist resorts, yet they have magnificent museums. In the heart of Massachusetts is a grimy little industrial city, to which probably no one has ever gone as a tourist. Its art museum is internationally

famous and its director, Francis Henry Taylor, went from there to be director of the Metropolitan Museum of New York. This little city has other public museums also, as well as a remarkable private museum of armor, housed in a factory devoted to pressed steel.

It is possible we have misjudged our practical man. Rockefeller, Morgan, Duke, Frick, Mellon, Widener, Freer, Ford, Carnegie, Kress, to name but a few of our captains of industry, could scarcely be called impractical visionaries. By their very practical efforts they aided powerfully in the development of this country, and while doing so amassed impressive fortunes for themselves. To dispose of their surplus wealth, they established, endowed and enriched cultural institutions—universities, libraries and museums. European and Oriental tycoons may expend their gains on racing stables, yachts, mansions and glamorous women, but American tycoons in goodly number consider first the advancement of the national culture.

The United States is not at all behind the rest of the world in the matter of museums. Aside from the large museums in the metropolitan centers, there is probably no city without at least one. Even many of the towns have them, if only a corner of the public library or the town hall. Truly the hunger for museums is insatiable.

San Diego is no exception, and there are excellent reasons why this city should have museums. For one, it is a city that attracts tourists, and tourism is one of our leading industries. They may come here for divers purposes, one being to seek an equable climate, but once here there must be provided for them more than just climate. Many are not interested in sport fishing or surf bathing, and, let us admit it, there are days when these pastimes lose their allure for even their most ardent devotees.

Another reason is that San Diego has a large semi-transient population. Men come here with their families for a limited time and for a special purpose but who view the city as place of possible residence. They weigh the advantages of various places, and a system of good museums is not one of the least of these.

San Diego has four museums, the Fine Arts Gallery, the Natural History Museum and the Museum of Man, all in Balboa Park, and the Serra Museum in Presidio Park. Each is administered by the members of the association sponsoring it through a board of trustees, which employs the professional staff. The memberships of the associations are composed of civic-minded persons who, by their dues and contributions, make possible the operation of the museums for the benefit of the entire community. Many members donate more than money, they give generously of their time. Many demands are made upon the time of board members, especially the officers of the associations. Most of them are busy men and women with other things to do, but they serve devotedly for no other compensation than the satisfaction of aiding their fellow citizens to enjoy a richer life.

To operate a museum and furnish all the services expected by the public is expensive, and our museums are not wealthy. The City allots a certain amount of money to each of them yearly for building maintenance, which it is really forced to do as all the museum buildings are city property, although the City did not pay for the construction of any of them. It also pays the salaries of a minimum staff just sufficient to keep the museum open. According to the terms of an agreement between the associations and the City government, the staffs are not permitted to engage in any research or education. If strictly observed, this would mean that they could not authenticate any exhibit or identify any object. They could give no talks nor answer any questions. Fortunately for the public, the terms are liberally interpreted.

As has been noted before, a museum that is merely a collection of objects on display is a dead museum. To be vital it must conduct research and it must educate, and our museums succeed in being vital despite their imposed handicaps. For this much credit is due the many volunteer workers who devote long hours and great energy to make them so. The museum could not function effectively without them, but they require guidance and supervision, which can be given only by the members of the professional staffs who must, therefore, work many more hours than they are paid for.

The financial support now given the museums is far from adequate. Greater support is urgently needed if they are to continue as they are, and still greater support if they are to expand to keep pace with

the rapidly growing population. Because their doors are now open, it is commonly supposed that they are city departments, in a class with those that collect garbage and repair streets. Few realize the struggle it takes to keep the doors open. It would be a tragedy if even one had to close, but such a closing would bring forcefully to the attention of the people of the City that these institutions cannot exist without proper financial aid.

The museums are now good, but they could be much better if their status were assured. As it is, the institutions must go every year to the City Council to solicit enough funds to keep them barely alive for another year. A Council that understands their value will grant them, but it is not difficult to imagine a Council without that understanding. Under conditions of such great uncertainty, potential donors and benefactors hesitate to consider our museums and turn to cities where museums have an assured future.

To sum the matter up—the museums of San Diego and the work they do are worthy or they are not. If they are not, all the City support should be withdrawn from them and they should be allowed to die a quick and natural death. This would brand San Diego as a city concerned only with material things, and make it unique among American cities in having no museums. The alternative is to support them by having their yearly revenues derived from a tax of not less than four cents on the dollar of assessed property valuation. The voters of San Diego can make the choice.

March 1957, San Diego Magazine, 24-30, 64-65, Sim Bruce Richards

CAPTION: A balcony of the Edward S. Bascomb house in Point Loma shows the wood craftiness of Architect Sim Bruce Richards, who was caught (right) against the cedar by the camera of Charles Schneider.

CAPTION: All four pictures on these pages are for a house for Robert Palk of La Mesa, built quite economically in 1955. Richard's houses now average \$14 a square foot with the architect getting a 12% fee (for 400 to 500 hours of his time.)

Knock on any wall and if its plaster you can be pretty sure it's not in a house designed by Architect Sim Bruce Richards. Actually, in his houses you don't have to knock because there is no paint hiding the material of the walls and you know right away that you are surrounded by friendly woods. Indeed, if you entered blind-folded you should be able to tell from the distinctive healthy air that you are not in the presence of rigor mortis or rigid mortar.

Richards is a woodman through and through, as are many residential designers, but he goes further than most in his avoidance of plaster. The reasons for this are subtle and deeply poetic, as will appear before our narrative is completely unwound.

To start with, let us note his discovery of incense cedar. *Discovery* is the right word, for Bruce Richards was the first hereabouts to make extensive use of this sturdy vegetable which in the last dozen years has shot up tremendously in popularity as both interior and exterior surfacing.

When we cite the discovery and popularity of incense cedar, we are speaking of a San Diego County innovation which is just now beginning to spread throughout Southern California. According to Al Childs of the Lumber and Builder's Supply Company in Solana Beach, Bruce Richards appeared in the company's yards around the end of World War II and, under the guidance of some inscrutable instinct, fixed his attention on a dusty stack of cedar which had been moving very slowly (one reason being that carpenters are sometimes incensed by the peppery smell of the sawdust.)

With Richards standing over them, company men went about milling the tough lumber to his specifications. There were difficulties. Planning was unsatisfactory unless the blades were honed razor-sharp, but when the mill developed the knack it turned out boards smooth as satin.

Those satin boards today form the ceiling of every house Bruce Richards designs. Likely as not, they also line the interior walls, though often mahogany is introduced to modify the busy look of too much cedar.

Don't expect to escape cedar by turning to the kitchen or bath. Richards drives his carpenters into the testiest corner of these utility rooms. Splash areas and counters get *Marlite Formica* or some such hard surface, but even stove enclosures and upper walls of shower enclosures will be cedar. If the disbelieving householder turns to the architect for reassurance, she will be met by the compelling double-whammy gaze of a necromancer who expects every cedar board to do its duty, yea through fire and water.

Nowhere, if the architect has his way, does the wood get any "finish" except sometimes a penetrating sealer and wax. Occasionally a wash-coat of paint stain will quiet the cedar knots and raise the tone of a Richards interior to a sophisticated key. Beams and window frames may get a dark stain to define and set off the structure, but seldom merely for "protection" of the wood.

In handling exteriors Richards is even more fearless of the elements. He knows that incense-cedar is as decay-resistant as redwood and shrinks much less, so he usually specifies rough-sawn cedar boards applied vertically and left untreated to take their chances with the weather. The result over a period of years is a variety of coloring depending on local atmospheric conditions.

"Some of my houses turn silver-grey. Some go dark. Some sport several shades of weathering," says Richards. "I've given up making promises about color."

He doesn't even promise his clients how long the boards will last, but he's confident enough. He cites the Forest Products Laboratory analysis of weathering in ancient frame houses of New England, where under severe conditions erosion of unpainted clapboards is figured at something like one-fourth inch per hundred years. He thinks, board for board, San Diego weather can't begin to do that damage. So why paint?

The weathered barn-look of an unpainted house is decidedly hard for many people to adjust to, but once the adjustment has been made a fondness arises that makes other houses look garish by comparison. The confirmed Richards client is no more likely to put paint on his house than to put paint on the family dog.

How does all this wood work out in terms of comfort? Richards insists that it makes for a warm dry house as compared with plaster and stucco, which he finds often develop clamminess in San Diego, where heating systems are not operated enough to combat the effects of humidity. The writer can say from a tour of inspection that there is in fact a consistent feeling of easy comfort as though one were not really enclosed nor yet really exposed—a balanced sense of being in equation with Nature.

People who cherish antiques are likely candidates for the Richards treatment, for his houses, inside and out, have a timeless look from the day they are finished. Old furniture of all descriptions manages to look its best in natural wood interiors, though one might not believe this from photographs, in which furniture has a way of standing out unduly.

An automatic bonus of the Richards style of design is a pleasant *sounding* interior, traceable to the general woodiness, the openness of the plan, the fact that ceilings often slope (thus dispersing noise and making music easier on the ear.)

The openness of Richards' plans is really something special to experience. In house after house there is never any sense of being stopped by walls. One space opens into so many others that even the shutting of doors doesn't give a boxed-in feeling. Windows are strategically placed to open on interesting vistas or sweeping panoramas. *View* in Richards' design vocabulary is not just a matter of "a" picture window but, as much as possible, an experience to be had everywhere you turn.

Naturally, these houses call for studied gardens. They are ideal excuses for the efforts of landscape architects amateur or professional. San Diego's famous Japanese landscapist "Chuck" Ito has done some of his handsomest work in connection with Richards. Richards, of course, has a refined awareness of Japanese architecture (which also is little acquainted with paint.)

Our discussion so far may have hinted that we are talking about a close follower of Frank Lloyd Wright. This is so. Bruce Richards studied two years with the immortal wizard on a scholarship after graduating from the University of California. But Richards' style, his outlook, his philosophy have qualities that seem native to the man, not merely induced by the master.

It helped that he was born (1908) with a measure of Cherokee blood in his cup of life. One notices in him a lively respect for the Indian cultural heritage which is so little known to so many of us. When I mentioned that some Christian churches indulge in ritual that is not too different from Indian ceremonial, he let me know in a flash that he considers the Indian religious sense second to none. Said he: "I'd rather sit under a tree any day than in a church building."

Thus, we get a peek into the Richards subconscious and discover that his architecture is aspiring to the condition of a tree. Clearly, this worshiper should design churches. I asked him if he had and he said no, no one had ever asked him to design anything much but houses, and he is not a hustler for commissions.

I hope San Diego building committees will give very careful consideration to Richards' talents because I'm sure he can do much to grace our city and countryside. As a member of the American Institute of Architects he is qualified in all branches of the profession, including engineering. There is no reason to doubt his capacity to handle large jobs. There is every reason to believe he would give them uniqueness.

Churches especially would benefit from his approach if the elders were interested in getting architecture symbolic of the spirit of man in tune with the universe. The fact is, unfortunately, that most churches are not interested in anything of the sort: they want "practical" gathering places.

Commentary of favorable tone does not come from this writer except in case of activity that seems to be inching us toward better values. I believe Bruce Richards shows a sensitive, growing command of design ideas, that his houses are among the best in San Diego both as living accommodations and as works of art. It is time now for community acceptance of this important architect on a more important scale.

Current president of the San Diego chapter, American Institute of Architects, Bruce Richards is trying to bring Lewis Mumford to our town as prime feature of the California architects convention here in October. It is hoped that the sovereign philosopher of city planning and architecture will also give a lecture open to the public. Mumford, as thinker and speaker, is a 20th century cousin of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

March 1957, San Diego Magazine, 40-41, 73, ART OF THE CITY: Delinquency in Coronado; Johannes Wagner; Triumph of the flattops

April 1957, San Diego Magazine, 36-39, ART OF THE CITY: Of Rock and Roll; 40, 70-73, Antidote to Television

May 1957, San Diego Magazine, 30-32, 34, ART OF THE CITY: SAN FRANCISCO WAY

ARCHITECTURE

When the Food Basket Supermarket was built in Point Loma, we tore into it (February '56 issue) as a piece of bad architecture that downgraded the looks of a handsome neighborhood. We suggested that the style of the Point Loma Lumber Company would have been more suitable.

About the same time in Tiburon (a suburb of San Francisco similar to Point Loma) a supermarket was built, part of a regional shopping center known as The Boardwalk. It happens that it is almost exactly what we would recommend for Point Loma—or any other San Diego neighborhood that is trying to

maintain or gain character. It appears also that The Boardwalk has just received the very top award from a distinguished jury that was asked to single out the best architecture created by Northern California since 1950.

The jury pointedly expressed the hope that by honoring a type of structure so prominent in modern life, standards of store building would be encouraged toward humane excellence. In that cause, we present The Boardwalk to San Diego, though it is a little far for most of us to go for groceries.

Food Basket may never mask its pastel brashness along Boardwalk lines, but among shopping centers that might be expected to take the cue is the one projected for the junction of Highway 101 and Miramar Road in La Jolla.

Certainly it is not a question of mere duplication. While Boardwalk is a delightful shopping situation, there is room for improvement. Curiously though, natural wood exterior seems ideal by tying bulky structures into a neighborhood and stating a friendly attitude. The same wood on inside walls is too easy-going. It allows a great visual commotion in the cans and cartons that bid for customers. Better inside a market, it seems, is the use of color, serving psychologically as a firm teacher who overpowers noisy children.

Lettering at The Boardwalk is not uniformly successful. Straightforward modern lettering seems wrong, perhaps because it has no interesting detail to correspond with the interesting detail of the wood construction. The large trademark *Embee* is contrary to the spirit of the place; it is one matter on which the market owners should lie down and let architects boardwalk over them. To my eye, the most agreeable letting in The Boardwalk, though little used there, is the type illustrated by the headline on this page [not reproduced in this copy]. It has structure. It has flourish. It has nostalgia.

While The Boardwalk's design may not be letter-perfect, the spirit is of the finest. It can be mentioned in the same breath with the old New England village or the Japanese house, and it brings a new measure of world attention to San Francisco through the good office of John Lord King.

Speaking of spirit, we must give grateful credit to the Northern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for its wisdom—nothing less—in selecting a jury made up mostly of non-architects, rather than being satisfied with the usual professional mirror-worship: architects judging architects. Even more important, the jurymen were individuals who have demonstrated a deep appreciation of human values—or art values, which are the same thing. They were sculptor Harry Bertoina; former San Diegoan; Edgar Kaufman, Jr., museum official; James Marston Fitch, architectural critic; Pietro Belluschi, architect and teacher; J. Robert Oppenheimer, physicist and Person. We say capital *Person* of Oppenheimer because it was the person not the scientific specialist or the political woolgatherer, that stood out in the judging, part of which was done in the presence of a large public dinner assemblage. Person Oppenheimer was the hit of the evening as he demonstrated over and over the range of balanced thought that befits the head of Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies. Equipped with warm voice, steady blue eye and everlasting peaceful pipe, he left the impression that the arts of living were of first importance to him.

If there was great strength in the jury's deliberations, there was also a weakness—too great reliance on photographs, which can be enormously at variance with the actual character of a building, adding or subtracting. For example, one church looked so silly and amateurish in its photo presentation that the jury was appalled when it learned the name of the accomplished veteran architect: Mario Corbett. The jury did not see the church itself, but I did, and I liked it better than another church that had won an award. To be sure, Corbett stumbled conspicuously when he dared to lean the Christian cross at an angle instead of the usual vertical. It was a great idea, expressing the weight of conscience rather than assuming uprightness, but it did fail to come off as a design element, both in fact and in photo. Corbett's church (Lutheran) can be seen from Junipero Serra Boulevard, at the south edge of Daly City.

The deliberations of these jurymen, their interviews with the press, their TV appearances, and the public exposure of their reasoning process to an open meeting was a first-rate adventure in adult education. San Diego should have frequent experiences of that sort, not only in architecture but in all the limbs of life.

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE [32-33]

San Francisco offers two big annual museum shows to which artists may seek entry. Sponsored quite separately by the Society of Western Artists and the San Francisco Art Association, they couldn't be further apart if called West and East. Never the two shall meet, for at one pole (Western artists) gather all those who Know What They Like and cherish Sanity in Art, while at the other pole rally those who rather known what they don't like and cherish insanity as one of the forces at work in life and in art.

The difference is even borne out by the location of the shows. Western art is set up at the deYoung Museum in Golden Gate Park, in easy communion with the foggy ocean and the sunsets which are often the limits of their creative horizons. Several miles to the east, in the seedy tangle of downtown San Francisco, the Art Association sets up at the San Francisco Museum of Art, where the outlook is strenuously east, east, east—to New York, to Europe, to China and Japan.

The Society of Western Artists is essentially an American flowering, pressed flowering of sometimes wistful charm but no likely future. Art Association, by comparison, is a riotous jungle where all sorts of surprising animals and vegetables wrestle each other. While you may be repelled by much of what you see, you can't deny the vitality of the jungle, its air of imagination on the make.

All the work shown on these two pages are from the jungle, that is the Seventy-Sixth Annual Painting and Sculpture Exhibit of the San Francisco Art Association. All got prizes, all but two (Churchman and Thomas) being purchase prizes, meaning they go into a permanent collection housed at the museum. They are presented here not as great achievements but as examples of what currently comes to the fore in the city that is one of the world's top ten art centers.

If it is true, as we hear often, that human culture is struggling toward new heights, it will have to rise out of our present jungle, our profusion, our confusion. Man's experience over the millennia has brought us to this: we are back where we started. Of course we're going to do better on the next try.

A lion like Picasso is king of the jungle because he takes to it so naturally and makes some of the laws. In varying degrees others fit too. It is even natural that there should be lots of parasites, along with the sloth, the anteater and the jackal. In more familiar art terms, it is natural that we should have lots of academic modern painting and sculpture.

The 76th Annual is dense with academic modern, even though some 10 percent of items exhibited got into the show. (Dr. Grace Morley, S. F. Museum head, says that 10 percent is par for big regional shows all around the country.) Possibly 10 percent of the 10 percent are works that still will seem to possess beating hearts a generation hence. That would, perhaps, be even better than par for the rugged course of time.

What is the point of shows so short on personal satisfaction? Dr. Morley as they are for "the public concerned with art." An elastic phrase. You are included only if you choose to be concerned. Which is at it should be. Those that are concerned see that the best modern ideas and achievements have inspired a great many people to try and do like wise. If they don't rise to distinction, at least they appreciate exuberantly and the teeming vitality of the jungle is sustained. Few things in the show were lifeless.

Among the prizewinners the process of appreciation is very much in evidence, if sometimes suggesting ancestor worship or submission to the medicine man. Most readily we see, for example, Moore-through-Lemon, Moore-through-Thomas, Tomlin-through-Lockwood, Flannigan-through-Washington, Marini-through-Churchman. It is an easy game for anyone who looks at much painting or sculpture. The answer is whether the lessons have been absorbed, and whether the item on hand can stand on its own two or three feet.

Is David Lemon's *Development* merely an elegant piece of polished wood, or is it a successful synthesis of remembered dignities—dinosaur, bishop, woman—into a new statement of grace, a development?

While in the jungular vein, look twice at James Kelley's wild *Jackknife*, and suspect that the title is a far-fetched pun: *knife* referring to the tool with which paint was applied and *Jack* being the guy whose tortured eyes and mouth can be made out. The laws of the jungle are sometimes in very fine print.

In the matter of laws, Sonya Gechton had passionate fun, filling a whole panel, *Rules of the Game*, with stirred-up paint—that being the first rule of the painting game. She set herself an impressive project to keep the whole panel alive with so little going on to the first glance. For the sketching eye subtle things do happen that are not apparent in black ink reproduction.

One item that made an instant hit with me, and held up after repeated inspections, is Bill Allan's untitled panel which relies very little on painting or drawing but gets its lines and textures pretty much from glued-on tissue papers. Browns and black, cream and (very little) crimson, together with the shapes employed, manage a ghost of the thorned figure on the cross—the husk of a real-gone Christianity, a trace of sadness, an infinity of patience.

The impressions written here are merely what one visitor brought to the show. Nothing said about the works of art necessarily corresponds more closely to what went on in the artist's make-up than the things said by artists to what goes on in their work. Miss Gechtoff, for instance, "explains" her *Rules of the Game* title as a fragment from the line of a Bay region poet: ". . . the rules of the game that the sea otters play in the sea . . ." Sea? Jungle? Clearly there is much evolution ahead of us.

THEATRE [34]

In staged art, unquestionably San Francisco's top experience of the season is Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, as produced by Actors' Workshop. Beckett calls it a tragicomedy, and the two-faced term is a fair index to the man who is being talked of as a word worker of prime importance.

Polarity seems to be Beckett's middle name. Born in Ireland (1906), he chose to ripen in France, returning to Dublin's Trinity College to lecture in French and gain an M.A. Resident in Paris as of 1937, he still wrote English until the 50s, when he swung over to French.

Waiting for Godot originated in French and was translated into English by the author. It inhabits the same air as James Joyce and Gertrude Stein, roots in existentialism, yet as charming to an audience as the early Charlie Chaplin. The spectator only has trouble if he tries too hard to get meanings. It is true that the Godot upon whom the play waits never appears and never is defined tightly. For just that reason you are free, if you feel free, to fill in the blanks from your own experience. How could an author be more complex in delivering confidential messages to his audience? Of course Godot is God. Of course *not*. It all depends on you.

No open message. No plot. No story unfolds to a happy or a sad end. The final arresting curtain lines sum up the "action." Vladimir says: "Shall we go?" Estragon answers: "Yes, let's go." *They do not move*.

Vladimir and Estragon are a pair of everymen who simply cut up the stage in one calamitous vaudeville situation after another. A strongman, Pozzo, and his sorely saddled servant, Lucky, come on a couple of times to act out the great abstractions of social injustice in diabolical caricature. Lucky furnishes the play's momentous moment when he is commanded to "think" by his totalitarian master. Lucky's think piece is a cracked mirror or cracked record of our cliché-ridden times, one of the most telling play-scenes recently written—just because it is so much about so little. La Jollans, in particular, would be devastated by the zany surprise emphasis on tennis, the polarity game.

The language throughout is really quite simple and clear, rarely rising about two syllables and sometimes sinking to four letters in the interest in keeping things on the human-animal level.

A revealing view of Beckett is this by Horace Gregory (in the October 26 *Commonweal*): “Beckett strikes beneath the logic of mind to a dream dreamed by the whole society, which is why it never has had the least concern for immediate political and social movements. An artist he is at an opposite extreme from those who have yielded to the fantasies of social science . . . Today, and at a moment, when most writers have been willing to conform to whatever demands society makes upon them, Beckett stands almost alone. He is essentially a poet, a comic writer of the first order.

And the Actors’ Workshop is a company of the first order. The actors are paid a sort of semi-professional scale, but there is nothing semi about their work. Destiny of the group is in the hands of Jules Irving and Joseph Blau, two extremely informed and purposeful refugees from the New York theater scene, who teach at San Francisco State College, and firmly believe that the future of theater lies off Broadway, even to this coast.

In *Waiting for Godot*, Blau directs and Irving takes the choice role of Lucky. Except for a fleeting juvenile, there are only three others: Eugene Roche (Vladimir), Robert Symonds (Estragon) and Joseph Miksak (Pozzo). The four in hand of Blau have created such a sum of substance that it would leave a gap on your theater album to miss them. Standing room only is the rule in S. F. performances (Thursdays). The group has indicated willingness to fly to San Diego for a weekend performance, if invited. Someone would have to guarantee expenses, which should not be over \$500, including salaries. The simple set (sky backdrop, dead tree and sitting stones) could easily be worked up locally too and probably will be sooner or later, but that is no reason why a creative acting job originating in San Francisco should not visit here.

May 1957, San Diego Magazine, 70, LETTERS: Delinquency vs. Britton (Katherine W. Taylor, Coronado)

June 1957, San Diego Magazine, 41, ART OF THE CITY: 36-37, University of California at La Jolla; 38-39, Linda Faces Life; 39, 61-62 Divine Comedy; 40-41, 60-61, Haunted Houses; Theatre: 62-64, Persecution and Prosecution (Reviews of *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller at San Diego State College and *Witness for the Prosecution* by Agatha Christie at the Old Globe Theatre)

LINDA FACES LIFE

(Article in incomplete . . . Attempts to find continuation in San Diego Magazine were unavailing.)

Linda Lewis is 20 and serious about life. She has never been much of an adolescent in the frivolous sense. Drawing and painting deep pictures come as naturally to her as panting after boys in the ordinary case. Daughter of Monty and Mary Lewis of Coronado, Linda is now at Scripps College, concentrating on studies that will help her growth as an artist.

The Art Center in La Jolla put Linda’s recent work on view in April ‘Twas an occasion to be jolly about nature bursting out from case-hardened winter, and Linda’s paintings were remarkably in phase with the organic phenomena of birth and rebirth. Visitors whose eyes were near their foreheads and not near their belts considered this the handsomest yet of the one-man shows presented at the Art Center. But some La Jollans, in whose lives everlasting winter may have settled, found Linda’s frankness hard to bear. Tremulous comments were heard to the effect that the Art Center was showing depraved and “dirty” pictures.

Before we go any further in constructing the parable of Linda and the elders, let us pause to recollect a few lines from Ralph Waldo Emerson, who presumably would be acceptable in the most guarded La Jolla parlors.

The sinful painter
 drapes his goddess warm,
Because she still is naked,

being dressed;
The godlike sculptor
will not so deform
Beauty, which limbs and flesh
enough invest.

Only blindness of the inner-eye could cause anyone to see Linda's people as naked. She seems to start by knowing that pictures are symbols, and she seems bent on making her pictures elemental rather than specific. *Self-portrait*, thus, is not the usual mirror of the artist but a report on *self* in general, facing the sun and clutching at plants as humans must; attended by birds, a compulsion of the soaring spirit. It might have been posed eon before last, except that the style shows much contact with recent developments in the art of honest painting.

Honest painting, like Chinese writing, is beyond the understanding of spectators who haven't taken the trouble to study it. Those who quarrel with the subject of a painting usually are showing that they are not interested in the art of painting itself. 'Twould be the end of the world if such people got interested in the politics of art museums.

We hope that the notable recent standards of the Art Center will not be taken by criticism arising from ignorance. Occasionally, one hears thereabouts a beating of wings as of buzzards. One ill omen, an omen of catering to the artistically illiterate was the featuring of a picture by Nicolai Fechin in the most prominent spot of the 1957 new gifts exhibit (May). Fechin's happens to be a very bad picture technically—an uneasy mixture of Tiepolo pudding and pseudo-expressionism. But it is appealing, like a magazine illustration.

If we read the omens right, the Art Center would not dare show "shockers" like the savage women of William de Kooning or the awful real males of Larry Rivers. Yet, for better or worse, de Kooning and Rivers are major eruptions on the art scene. Their paintings may deserve to be rejected, but they also deserve to be seen before rejection, since they were seriously produced. Unspoken censorship, which we are berating here, is surely worse than even the spoken kind.

Still reading the omens, we feel that the pictures of Linda Lewis reproduced here might not be allowed a return visit for the Art Center plans to offer its Linda Lewis exhibit to the Western Association of Art Museum Directors for circulation. Whether or not the plan comes off, a selection of the pictures will be at the Capri Theatre during June, and later a one-man show may materialize in New York.

Linda herself shows promise of going for creativity. Her is an approach that has real communication value if the audience is openminded. She searches out subjects of human importance and yet she maintains the integrity of the paintings as *paintings*. This marvelous balancing act only comes off if the artist is a "natural." We think Linda is just. . . .

Divine Comedy.

No one can fairly complain that the Luce publications have any lesser motive than public service in filling their pages with reproductions of art. Magazine business is not substantially increased this way. The same applies to the singular circus comprising full-size images of Fifty Great Paintings and the Sistine Chapel ceiling supplied by *Life* to museums of the country, fee \$1000.

Called *Illuminations*, the images are photographic transparencies lighted from behind. Like *Life* magazine itself, the aggressive exhibition is repulsive to the fastidious. Also like *Life* the exhibition has the fascinating crowdedness of a Bombay street. But let's go deeper.

When you view *Life's* illuminations, you are thrown into fierce intimacy with the souls of the departed. Your eye is sucked through the surface as through so many furnace doors, and you go away with the things you saw blazing in memory. A parade past the illuminations bears some analogy with the trip into Hell of Mr. Dante Alighieri.

For a person who cherishes the subtleties of which paint is capable, the illuminations are an all too hellish torment. “Eliminations!” scream the wounded. Take the matter of light control. Pretty important. The illuminations invariably derange the original scale of values. Light comes pouring through the high-keyed parts of a picture, and is blocked by the somber parts, thus setting up a terrific tension of light and dark, no hi-fi.

Curiously, the earliest painting (Giotto’s *Betrayal of Christ*) comes off best—because of its narrow range of fresco colors—and the latest by catalog number (Mondrian’s *Composition in White, Black and Red*) is most seriously ruptured, its straight-line purity going waxy because the surface is warped by the heat of the lights. Generally, all painters since Cezanne are so badly misrepresented that the net effect may be a set-back for modern art. Braque is rendered dead as a crushed bug. Rouault is visually turned inside out; his blacks look transparent and his reds look opaque. Van Gogh is inert and Monet congealed. Seurat is a syrup and Degas a gravy.

Backwards in time from Cezanne, the show offers many vivid delights, because the early artists were devoted to story-telling subjects. They had to make up for the failure of the camera to have been invented yet. Their paint qualities are very precious, but they can be overlooked with less complete disaster than the moderns. Some of the smaller illuminations (Van Eyck, Raphael, Bellini, Rembrandt) do right well by the originals.

In story ideas, the paintings shown add up to a spectacular Divine Comedy that covers as much range as Dante, from Hell through Purgatory to Paradise. Subjects include: the creation, the expulsion of Adam and Eve; the deadly sins; the witches Sabbath; Susanna and the elders, Diana’s nymphs surprised by satyrs; the judgment of Paris; the birth of Venus; the wedding dance; Apollo pursuing Daphne; Sunday afternoon on the island of LA Grande-Jatte; a woman weighing gold (the most heavenly touch).

Instead of word poetry, we have the sublime beauties of design conception, which in all its variety is a main reason these pictures deserve to be called great. Convincing proof of the illumination’s vitality is that in their afterglow second-rate old masters glare with second-ratedness while first-raters look much better than ever.

Installation at the Fine Arts Gallery was ill-planned. Obviously, the enormous pictures call for the largest rooms, with some sort of barrier to keep people from getting too close. Proper strategy would have been to use the entire second floor for illuminations, and sideshow a careful selection from the Gallery’s permanent collection downstairs. Michelangelo’s ceiling would be better seen spread on a wall, rather than in a canopy effect overhead that hardly gives any sense of the lofty original setting.

We are grateful for *Life’s* resourcefulness, but there is one step further the publishers might have taken: fifty cents admission should be charged, all profits going to the museums which house *Life’s* extravaganza. This is a popular attraction, a record breaker at the free gate: \$100 the first week here. Many lives will be brighter for having seen the illuminated Divine Comedy.

HAUNTED HOUSES

Please excuse that we should bring up La Jolla again, but it really is the most discussable part of San Diego, when it is not just plain cussable. Here we examine the ghostly history of the building which houses the Art Center. Would you believe that it is one of the fifty most important buildings of the last 100 years in America?

Architectural Record magazine pulled a large number of architects and came up with the magic fifty. How the Arts Center got included is a story that exposes the superficial process whereby fame arises through publicity. The Art Center got its start toward fame when Frank Lloyd Wright insulted fellow architect Irving Gill. That was in Chicago, pre-1900. Gill shortly settled in California. Many years later, Wright wrote of Gill: “His work was a kind of elimination which if coupled with a finer sense of proportion would have been—I think it was anyway—a real contribution to our so-called modern movement.”

Other architectural writers re-discovered Gill, and he deserved it. He was a man of principle who, around the turn of the century, made a statement strikingly Cezanne-like: “We must get back to the source of all architectural strength—the straight line, the arch, the cube and the circle . . . “ He acted on his principle and built in La Jolla the women’s club, the community center, the Bishop’s School and several houses including the one for Miss Ellen Scripps that is now the Art Center. The cluster of La Jolla buildings (around 1915) had the singular distinction of reflecting American history (the missions, the pueblos) and predicting world history (the International Style).

The clean lines, the freedom from cornices without and moldings within, qualified Gill’s work as genuine pioneer “modern.” But considered by itself and forgetting for a moment the superb site on the Pacific, the Scripps house was not exceptional as a place to live. Some rooms had a claustrophobic narrowness. Though windows were generous, there was no exterior protection from glare on the west. Concrete walls and floors were as friendly as a girdle of security police. The lay-out was quite routine for big houses of the day, even sub-standard in some particulars, like the bathroom windows hard by the front door. Warmest thing about the place was surely the spirit of Miss Scripps, one of our very forward-looking citizens.

In a vital book (*Architecture, Ambition and Americans*, Harper, ’55) which recounts some of Gill’s story, architectural scholar Wayne Andrews calls the Scripps house “the finest of all” Gill’s houses and adds: “Miss Scripps memory and the cause of modern architecture would have been better served if her house had not fallen into the hands of the local art museum, whose board of directors have seen fit to ‘modernize’ this masterpiece by altering the fenestration so that next to nothing may be guessed of the designer’s intentions. If the museum ever makes amends by restoring the building to its original state, this photograph, taken shortly before the improvements were carried out, may be of some use.”

Mr. Andrews betrayed a nasty approach to the subject, for his photograph is not of the “original state” at all but shows extensive additions made by Miss Scripps herself. Furthermore, alterations made for the Art Center by architects Mosher and Drew definitely enhanced the original, producing a building more pleasing outdoors and in (though by no means fully satisfactory for museum use.) Incongruous pergolas and other rustic touches were suppressed, and one feels that Gill might not be too displeased.

Just possibly, the Andrews endorsement got the phantom original of the Scripps house under the wire as one of *Architectural Record’s* historical fifty—even if the common sense and esthetic sense of the case is more as we have asserted. The phantom continues to fascinate scholars. Frederick Gutheim has included photos and drawings of it in a great historical exhibit, prepared for the 100th anniversary convention in Washington of the American Institute of Architects; after the convention (May), the show will move around the country. We can’t say whether any buildings in the exhibit will be haunted by reputations that don’t square with the facts. In any event, the Scripps ghost house and Balboa’s California Tower, which is also included in the national exhibit, will be doing a great job of publicizing San Diego as their images tour America.

Another haunted house in La Jolla is just newly built in the Muirlands overlooking the country club, at a cost said to be around \$700,000. It is Union-Trib publisher James Copley’s dream house, and the phantoms that haunt it are imperishably famous: Louis XV and Marie Antoinette.

Though modestly scaled in comparison to the grandiose San Simeon of William Randolph Hearst, the Copley mansion, cyclone fence and all, expresses the lordly position of the main newspaper publisher in any large American city. What caused press lord Jim to identify with those two who brought royalty to ruin in France is beyond our range of conjecture. But the interiors of the house were extensively modeled after the *Petit Trianon*, built at Versailles by Louis and lollid in by Marie.

Of course some concessions to progress were made. Louis would have flushed with joy if he could have had Mr. Copley’s plumbing fixtures. Exteriors chez Copley are of Mexican red brick and heavy cedar shakes, a far cry from Versailles. Because of the materials and the low-lying masses of the house (constructed by master builder Togo Hazard) it sets fairly quiet in its rolling landscape. But no

connoisseur's eye would judge it a good-looking house, and as a work of architectural art it can never be taken seriously. It is not consistent with the architecture ability of Mosher and Drew, who are among San Diego's best contemporary designers. It is an extreme example of a force that saps all architects sometimes—the customer's notion.

We can honestly argue that the customer has no right to his notions. Any man should seek those surroundings that are psychologically comfortable for him. And it is a healthy impulse to build something different from the neighboring huts.

For some years now there have been very few *Petit Trianons* built in America, though it was once quite a rage. Just possibly the retreat of Mr. Copley toward the past may represent an emerging trend. If so, in the long run it may work a blessing by stimulating creative original architects to offer still wider variety and deeper satisfaction in contemporary design.

July 1957, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 46-49, 67-68, 70, YOU CAN'T SLEEP IN PARADISE by JAMES BRITTON

Should we have glass buildings alongside the Spanish spinach?

Though it contains some serious failures of the collective brain, the report of the citizens' study committee of Balboa Park reads in good part like a blueprint for Paradise. Much of the report runs along the lines of suggestions made from time to time in *San Diego Magazine*—which is not surprising for we are in the business of blueprinting Paradise.

Paradise is a handy word for describing the rosy life of abundance into which we all, especially all Californians, appear to be heading surely, save for a few nagging worries about fallout, concussion and obliteration. Finally disregarding the negatives of our situation, we are bound to live happily ever after, even after each other, and ours is *not* the final generation.

The handsomest words of the citizens' report are these: "Our generation is passing to the future a heritage of astoundingly expanded economy devoted

civilization. Compounded with this we pass on massive debt and a seeming disregard for the preservation of many natural resources. It is our profound duty, therefore, that we pass intact to the future Balboa Park, this transcendent work of the hands of man."

These words were contributed by Architect Sam Hamill, who has a real sense of the American tradition, of San Diego tradition, and of the part that each functioning citizen plays in keeping the world on its axis. Mr. Hamill cites evidence of an almost pathetic reliance of people on the park for beauty in their lives. He writes in the report: "The preservation for over forty years of many of the 1915 exposition buildings despite the fact that they were originally constructed of wood frame and stucco as 'temporary buildings' for a one-year life expectancy, indicates the revered placed . . . and affection of San Diegans and visitors from all over the world. When one reviews the impermanent nature of certain of these structures and the fact that many of them have known no practical use for extended periods of their existence, we have proof beyond a doubt that their outstanding beauty has endowed them with a degree of permanence not inherent in their structure.

"That our primarily practical people have for so long been deeply moved and affected by the beauty of the composite of buildings and gardens in Balboa Park is proof positive that all future developments must be directed to continue this esthetic masterpiece through carefully considered maintenance and development.

"To the thousands of citizens who wish to retain Balboa Park in all its beauty and too many of those citizens who dread the removal of a single beautiful old structure, we call attention to the fact that the immutable hand of time and decay will sooner or later destroy each of the temporary structures. The greatest tribute, therefore, which we can pay to this center of civic culture will be to initiate and with perseverance carry on, a continuing program of development in Balboa Park which will insure that as each

old structure passes into memory, it be replaced with buildings and/or gardens of commensurate beauty, blended into the inspired design concept of the original group of 1915 exposition buildings and gardens.”

Notice that Mr. Hamill (writing for the citizens’ committee) says the decaying structures should be replaced with “buildings and/or gardens.” This reminds us of the curious fact that Bertram Goodhue, the masterful architect-in-chief of the park structures, intended that most of the buildings he laid out would disappear in favor of gardens. Here is how Goodhue put it: “It was not believed that the temporary buildings should be other than temporary, for it must be remembered that exposition architecture differs from that of our everyday world in being essentially of the fabric of a dream—not to endure but to produce a merely temporary effect. It should provide illusion rather than reality. So at San Diego, the bridge, the domed and towered California State Building and the low-lying Fine Arts Building (*now the upstanding Museum of Man – ed.*) were to remain, the rest were to be swept away utterly.

“The cleared sites of the temporary buildings were to be planted and gardened until they took their place as integral parts of the scheme. In the years to come, when the trees and flowers that grow to such universal perfection in San Diego should have attained their full magnificence, this domain would then become a public pleasance that might well be the envy of other American cities.

“The design of the bridge, the great California State Building and the Fine Arts Building were intended to express and to insure permanence. As their method of construction is to all intents and purposes that of many of the great monuments of the past that have come down to us, and as the purposes for which they were intended are as permanent as themselves, so should they be the only structures to remain in such a garden.”

Architect Goodhue’s name is one of the top dozen in all American history, and his “permanent” buildings in our park are among his best works. The buildings also happen to remain the handsomest architecture ever produced in San Diego.

However, Mr. Goodhue rattled on about dreams as though he had never heard of Freud (who indeed was not fashionable in 1915). No one today would argue that dreams produce a merely temporary effect, and imply that reality is permanent! The quotes from Mr. Hamill are sufficient evidence that people cling to their dreams whereas the “everyday world”—downtown stores, let us say—is restlessly cast off or recast.

What Bertram Goodhue did for us in conceiving his almost supernatural bridge-tower complex was to deep-freeze a dream—castles in Spain, castles in the air. Perhaps the only structures worthy of the name *architecture* are those that have this quality of frozen dream, for dreaming at its best is a matter of discovering ideal perfection. The bridge-tower complex approaches perfection in its unity, its variety, its points of emphasis, its balance of bold form against fitting detail, above all in its defiance of time and fashion.

However, the interiors are a shocking let-down to anyone drawn by the architectural spell of these buildings. A clutter of museum exhibits ranging from a bony mummy to a stuffy gorilla is no more appropriate than would be a burlesque show. I’m not sure the interiors were arranged in dignity equal to the exteriors, but to achieve such harmony should be our aim. Perhaps all interior trappings should be Spanish, religious, historical.

At present it is the Museum of Man that is spread out there, with the curious result that the more ingenious its display efforts the more ill-fitting the results. The citizens’ report does call for moving the Museum of Man into more suitable quarters, but doesn’t say where. Temporary buildings adjoining the California Tower to the east could be rebuilt for the Museum of Man as part of a general plan for museum housing.

The report fails completely to come to grips with the prerequisite for improved museum housing: unified administration and unified financing. (The way to museum prosperity is a united success campaign for memberships plus the charging of admissions for most visitors who are not members.) The Cultural and

Educational Sub-committee was asleep in Paradise, or else hypnotized by the several competing museum boards of directors—who should be closely coordinated for progress' sake.

If we don't wake up by natural process, we may get a rude awakening by jolt from Los Angeles. What, for example, will be the effect on our extremely successful zoo of the recent ballot in which Los Angelinos voted to spend \$6,600,000 on the construction of a brave new zoo up there? Until now our zoo has been the best of its kind on the Coast. The days of that supremacy are suddenly given a number. Los Angeles is bounding ahead on cultural and educational fronts other than animal, too. Our tourist traffic faces sharp cuts unless we think up cultural combinations of unbeatable distinction.

Bertram Goodhue's 1915 buildings and his words certainly mock our efforts since then. Whenever we have finally crunched the broken eggshells of the exposition and built "permanent" regressively less charming results. The Fine Arts Gallery is such a replacement (1925). It would rate as a good standard job of prestige architecture for its day, but it is not equal to the bridge-tower group in design quality. The Natural History Museum is another "permanent" replacement (1933). It is far inferior as a work of design to the Fine Arts Gallery.

Question: if the remaining "temporaries" along El Prado are to be replaced by Spanish-style permanents, would the design quality continue on its declining course?

Answer: Very likely, for the building industry is not now geared to make even a noble try at duplicating full-fashioned historical styles and the imitations get more anemic every year. (A depressing example of anemic Spanish presently under construction is San Diego University, a poor relation of the great Roman Catholic tradition of architecture.)

Furthermore, except in rare instances, *modern* architectural design does not appear to have the staying power that was built into Bertram Goodhue's contribution. If, by some chance of civic bravery, we were to venture into modern design to replace the 1915 exposition shells, we could get into a great deal of esthetic grief.

There is a way out that suggests itself to me on the basis of design logic. All replacements of buildings along El Prado could be chiefly of glass, interrupted at strategic points by exuberant displays of Spanish ornamentation in stone, either duplicating the existing fancywork or repeating its spirit in new outbursts. The virtue of glass in this particular situation is that it would multiply charm by way of reflections of landscape and stonework, while at the same time enclosing space for museum displays. Museum space then could be planned as interplay of indoors and outdoors, thus achieving, on an enlarged scale, the kind of situation which is so satisfying in modern California houses. In any case, the arcades along El Prado should be retained and rebuilt as they decay, because they are timeless good architecture, good planning.

The nearest thing in San Diego to the clear-faced display architecture I am speaking of is the lower floor of the Design Center building (3603 Fifth Avenue), which opens out handsomely into one of San Diego's glamorous canyons. But the very best examples of American glass architecture are, paradoxically, in the East where winters are wintry. The United Nations Secretariat and Lever House in New York show how glass and its endless changing reflections bring pulsing life to a structure. And at the glassy Museum of Modern Art, one of the chief delights is the extensive garden designed superbly as a continuation of the interior space. It should go without saying that the use of glass brings problems, but these can be solved by wise designers.

I have wandered some distance from the citizens' report, but the wandering was dictated by the dilemma exposed therein: shall the "temporaries" be replaced by buildings "and/or" gardens? It seems to me that by the extensive use of glass you get both building *and* garden. How better to reconcile the intentions of master builder Goodhue with the determination of our generation to have buildings where he would have gardens?

There are other topics in the many-sided citizens' report on which comment will appear in future months. I'd like to close this fragment of review with an extremely significant quote from the report of the landscaping subcommittee:

"Balboa Park's generally stated acreage of 1400 is misleading, since the area for park functions is reduced to less than half that figure by deeds and leases to governmental and social agencies which have no program for the general public."

Let's try to remember that, magnificent as it is, Balboa Park is only a good beginning of the park system that must develop in and around San Diego if the leisure-laden multitudes are not to swarm like ants over each other's picnic sandwiches.

July 1957, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 50-51, 70, How to Buy a Painting; 52, Family of Man.

July 1957, San Diego Magazine, 40, LETTERS: re. Britton's comments about Linda Lewis' painting

August 1957, San Diego Magazine, 31, LETTERS

This letter was printed in the July issue, and is reprinted here for reference.

James Britton's article in your June issue, in praise of the work of a young local painter, brings me to the boiling point! I have long wanted to ask a few questions of some professional art critic; Mr. Britton shall be the one.

My questions have to do with the modern style of distortion, and that particularly of the human face and figure. The local paintings reproduced with this article are typical, though perhaps a shade more imaginative than most such work. Like Mr. Britton, most art critics express eloquent contempt for anyone who ventures the timidest criticism of this style. Mr. Britton speaks of "those in whose lives everlasting winter may have settled," "blindness of the inner eye," "eyes below their belts," etc. (But don't you *like* misplaced eyes, Mr. Britton?) They also become eloquent in praise of their pet artists, but in some vague and general terms. Let's get down to something concrete, just once, Mr. Britton. And I am seriously trying to understand—if only you would give us "artistically illiterate" ones a little education, instead of only berating us.

So, now tell me: why, in Linda's "Self-Portrait" and "Pregnant Woman," are the body organs any more "symbolic" and "elemental" when misplaced and misshapen than they would be if approximating their natural location and shape? Why must eyes always be shaped like dead fish and set at impossible angles? Why are birds more "symbolic of a compulsion of the soaring spirit" when they resemble half-moons perched on wooden stilts than rather than creatures of flight? Why, above all, must the grotesquely hideous always be considered superior to the beautiful? For ages, the true artists of the Orient have managed to combine the simplest elemental symbolism with the aesthetically joy-giving and satisfying forms without every violating the truth or harmony of nature. Cannot Western artists at last develop some such approach to a true art? The road they are now on is obviously a dead-end street, where they can only go round and round in endless variations of the possible distortions, which are limited. Like the art of writing, the art of painting may some day discover that "truth is stranger than fiction" and much more interesting. We do not find it necessary to admire only the writer whose characters and events are as distorted and unlikelike as possible; we praise his work when it shows us a true picture of life, with non-essentials pared away and with the elements of the picture reorganized to make a harmonious whole—but not intentionally distorted. How long before the painters will come back to such a sane and worth-while objective? Well, not while his master, the art critic, holds out the carrot in the other direction.

ROSEMARY WOOD

Miss Wood sent a postscript:

I purposely ignored the question of “dirtiness and depravity,” which you said some La Jollans had raised because I feel sure that the moral aspect of the paintings was not the basic one, even in the minds of those quoted. At least not in the narrow sense of the word moral. Most people, not very articulate, not at all self-analytical, find it easier to express their objections in moral terms.

And indeed the moral objection is correct in a broader sense. What can be more depraved in the field of art, that this modern tendency of the art critics, art patrons, museum directors, et al., to encourage a cheap and easy sensationalism as the artist’s goal rather than the difficult service of truth and beauty?

Proving my point, young Linda’s friend (in her letter, July issue) replies that Linda herself is aware of the falsity of the standards required of the artist who would catch the attention of those “pseudo-intellectuals holding sway over the art world.” What is this if not depraving? Perhaps we may soon have an effectual revolt of the artists themselves, joining the long-time ineffectual revolt of the public. Then the army will all be out of step, except the art critics!

August 1957, San Diego Magazine, Festival Fever: 40, 72, Leo Tolstoy as King Lear; 71, Playhouse Reviewed

August 1957, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 51, 69-70, Looking at modern painting; 52, 70, Fairest of the Fair—Family Trouble (Kenneth Eisler); 44, 67, What is so special about La Jolla playhouse?

September 1957, San Diego Magazine, **LETTERS:** Britton evasive: Anent your article in reply to Rosemary Wood (see previous articles as well).

Most of us haven’t the time or inclination to read weighty books on art or to take courses in art. But most of us do have the time to read an occasional article on art criticism, especially when the article concerns one of the current, local exhibitions. We feel chagrined and shortchanged when the art critic does not design to give his personal opinion but takes the easy way out by recommending books and course to our (implied) low intelligences.

In a recent interview, Pablo Picasso describes the function of the art critic as that of building a bridge between the artist and the public. As pointed out by Herbert Read, in “The Philosophy of Modern Art,” the critic has replaced the art patron as the maker or breaker of the artist. At the same time he goes one step beyond the traditional art patron who was practically the sole consumer. He stands midway between the artist and the new consumer, the general public, as a sort of switching station. If art is in part the communication of the artist’s attempts to increase his scope of consciousness with hopes of finding affirmation of these attempts in an informed public, then the critic has the tremendous responsibility of interpretation so that there is no breakdown of communication.

How can a critic best do this? It would seem that it is primarily a task of being informed: informed as to the latest works of art and as to the latest art criticism available. Thru a synthesis of this information, fitting it to the limitations of space available, he, in turn, informs the public of the latest trends and interpretations, including *his own*.

It is on this last point where James Britton’s personal communication bogs down to me. I have the vague feeling that a constant attempt is being made to be controversial without anything much of substance being said. This is fostered by a writing style that seems to be a glib, “racy” type of journalese more suited to the sports page than to such a professional subject as art criticism.

Engendered is the impression that it (the style) is a cover-up for saying nothing. Too often the sole end seems involved in the building of clever syntax—leading away from what he may have originally intended saying: a sort of entrapment by syntax. Possibly he does start out to say something but it seems to get lost in the circumambulations of the literary style employed.

To sum up:

Thru reading the same writer on art over a period of time, the public expects and should get information as to new works available, as to current criteria for judging these works, and, in outline form at least, a cursory sort of art education. In the process, some conceptions of the critic's personal theory of art should become apparent as it evolves thru his various articles. The very fact of space limitation, should impose a writing style of condensation and clarity more closely akin to the directness of poetry than the dispersion inherent in prose. Not being an art critic allows *me* to suggest one of Herbert Read's books, "English Prose Style" (or his writing in general) as illustrating the type of taut and to-the-point writing I have in mind.

Please do not consider this a personal attack. I may be missing the whole point of what Mr. Britton has to say.

Nick Stanton, San Diego.

September 1957, San Diego Magazine, 26-27, A flight of managers, what made Campbell run. . from San Diego to Miami?

In the smooth person of Orwin W. (Hump) Campbell, San Diego had for eight years on of the country's very best city managers. This year we lost him to Miami, of all places. How come?

Miami offered \$9000 more per year than San Diego (\$35,000 as against 26), and the easy conclusion along the easy streets of our easy town was that money had spoken and the Scotsman had obeyed. That easy—and wrong—conclusion may account for the ungrateful air of indifference that greeted the Campbell changeover; no concerted movement arose to keep him here.

The San Diego public was largely unaware of the quality job Campbell had done. Everyone could find things wrong about the city which he was pretty sure Campbell could be blamed for, and indeed this honest administrator made his share of mistakes in the course of his extremely complex work. But a good part of the local indifference to Campbell owes to the fact that our daily (Copley) newspapers never warmed to him. Copley coolness often descends on people who show too much independence.

Still, uphill press relations and widespread public apathy here were not enough to turn Campbell toward Miami. Besides standard apathy and greed, he will find small-town dragon-type press lords surrounding him there; and besides the native alligators plenty of unsavory gorillas from Chicago, New York and maybe Jersey City. Miami is rough country, uncivilized politically and bursting with private armaments, compared to California, and there are many active enemies of orderly government. Knowing the risks, Campbell goes only armed with courage and sweet reason.

What explains the Campbell decision? It is a simple case of professional pride: the man of training and experience moving on to a job that offers advancement not so much for himself as for the principles in which he believes. A city manager is really a man-without-a-city; the place is not so important as the idea and moving around rather than bedding down with the evils of any one place, is considered professionally healthy. The case of Les Halcomb is further illustration.

The brand-new Miami opening is something of a miracle in city-management terms, the first opportunity in America to practice the profession on an area large enough to include all parts of a metropolitan whole, the first opportunity to really reduce the burden of petty warfare between neighboring cities that is now one of the ugliest and most expensive features of the American scene. In fact City Manager Campbell of California becomes County Manager Campbell of Florida, and his Dade County government is organized by State charter to be more powerful than all the cities within the county, including Miami.

In reading the following explanation of the Miami management miracle you may find it bracing to substitute San Diego County every time the words Dade County appear, draw parallels with our situation and imagine yourself raised to the same higher power of orderly government. Whether San Diego and the nearly 175 other metropolitan messes of America are turned toward harmonious development will depend

very much on the success or failure in Dade County of a talented man who got his main experience in San Diego.

In California, Sacramento is the city most likely to move toward the type of metropolitan pattern pioneered in Dade County, Florida. The Bee, main Sacramento newspaper, promotes that kind of thinking and Public Administration Service has made a study there similar to the one PAS made for Dade County. Look for real stimulation of metropolitan planning shortly when \$1,000,000 or more of Ford Foundation money will be spent in California on studies of just this urgent aid to American growth.

inside SAN DIEGO

LAST YEAR the City Council made the mistake of changing part of Mission Valley to C Zone so the Padres Baseball Club owners could build a ball field there. Our owners promised that it would be used only for baseball and similar attractions, and indeed baseball was nearest to their hearts.

Now we are dazzled by a scheme involving our owners and Wayne Dailard, who would like to house *The California Story* next year in some better theatre than Balboa Stadium. What could be sweeter than to put a canopy over the ball field, upholster the seats and open the box office?

Without pausing to assess the effect on our culture of watching baseball from upholstered seats, we must ask: if a canopy comes to the ball park, can the American Legion convention be far behind? If a facility is built in Mission Valley capable of housing the largest conventions, what is to stop its being used extensively for this purpose, especially since the spot is ringed around with snazzy new hotels, with more a-planning?

Such a convention set-up would make great good business sense to the investors. But is it good city planning? Of course it is not city planning at all in the sense of responsible officials acting in behalf of the whole public welfare. For city officials had nothing whatsoever to do with this robust "planning" except to sheepily acquiesce. It is a spectacular example of private planning that tears apart such city plan as we have.

Official city planning here has stuck for years to the principle that Downtown at the convergence of freeways, in the neighborhood of the old established hotels, is the place for convention facilities. If we encourage these facilities somewhere else, we are abandoning Downtown as the main focus of the community. The whole character of Downtown must change when it is no longer the main gathering point. The usual change in such cases is rapid, expensive decay.

If convention facilities are to appear suddenly in Mission Valley, the City Council should at least be aware of what is happening, and maybe take a firm hand to protect the development. It is possible to conceive convention planning at that point of splendid quality, consistent with the Commercial-Recreational zoning formula which the City Planning Department is just now trying to get adopted for Mission Valley. A zoning ordinance could be passed, spelling out the character of structures and uses to be permitted. That would be a far superior procedure to what the Council did when it inspired the ball park people to dream big and practice throwing beautiful curves by giving them a C (Commercial) Zone with only a semi-legal gentlemen's agreement that they would confine themselves to baseball and the like.

Recent changes in the sports world have made baseball itself a questionable investment here, but everybody knows that conventions are reliable big business. At the moment of writing, no one has been heard even breathing the word *convention*. Could it be that our interpretation is a mere invention of the scribbler. But it is plainer than ever to us that our City Council should clarify the zoning in Mission Valley. Nowadays, more than ever before, uncontrolled growth of a city is a prelude to disaster.

IN CONTRAST to the fast-breaking ball park game is the serene dignity of Mrs. Henry B. Clark's continuing efforts in behalf of a civic theatre. She wrote to Richard Graves (last Democratic candidate for

governor), whose Community Facilities Corporation has been described in *San Diego Magazine*. His reply was as follows:

August 6, 1957

Dear Mrs. Clark:

A reply to your letter has been delayed until I was sure I had something authoritative to say to you. In this extraordinary money market one doesn't know from one day to the next what is possible.

I am now in a position to say that if we should be invited to do so, by the City Council, we could submit a proposal for their consideration under the terms of which we would finance and build a Civic Theatre in Balboa Park, after executing a long-term lease of the completed theatre to the City of San Diego. We assume the theatre would be operated by the City, and any rentals arising from its use would be revenue to the City as an offset against its rent.

Upon the expiration of the initial lease term of 20 to 25 years, it would be possible legally to arrange the transaction in such a way that the theatre became the property of the City, free and clear of indebtedness. Your City officials know we cannot compete in our financing with your general obligation bond rate. However, on a 25-year basis, I do believe we could finance the Theatre for an annual payment of about \$235,000.

*Richard Graves, President
Community Facilities Corp.
Lafayette, Calif.*

The letter is certainly specific enough. All Mr. Graves needs is an invitation from the City Council. According to Deputy City Attorney Alan Firestone, it is legally possible for the City to do so invite, though preferably someone other than the City should hold the operating lease. In any case yearly payments presumably would come in part out of the earnings.

Those other more or less remote prospects for theatres should be borne in mind, all of them in connection with college campuses. At the La Jolla campus of UC, 850 seats with a larger hall possible later. At San Diego State College, 1500 seats (not yet financed). At California Western on Point Loma, 2500 seats (will be built if the City promises to finance the theatre part-time, small chance.)

While three great scattered campus theaters would be great in terms of both college and community welfare, they would not kill the need for a theatre in Balboa Park, convenient to more people than any of the other proposed. Downtown may lose its identity in the tortured process of metropolitan growth, but Balboa Park is quite sure to remain literally our central park, and should be outfitted accordingly.

When Frank Lloyd Wright lectured here three years ago, he said positively: "You can't stop cities from exploding." Maybe not, but as with bombs, we can nurse the hope of *controlling* the nuclear explosion of our San Diego.

September 1957, *San Diego Magazine*, ART OF THE CITY: 34-35, *The Christian Conductor*; 36-37, *Liberal Arts Without Tears*

THE CHRISTIAN CONDUCTOR

IT IS generally felt that our summer symphony conductor, Robert Shaw, has made marked progress in orchestra conducting know-how through his winter in Cleveland, as assistant to past master, George Szell. One observer thought that Shaw had taken on Szell mannerisms as part of his growth pattern, but hardly the Hungarian's steely tautness. Musicians in the San Diego Orchestra still say that Shaw does not show sufficiently intimate technical understanding of how instruments get musical effects.

On the other hand, one seldom hears any questioning of Shaw's powers in choral conducting. Partial explanation of his overwhelming success with massed voices may be that he came to music from a professionally religious family and the reverential note is second nature with him. As some preachers

deliver the Bible, so Shaw uses the choral literature to convey heroic Christian convictions. When, for example, he produces the Brahms *Requiem*, he energizes it in a way that suggests Michelangelo's painting of *The Last Judgment*, or that grand literary parable, Christ walking on the water. On such occasions even the instrumentalists "play over their heads," which is something like walking on water.

That Shaw's Christian convictions are truly heroic was evidenced in the painful Affair Frederick Baker. Baker, 55, is the symphony's flutist, son of two college teachers and himself an exceptional school teacher, who pleaded guilty when charged with molesting a girl of 13. (There was no published indication that the girl had been coerced, but the City Schools fired Baker quickly—and necessarily—despite his exceptional record as a cherished teacher.)

Until the moment that Judge Turrentine sent Baker off to Atascadero for psychiatric observation, Conductor Shaw kept his accused musician in the orchestra for two reasons. Baker is an incredible flutist, and Shaw is an incredible Christian. In defying the inevitable waves of sanctimonious pressure for washing out Baker, Shaw asserted that he could not bring himself to pass judgment on a fellow human in a matter of this sort. To their Christian credit, key symphony board members took similar positions.

In another part of our haphazard earth, a music student of 20 married Incredible Cellist Pablo Casals, aged 80, entirely within the law. Plenty of gossip but no arrests. In San Diego, after the law had extended its claw, a late-summer program was quietly dropped. Walter Piston's suite called *The Incredible Flutist* had been planned long before the Baker misfortune as a feature vehicle for one of San Diego's very best musicians.

Summer in San Diego

Viewed large, our summer symphony season offered programming of high distinction, as is usual under Shaw. The orchestra, a-slumber all winter, was not altogether out of hibernation in the first concert. Particularly shaggy was Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*. Comparative success that evening was Robert Gerle in a violin concerto by Samuel Barber, a sweet neat work such as this composer seldom yields. Concert two gave us a raddled reading of Wagner's *Meistersinger-Overture*, and two concertos featuring Pianist George Sementowsky, who should play more Mozart and leave Rachmaninoff alone.

Concert Three opened with a forced reading of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto 4*, which was forgiven and forgotten because the unforgettable Brahms *Requiem* followed. Concert Four was a lapse in programming, notable only for the hi-spontaneous humor of the Hi-Lo male quartet. The quarter's derangements of familiar ballads were grotesquely bad, and Robert Russell Bennett's soup-ups of show music by Gershwin (*Porgy*) and Lowe (*Fair Lady*) weakened the character of the respected originals.

Concert Five gave a Haydn *Symphony 92* lacking in the elasticity, fillip and bounce of the composer's intention. Stravinsky's *Symphony of Palms* (with chorus) had some of Shaw's reverential fire, but the surprise was how well the orchestra did. Tchaikovsky's *Sixth Symphony*: dramatic evidence of how an orchestra grows by playing.

Concert Six was Isaac Stern display night, top-level virtuoso violin, the orchestra was clear and clean in *The Marriage of Figaro* overture. Concert Seven was an animated version of Arthur Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake*, music which only half realizes its scale of tenderness and terror (text by Paul Claudel). Dorothy McGuire's hollow cheek and eye, her spare frame and spare acting, stood for Joan all right; Richard Hale as Brother Dominic had a glowing warmth and human concern, a model for priests.

Winter in San Diego?

It is time for renewed efforts to keep our orchestra talents playing through the winter. Composer Howard Brubeck is talking up a plan that makes good sense: four winter concerts at Hoover auditorium (1461 seats) using about 60 players under the direction of Daniel Lewis. Lewis made a genuine success last season in the same hall inaugurating the Civic Youth Orchestra—because he is an expert technician at grips

with most instruments and an effective taskmaster. Whether he has anything like Shaw's fervid attunement to the great ideas in music is not yet so clear.

One thing is triumphantly evident about San Diego: there is an audience here for the highest type of music programs, not omitting important modern masterworks or even experimental originals. Any winter orchestra here will not have to cheapen itself with "semi-popular" offerings.

In planning more live music for San Diego, we should not forget Nikolai Sokoloff just because he lives in far-off La Jolla. He is a venerable conductor of major accomplishment on the American scene (top man in WPA music, conductor at Cleveland, etc.). His Musical Arts Society of La Jolla gives a summer series in the high school out there that has few audience members from south of Bird Rock and not a single musician from south of Los Angeles. There is a ripe finesse in his conducting, a vintage advantage that should be shared by way of guest appearances with the San Diego summer symphony, and perhaps in winter too. He is a man of quick intelligence and also quick disdain who has torn some musicians in getting his work done. Old wounds of the local union army should not be allowed to limit him from his possible contribution.

Reflecting for a moment on the musical summer in La Jolla, it must be said that Sokoloff's orchestra has an opposite effect to Shaw's. That is, the individuals play too much rather than too little. Mostly Hollywood studio musicians in constant demand, these busy people turn up at La Jolla in various instruments, tending to frustrate the continuity of membership that is good for an orchestra. Even the concertmaster was not present on one occasion this year. All excellent musicians, but not a steadfast ensemble, they tend to play confidently, aggressively and loud. There was much overloud playing this summer in contrast to previous seasons, conspicuously so in Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony*, final work of the final concert, which was sometimes swollen and blurred out of shape, far less moving than former Sokoloff finales. This complaint does not deny many stretches of superb sound throughout the season, with exceptional expression seeming to come from the all-important first-violin section.

Dr. Sokoloff is fully the equal of Dr. Shaw in programming, taste, superior, of course, in seasoned poise, and "Christian" enough, for that matter, especially when he comes to Bach. Most distinguished is his support of modern composers; of this year's moderns I found especially attractive the *Canticle* of Nikolai Sokoloff (son), structured clean as a Cubist painting. Father Sokoloff is a naturalized resource San Diego should not neglect.

April-May 1955, Magazine San Diego, 32-33, 52. How To Bury Educational TV for San Diego

April-May 1955, Magazine San Diego, 22-24, 37, A City In Perpetual Crisis: A Panel Discussion sponsored by USC and Magazine San Diego

October 1957, San Diego Magazine, 4, LETTERS re. Britton from Ralph de Sola, Robert Sanders

October 1957, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 34-35, 69-70, Looking backward and forward with the AIA; Theatre; On wings of art; 69-70, Jan of Art

Looking Backward—And Forward With the AIA

Caption: OLD DEPOT of Santa Fe railroad at the foot of Broadway—pleasing proportions, pure gingerbread.

Caption: EVEN SUCH a utilitarian structure as the offices and decks of Pacific Steamship Co. was lavishly decorated in the San Diego of the 1880's. Architecture has changed, but the power poles remain.

Caption: FORTH AVENUE, 1906. The Pickwick Theatre, second building from right, was designed by Irving Gill, newly arrived in San Diego after apprenticeship with Louis Sullivan. He worked with Sullivan at the Chicago Fair Transportation Building.

Caption: ELECTRIC TROLLEY No. 1 stops for its portrait before the San Diego County Court House. A monument at the turn of the century, the building is still used.

ALL the talk about our town as the most logical convention center in the U. S. of A. may get a little tiresome to people trying to soak up the lovely life here, but there is one piece of news that ought to make even the sun-bakers radiate renewed pride. The California Council of the American Institute of Architects has decided after twelve years of shopping around the state that Hotel del Coronado is the only place where its annual convention of about 1000 can be held with the kind of vocation-vacation satisfaction its members expect. San Diego's A.I.A. chapter president, Sim Bruce Richards, sums it up with a single well-carpentered word: *resourceful*.

No clutch of convention goers is more qualified to judge the merits of a convention center than the architects. Their proper lifework is to assemble packages that answer the needs of human shelter, whether it be in the shape of house, convention center or whole city.

It is especially worth noting that Hotel del Coronado, which has such appeal to the modern man, is an inheritance from the Nineteenth Century, almost entirely unchanged while jet bases grew up around it. Surely the nineteenth century in America was a higher-headed time than ours; things got done with scale and grandeur, tonic to the growing spirit and with a sense of confidence about the future of grace on Earth. We can always review it with profit.

The AIA being 100 years old this year, much healthy looking backward has occurred in the professional family. For its twelfth convention the California Council includes in its program book some memento-photos of earlier San Diego, including those reproduced here. A late-starting city even in American terms (and now the fastest growing big city), San Diego cannot point to many monuments designed by the pioneer architects of our country, no Stanford White (or Frank Lloyd Wright), no Louis Sullivan, no Henry Richardson, say nothing of Richard Upjohn, Thomas Jefferson, Charles Bullfinch.

Only one of the buildings displayed on these two pages (Gill's Pickwick Theatre) can be attributed to an architect of historical prominence. The courthouse surely had a Renaissance-happy architect, but the Pacific Steamship and Santa Fe stations look to be the dreams of surrealist carpenters. Hotel del Coronado itself is said to be the creation of Chinese coolies who started at the rear so by the time they got around to the front they'd be able to make a good appearance!

As other pages of *San Diego Magazine* show (in this issue and every month), professional architecture now figures large in the San Diego development pattern. Architects themselves are diligently looking after their own growth to keep up with their expanding responsibilities. Thus a feature (October 3) of the twelfth convention of the California Council is a thorough casing of Community Planning and Development, with an address by William T. Sesnon, leading *civic* citizen of Los Angeles, and a panel discussion by experts. Good augury for San Diego advancement is the inclusion of Realtor John Cotton on the panel and the presence of invited guests of our entire Downtown Association. Looking backward may raise our spirits, but we'd better look forward too or we could get our heads knocked off.

JAN OF ART

The variety of views shuffling between this column and our Letters column is a fair example of the healthy conflict that flares wherever art is a living issue. Another example—of rather startling vividness—is the emotional upset that followed the visit here of Jan Stussy as one-man jury for the October show of the Art Guild at the Fine Arts Gallery.

Personally, Stussy is common-sensical, keen and considerate. Professionally, at 30, he's a good painter and a born teacher (on the art faculty at UCLA) with a marvelous gift of facile persuasive gab. He jokingly described himself as "a used-car salesman" type, which may or may not have pertinence, but don't let that suggest he's dishonest. He's as honest and sincere, as Joan of Arc. (He also joked about himself as like Joan of Arc exhorting her troops.)

The Joan comparison can be pursued with some legitimacy, without any implications against Stussy's manhood. Joan heard voices. Jan, by his own account, has to fight from being "drawn into" paintings that mean a great deal to him. Joan had supernatural clarity of purpose and ability to sell herself (in the better sense), so did Jan as he spoke to the Art Guild membership, explaining his choices and rejections. Joan got roasted for her efforts, so did Jan for his.

Here the analogy breaks down, for we can't simply say that Jan, like Joan, committed a defiance of organized religion, though his performance may seem just that to persons who consider modern art something put over on the public by high priests.

Exactly what Jan Stussy did the night of Friday the Thirteenth of September was to recommend that artists 1) go back to painting landscapes from nature, preferably Balboa Park; 2) get into the habit of copying "old masters", preferably in the Fine Arts Gallery; 3) learn framing; 4) etc. On top of this advice, he proceeded to award prizes to several "academic" pictures, along with two or three "moderns."

Now, repeating Stussy is an awfully nice guy with a bright brain and an important job. His own paintings are greeted with respect by San Diego's painters. But the whole winsome structure collapsed when Stussy's choices for prize money were unveiled. Bafflement was widespread and amounted to dismay in some cases. At least three good painters (Guy Williams, William Munson, Sheldon Kirby) muttered about resigning from the Guild, and Kirby did on the spot. With him it was a matter of protect against what he considered a downhill trend in Guild shows. Actually, of course, the one-man jury was a sincere attempt to upgrade.

Jan Stussy registered an act of astonished innocence at the furor and vanished into the night via 101, leaving the Art Guild turned exactly upside down. Whether truly innocent or masterfully calculating, Teacher Stussy had succeeded in shaking the thinking patterns of his audience. Education was reaching this group; perhaps a few painters would begin to extend their range.

The point of points in this story is that several of the pictures selected by Stussy for prizes were really pretty bad, hopelessly inferior to others that did not win prizes. In particular, the first prize winner (by Russell Baldwin) was a student work obviously generated in the State College class of Jean Swiggett; it simply did not have the subtleties and virtues that Mr. Stussy claimed for it. How explain such a "mistake" on the part of the undoubtedly honest and capable juror? That would be a very complicated question to pursue. Let it suffice that his "wrong" choice incited more edifying response than would have occurred if he had honored a clearly superior picture.

Of course, for me to de-value Stussy's choices and downgrade the first prize as a student piece is merely an exercise in my personal opinion. Again in my opinion, the finest picture in the show is the largest one there and painted by none other than the resigned Sheldon Kirby. He thinks it's his best work to date, and so do I. In fact, I don't recall ever seeing a single picture, originating in San Diego, having more mature abstract strength, though it does have a subject that is quite well evoked, *Christine and the Merry-go-round*.

It is a canvas into which anyone should be "drawn" because it has the power of an immense whirlpool. Not all whirlpools of paint have drawing power: the sense of space must be under control, the color aiding the space concept, the shapes hypnotically understated. Kirby's picture works that way. It is elemental. It is somewhat on the order of the abstraction from nature that Beethoven was doing in such works as the "Tempest" sonata or first movement of Opus 111, elemental vitality grasped through an art medium. By contrast, the Guild first prize winner has not so much artistic or natural life as the music of Cecile Chaminade.

But—the best medicine is do-it-yourself criticism. Please visit the Guild show, in the Fine Arts Gallery through October.

November 1957, San Diego Magazine, 28, 58, City Council II; 29, 58, (John) Cotton; 36, Fine Arts Gallery; 37, Opera – yes we have no Bernanos; 37, Drama—lifting the weights.

November 1957, San Diego Magazine, art of the city, 39, 67, **DON'T** KISS THE VALLEY GOODBYE

Caption: Handsome as an Arab before his tent, under the muezzin tower at Mecca, Actor Vincent Price talked arrestingly to a State College assembly (left), planting the idea that art of all ages is still modern if it is the expression of feeling by especially sensitive people; he strongly commended today's "difficult" art and dismissed the "Eucalyptus School" of literal landscape painting as being unable to compete with the trees.

"CORRUPTION!" is not a charge that we would lightly make against our city officials; but it seems that no milder term will do to explain the posture of lying down like a carpet for the May Company to enter town on. At this point we won't mention names, for some officials still appear reasonably upright and others are only caught in a bowing and scraping that is normal, reversible political exercise.

"Corruption!" applied to politicians usually means that money has changed hands illegally. As we use the term here it would refer to any cases of politician prostration before big business forces at the expense of the general public well-being.

First step in knocking flat the susceptible politician is for a big spender to drop word that he is not interested in locating to San Diego if officials don't want his firm here, and David May II said just that according to *The Union*. (It's a familiar story, a like threat was used in the same week by Attorney John Butler, bulldozing our Planning Commission into re-zoning a La Jolla site for "clean" manufacturing, against good planning sense.) Mr. May made his bluff threat despite the fact that his experts figure he can do \$50,000,000 worth of business here the first year. Of course the May Company is interested in San Diego.

May Company experts know that San Diego is one of the best retail spending pools they could have for a shopping center, and their calculations pinpoint Mission Valley (near the crossing of Highway 395) as the choicest spot for mopping up on concentrated freeway traffic. It is no concern of the experts if future generations will lose something precious because of their decision.

San Diego's public well-being, as I see it, would not be served by allowing a distinctive geographic asset like Mission Valley to be blotted out for the convenience of merchandisers. Any enormous metropolis (and San Diego will be one) needs plenty of relatively open "breathing space" laced through its real estate fabric and it makes good sense to keep Mission Valley open because it has such a good start that way. It can't be as richly "greenbelt" as a public park, of course, but usages that favor a good deal of greenery can be encouraged—as they have been quite successfully up to now. Welcoming May Company to the Valley is an enormous switch of public policy, though the papers did not play it that way. Readers may have been lulled already into accepting a great shopping center—anywhere—as a new convenience in their lives.

"It's a short in the arm for our economy," said the one councilman welcoming the May Company as though we needed to be shot, with heroin maybe. True, the May Company on its own merits as a superior department store will be greeted gladly, and the company could be expected to do a reasonably handsome installation in the Valley, but even if it gave us the finest architecture and site planning America could produce (which isn't likely), it could not fail to ruin the Valley's unique character and charm, its special public usefulness as a lifter of spirits. My reason for this statement is that victory of the May Company would necessarily open the Valley to any and all merchandisers. The City can't zone commercial for one owner and not for others. Full-flood commercialism would as surely follow as neon night follows billboard day.

If our Planning Commission were worthy of the name, with an adequate conception of how to develop a metropolis of character, it would tell May Company where it could go and not kill the distinction of this city, reducing our geography to a mere shuffleboard for buying and selling.

There happens to be an area of nearly 100 acres which could be quite as accessible to shoppers and as profitable to the May Company as the heart of Mission Valley, That is the Frontier Housing area owned by the City, north of Rosecrans and west of Midway Drive. Improvements to highways with interchanges—which are needed anyway—would make a super shopping center at that point quite as convenient as any spot in Mission Valley. Sound city planning would offer this land, with suitable design regulations, to the highest bidders, who might well include the May Company. Or perhaps a trade with owners of the present May Company site would enable the City to retain a major section of Mission Valley for appropriate public use.

A main reason the May experts pick on Mission Valley is that the property is highly visible to heavy streams of passing traffic. Thus our arteries are used as a free advertising medium, and the corporate monster that muscles into the most visible spot lords it over all competitors.

Just because Mission Valley is so gloriously visible, it should be kept open, green and valley-like in so far as practicable, thus telling the passerby he is not a mere digit in profit calculations but a creature of Nature, entitled to a fair contact with the uncluttered good earth.

The difficulty about saving the future from urban blight is that few people take the trouble to look at it with an eye to balanced human benefits. The busy “experts” make economically-g geared solutions of sorts but often without sufficiently human objectives. As Lewis Mumford says, “Some things are too important to leave to the experts.”

In reporting the May Company’s aggression against San Diego, the papers noted that our city planning is preparing a comprehensive zoning plan for Mission Valley (fully reviewed in *San Diego Magazine*, January, 1957). The papers did not mention that the feature of that plan is a new Commercial Recreation zone (which could keep the wonderful valley open like a vast democratic country club, and that standard Commercial zoning (which May Company would require) is *not* part of the plan because it would ruin the character of the valley, allowing all kinds of commercial clutter.

Mr. Mayor and gentleman of the City Council: Will you back the Planning Department’s fine original intention of human-scaled Commercial-Recreation zoning for Mission Valley or will you let this gradual thing of beauty lose her virtue because a strong man comes flashing money? Will you kiss the Valley goodbye?

LETTERS

Linda’s talents rare

Your recent articles on Miss Linda Lewis’ paintings and the many replies they have stimulated from your readers have been of considerable interest to me.

Without going into a discussion of modern versus representational painting, I would like to give my views of Linda Lewis’ work as art. I do this because I feel that in the furor about whether or not some readers like her pictures, the basic question before the critic—how good are these pictures—is being lost from sight.

Not everything that is created is necessarily suitable for hanging in the home. Some art finds its true place only in a museum. Many of Miss Lewis’ canvases fall into the latter category. On the other hand, many of her paintings, as can be seen in her recent show, would fit beautifully in any home. If more of your readers were to see Miss Lewis’ work in Coronado, I am sure that when they viewed her paintings they would feel as I do that they prove her to be an artist of great creative ability.

The depth of understanding displayed in her handling of her tools—color, space, texture—and the sensitive resolving of these on the canvas surface show a rare talent. Such vision and creative qualities are not found in enough galleries. It was a delight, therefore, for me as an artist to see her paintings which exhibit a freshness of approach usually found only in the galleries of New York and Washington.

San Diego should be proud to have a painter with such real talent.

SELLEN JAMES KEATS
Coronado

James Britton's art criticisms in recent issues have been very interesting, first because of his viewpoint and second because, unlike most art criticism, they are written in understandable English.

Miss observations on the work of Miss Linda Lewis have brought forth some adverse criticisms.

I saw her show at the Coronado Gallery and was very much impressed by it.

L. R. Longworthy
Coronado

Britton, Critic or Artist?

It seems to me that Mr. Stanton is on the right road since he has read at least one of the books of the eminent critic (and artist) Mr. Herbert Read. If he will take the time to study the chapter of another book by the same author, he will not have to continue "missing the point" of James Britton's writing and of modern Art. I refer to the final chapter, titled "The Adamantine Sickle" of Read's book *The Innocent Eye*, which is available in most public libraries.

I feel sure that Mr. Stanton will eventually continue his exploration of Herbert Read's valuable work, but for those who may feel too fatigued or too hurried for even this "taut and to-the-point writing," I will quote from the above-mentioned chapter fifty-five words (55) which Mr. Read has already sifted for us from the writings of Plato.

"For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles."

JESSIE ROHRBOUGH
Coronado

December 1957, San Diego Magazine, 44-45, 70, ART OF THE CITY: THE MALL AGAIN

If San Diegans were free to plan an ideal arrangement of public buildings, where could these be better placed than Mission Valley? As indicated here last month, department store planners eye the lower Valley as perfect for attracting throngs by way of far-flung freeways converging there, and what's good for a department store would be good for public buildings.

Instead of commercial clutter in the Valley, a spacious layout of public buildings in a park setting could have something like the grandeur of that noblest of American patterns, the Mall in Washington, D.C., with which are associated the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Washington Monument, the White House and a clutter of Executive office buildings, the Capitol, the Library of Congress, museums, etc. over a two-mile stretch of parkland. A San Diego counterpart in the Valley could be done at surprisingly low cost, as we will show.

Such a scheme would be consistent with the recreation theme which has guided recent building in the Valley. The necessary Flood Control Channel could be so designed as to take care of all parking needs and still be fit to handle the floods that must be provided for, though they may occur ever more rarely. If it were a matter of pinching on the cost of land, public buildings could straddle the river bed or Flood Control Channel, on stilts—stilts which would not be apparent to the passing eye because the Channel would be below eye level in any case.

These thoughts arise because official efforts to provide public buildings downtown have run into so many problems as to amount to design bankruptcy. Following the sad, compulsive mistake of building a public library on the forlorn fringe of the shopping center without adequate parking, the city fathers, or rather the city stepfathers (the County Supervisors), set about trapping themselves in a terrifically wasteful plan for a new courthouse on the site of the old one (Broadway at Front Street). In good faith, a great majority of citizens voted \$8,400,000 for the structure in 1954 but before ground could be broken the cost had risen to a preposterous \$11,000,000+. And the building is still not started. Architects were needed to jettison the “frills,” that is to say a number of features intended to make the monstrous building attractive and inviting. A million dollars or so could be saved that way, but whittling was hardly the answer to the County Sheriff’s objection that the jail as planned would be too small, that prisoners would be sleeping on the floor from the day of their arrival as public guests. There were other less spectacular indications that other departments soon would be cramped for space too. Such parking as was likely to be provided would take care of employees only, and certainly not all of them; it would have to be shared with a State office building now being planned for a nearby block.

A basic cause of the high cost is the cramped site, forcing more upward building than would be necessary in a more open situation. Future expansion would be just as costly and choke the site still further. Altogether, it is a thoroughly wrong solution, if we are considering the ideal in the public interest—or even merely in practical terms.

A principal reason for choice of the courthouse site was the natural but short-sighted preference of powerfully important barristers to be within walking distance of their downtown offices. Also, as recently as a few years ago, when this project was planned, it was widely assumed that public buildings close to downtown shopping would be the ultimate in convenience for the citizenry as a whole, and there was never any thought of placing further than a few blocks from Fifth Avenue and C Street. But the zany shifting of the city’s habits in this Flying Saucer Decade makes certain things clear at last. 1) Downtown must change radically to continue as a major shopping center; 2) even when Downtown does change for the better, vast numbers of people will prefer to shop elsewhere most of the time; 3) therefore, demand will arise for more and more outlying branches of distinguished downtown stores—and far more and more branch offices of various governmental agencies.

In any case an adequate *grouping* of main public buildings will always be a basic need of any sane city. Consideration of the Valley is warranted because it would be cheaper to build spaciouly there than to build tightly downtown. Furthermore, since past efforts to group such buildings intelligently downtown have run afoul of selfish property interests there is little reason to hope for more enlightened response until several more years have passed and blight has taken a firmer hold. But we need public buildings now.

San Diego is just beginning to be aware of sensational new methods for building large structures beautifully and well *for a great deal less money* per useable area than is about to be tied up in the old-hat design of our courthouse. These are methods arising from fantastic pioneer efforts exerted in our lifetime, notably by Buckminster Fuller, American, and Pier Nervi, Italian.

Fuller was here in October to address the architects’ convention in Coronado, and he was heard expounding his startling laws of new growth over KGB’s *San Diego Horizons* program. In practical terms, what he has achieved is an aluminum sheet-metal roof so engineered that it could cover a football field without any visible means of support except around the outside rim.

Nervi was the subject of an illuminating article in *Time* for November 11, an article bearing the title “Poetry in Concrete” after a phrase used by an Italian critic of Nervi’s architecture. In simplest terms, his contribution is the design of roof structures of reinforced concrete processed thin as skin.

What we have, following either Fuller or Nervi, is that prime element of shelter, the roof, capable of covering great spaces at low cost. It would be a mistake to think of these structures as looking like the lowly Quonset hut or the lowlier igloo. Rather expect them to compare with the majestic loftiness of New

York's railroad stations or your favorite cathedral. It is true that the Fuller roof would always have the same shape, but what a shape! You can't beat pure geometry for lasting visual appeal.

Fuller roofs are designed in jaw-breaking terms as a three-way grid division of the spherical icosahedrons, the ultimate in structural strength. In everyday terms, these roofs have the shape of a sphere, and about one-fourth of a sphere's area. Nervi's roofs soar into the sky too, but in more varied shapes and they are not confined to circular floor plans, as are Fuller's.

If we can roof over a space as big as a football field (or smaller) and the interior is uncluttered by posts, the arrangement of rooms becomes a mere matter of partitioning, provided everything is kept on one floor. There are no limits to the architectural wonders that can be accomplished with partitions, if mere utility is not enough.

Getting back to our ideal Mission Valley layout of public buildings, visualize the Flood Control Channel roofed over for a mile or so with a more or less continuous slab, from which would blossom Fuller or Nervi's roof structures covering such floor space as would be needed, with plenty of landscaping inside and out to cushion the scene. Under these roofs partitioning could proceed as elaborately as public money permitted. There is no public agency function that could not be fitted comfortably into such a scheme—whether it be jail or courtroom, offices or auditorium.

Surely a development along those lines need cost no more than half the square-foot cost of the County Courthouse as now planned. Getting officials to admit their mistakes, their design bankruptcy, would be the biggest hurdle, but if cost figures could be firmly demonstrated it is a sure bet that voters would welcome a chance to vote out the hopeless old plan and vote in a workable new one.

As a start in the direction of cost estimate, we present some facts and figures on the Fuller roof as reduced to a pre-fabrication basis by the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation here in California. The first "Kaiser Aluminum Dome" was erected in Honolulu in twenty hours beginning January 12 of this year. It was 50 feet high and 145 feet in diameter. Total cost was about \$4 per foot (16,500 feet, \$66,000), not counting foundations and other architectural factors.

This 145-footer is now available from Trentwood, and should be popping up everywhere before long. Larger sizes will be along soon. First architect to schedule a Kaiser Dome in Southern California is C. J. Paderewski of San Diego, for Palomar Junior College. He expects his cost to be about \$5.30 per foot. Palomar will use the dome to cover both gymnasium and classrooms. Honolulu's dome covered an auditorium in which symphony concerts have been given for 2000 with satisfying results acoustically.

The dome is made entirely of elaborately crimped diamonds of sheet aluminum (1/16" thick) braced with somewhat heavier aluminum struts. Any crew of erector-set graduates could put it together, renting equipment and reading directions. The completed dome weighs only a couple of tons but can withstand all natural forces, including earthquakes and the fiercest hurricanes, with strength to spare. Like an erector set, it is put together with bolts (Huck lock bolts) and could be taken apart without destruction in the same way it was put up—an important factor in case it were to be used temporarily while money for a more pretentious structure was being accumulated.

The thin-concrete design of Pier Nervi is spreading west too. Very little of it has been seen in California yet, but watch for a rush. At least one group of engineers is planning to set up a design and contracting business in San Diego using Nervi's principles.

Clearly, both Fuller and Nervi have had brain waves of the future. With the picture changing so fast on us, we certainly should take advantage of their sterling economies and save expensive building until we know better where we stand, where we want our monuments to stand.

KEITHLEY PLUS COUNCIL EQUALS COMEDY

ON THE surface it looked as though Mayor Dail and the City Council deserved unqualified praise for the careful way they went about selecting a new city manager for us. But then the man of their choice, Jerome Keithley, 41, accepted only to take a good look at the job and run home refusing to play, it came out that the Councilman had eluded their own precautions and executed a joint piece of bad judgment that could have been quite serious for our future. On the surface again, theirs was a mistake that any similar group might make—choosing a man for his youth in preference to a better qualified man who was a little old for a fresh start and might be heading into retirement soon. It was our two youngest councilmen who held out for a young manager, middle-aged Mayor Dail and the older councilmen took some persuading.

San Diegans who knew Jerome Keithley as a fine chap who seldom made up his own mind were surprised that he appeared among the top five candidates selected by a management consultant firm hired by the City. The answer to that one would appear to be that his record as city manager of Palo Alto since 1950 looks extremely good on paper. In his own presentation brochure, Keithley claimed: “I have had the pleasure of serving 37 Palo Alto councilmen and five mayors, and I would list them all as references.” Presumably our paid investigators checked these 42 references and the claim held up; we can’t say for sure, because Mayor Dail refused to let us see the complete record.

Amateur psychologists might conclude that any man who won the unanimous endorsement of 42 bosses must be an excellent employee but hardly a fighter. But then of course there is the old question whether San Diego politicians will adjust easily and stay within the good graces of all our diverse councilmen.

Keithley’s decision to stay snug in Palo Alto rather than tackle the colossal uncertainties of a big city helps explain why problems seem to be multiplying faster than solutions in America—not enough people are willing to put their talents to the good fight for public sanity.

As a place to live, Palo Alto is the kind of city San Diego should be but is not, because of its terrible growing pains. Perhaps some of our councilmen honestly hoped Keithley would lead us towards Palo Alto standards of civic order. One of the virtues of that beautiful university town is that it hardly needs a strong manager because its councilmen are almost always highly educated, with a positive interest in good living conditions and very little involvement with commercial forces.

By contrast with Palo Alto, Peoria, Illinois is fabled as a sink, a trap and a sewer, and a large part of its manager’s job is mopping up after foul elements. Any Peoria manager who could arrive at age 38 with a high reputation like George Bean must have stamina, wits and wisdom. Mr. Bean is the man who ranked highest in the carefully garnered reports on which our City Council based its deliberations. Now that youth has flinched, an elder shall lead us. Would that Bernard Shaw were here to write the comedy. J.B.

December 1957, San Diego Magazine, 44+, ART OF THE CITY: 47, 82, 88, Opera\;; 74, Keithley plus Council equals Comedy; 88, Shakespeare; 89, Seven Year Itch Viewed

1958—**POLK’S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas. (Eliz.), ed. San Diego Mag., h. 1433 Sutter

Timeline: 1958—Remaining portion of flood control channel, Mission Bay, and all of San Gabriel Cove (now Mariners Basin) completed

Timeline: 1958—Fiesta Island created from disposal of undesirable material

January 1958, San Diego Magazine, 38+, ART OF THE CITY: 38-39, 54, Question: Can a significant art form exist in a democracy?; Family Fun: Ridgley wipes floor with Britton; 55, 59, 64, Why I am not a San Diego theatre reviewer? by Roberta Ridgley; Britton picks himself up and suggests a Reviewer’s function; 40-43, Boys will be Scouts,

February 1958, San Diego Magazine, LETTERS

Family Brawl Widens

As a sometime member of the San Diego Magazine clan, I haven't been able to lure my eyebrows back down to normal elevation since reading "Family Fun: Ridgely wipes the floor with Britton: Why I Am Not A Theatre Reviewer In San Diego."

It is a wild presumption that Ridgely wiped the floor, or even lightly dusted the deck with Britton. Such a naïve notice brings to mind the Mark Twain obituary notice which the old boy, very much alive, shrugged off with, "Grossly exaggerated."

Miss Ridgely's spasm went on for approximately two pages of the most idiotic criticism of Britton's criticisms that ever saw the light of print. Britton, apparently, had the unmitigated gall to grumble about a directing job underdone by the Globe Theatre's boy-wonder. Craig Noel.

According to Miss Ridgely, who sounded like a shrill stage mother whose moppet had been maligned, this only goes to show what happens when a second-rate hayseed type like Britton "runs afoul" of a San Diego Community Theatre production of *The Seven Year Itch*. To avid followers of Britton, it probably indicated what happens when a second-rate hayseed type San Diego Community Theatre production runs afoul of Britton.

Miss Ridgely's argument . . . the last show went into rehearsal one week late owing to casting difficulties. And it is only after all blocking has been completed and actors are up in their lines that a show acquires the polishing that a director lapidary like Craig Noel can give. The deficiency in the early run of *The Seven Year Itch* could have been supplied by seven more days.

With this inanity, Ridgely boosts Britton as a *tres* sharp observer who knows what to do about a deficiency when he's astute enough to spot it. Who gives a damn what the alibi was for a lack of luster or what ideal circumstances sensitive Noel must enjoy before getting on with his sequin-polishing?

Ridgely further confounds the intelligence of the reader by zapping the knuckles of the unhayseed New York critics who on the recent Faye Emerson Broadway bust. "What they didn't know," Miss Ridgely breathed as if finally cutting us in on the real dope on Sputnik, "was that as early as the out-of-town tryout Faye realized she had a real dog on her hands and . . . pled with the producer to be released from her contract . . . (was refused) . . . and . . . pulled every trick in the prompt book in a last-ditch effort to save a script that was sick, sick, sick."

Aw, come off it, Roberta . . . Faye has been rather fruitlessly pulling every trick in the book for years and turkeyed out of all of them until she pulled Elliott out of a hat. Until him, who needed her? So the New York critics were supposed to rave about a sick, sick, sick dog because Faye wasn't allowed to welch on her contract. Faye was an also-ran in Hollywood before graduating with all the B's. In TV she was a has-been the moment she covered up the cleavage. All because of know-nothing tactics?

If you want to complain in public about Britton—make it a legitimate gripe. Like his picayunish proof-reading and driving mad within a mile of the printers every time a comma in his or anybody else's copy is out of place. As a family "stepdaughter" I'll go along with the fact that he's hell to live with—what perfectionist isn't? But Britton has, for years, covered the entire gamut of local aesthetics (of which Noel is merely a nth) with noticeable talent, genuine wit and, more important, impeccable taste. He furthermore has (for me) made San Diego Magazine the delight it is, This man, I believe, deserves a little loyalty from the home folks. Which is why I decided to stand up and be counted.

Britton (that old New York "rube") quoted in his piece on the Boy Scouts a credo which, in my present opinion, succinctly defines his own . . . "We will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city . . . We will transmit this city better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us." New York should have such a rube already.

Mrs. Alex Krupnik
Darien, Conn.

February 1958, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 28-29, Sim Bruce Richards looks a Mission Valley; 32, Bruno Bolts; 32, Globe Valentine; 32, 58, Bardoni vs. Bats; Ever-Living Dolls' Rare Mixture

February 1958, San Diego Magazine, 31-32. ART OF THE CITY: How to save the Zoo and Museums too

An arresting little item in the *Los Angeles Times* announced that Los Angeles is about to build “the finest zoo in the world,” and that one of the advisers to the undertaking will be the San Diego Zoo director Dr. Charles Schroeder. The popular formula, “If you can’t beat them, join them,” would seem to fit this picture for nothing is surer that if a zoo in Los Angeles rates first, San Diego can be no higher than second.

Dr. Schroeder currently is putting a lot of ingenuity and money into improvements for the San Diego Zoo, which surely will remain major tourist bait for another few years, for however long it takes our purposeful big city to ripen its animal act. After that, our Zoo will no longer be, of itself, sufficient reason to journey south of Los Angeles.

The lesson is clear: if we expect tourists to continue as a main ingredient of our economy, we have to create some attraction or combination of attractions—cultural attractions—that Los Angeles can never surpass. It’s no good just to assume that our town in 1970 and forever will remain delightfully different from our neighbor (which by 1970 will be the biggest city in America). Every year sees us grow more like Los Angeles in traffic density, in smog density, in tract density—even while Los Angeles itself takes giant steps to cure some of its own ills. Unless there’s much more effort to safeguard our choice corner of U.S. against dreary mediocrity, this will no longer be the place America’s fluid population seeks out for a healthful change. And those who live here in fixed fascination will have lost their precious natural heritage too.

So, as our patient readers hear over and over, vigorous city planning on all fronts is called for—here even more than elsewhere. And the *cultural* front of city planning is the very most important. It is no news that animals are popular, but it is a new thing in our world that the so-called fine arts are getting to be as popular as animals. Museums (or art centers, to use a more accurate term) will be as well attended as zoos in the near hereafter. Therein lies the clue to San Diego’s super-attraction that Los Angeles can never match: museums and zoo all in one handy tramping ground—Balboa Park.

The condition already exists in a sketchy way. Three museums (Museum of Man, Fine Arts Gallery, Natural History Museum) now co-exist uncomfortably in cramped quarters hard by our Zoo, but are not improving in quality or anything like the improvement rate of the zoo. There is a logical way out of this scandalous situation, and it’s about time we faced up to it. The animals will have to share their money with the museums, for there is strong reason to suppose that the *people* of San Diego will not come through with adequate museum financing. There are simply too many calls on their money and the arts do not have sufficiently high priority yet.

Our Zoo last year had a total income of \$1,538,855. This came from gate receipts, concessions, bus rides, donations—and it included \$132,613 from the City on the basis of a voter-approved percentage of taxes. The Zoo spent \$232,000 on improvements last year (operating expenses were \$1,160,000) and plans \$300,000 worth of improvements this year.

Considering the realities of the changing situation, I propose that half of the City’s annual contribution to the Zoo (a sum that automatically increases yearly) be committed to the improvement of non-zoo cultural facilities in the park. This might be done at the polls, or it might be done by a generous, un-jealous, far-sighted act of the Zoo’s board of directors *on the grounds that only as part of an irresistible cultural wonderland can the Zoo itself be assured of health, prosperity and tourists decades hence.*

With next year’s bequest from the animals a design competition could be held to create a worthy master plan for the development of Balboa Park’s run-down, chaotic structures. Once a first-rate master plan was in existence, subsequent funds from the Zoo or wherever could be applied to carrying out the plan by orderly steps. An engaging master plan—with an air of future fame about it—would itself attract major

bequests, since every rich man wants to win a reasonable approximation of immortality when he deposits the remains of his wealth in an institution. Also, great collections of art would be attracted for the same reason. (The incomparable Arensberg Collection, for example, might have come here if we had positive plans; instead it went to Philadelphia). Conversely, second-rate museum architecture will attract only second-rate bequests.

The important thing is that the end-product of a master-planning operation should be a superlative exhibit wonderland that will not fail to compare notably with other cultural centers likely to arise around the country. Every agency that wants to improve Balboa Park, whether it be Zoo, Fine Arts Society, Museum of Man, Museum of Science and Industry, Museum of Natural History, Fiesta del Pacifico or hot-dog dispenser, should be obliged to do so within the terms of a comprehensive master-plan—which does not now exist.

In this light it is unfortunate that the Fine Arts Society is conducting a unilateral campaign for funds to build itself a pair of badly-needed wings. One might expect an agency with the name Fine Arts Society to see the larger picture and insist on comprehensive planning of the kind we have been ranting about. Instead, it has hired the amiable architects Mosher and Drew to do a job that necessarily will be half-baked despite their superior talents. The smart architects have proposed closing in the plaza in front of the existing Fine Arts Gallery by means of an arcade that runs continuous with arcades already in place along El Prado or Laurel Street. The plaza would then be redeemed from blacktop parking and planted to gardens, with the old buildings on either side replaced by fireproof structures. This would be a marked improvement over the present situation but it is hardly an architectural scheme to catch the world's eye. Behind the glamorous façade of the plaza the real issues of architecture will be joined: an auditorium, classrooms, exhibit rooms, a children's museum. These must be of indifferent quality if the campaign yields only a modest fund. Desperation and practicality, not inspiration, are in the driver's seat.

Desperation and practicality rather than inspiration have already been at work in the park. Witness the giant lath house which looked better *before* its recent restoration. Though an architect, George Lykos, was in charge somehow the stucco came out pink—which goes poorly with the redwood lathwork and doesn't go at all with the stimulating buildings, which are creamy. Exit magic.

This January there came tentative proposals from Fiesta del Pacifico to build various facilities in the park for a world's fair. There should be a firm, not commercial master plan for the park so the fiesta people and others would know what they could build there—and what they could not build.

Because the park and all buildings in it are public property, this urgent question of the quality of park planning has to be thrown at the sorely tried City Council. In the park and in the city at large the Council is not supporting a sufficiently high standard of planning to preserve San Diego's special qualities. It could get a good start in reversing a disastrous trend by insisting upon an architecturally superior master plan for Balboa Park (generated through a competition) before any new building is allowed there. It will be a sad day indeed if San Diego degenerates into a dull suburb of a dynamic Los Angeles.

February 1958, San Diego Magazine, Art of the City: 30, **WORLD'S FAIR OR FOUL?**

MISSION VALLEY SHOWN AS THE NATURAL CENTER FOR FUTURE SAN DIEGO: In the conception discussed in the accompanying story, a great circular complex of convention and sports facilities, and a series of high-rising hotels, occurs at the point where the Valley opens out into Mission Bay Park. South of the circular complex is adequate space for a major shopping center such as the May Company wants to build. Eastward from this point, the Valley would be kept green and park-like so far as possible, continuing its present emphasis on commercial recreation (riding, golf, etc.) but major construction would be limited to public buildings at least as far east as Highway 395.

(drawing not shown)

It might seem that plans for preserving the lower end of Mission Valley in magnificence such as sketched (page 28) by Architect Richards must have little chance of action in our floundering generation.

But mark the flutter of the phoenix in the ashes: Fiesta del Pacifico's directors are now talking about another world's fair (for 1960) such as the 1915 one that gave us the architectural magnificence of Balboa Park.

Balboa Park would figure heavily in any new world's fair, but it couldn't carry the total traffic without squeezing out the natives—who probably would turn to picket fences on the spot rather than give up their established uses of the park just to make room for expo visitors. The utmost logic for world's fairs would be to build something like Mr. Richards' convention hall exactly where he reasons it should go; at the mouth of Mission Bay Park, at the throat of Mission Valley. Exposition buildings could be put up eastward in the Valley, following the ideas of structure we discussed in December. The site is an architect's dream, which is exactly what a world's fair requires. After the fair is over, the buildings could be readily converted for government use—city, state and federal. Thus would we have a fair start toward an orderly and adequate public building situation only rivaled by the mall in the nation's capital.

If our world were sane, San Diegans would rise up and halt the impending construction of a courthouse that has been proved inadequate even before the groundbreaking.* Then they would march to the polls and vote that the courthouse millions be spent instead on construction of world's fair buildings that could later serve courthouse needs. (The present courthouse might just as well serve a few more years, since there is little convenience in substituting one set of inadequacies for another.) Our legalistic excuse for inaction on this by officials is that they bought the land for a courthouse and could be sued if they didn't so use it. They could, of course, sell it back with suitable discount, which the courts would probably support, and the publicly-owned block on Broadway could be sold for a very good sum.

Precedent for realistic reversal like this is the use for an industrial park of land on Kearney Mesa bought by the city for a municipal airport. The Kearney Mesa switch was forced by the federal government's refusal to OK the airport use. In the case of the courthouse mistake, the only dictate we have is our own civic conscience, which is feeble from disuse.

A world's fair, properly conceived, would do something spectacular to improve the city's readiness for the onrush of population. Crowding colossal convention facilities into Balboa Park would be a wrong move, and the City Council should not permit it. Establishing convention and government uses spaciouly in Mission Valley would be a right move, and the City Council should encourage it. Skimpy city planning in our day will be viewed as little short of criminality by future generations that can't help but be more awake.

*According to a Van Deerlin broadcast, County Supervisors are toying with buying the San Diego Hotel to catch the overflow of workers who cannot possibly be housed in the courthouse as planned. Thus, at a cost of \$10,000,000 plus for the badly planned courthouse and \$2,000,000 for the hotel, we would be assembling only a makeshift.

March 1958, San Diego Magazine

ARTICLE: Sins of the City Council, 25-26, 67.

Like most city councils, ours is well-intentioned but, like most, it is under political pressures which make a mockery of the planning commission. The pace of city growth calls for reforms suggested here.

The following piece of propaganda begins where we left off in February saying: "The City Council is not supporting a sufficiently high standard of planning to preserve San Diego's special qualities—and enhance them where possible.

Our complaint of planning failure has to compete against a wave of lather recently whipped up in the daily newspapers. On January 26th the *Union's* deft Peter Kaye had a whole page under the banner: "SAN DIEGO GROWTH: FIVE-YEAR VIEW SHOWS GREAT STRIDES." I recommend a careful

reading of that page and the drawing there from of all possible comfort. However, I intend to ride the wave in my little slick paper canoe and see if I can discover the horizon.

Mr. Kaye asked: "Did the citizens act together to assure classrooms, a water supply, sewage disposal, new industry, transportation facilities?" and the *Union* reporter continued: "San Diego wrote its answer in action . . . the pile drivers that sunk a new foundation for a new health center on the waterfront . . . the dredges that scooped out a bay and made a beach . . . the earth-moving machinery that pushed freeways over and under and around cities."

Granted that there has been action, but our big question is whether the action has been sufficiently guided by forethought (planning) to still make sense 20 or even 10 years hence. In terms of the logic behind recent discussions in SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE, a health center should properly be built in Mission Valley not on the downtown waterfront, which is going to be required for expanding port operations. By the same reasoning, it is lost motion to enlarge the Civic Center buildings—which should be earmarked as future port administration building. Present activities at Civic Center should be transferred eventually to a great government complex of buildings in Mission Valley, unplanned as yet. In general public building policy has been a distinct planning failure. Our new and oppressively designed public library stands rather remote in a forlorn corner of downtown that is rapidly losing popularity. A new and oppressively designed courthouse (called a design failure by at least one of its four architects) is about to be built in a location almost as unattractive as the library's. And so on.

Scoping out Mission Bay to make recreation beaches is a truly splendid civic procedure, but the really big scoop that might create (1) a desperately needed civilian airport out of dredgefill in the South Bay, (2) an entrance into South Bay from the ocean and (3) an earth causeway connecting San Diego to Coronado—this big scoop has been given scant consideration by our "practical" city fathers who live in fear of the American navy (which has reserved the bay for a seadrome that is not likely to get built.) Instead of anything so sensible, the City pushed for enlargement of Lindbergh Field and thereby ran afoul of the CAA, which said "no" because the field is surrounded by dense population. Next city officials began to nourish half-spoken hopes that the Navy would eventually turn over Miramar Field for a civilian airport, even while the Navy itself was scrounging for federal funds to buy more land around Miramar to prevent civilian encroachment. But Miramar is in the very center of a 53-1/2 square mile areas which officials predict will have 250,000 population in 20 years. And no one outside SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE has publicly recited the plain fact that the midst of such a population is no place for a jet-age airport.

Pushing freeways over, under and around cities is indeed great sport these days, Mr. Kaye, but there is no assurance that the expensive ribbons will be good for more than a few years. The elaborate traffic interchange where Highway 80 crosses 395 is only ten years old and still in good condition—except for the little matter of design. It can't handle today's level of cars safely so it is now being revamped or rather re-ramped, at a cost of \$3,000,000. Design sense might call for two one-way freeways in the Valley with a simple set of interchanges (see cut), but our "long-range" planning is in such uncertain condition that we are likely to end up a decade or so hence with two *two*-way freeways with many *complicated* interchanges. (The State, of course, is mainly responsible for freeway design, but if the City Council supported a big design idea, it would carry a lot of weight.)

Design sense is potentially the greatest service government can bestow on society, and the opposite—and opposition—of design sense is *political nonsense*. *Political nonsense* says that the more people you can park in a given area, the better off everyone will be. Design sense says that just as a theatre is kept from overcrowding by fire regulations, so a city should be kept from overcrowding by such planning regulations as are demonstrated in the public interest. Design sense would mean that our highway system should be planned keeping in mind an ultimate absolute limit on the number of cars permitted to circulate, and that there should be an attractive public transit system to take care of the rest of our wheel-happy race. Such design sense is practiced nowhere in America, but anyone who bothers to project the present into the future must see that such measures against auto-intoxication have to come.

Continuing to sample and react to Mr. Kaye's catalog, it is true that the Board of Education is keeping up in a statistical way with the need for classrooms, but the business-like board usually settles for

mediocre design under the illusion of economy. The distinguished “portable classroom” design idea has been used more widely in San Diego than anywhere else, but for reasons that add up to political nonsense the idea has still not gone as far as it might. The portable (usually preferred by teachers) should be produced on an assembly line cheaply, besides being extremely valuable in an incentive-growth pattern, these movable structures could mean a great savings in educational costs. The Board of Education is guilty of nonsense where design sense is called for—on this and several other counts. Again, a healthy planning stance by the City Council could be an influence for the good.

It is true that the University of California has great plans for a peerless campus in La Jolla, but political nonsense could result in pressure to locate it less advantageously elsewhere in the County. The City Council has not taken a stand in favor of the best site, La Jolla.

Architecturally, all out colleges are operating below what should be the college level. The new junior college building is a nightmare for teachers due to bad design that, for example, causes the place to rumble from machinery motion in the basement. State College continues to build without any clear architectural control, and the University of San Diego’s design standard is downright reactionary, though it has a most splendid site. California Western University shows some design resourcefulness but its chief architectural sin is stamping out one of San Diego’s few important historical mementoes, the old Theosophical School. It is hardly fair to blame the failure of colleges on the City Council but certainly a clear policy of seeking maximum architectural value in the City’s own public buildings would set a good example for the colleges and for all private builders. (Of course it should be the colleges that do the example-setting.)

In the field of recreation, Mr. Kaye’s report that “a citizens’ study committee drafted a long-range blueprint for Balboa Park” is not accurate. The committee made only general recommendations, some of them quite vague, and the City Council simply has not yet faced up to the need for comprehensive planning of this key piece of recreational acreage. As reported by Mr. Kaye, a master plan projecting additional parks was prepared and adopted by the City Council. The plan is admirable as far as it goes, but it does not account for enough park land to service our likely growth. This statement of mine is in line with thinking beginning to shape up in professional recreation leadership circles.

Mr. Kaye found that sewage disposal remained San Diego’s most difficult problem to solve. Difficult it is indeed, but no more so than the other matters touched on here. Right now the City Council seems disposed to leave political nonsense aside and let design sense take over the planning of our sewage disposal system, granting it the kind of respect one gives a skunk. Whether the Council stands by design sense until the pipes are in the ground should furnish an interesting page in our history.

Perhaps I have made my point that design sense is the basic need of an expanding city. The administrative machinery for producing needed designs is, then, of first importance. The design function of government has been scattered in a number of directions by our City Council, leaving the Planning Commission dangling as a mockery of itself. The Planning Commission is the proper agency to supervise, along with the City Manager, the preparation of all plans or designs for the city’s coherent existence, yet our commission has been saddled with irrelevant work and when it has managed to dredge up a piece of disinterested planning, likely or not the City Council has vetoed it in the interest of political nonsense.

Not that the Planning Commission members themselves can be the designers. They have to know enough to get the designs done by the best qualified people. When the Planning Commission has secured adequate designs and recommended them to the City Council, it is the Council’s ethical duty to accept the designs—*unless it can prove that the public interest is not thereby best served.*

The currently functioning charter revision committee has been asked by the Council to consider adding more members to the Planning Commission. I submit that the charter revision committee should go much deeper into the question of our planning future. I think it should recommend that the Planning Commission be reconstituted to do the job of planning implied by the name. Provision should be made that all committees or commissions concerned in any way with planning be sub-committees or sub-commissions of the Planning Commission. And the membership of the Planning Commission should not be

enlarged merely; its make-up should be spelled out to insure a disinterested and constructive character. I think it should contain at least two architects, three or four educators and a dozen or so members of the League of Women Voters, our most serious students of public affairs. That last group, incidentally, may be our best hope of breaking the gap of political nonsense that could bequeath our grandchildren an unholy mess of civic housekeeping.

March 1958, San Diego Magazine, ARTICLE: 27, 51, **SORRENTO—a great industrial park opportunity**

Industrial park is often a misleading term suggesting pictures of handsome work buildings set attractively amid lawns and trees, with ivy climbing the walls, ponds or streams sparkling in the view and no more noise nor smell than necessary anywhere. Such attractive work situations have sometimes existed in America as much as a century ago, a prime example being the Cheney silk mills in South Manchester, Connecticut where mills, workers, housing, owners' mansions and community buildings all co-existed in a single great park as large as, and even more handsome than, our Balboa Park.

The tradition is maintained mostly by the best of today's plants, such as the General Motors Research Center in Michigan or General Atomic's John J. Hopkins Laboratory north of La Jolla. But we are not at all sure that all acreage bearing the stamp "industrial park" around San Diego is going to bloom with landscape amenities of much consequence. We'll have full reports later on the state of planning for the City's industrial park on Kearney Mesa and on industrial parks associated with outlying cities such as El Cajon.

Right now we'd like to call attention to an industrial park that would get our voice as being most likely to succeed both in the industrial and in the park implications of the term. That is the one being advertised by Maryloyd for the owners, principally Dr. O. Clemens Helming, Jr., and his wife Barbara. It is located in Sorrento Valley, that fairytale landscape that competes for your attention with the pounding surf as you descend Torrey Pines Grade going north on Highway 101. So descending, you have just passed the wooded site of the General Atomic Laboratory and you are headed directly into the wooded town of Del Mar, which has more leafage overhead than any "suburb" of San Diego.

In terms of metropolitan San Diego's growing need for recreation space, it would be ideal to see all Sorrento Valley develop as a *public* park, but the owners can hardly be expected to merely give it away. Next best would be an industrial development of truly park-like character so that people coming to San Diego for the first time via 101 or railway will get the very best impression of San Diego as an economic reality.

Clearly, it would be a social crime to spoil the natural beauty of Sorrento Valley, and the Maryloyd talk as though they realize this. It is their announced intention to control the development of some 600 acres so that the surrounding hills will still be among the choicest spots to build a home. Since much of these hills is in the same ownership as the valley, there is much economic incentive to keep up the quality. Keeping up quality means strict control so that, seen from the hills, from the roads, from the railroad, the vista of factories will have the composure of a picture. To achieve that composure will require keeping the trees that are already there and planting new ones, make no mistake about that, Mr. Progressive Builder.

The landscaping of Sorrento Valley's industrial park should follow naturally because the industrial zone borders on the southerly half of the valley's mouth. (It is a scenic park, not intended for intensive recreation uses.) With this state park to the west, sylvan Del Mar to the north, and General Atomic to the south, it is hard to see how Sorrento Valley could fail to be one of the nicest places in the world to work. Even though a sewage disposal plant is required at some point in the valley, it may be expected that non-objectionable techniques of sewage disposal will be insisted upon. Another necessary feature that need not be objectionable, will be an enormous traffic interchange where an expanded and re-routed 101 meets Miramar Road at the southeast corner of Sorrento Industrial Park.

As a step in insuring harmonious development, San Diego's City Planning Commission has offered to exercise architectural control (it is not compulsory) over the whole area until more than fifty percent of its is built up, after which it is expected that the established character will maintain itself. Very much to the point, then is the quality of our City Planning Commission, a subject covered on another page of this month's *San Diego Magazine*. With or without the help of a hip commission, Sorrento Valley has every reason to become a really distinguished industrial park, worthy of the name in all its promise for the best.

March 1958, San Diego Magazine, 30+, ART OF THE CITY, 30-33, 64, Ruocco's Roost; 34-35, The Meaning of Munson; Middle Management; University Extension; 64, Van Beinum's Final Hours; 4 and 4 Makes Music.

RUOCCO'S ROOST—Is it the cure for tractitis?

CAPTION: Converted surplus signal flags make the patio awnings at Architect Lloyd Ruocco's own house on Tyson Road near State College. Exterior walls are nearly all glass controlled by drapes or outside blinds.

CAPTION: The living room is a rectangle, but you never notice it as such because of interesting vistas on all sides.

CAPTION: The entrance is free of pretense, just a sliding door by the carport presided over by a John Dirks carving.

CAPTION: The Ruoccos take special delight in their dining table, not so much for the food as for the decorative possibilities, reflecting the wares sold at Design Center owned by them.

CAPTION: Through the imaginative bathroom window a long view can be taken of unimaginative tract houses on the faraway hills. Ruocco's proposals to transform tract houses are discussed in this article.

CAPTION: Inside the front door, one is struck by the lengthening vista, with a fantastic garden pulling the eye to the far end.

LLOYD PIETRANTONIO RUOCCO (rue-ah-ko) has a lean and hungry look which befits a man who has made it his business to pare off the excesses of civilization and grasp at the pure spirit of things. Of his architecture it surely can be said that there is never any excess. To average materialist eyes a Ruocco-designed house may seem as unattractive as an empty pantry shelf, and offhand he would seem the last man likely to emerge as a popular hero.

But let's not be offhand about Ruocco. Let's look closely at what he has achieved. I think we will discover that he is one of the best friends the common man has had west of Gandhi. The final paragraphs of our account will reveal a truly extraordinary scheme of Architect Ruocco's for taking the curse off the lowly tract house—which means practically any house these days.

First we should like to take the architect's measure in his own roost. An indifferent way of describing his house would be to say that it is "different." So different is it from its neighbors that the passing motorist looks at its location in the hills near State College and sees absolutely nothing other than greenery. The neighbors did the standard "sane" thing and built at street level, often on fill, putting up expensively dressed fronts to the public eye. Ruocco—quite contrary and seemingly perverse—dropped his house into the natural contours of the site—and that meant even the roof was below street level in this case. Thus the house simply does not exist in the world that believes in putting up a front: it cannot be seen from the street! And there is no other convenient point from which it can be seen as a whole either, for back of the house the land falls away in long rugged slopes.

On the evidence, Ruocco's roost has something in common with the concealed caves of time immemorial. But *quelle difference!* The sensitive modern's "cave" does not shut out the world. Rather the

world is admitted on all sides—on Ruocco’s terms. The result is a unique masterpiece, outstanding even among the man successes of American domestic architecture.

Since you never can size up Ruocco’s house at a glance, you approach it with no sure idea of its dimensions, its costs or its resale value. By the time you are fumbling for the none too obvious front door you have been subtly rid of the real estate outlook, and conditioned instead for a transcendental experience, believe me. When the door slides open you are confronted by infinity—a vista straight ahead, so managed with glass, lights and mysterious glimpses that you can have no idea where it all leads except inward, inward. You are now under the spell. Proceed.

Your visit should be at night if you are to capture the experiences that are here described. A fire will be boiling in a great middle-of-the-floor pit. Naturally drawn to it, you will collapse in somewhat solid comfort upon a circular settee also sunk below floor level surrounding the fire. When your gaze falls upon the northeast corner of the room you will sit up with a start because you are suddenly unsure whether you are looking into a mirror or through a clear window; the view through the glass *almost* matches the scene on this side but you don’t see yourself there. Are you at last free, a disembodied spirit?

Many things about the house work thus to take you out of yourself. Your sense of balance is put on trial and your other faculties heightened. You know that you must be visually wary of boobytraps, as it were, and so you are visually awake. A visitor who had not responded to the sprit of things in this house could easily smack into one of the slinky floor-to-ceiling glass panels that mockingly “separate” indoors from out.

If you are not otherwise spellbound, the hypnotic process will be completed by the gleaming stainless steel cylinder, three feet in diameter, poised above the fire, serving as flue, yes, but also summing up the reality-defying quality of the house, the shiny surface picks up lights in such a way as seemingly to turn the cylinder inside out as you watch it. You’d swear it was concave, not convex in shape. Are you really outside the flue? Are you watching the fire or is the fire watching you? Are you through the looking glass? Are you a follower of Alice in Wonderland?

Observe some of the other features that have an air of suspension between reality and imagination. In the middle of the big room, imbedded in the concrete floor, is a fine specimen of the century plant that singular growth than perhaps looks better dead than alive. It is here an elegant year-round Christmas tree, delightful with baubles at any season. A characteristic Ruocco touch is partitions that seem to go only part way to the ceiling but which actually have a foot or so of unframed glass hardly noticeable at the top. Your biggest crisis of adjustment will be in the bathroom which offers uncurtained floor-to-ceiling windows to the rabbit-inhabited hills, modified only by occasional panels of obscure glass. The “tub” is free form, sunken, Roman style, of terrazzo. The toilet hangs from the wall and the flush button is as deliberately hidden as the spheroids of an Easter Egg hunt. Adventure unlimited.

I don’t know whether I have hammered enough to nail down the point that Lloyd Ruocco’s house is an experience that makes you a square of your former self, raises you to a higher power. It imparts some psychic equivalent of the overdrive in your car. Your engine is not working so hard and your passage through time is for a while no effort.

Of course, the place sound thorough impractical to the tract-house broken mind. The most obvious objection is that it would never do for children, if only on the grounds of the plentiful plate glass. Leaving aside any tendency to theorize that children should be drilled to live in glass houses, let’s simply acknowledge that Ruocco’s own house was not designed for children but for adults who value above all the life of the senses.

NOW WE CAN GO on to consider how this wonderful ingenious architect might be exploited in connection with the housing problem of average families. Assume in the first place that he will always try to introduce esthetic excitement into any house he designs. Commercial eagerness would rarely cause him to make silly compromises of design as concessions to imagined popular preferences. This relative purity of Ruocco’s sets him apart from most home builders and indeed from most architects.

Assume too that Architect Ruocco is an implacable foe of the tract look in housing. In this quirk he is not too different from many people who have lived in tract houses. One important fact that has emerged from post-war tract living is that sooner or later the inmates make more or less pathetic efforts to break up the standardized living pattern imposed by the limited design sense of average sub-dividers.

But there is only so much that amateurs can do to take the curse off houses that will ill-conceived to begin with. They can landscape. They can build fences and patios, add a room maybe (if they are lucky on lot size). There is a tendency, however, for a tract-dweller's improvements to have the effect of hemming him in, self-centering his life. The neighbors become less interesting as time goes on and community spirit—half-hearted to begin with—is likely to wither as a tract ages. Withered spirit means slums.

Ruocco, like a Jonas Salk of architecture, thinks he is on the trail for a cure for tractitis. He thinks that whole neighborhoods should be the product of architectural design of the most careful kind. Not for a minute does this mean that the design would be rigid, frozen, take-it-or-leave-it. He believes that the essential thing about a neighborhood is its ability to change and grow. The place where the most flexibility has to be possible is in the homes themselves. Each house site in a neighborhood should be ready on short notice to accommodate itself to the needs of any family—whether it be childless newlyweds or childfled elder, solitary hermit or Lionel van Deerlin (six children). The population make-up of a healthy neighborhood shall not be imposed by some mass builder's calculations, but shall result from the natural forces of human attraction and repulsion, aided by architectural forethought.

The logical follow-through of Architect Ruocco's concern about the neighborhood unit is—paradoxically enough—prefabrication and mass-production of houses, not whole houses but parts of houses, standardized parts from which houses of great variety in size and shape and character can be assembled rapidly. Pre-fabrication of houses was a dream of architects even before Ford made the mass-production revolution, but no house-parts system has yet caught on in a big way, largely because the old wasteful methods of house-building are so profitable.

As Ruocco sees it, our technology is now so advanced that if some individual or institution of sufficient prestige were to push the project a vast new industry would be born to supply pre-fabricated house parts. These parts would include wall sections, made mainly of materials that can be best handled industrially (glass, metals, plastics) but not neglecting the traditional graces of wood, leather, etc. Roof systems would be worked out so that ceiling and weatherproofing would form a sandwich with strength in the middle to easily span adequate spaces. Kitchen and bath would come in adaptable pre-fabricated sections, and all utilities would be engineered in.

As we noted, pre-fabrication is hardly new, and there are a number of fairly advanced schemes in the air all the time. The distinctive Ruocco approach (worked out in conversations with Everett Herter of Coronado and other idea men) calls for a comprehensive laboratory of design to which manufacturers of materials and parts would supply their latest offerings, but in which the principal activity would be *architecturally controlled research*. Over the years design refinements would develop—not according to the cynical forces that control auto design, but according to the high creative standards of the uncompromising architect interpreting the needs of society, remembering always that one of the psychic needs of society is flexibility and variety in housing.

Ruocco's hope is that some entrepreneur on the scale of Henry Kaiser will see the wisdom of his approach and invest accordingly. It is my impression, though, that Ruocco's concept of a design revolution in housing will not catch on with the spenders until its worth has been proved in an actual neighborhood in which the superior designs of the architect have given several years of satisfaction. Accordingly, I think it is the responsibility of San Diego institutions of higher learning to consult Architect Ruocco carefully as to the possibility of setting up a pioneer superior neighborhood in conjunction with one of the college campuses that are blossoming all over the region. I should think it would be an ideal investment for the University of California in conjunction with the proposed La Jolla campus, lest those environs develop no

more handsomely than the tract-girded State College. Faculty and students should be the first to appreciate superior neighborhood and house design.

University of California sponsorship of the Ruocco concept might *attract* the real estate interests which are the main pressure bloc against creating a La Jolla campus. The real estate powers themselves could *profitably* join in a system to build truly exceptional houses in their precious acres. And our aircraft manufacturers would do wisely to look into the fabrication of house-parts as a suitable *steady* employment for their work forces.

It is not possible to give you the specific profile of another man's brainchild until it is out of the womb, but certainly Ruocco's own house is a stunning example of his sure esthetic touch and a hint as to some of the new values he would introduce to a designed neighborhood. It is hardly a complete catalog of the delights he would supply to meet the various needs, including the needs of children.

Though he would probably disown the connection, there is already flourishing a great industry based on the hidden psychic hunger for flexible housing. Trailer parks are a crude example of the kind of neighborhood toward which Ruocco is pushing his thoughts. The best of trailer parks develop a pretty good community spirit and offer community facilities to make for common joy in living. The trailers themselves have advantages from a housekeeping point of view, but as design subjects they closely reflect the sterile Detroit cynicism and take little advantage of the resources of the true architectural mind. But they are a foretaste of possibilities. Their main disadvantage is uniformity and tightness of the living arrangements.

Lloyd Ruocco has not carried his contemplation so far as to eliminate the need for fixed housing foundations, but, take the cue of the trailer, I would suggest that it is important in carrying out his idea of fluid neighborhoods to eliminate the cumbersome concrete slab of concrete footings that underlay the usual house. The foundation must be easily movable too. Further than that, portable landscaping should be introduced where possible. These innovations in turn might encourage flexible lot lines, and thereby hangs the chance for truly park-like residential neighborhoods, that will not be very different from the enchanting early villages of New England—but will be easily superior to the sub-divided tract “paradises” that comprise most of the housing now getting built.

In a February telecast master architect Walter Gropius made the point that architecture only exists when the observer is elated by seeing and experiencing a building. Lloyd Ruocco is one of the few in our region who can deliver that quality. Let's make wider use of his talent.

THE MEANING OF MUNSON

No one regretted the death in a freeway accident of William Munson more than the staff of this magazine, for which he did our handsomest art work. We liked Bill for his talent and his gentle manner, his air of accommodation and advance apology in case everything should not go just right; his public manner was hardly calculated to the interest of self-advancement but, for a true artist, he was amazingly popular and successful anyway. Much as with Franz Schubert, Bill had the instinct for ready-flowing lyrical expression and bonhomie.

But there were deeper shadows. Bill had an astounding suddenness to sink into the pits of despair that are popularly supposed to beset the artist's temperament. When I asked him to do self-portrait to be included in an exhibition at the Capri Theatre, the resulting head was shocking: he had seem himself in a torment equal to the blackest days of Van Gogh. Later he and I sat together at Barton Jones' private run-through of the Kirk Douglas movie, *Lust for Life*. As the film tragedy unfolded, I was aware that the grim mood was settling grievously as a steel trap around Bill. He left the theatre in heaviest silence.

Just because of his hypersensitive nature, Bill was the kind of expressionist best able to paint the big issue of our time, to sense the chaos of rampant energy and impose on it some idea of order. All his work showed his brilliant natural talent. When he reached deep and set himself different problems, his solutions tended to have a limited, unrealized quality, as though the ideas of order were not coming fast

enough to dispute the energy of chaos. Was this failure or was it prophecy? Whatever the answer, the sum of his work is a unique enrichment of San Diego by a San Diegan, who stayed at home and worked with what conscience the fates allowed. It is fitting that the Art Guild has instituted a perpetual Bill Munson award for transparent watercolor, and that the Coronado School of Fine Arts, where he had his start and of which he was very fond, will have a Munson Scholarship—to which contributors are invited. An extensive memorial exhibit will be held at the Fine Arts Galley from May 14 to April 13.

April 1958, San Diego Magazine, 51+, ART OF THE CITY: 51, Robert Cremean; 52, From Camp to Campus; 54, A Matter of Life and Death; 54, Making the Most of the Bay; 75, The unstable symphony; Theatre: 77, Longstreath's trial

ROBERT CREMEAN

is an intense lad of 25 who lives bare-chested in La Jolla, but has spent little time at the beach, though these sculptures of his could be regarded as a set of beachboys, if you like. He's so wrapped up in his work that a promise of his to appear on an Art Guild discussion panel had to be broken at the last minute via a telegram saying only: "The sculptor's place is in the studio." Cremean figures, like these, are all the rage in Southern California this year, getting good reviews and selling like cakes through the Paul Kanto Gallery of Beverly Hills. He will be exhibited during April at the Art Center in La Jolla, where he teaches excellently, according to his students.

FROM CAMP TO CAMPUS: PROGRESS!

CAPTION; (Looking south) Buildings of Camp Matthews (foreground) could get the University of California in La Jolla off to start while permanent construction was being planned carefully. View shows the expanse to north and east that is beginning to come in for development.

CAPTION: (Looking west) Miramar Road threads upward from bottom center past Camp Matthews to meet Highway 101, beyond which is the priceless mesa of La Jolla Farms and Camp Elliott (right), overlooking the Pacific. The perfect setting for a great university.

SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE is happy to be singing the same song as the *San Diego Union*, namely: "Put the Campus on Camp Callan." The *Union* had an editorial March 10 recommending that the proposed branch of the University of California be located on a gorgeous chunk of seaside mesa north of La Jolla, seen in the accompanying photos.

Several months previously, *Union* publisher James Copley sent an impressive letter to the University Regents urging the site for a hundred reasons. Since then, strong pressures have been generated in behalf of other sites, and Copley himself wavered for a while. La Jollans in general wavered on the issue until UC administrator Roger Revelle rose Cicero-like before the La Jolla Town Council and eloquently ticked off the multiple reasons why North La Jolla is the *only* site that makes sense.

Revelle's overriding assumption is that the only university worthy of the name is a "great" university. Listening to him, one feels that the campus which he wants to bring into being here will be not merely a branch of UC but a complete *cite universitaire*, visually self-governing, having its own character which in turn will be governed by the quality faculty it is able to attract.

Attracting "great" faculty *at the outset* is the secret of creating a "great" university, according to Revelle, a man of experience and contact. He likes to quote his witty friend Professor Harrison Brown to the effect that there is a sort of collegiate Gresham's Law: "Bad faculty drives out good."

Competition for available "great" faculty men is fantastic. There are far few teachers of even average quality to serve present needs, let alone the mushrooming needs of the next decades. As in the past—whether it be adequate state of affairs or not—only a few universities will be center of original thought, of significant research, of truly advanced education (which simply means the bringing out of the

potentialities of humans). Roger Revelle burns like Joan with the determination that his La Jolla university shall join the select circle, and he seems to have convinced key citizens to support his quest.

It is not hard to understand La Jolla supporting a select idea—in part because of the opportunities for realty and snobbery, but also because of much genuine devotion to selective living. Support by the larger San Diego community may be harder to win. A surprise in March was the institution's endorsement of the La Jolla site by the San Diego Board of Education, which was under no obligation to take any stand whatsoever. It was another victory for the Revelle logic.

The really big test is the attitude of the City Council. If the Council were to endorse the site, it would be committing itself in effect to put before the voters the question of giving (or selling) Camp Callan land (owned by the City) to the University. Will San Diegans again vote acreage off the tax rolls forever and into the University of California expansion, as 75 percent of the voters did two years ago.

This is really the question which will determine whether the campus goes in La Jolla. If Camp Callan is turned over by the City, then there would remain little doubt that neighboring Camp Matthews could be obtained from the Navy, which has indicated its intention of moving the Matthews operation to Camp Pendleton. The two outworn camps—Callan and Matthews—taken together with parcels already owned by UC, form a L-shape of about a thousand acres, the amount considered necessary by the Regents on the basis of their sad experience with smaller acreage that has cramped growth at Berkeley and at UCLA. A large portion of William Black's La Jolla Farms, premium estate acreage, will be available to the university, the Texas oilman running somewhat ahead of his species in support of culture.

From the photo it is clear that Camp Matthews contains structures that would be useable as temporary quarters for the university. That is more of an advantage than even it seems, as it would allow careful rather than hasty development of master plans and architecture for the campus. Anyone who realizes that we are passing through a period of extraordinarily bad public building practice will especially appreciate the blessing of riding out the bad period in "temporaries."

It seems to me that one of the first obligations of the university must be to discover and nurture the seed of renewal in the building arts. Architecture and site planning should not go automatically to the Regents pets, Pereira and Luckman. The campus project should be thrown open to attract the world's best design brains, by way of competition of ideas.

First major structure of a La Jolla university would be a hospital and medical school, this because Scripps Hospital needs to build anew right now; with or without university attached. Scripps is actually planning on building on a site near the junction of present Highway 101 and Miramar Road. This would be approximately at the inner angle of the La Jolla campus. Obviously, the hospital is the key to campus architecture and should be designed accordingly—through competition.

Also in prospect of materializing soon is the theatre proposed by the Theatre and Arts Foundation (*San Diego Magazine*, October 1957) for a spot on the south boundary of the probable campus, the theatre to be shared with the university. The theatre campaign fund has been rough going, but an offer of construction help from big builder, Carlos Tavares, has decided the Foundation to go ahead with the foundations, at least. Paradoxically, Tavares, a man of big moves in many directions, is the chief pusher of an alternate university near Lake Murray!

Gone begging is how the question of how the theatre design, already done, will relate to university design, not yet begun. But a dim outline of probably university layout can be deducted: heart of the campus (administration, library, etc.) will be just north of the L-angle; humanities and arts south, near the theatre; scientific and practical functions nearer the extremities of the L-shaped campus.

A very serious matter will be the character of housing available within walking distance of the school. Dr. Revelle says this must be kept down in cost so that the UCLA pattern will not be repeated whereby entirely too many students have to commute from areas in which they can afford to live. Solution of this problem means a good deal of apartment construction in the neighborhood. To help assure a

desirable direction for faculty and student housing, Revelle has personally bought some 35 acres nearby. The combination of living advantages in the La Jolla area plus controlled costs is Revelle's ultimate weapon in the competition for faculty.

When all other factors have been weighed, the scales of decision among "great" faculty may often be tipped in favor of the campus that offers maximum family living conditions, as we exactly the case with Dr. Harold Urey, Nobel prize winner already signed up here and glad to get away from the slum-surrounded University of Chicago. It should also be noted that the University of Chicago is falling apart intellectually for other reasons.

The La Jolla site is a formidable advantage for UC as against its stiffest higher education competitor, San Diego State College. Among faculty and alumni of State, underground political pressure against the La Jolla site for US already exists, despite surface indications of dignified cooperation. Quite simply, State College will not grow as fast or as richly when a La Jolla campus is prospering. There is even unreasonable fear of shrinkage. These sentiments could add up to a negative vote of UC unless carefully combated.

A necessary critical note is that the south border of the L.J. campus area, where the theater site is, has grown up in the last two years with expensive housing designed in a mood of ostentatious rusticity that hardly sets the right tone for an important university. All the more reason for settling the university on the site quickly, and proceeding with the architectural obligations. The campus itself must be the finest 20th century architecture not for itself alone but to influence the character of the surrounding region and keep down the barbarians who know no better than to make sow's ears out of silk purses,

If the university is planned right, architecturally and educationally, it will fulfill the promise of civilized distinction implicit in the physical beauty of the rare village called La Jolla, and ours will be truly one of the "great" centers of progress.

The prospect of turning a couple of military camps into a university campus has a special rightness, for the symbols of camp and campus embrace the whole history of the fabric-covered biped. The one is to outgrow. The other is to grow up by.

MUSIC

UNSTABLE SYMPONY

THERE ARE two kinds of orchestral music—easy and hard. A poor orchestra can made a quite good effect with Samuel Barbers's *Adagio for Strings* or Gabriel Faure's suite from *Pelleas at Melisande*, pieces heavily cushioned by fat violin wallows. A poor orchestra can sound like recital day in the third grade while playing the music of Mozart or Beethoven, wherein structural strength, careful joining of parts and the rhythmic articulation are all important, the total effects being secondary to the design.

The San Diego Symphony tackled *Pelleas* and Beethoven's *Fourth* Symphony at the Russ March 15th. In between Andres Segovia was heard in a pleasant concerto for guitar and orchestra by Castelnuovo-Tedesco. He added solos, of which Fernando Sor's *Allegro* was the evening's great moment, being really suited to the instrument. A packed house was touched, as though by the breath of sweet mother over the cradle.

The run though of Beethoven's *Fourth* was one of the lowest points to which the group has sunk in its spotty history. More miserable, out-of-tuneness, out-of-stepness and general confusion of intentions I have never heard from a group of union musicians. Particularly conspicuous, of course, were the violins, but the deeper strings were musty and even the tympanist was shy of strength. Brass actually blanked out at one crucial moment and was generally unnoticeable—which is not way for brass to be. Woodwinds as usual were the best section but they were not always right by any means.

If guest conductor Erno Daniel had stopped the agony and stalked off the stage at any point after the Beethoven began, art-conscious observers would have understood that he valued his professional standards more than he valued the friendly embrace of the musicians and of the socially talented persons who control the symphony association. The fact is, Dr. Daniel was on trial for the San Diego conducting post being vacated by Robert Shaw. Sad to report, there are many conductors so unfulfilled that they would want this job even under the deplorable conditions surrounding it. The jostling is quite brisk,

I have it from high authority that the San Diego Symphony spot will go only to a man who is socially acceptable and he *must* have a wife who can entertain and be entertained relentlessly. Furthermore, the musicians must like him. This is a prescription that automatically eliminates many excellent conductors who may be a bit harsh, impatient and imperial in their pursuit of good music.

Amiable cooperation between players and conductor might make for a growing orchestra if the supply of superior union musicians were on the increase. The reverse is true, and the only way to correct the downward trend is to get a strong conductor and give him absolute command, with freedom to “import” musicians as needed. Small chance.

Eileen Jackson, who writes about *Straw's in the Wind* for the *Union*, pronounced this sell-out concert a success, with emphasis on the society turnout. True, there was a good turn-out of the party-line veterans, but the bulk of the audience was younger people of lesser pretension, many of them surely record-players drawn by the Segovia reputation for excellence. It is hard to imagine the new people returning to hear this unstable orchestra without a soloist.

THEATRE

Longstreth's *Trial*: Review of *The Trail of St. Paul* by San Diego's Edward Longstreth at the Russ . . . Mr. Longstreth's play is the effort of an American aware of our culture's long heritage to re-circulate some important messages coming down to us from both Christians and Romans. Though it is no go in present form, it does seem it might respond to expert doctoring, at least so far as religiously sympathetic audiences are concerned.

A Matter of Life and Death

LIONEL VAN DEERLIN, triggered by the latest of many ghastly railroad-crossing deaths in downtown San Diego, aired over his KFSD mike his opinion that the Santa Fe magistrates should move their passenger station up the tracks to Mission Valley. His reasoning was that the new location would eliminate most of the trains crossing busy downtown streets, and that it would be nearer the center of population—easy to reach for all comers and goers.

This fits in with San Diego Magazine's campaign to promote Mission Valley as the natural civic center for the region of San Diego (December and February issues). All principal public buildings should be grouped there according to a master plan intended to make the Valley one of the architectural showpieces of the nation as well as a mighty convenient place to conduct public business. As yet, no officials have shown active interest in the idea, but then most officials have sunk into bad planning posture, paralyzed with their fingers crossed, hoping not too many people will notice how bad their planning is.

We have blasted away from several angles at the Board of Supervisors for their bad planning of a courthouse downtown. Now the same B.O.S. is out to build a county school administration center on Kearney Mesa—unrelated to other public buildings. Postmaster Krenning has talked recently of building a new post-office at Market and Kettner Streets, again unrelated to main public business patterns. All three of these buildings should be in Mission Valley, and the post-office should adjoin Mr. Van Deerlin's railway station there.

The politics and economics of getting such structures so placed are for others than your editors to interest themselves in. Our business is to give circulation to ideas regardless of strategic timing. A courthouse, which is the biggest public building project in county history, and the biggest mistake, may be

in process of construction today, in a decade the comedy may be regretted and a better idea may have grown enough to be trotted out.

One thing that occurs to me is that our representatives and senators in Congress should take a hand to see that the federal government's contribution to the local building scene can be in accordance with the highest possible standard of planning. Mr. Krenning, who is a federal employee, has not been well advised.

The proper way in which the Congress could interest itself in unsnarling urban tangles is to go ahead with the legislative creation of a cabinet department of urban affairs about which there has been Washington talk of late. It is an issue on which congressional candidates Bob Wilson and Van Deerlin should be heard.

State, county and city governments should be tied to high-grade planning, and the way to tie them in is through some single planning agency with prestige enough to make plans and to make them stick. On matters with city boundaries, the authority might be with a revitalized city planning commission, as outlined last month.

For more complicated planning matters involving the vast region around San Diego (an area which includes nearly a dozen other cities with their own more or less functional planning commission) a regional planning commission is needed. One way to get this would be a division of the *County* Planning Commission. Just such a regional Planning Commission is being discussed by county officials. The promotion of a civic center in Mission Valley—involving government agencies of city, county, state and nation—could be its first order of business (unless studies showed there is a better way).

The overriding question, of course, is whether there is firm intention and stout heart in the planning process. Grade-crossing deaths are only the most heartbreaking of penalties inflicted on citizens because officials lie down on the job.

Making the Most of the Bay

BESIDES the development of port facilities there are three major features for the San Diego Bay that have had more or less consideration in recent years. (1) a vehicular crossing to Coronado, (2) an entrance from the sea into the south end of the bay and (3) a prime jet-age airport for the San Diego region.

Crossing to Coronado more rapidly than by ferry has been a thoroughly considered, or rather tortured question. Should it be a tunnel or a bridge, either of them very expensive? Until lately, no one has talked seriously of an earth causeway that would cut the bay in half. This dredge and fill operation would be the cheapest, but it couldn't even be considered except as part of a total plan that would include a south bay opening to the Pacific. A south-bay entrance, using federal funds for dredging, had the support of Congressman Wilson and the Navy—until the economy wave hit Washington. With the new Washington swing to public works projects, bay plans should enjoy revival at least to the talking stage.

Also cut back under the economy wave was a seadrome for the Navy in the middle of the bay. This may come in for revival too, but we hope not. It would be our good luck if it could be established that this peculiar naval maneuver is absolutely unnecessary in connection with the national defense.

Instead of a seadrome in the middle of the bay, it would be entirely feasible and logical to build there (again, it's all dredge-and-fill) the major civilian jet-age airport that is still begging for a site after exhaustive efforts by the City to find one. Almost everywhere, the Navy's established air activities prevent building a major airport. The Navy is not so constituted as to move over easily, but it has offered to give up Brown Field (on the Mexican border.)

Brown Field is attractive except for its distance from population centers. It nonetheless has great potential as an international airport. But, because of fog patterns, the ideal solution calls for two fields, one at sea level and one at higher elevation to assure continuous service.

The City's Fisher Report of 1956 invited the Navy to cooperate in enlarging North Island to be used jointly for civilian and naval planes. It is just as well the Navy said no to that one, because flight patterns off North Island already visit traffic noise upon densely residential areas.

The middle of the bay is just far enough from population centers to minimize the traffic noise nuisance that a busy jet airport is expected to entail. Furthermore, sea breezes will dissipate fumes which also are produced as a major nuisance of intensely used jet fields.

A main civilian airport in the south bay would require some re-arrangement of naval air patterns around the bay. This would be stiffly opposed by the Navy—which appears to be decidedly the stronger force in any war with unnamed civilians. The fault here is that the United States Government does not always recognize the need for so distributing its military installations as not to hobble the arts of peace. It is another issue on which our congressional candidates should be heard in tones other than jingo.

CAPTION: A thousand tiny numbers showing the depth of water in feet make it quite clear that there is plenty of material to dredge from San Diego Bay in order to create the land areas indicated for (1) a causeway crossing the middle of the bay and (2) a civilian airport equal to the demands of the jet age. We have indicated with large arrows only two of the many possible flight paths, the two which would cause minimum noise nuisance. The channel (3) would open to the Pacific somewhere south of where we have shown it, paralleling the natural concourse of the Tijuana River. Ideas shown here are based on studies made by a group of architects who take seriously their professional obligation to help cities grow right. The initiative to publish this plan was San Diego Magazine's, the architects having dropped the plan in deference to opposition.

Timeline: May 29, 1958—City Council adopted 1956 revised Master Plan for Mission Bay

May 31 1958, San Diego Union, B-2:8. Letter, James Britton, regarding location of auditorium.

The City Planning Commission hearing on the problem of a civic auditorium brought out a great display of interest, contrary to the impression of your report. The council chamber was almost full, and the fact that only seven persons spoke was due to the short time available.

The location recommended for the concert theater as "in or adjacent to the southwest corner of Balboa Park, between Sixth and Ninth Streets," thus suggesting a choice of using park ground (an auditorium is legally admissible in the Park) or buying the land adjoining the Park which has been highly indorsed by visiting experts as a site for an auditorium.

May 1958, San Diego Magazine, LETTERS

Cowtown Crucifixion

Your April issue of San Diego and Point brings to mind the lamentable rural habit our city is noted for in the cultural fields. I refer to James Britton's articles on Robert Cremean.

What a pity to crucify a serious artist and his work with flippancy. Should we tolerantly assume that Mr. Britton has never met Mr. Cremean or seen his work, or is it rather that the bigness of the artist constellated the smallness of the critic?

Is this type of review one seed that produces such an evaluation of our area as was expressed to me in Switzerland last year by a traveler who said, "San Diego? It's a cow town."

Katherine Sanford
Del Mar, Calif.

My brief remarks on a picture page of Cremean's sculpture last month were not an art review at all but rather an attempt to caricature the sculptor and thereby call attention to a forthcoming show of his work.

Caricature is an ancient journalistic device intended to be vivid and amusing, but not generally practiced in cow towns. It was not my intention to slur Mr. Cremean's personal character which appeals to me as extremely fine.

Mr. Cremean's serious work deserves serious comment. Now that I have seen his show, comment on the work becomes possible and is offered on page 67.

J.B.

On South Bay

Re James Britton's advocacy of a South entrance to San Diego Bay. The South entrance should be in Mexico to get two big advantages. (1.) A truly international port with a duty-free warehouse section (for transit goods). (2.) By having the South entrance close to the chain of rocks protruding into the sea the building of one jetty would, I believe, keep the channel clear, and nature would in a few years extend the land area of the Strand and Coronado quite a distance. (3.) Sewage could be scavenged out of the bay and quick. (Consult the tide tables between Point Loma and Tijuana River. Ten minutes difference would make cleanout for time a day.)

Roy Arthur Silva
Descanso, Calif.

May 1958, San Diego Magazine, 44+, ART OF THE CITY: 44, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man; 48, Does Mayor Dail Have a Planning Sense?; 49, The Planning Departments' Big Idea for Mission Valley; 30, How to Upgrade Education—Down with Comfort Sex and Football—Kramer Rohfleisch; 51, Bring on the Federal Money—Robert Rohrbough; 67, Cremean's Way; 71, The Lovers

June 1958, San Diego Magazine

ARTICLE: The Earthly Art of Ray Trail, 41

Low life and low livers, that is, in the scale of social posturing, have often appealed to artists from Rembrandt to Reginald Marsh. In the submerged sections of any town, the artist will find willing models, whether it be the burlesque princess ready to pose her worldly goods, her bones and her flesh, or the bottlebum ready to pose his "characterful" assemblage of vestments and visage. As long as the human animal remains discernable under the layers of civilization, these subjects will not entirely go out of the artist's eye.

In San Diego, Ray Trail, fortified by a Chicago-bred outlook, has plumbed south of Broadway and come up with the drawings reproduced here. By contrast he earns his living doing scene painting and stage setting for Channel 8. Like most of today's painters, Trail also erupts into abstractions. In his case, abstractions burst with vitality suggestive of honky-tonks or midway. In fact he often draws themes from such areas of our culture. There is a down-to-earthiness about Trail's work. It is laced with humor and laced with the kind of riotous exuberance for which the races has celebrated Bacchus these many centuries.

The drawings here shown show only a portion of Trail's talent. We encourage readers to explore further: call Trail at Channel 8, talk to a delightful descendant of Rembrandt and arrange to look at his work. Not only in the case of Trail, but whenever you are attracted by an artist's work, seek him out and show your interest, even if you are not disposed to buy. J.B.

ART OF THE CITY, 30, Music: the San Diego String Quartet; 31, Architecture: Mission Valley Playhouse; 31, Theatre: the Cat and the Foxes; 32, TV: Revolution Before Our Eyes and Ears; 33, Art of Education via TV—John L. Burns; U.S. vs. USC for Education—Kramer Rohfleisch

The San Diego String Quartet

GARRY WHITE is an engaging figure in San Diego music. He's in love with the heady stuff and has exceptional ability to communicate his enthusiasm. Knowing him only slightly, I find it easy to conclude—without much evidence other than the grip of his personality and his luminous way of talking—that he must be an effective teacher. One attitude of his that strengthens my hunch is his warmly spoken respect for the man who did so much for music through San Diego High School, Nino Marcelli, a major teaching force in White's own growing up. Having acquired a doctorate, Garry White was welcomed onto the staff of California Western college and he is irradiating the community with almost Marcellian charm. He is a compulsive leader and is forever popping up with bow or baton, like a wooden sword aloft at the lead of one musical battalion or another.

The new San Diego Quartet is a product of White's initiative. In it he handles the key first violin (though most of his public playing is on the viola). Anchor of the four is Cellist Gloria Strassner, fairly new in town and fairly wonderful on the instrument. Second violin and viola are two San Diego bred dependables, Stanley Womack and Keith Collins.

The quarter has a tendency, found in even some highly polished fiddle teams, for viola and second violin to be a few shades more reticent than is called for by the part writing. Unquestionably, the rewarding moments of their recitals are when the Strassner cello is cued into the foreground of the musical landscape. Miss Strassner never takes more than her due of decibels, however. Biggest handicap to the unity needed for a musical quartet is the dazzling White. Geared as he is to accomplishment on many levels, he seems overstrung when he plays and his leadership runs with too loose a rein. His violin vibrates with feeling and understanding, but it does not have stability within itself or in relation to the ensemble; it gets overload easily, lurches from pitch and slurs difficulties. The very qualities that mark him for success in handling people seem to queer the abstract discipline which makes secure musical enjoyment.

There's nothing I'd like better than for this quartet, with its high standards of programming and its generous spread of musical intelligence, to lick its faults and cancel out the choosy listener's reservations. There's a tough project for the resourceful Dr. White.

The San Diego Quartet has played twice at the Public Library in a series of free concerts planned by Vere Wolf, music librarian. Mr. Wolf is working wisely and well within the American library tradition to put forward the case of live music regardless of its commercial standing.

Mission Valley Playhouse

EDYTHE PIRAZZINI is more kindly, quiet and easy-going than you might expect of a theatrical director. But she has chronic stage fever and is always pushing through some little theatre project. Mission Valley Playhouse materialized last year when Dr. George Hartley gave her the use of his Barnstable while his property waited development as a motel. Edythe and her cohorts did labors worthy of Hercules in preparing the horsequarters for human use. They achieved a distinctive barn-theatre with minimum comforts for performers and audience. The minimum-ness has certain advantages. It puts the actors on their own and makes the audience work at its half of the bargain. No lapsing against a cushion for artful semi-sleep. Mrs. Perazzini [sic] can build a sturdy following if she is careful to keep her costs small and emphasize variety of talent.

With the coming of the motel, Mission Valley Playhouse may have to move a few hundred feet north of its present spot. Under debate is whether to move the old barn or to build anew along the same lines. Dr. Hartley and others connected with the motel promotion seem to appreciate the added pulling power of a theatre attached to their bedbusiness, though they may not advertise the hard benches as loudly as the ubiquitous Beautyrest mattresses so dear to the motel heart.

From the city planning point of view, the combination of motel and theatre is entirely in keeping with the development of Mission Valley as a unique tourist center. It would not be too much to expect every motel project down there to introduce some positive entertainment or recreational innovation comparable to the Mission Valley Playhouse.

The Cat and The Foxes

MAY BROUGHT to San Diego vivid stage plays by two outspoken preachers, Tennessee Williams and Lillian Hellman. Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* preaches that people ain't honest and that they love money more than anything. Hellman's *The Little Foxes* preaches that people love money more than anything and they ain't honest. In each case a couple of characters stand for the small percentage of the human race which, like the preacher, has higher allegiances. Both plays get their local color from that rich dramatic loam, the Decadent South.

Nowadays when newspapers are tame things, this kind of theatre takes the place of the outrageous caricature drawings that filled nineteenth century newspapers with scathing criticism of society—just as the caricaturists had taken over when the pulpit began to cool down, after centuries of hot hellfire-and-brimstone oratory. Like the Cotton Mathers and the Thomas Nasts, preacher playwrights Williams and Hellman hold their audiences by offensive exaggeration.

Technically, the most interesting feature of *Cat* is a near-monologue for one character throughout act one, a near-monologue for another character throughout act two. Playing the second of these roles, the role of a dying man, Victor Jory "lived it up" and wowed the audience for the traveling production at the Russ. On the other hand, the monologing *woman* of act one showed the strain of so much talking. In the third act the play itself showed the strain of talk.

The State College production of *Foxes* was distinguished above all by visual beauty. Don Powell's stage set was a triumph of spaciousness on a small stage, due to scale and proportions and details that related the grandeur of plantation architecture. The action patterns set in motion by Director William Adams were nicely balanced between languor and urgency suitable to the mood scale of the play. Outstanding eye entertainment was given by Priscilla Lawson, Darlene Geer, John Selzer, Dick Lennon and Jim Sloan; no one in the cast was out of place. As for the construction of characters, there was the built-in, or should we say un-built-in blessed shortcomings of 20-year olds which limits their ability to weigh like 40. Still there is plenty of compensation when a college crowd (joined by skilled professors) grasps and projects the content of a play with the high degree of orderly art observed in this case.

July 1958, San Diego Magazine, LETTERS

Rise and Fall in Chicago

One of your readers sent us the April issue of your magazine in which James Britton makes that statement that "the University of Chicago is falling apart intellectually."

I read his article with interest, and as an ex-reporter myself, I would be curious to know the amount of research which went into so sweeping a statement.

The University has changed in many ways in the last few years, because it is more responsive than most to new developments in education, new responsibilities and greater opportunities for service to society.

To speak personally, I transferred to the University of Chicago from an Ivy League school because I believed the kind of education offered at the Eastern school left much to be desired. In those years Mr. Hutchins was (and still is) making life uncomfortable for American educators. In the opinion of many, Chicago paid a price for his leadership, but I believe that Chicago pioneering set standards and made for important creative changes in American education.

Mr. Lawrence Kimpton, the present chancellor of the University of Chicago, took over from Mr. Hutchins in 1951. He has emphasized a sound administrative base for the educational program that Mr. Hutchins helped to develop. The college program that I found excellent and exciting has been supplemented to provide for a greater diversity of student interest. The equivalent of the liberal arts

program available to my class (1943) is still available, only it is better, in my opinion, than it was in my day.

Among other things, Mr. Kimpton has devoted himself to improving the University neighborhood. These changes are just now clearly visible. In the last five years approximately \$10 million has gone into neighborhood improvements and it is anticipated that an additional \$40 million be spent in the next five years. This investment comes from private, Federal and local sources.

During a special campaign year, 1956, more than \$50 million was given to the University of Chicago. This is nearly double the University's annual budget. Money in this quantity does not come to a university that "is falling apart intellectually."; an appeal for funds based on desperation would not have produced 10% of this amount.

Educators and others who have ranked universities in the United States have always rated Chicago's excellence in the first five. The *Chicago Tribune* rated it fourth among "The Top Ten Universities" in their survey report of April 21, 1957 (I enclose a reprint courtesy of Harvard University). Chicago's is the youngest and smallest university in the "Top Ten."

There are a great many accomplishments that have taken place in Chicago recently. Just to name one, the Business School has added 30 new faculty members and has received grants of approximately \$5 million in the past year and a half.

Perhaps Dr. Urey's departure from Chicago or the remarks attributed to him, quoted out of context, may have been the basis for Mr. Britton's statement. Dr. Urey had reached retirement age at Chicago and may have felt that he would not have an opportunity to carry on his work at the same pace as previously. Also, California is his alma mater and there surely were strong sentimental reasons for his return. Based on Chicago's record, I am certain that there are at least two young scientists at Chicago who will attain the eminence of Dr. Urey and make contributions to science of equivalent importance.

Chicago continues to grow and change, as any good university should. Change for some people is often interpreted as decline. If an objective observer will take the trouble to get all the facts, I am sure he will find that change at Chicago continues to mean educational leadership.

William Swanberg, Director
Western Regional Office
The University of Chicago
Alumni Association

Mr. Britton replies:

We appreciate having criticism come to us in a letter form rather than in vague distant grumbles or pressure on our advertisers to print novelist-populist Swanberg's letter uncut. Of course an alumni association would not last long that did not put forth the best case for the old alma. I have talked to several Chicago graduates who feel the university slipped intellectually when the Hutchins' regime gave way to the current business-like Kampton administration. For one thing, as a Chicago graduate puts it, the Hutchins' plan allowing a student to whiz through four years in two attracted the ablest young brains in the country—and the faculty to match. At that time one suspects the same *Chicago Tribune* poll that now rates Chicago fourth (just behind the University of California at Berkeley) might have rated Chicago intellectually second only to Harvard. Chicago is still a great school though with lessened momentum, and the city is still a hellhole with towers.

July 1958, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY, 46, Mission Valley Gold Rush; A U.C. 47. Campus in Balboa Park; 48, The Treacherous World of Concert; 51, Grossmont 91, High; Puzzle for the Public

ALL OVER THE MAP: THE MISSION VALLEY GOLD RUSH, 46, 96-97

THE INCOMPETENCY of many people to deal with the public future was revealed at the Planning Commission hearing on rezoning a part of Mission Valley for a regional shopping center dominated by The May Company. To begin the hearing, the Planning Department itself opposed the rezoning in a curiously weak statement that nonetheless had a couple of flashes of critical fire: "The lessons we can learn from our large Eastern cities should be obvious, they now wish they had not been so short-sighted when they traded the almighty dollar for their available open space . . . Once Mission Valley is paved with commercial enterprises it will be lost to the community forever as an open area within the city."

Next, a very smart lawyer, Walter Ames, and a very smart architect, Albert Martin, Jr., made an artful case for The May Company. From their words the planned shopping center emerged as an entirely beautiful and reasonable asset to the community. But these smart men were incompetent guardians of the public future because they ignored the basic predictable sequel that will ruin Mission Valley, once a commercial enterprise is granted a zoning change there, the City will be unable to refuse the same change to other applicants, and the gorgeous, open valley will become clogged with miscellaneous profit-seeking operations, the whoopingest roadside clutter in America. Among the eyesores sure to follow—and unpreventable in a commercial zone—are billboards.

Philip Anewalt, longtime "leading citizen," very substantial in real estate, rounded up signatures on a petition favoring The May Company. He told of the eagerness with which surrounding property holders, including the Roman Catholic Bishop Buddy, rushed to sign up. Mr. Anewalt did not say that several of these people (not including the bishop) already had applications for zoning changes of their own before the Planning Commission, ready to ride in on the May Company's coattails, but of course the Commission knew it anyway. Specifically, it was known that 41 owners of some 500 acres west of Highway 101 in Mission Valley had asked a zone change (to Residential-Professional) and the R. E. Hazard Investment Company had asked for a C zone in the same general area.

The incompetency of our present Planning Commission to safeguard the public future is a study in itself, which we must do soon. At the end of the May Company hearing, the commission gave one of the feeblest exhibitions of public deliberation imaginable. In fact, their manner left the definite impression of minds made up in advance. It was as though the hearing was a staged farce to fulfill the letter of the law while the delinquent spirit of government lurked in unpublic conversations.

If the Planning Commission were really concerned that the Mission Valley Gold Rush is about to begin in a big way, there was plenty of evidence for them to observe in the jammed hearing itself. Certainly a majority of the audience was the same eagerlings who had signed the petition (not including the bishop). They laughed at the Planning Department's halting efforts to oppose the May plan, and applauded the May Company's smooth delivery.

Most disappointing of all the intelligent people serving The May Company was the State College psychology professor Dr. Oscar Kaplan. In his off-campus hours, he runs a survey business which was hired by The May Company to sample *housewife* opinion about the project. The Kaplan poll was incompetently reported in the newspapers in such a way as to leave the impression that it represented general public opinion. Actually, it represented opinion only among housewives, nearly all of which class might be expected to welcome a super shopping center at a handy location. Therefore, the fact that 21% of the polled housewives did not signify approval of the plan (4% opposed and 17% had no opinion) betokens to me a very real undercurrent of general opposition. In fact, I believe a poll taken among men as well as women might reveal a toss-up of sentiment. My conjecture is supported by a recent Chamber of Commerce poll of "leaders" (mostly men), 65% of whom favored the favored the Planning Department's recreational plan for Mission Valley, a plan which would not allow shopping centers like May Company's. The C. of C. poll was also done by Dr. Kaplan.

(Dr. Kaplan insisted to this writer that his survey for the May Company was objective and disinterested. My opinion is that it was highly misleading because of the way it was worded and the way it was used by the company and the newspapers.*)

Opposition to the conversion of Mission Valley into a commercial alley was voiced by Attorney W. J. Schall, followed by Hamilton Marston, Guilford Whitney and Arthur Jessop, merchants, and Ewart Goodwin, real estate investor. Their big argument was that commercial activity in the Valley should be limited mainly to tourist accommodations, logically serving the great Mission Bay aquatic park nearby and thus insuring the caliber of our tourist industry (our third largest industry). They endorsed the Planning Departments' plan which would keep the Valley open and park-like, a recreational continuity of Mission Bay.

Exhibiting debating wizardry, Walter Ames won the forensic if not the ethical victory when he rebutted that the opposition spokesmen, were slow-wakening merchants trying to save their downtown stores, and that Ewart Goodwin's investment company had offered to help develop the May Company project. He did not win the ethical victory because he was aiding the destructive principle that money should determine the plans of cities. Mr. Ames knows that the colossal discomfort of American cities is due to the selfish and short-sighted flashing of the dollar.

ETHICAL VICTORY for San Diego's citizenry, present and future, would only be possible if the City Council turned The May Company away from the Valley. In so doing, the Council should offer The May Company another site as nearly equal as possible to the one the Company is after. It so happens that the City itself owns the ideal alternate site, over 100 acres bounded by Highways 101 and 80 and by Midway and Rosecrans Streets. Clearly, a gorgeous regional shopping center, heavily planted with trees and breathing the "spirit of the missions"—as the architects straight-facedly propose for The May Company—would lift up the character of that area, thus adding to the assets of the community without taking any away.

The city-owned Midway area now contains sub-standard rental housing. There would be a problem of relocating tenants.

It happens that near the site just-described, a complex of high-class shops, Rancho del Mercado, is planned. If the area is good for such a unique congeries of shops it is also good for The May Company—almost as good as the heart of Mission Valley. An important thing to bear in mind is The May Company's magic name would draw crowds to almost any site in San Diego. Another thing to bear in mind is that The May Company plans a *complete* shopping center.

Great strength of character would be necessary for the City Council to turn down a private-profit land scheme because it conflicted with the long-range public welfare and then offer to sell City-owned land instead. But that is just what I propose. An America that is going to cut a handsomer figure in the world than Russia needs city councils with great strength of character.

The sad fact is that all the political force at Civic Center is aligned in favor of giving The May Company exactly what it wants. Not only the Council but City Manager Bearn relished the prospect of early tax returns from an immense shopping center, and the lid of the public coffer shrank when David May threatened that his operation would not come to San Diego at all, unless it could have his chosen site. The men who make the City budgets are under constant pressure to bring in spectacular chunks of tax money from big business to relieve the load on the small taxpayers. Therefore, even to slow up the coming of a May Company would take more strength than office holders are likely to have, even though a series of capitulations will turn San Diego into another dreary asphalt-jungle sooner than we realize.

The more credit, then, to the professional city planners who looked at the facts without blinking, and pronounced the sentences quoted in our first paragraph. *They* are trying to protect *your* city against *your* official weakness.

*DR. KAPLAN'S poll-takers were instructed to find a housewife at home and address here as follows: "As you may have read in the newspapers a major shopping center is planned for the Mission Valley area of the city of San Diego. This shopping center will include a large May Company department store and more than fifty other stores and shops. The shopping center will have parking spaces for more than 5,000 cars. Here is

a map showing the location of the Mission Valley Shopping Center and its position in San Diego's freeway system. Here are some sketches of the shopping center."

After displaying the map and sketches, the poll-taker asked as his first question: "Do you favor or opposed the construction of the Mission Valley Shopping Center?"

On June 6. *The San Diego Union*, which can look forward to The May Company as its biggest advertiser, repeated the Kaplan survey under a two-column head; SURVEY INDICATES RESIDENTS FAVOR SHOPPING CENTER. Throughout the news item, respondents were identified as *residents* never as *housewives*. Dr. Kaplan did not burst into print with a correction of the misrepresentation.

July 1958, San Diego & Point Magazine, **A UC CAMPUS IN BALBOA PARK**, 47, 99.

A. City-owned land (about 100 acres) in the Midway area, a proper location for The May Company's regional shopping center. Planned realignment of Camino del Rio would meet traffic requirements

B. May Company site in the heart of Mission Valley, an area that should remain dedicated to the public's mental health and welfare, preferably as a park like The Mall in Washington or the Public Garden in Boston.

C. The northeast corner of Balboa Park, where a University of California campus might be accommodated—*provided* the University gave the City equivalent acreage for park purposes.

IN OUR April issue we had a new campus for the University of California firmly set in La Jolla. It seemed the logical place—to us and to many others, including the mayor, the city manager, the planning director, the newspapers. Among other site possibilities, Balboa Park got mentioned, only to be laughed at all around.

Suddenly last month the laughter stopped and the flush of anger and surprise took its place. The university's site study architects Pereira and Luckman, looked up from their calculations without a smile and advanced a serious argument in favor of making Balboa Park a campus. Anger gave way to speculation in some quarters as the architects dangled mighty attractive reasons why the city would benefit from giving up, or rather sharing, its only begotten park, not counting the aquatic Mission Bay.

Chief promise held out by the architects was that the cultural institutions now in the park—the Fine Arts Gallery, the Natural History Museum, the Museum of Man, even the Zoo—would be co-ordinated with the university. Buildings of the institutions would be improved and enlarged. Collections would be augmented. Working funds would multiply. Curators would cut pie after pie. We'd suddenly be in the big time culturally.

Predictably, a vast university library would flourish in the park, thus realizing an ideal proposed in this magazine in the days before there was a remote chance. More to the taste of large numbers, sports facilities would be increased. Balboa Stadium would blossom, rebuilt with comfortable seats. A \$10,000,000 multi-purpose hall would materialize, usable jointly by the university and by the community for opera or conventions.

For strictly campus purposes, the university would take less than 200 acres in the Morley Field area, northeast corner of the park. In due sequence, the elderly houses nearby would convert into rooming houses and cheap apartments for students. As time went on and more campus acreage was needed, the university would buy from private owners north and east of the park, under condemnation if necessary.

All this would depend on a drastic change in the university regents outlook. They would have to reverse prevailing policy and accept the idea of two campuses instead of one. The campus in Balboa Park would be undergraduate only. A second campus in La Jolla, adjacent to Scripps Institution, would be postgraduate, a highly advanced scientific center. Thus, the regents' original requirement of 1000 acres in one place would be eliminated. The two-campus approach has not been adopted formally by the regents,

but it is said to have the approval of Ed Pauley, the regent most likely to succeed, the man who is said hyperbolically to make Paucity for the university.

The University of California has had certain awakening experiences that the architects could not overlook in advising about campus locations. Both the new Santa Barbara campus of UC and the new Riverside campus were laid out on splendid sites far from the clutter of built-up sections, no adequate low-cost rooming was available for students, so enrollment at these campuses has been below expectations. Convinced that the normal working of economic laws would result in an even worst failure of student housing in La Jolla, the architects accordingly rate La Jolla a poor choice for an undergraduate public university. To a degree, the same reasoning applies to an area around Lake Murray, the third of three sites upon which the architects are reporting in detail to the regents.

Early exploratory attempts to sell the Balboa Park campus concept included the argument that it would help save downtown from its present wasting disease. Presumably, downtown would have a more predictable future as a shopping center, benefiting from the kind of activity found in Westwood Village near UCLA—though the North Park shopping district might just as well inherit the mantle.

THE BIG HITCH is the idea that Balboa Park is San Diego's only major general-purpose park, and dearly beloved. It is impossible to imagine the fond citizenry voting out Balboa Park acreage for a university—unless the university offers a good deal more than the improvements indicated above. I should say that the perfect compensation would be for the University of California to buy 1000 acres of Mission Valley and give it to the city for park purposes in return for university accommodations in Balboa Park. Our unique Mission Valley would then be preserved as a handsome public garden with commercial recreational enterprises on all sides, and Balboa Park could be carefully re-designed as a combination park-campus, shared by citizens and students.

Following the logic implicit in the thinking generated by the Pereira and Luckman site study, we can have both a "great" advanced graduate school on the La Jolla site that we described in April, and an intensely alive, exquisitely-planned park campus near the population center of San Diego. Thus would Balboa Park come into a maturity worthy of the magnificent dreaming that gave shape to the park a half-century ago.

I like the three-package approach—Balboa Park campus, La Jolla campus and Mission Valley Public Garden—because it would mean a rapid growing-up for the metropolis, a counter-pressure to the chaos that threatens too many people who are too busy planning their private futures to give sufficient care to the public future of America's choicest city.

August 1958, San Diego Magazine, LETTERS

Around the May poll

Since Mr. James Britton has chosen to favor me with his attention in his article on "The Mission Valley Gold Rush," I trust that you will have the courtesy to publish my clarification of it. The article appeared in the July, 1958 issue of your magazine.

Britton dwells at length on the fact that the survey was based entirely on women respondents, apparently attempting to infer that the survey results did not make this clear. The results and procedures of the survey were summarized in a 36-page printed Report. The Report spelled out in very great detail the sampling technique employed in the survey and included the full text of the questionnaire. On page 2, the Report clearly stated that "all interviews were made with women, aged 18 and over." Copies of the Report were in the hands of the City Planning Commission, the City Council and Mr. W. J. Schall, attorney for the group fighting the Mission Valley Shopping Center.

Although Mr. Britton lightly dismisses the views of women, it should be noted that women cast more than half the votes in local elections and account for the overwhelming majority of all shopping

center purchases. I know of no shopping center survey made in the San Diego area in the last ten years which has not been based on women respondents.

The validity of the survey results is admitted grudgingly in Mr. Britton's statement that they "represented opinion only among housewives, nearly all of which class might be expected to welcome a super shopping center at a handy location."

Interviewers were given strict written and oral instructions to make no attempt to influence the position of respondents. They were told: "Strive for complete objectivity. Faithfully and accurately record the respondent's position whatever it happens to be. They were instructed to present no arguments, pro or con, and to accept the views of the respondents without comment.

In short, the Mission Valley Shopping Center survey was honestly and competently done, despite the statements made in this latest of your magazine's series of articles in opposition to the May Co.'s project.

Oscar J. Kaplan

Wild blows?

James Britton's venomous and irresponsible tirade on the May Co. hits a new low in viciousness. It reminds one of the McCarthy type demagogue who smears his opponents when he cannot overcome them honorably by logical argument. There no doubt is a case against the Mission Valley development but Mr. Britton's wild blows have done his cause and your magazine much harm.

Britton sneers at our Catholic Bishop because he favored the May Company and he has attempted to stir up bigotry by his reference to "immigrant merchandisers."

Britton bubbles over with praise for the City Planning Department yet readers of this magazine know that Mr. Britton has disagreed with most of the City Planning Department's principal plans, even that for Mission Valley. Britton wants to put our Civic Center in Mission Valley and has other ideas completely out of joint with what Haelsig and his crew want.

Before Britton accuses others of being one-sided, he should look himself over pretty carefully. He might find himself holding his nose.

You pride yourself on your fearlessness. It will be interesting to see if you have the guts to publish this letter.

Francis P. Monahan

We publish this letter not because Mr. Monahan challenges us to do so but because we believe in free speech and free press. My reference (in the May issue) to an "immigrant merchandiser" was in the sense that the May Company would be migrating from outside San Diego to inside San Diego and should consider carefully the effect of its actions on our civic future. My criticism of the bishop's support of the May Company (July issue) was in the sense that any leading figure the effect of his actions on our civic future.

The City Planning Department gets my praise for trying conscientiously to plan for the civic future in the face of strong opposition from short-sighted interests. Neither the planner nor anyone else is required to agree with ideas or opinions advanced in print under my name. I hope the discussion stimulates constructive thought more often than it causes cholera.

J.B.

August 1958, San Diego Magazine

ART OF THE CITY, 34+, Down and Out with the Council; 34, Why You Should Have Signed the Petition; 36, What they Said to the City Council; 37, Henry Kramer Takes After the Council; 36, La Jolla Playhouse and the Great Eartha; 47, Starlight: the Hot Element; 48, San Diego Symphony's Promising New Shape; 91, Musical Life: the Sokoloff Scene

DOWN AND OUT WITH THE COUNCIL

(Opposite) City Planning Director (back to audience, head bowed) faces the City Council, L to R, Ross Tharp (in partial eclipse), Dudley Williams, Chester Schneider, George Kerrigan, Frank Curran, Justin Evenson. Mayor Dail is at extreme right.)

THE PUBLISHERS of San Diego Magazine have authorized me to say that we are looking for an entire new slate of candidates to support for election to the City Council. As quickly as the current office holders come up for reelection they should be defeated on the basis of their unanimously demonstrated incompetence in the pivotal manner of city planning what to do about Mission Valley (See below).

Surely everyone will agree that we don't want San Diego to become another Los Angeles. But just that will be our fair city's fate if planning here continues at its present dismal-swamp level. The collapse of planning for Mission Valley was bad in itself, it was worse as an indication of trends.

Trends did I say? *Drift* is a more accurate word. A city without a master plan is as badly off as a ship without the basic charts of navigation. If councilmen were to explain why they haven't pushed for a master plan, they might be expected to say that, under a free enterprise system, government shouldn't step in anymore than necessary. To which I would agree, and add that extensive city planning is absolutely necessary as a matter of public health—and incidentally as a matter of the health of the free enterprise system.

I cite the fact that free enterprise gone wild in Los Angeles is literally poisoning city dwellers by the millions. Smog is a deadly poison created by yeasty enterprise uncontrolled by government. And smog is the most conspicuous civic feature of Los Angeles.

If only one objective in public health were to keep smog to a minimum in San Diego, there are certain basic high-scale planning measures that would be required to that end. These basic measures, as it happens, would add to the public well-being in other ways too. Parks might be constructed as by-products of smog control, a great deal of open space throughout the fabric of the city should be planted heavily with trees (which literally convert carbon dioxide from auto exhausts into fresh air). That paramount public necessity, a clean and comfortable rapid transit system, would reduce auto traffic and thus reduce smog.

One way to get sufficient open park-like space throughout a city is to control the zoning along freeways and, wherever possible, to acquire in the public name a sufficient width of freeway right-of-way to include usable park development along the route. In this context, Mission Valley may be seen as the key to a healthy future. If the beautiful valley cannot be kept green and spacious, how can we expect any less glamorous stretch of city land to fare better?

Planning imperatives like this have not been faced by our City Council. It is no excuse that they may not have been faced either by the State Legislature and the United States Congress, both of which influence the design of cities. It is not excuse that politicians in San Diego would look awfully lonely fighting for parks and public transit before a public that doesn't yet realize how important both are. It is no excuse—though inexcusable—that our newspapers lack sufficient vision to fight for the long term well-being of their unique city.

SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE will continue to argue obstreperously for sufficient planning to preserve a precious natural heritage, and we'll support any politician who shows the capacity and courage

to think adequately of the future. We're not mad at anyone. We're just determined that San Diego shall remain the most livable city in America.

WHY YOU SHOULD HAVE SIGNED THE PETITION

HERE mostly published for the first time (though heard in entirety over Channel 8 television) are verbatim quotes from testimony presented at the June 26th hearing before the City Council on the question of rezoning 90 acres of Mission Valley for a \$35 million shopping center to be dominated by The May Company. The quotes are selected in support of SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE'S campaign for comprehensive master planning to keep the city fit for human habitation. It is not the journalistic duty of a monthly magazine to publish all testimony of a crucial hearing, that would be the duty of the daily newspapers.

Immediately following the hearing—and totally without consideration of the testimony they had heard—the City Council unanimously passed an ordinance giving The May Company exactly what it had asked for. Thereupon, a citizens' committee backed by business interests, started circulating a petition asking for a public vote on whether The May Company zoning should stand or be rejected.

Some of the following statements reveal shocked merchants awakening rather late to a tremendous coup pulled off by a competitor. But their arguments also make sense as defining the public stake in the issue. I believe that anyone who reads them with an open mind should logically feel that his name belonged on any petition which would clear the way for the master planning of the Valley which the Council should have done before The May Company set the new pace that may cause rapid deterioration of the city under the illusion of progress.

J.B.

What they said to the City Council

WALTER BRUNMARK, a director of The May Company, throws a scare into the politicians.

If we are not given the privilege and the right to come to your city and locate in Mission Valley, we will not come here. That is a final statement. I say that to you, not in a sense of being piqued or childish or because if we don't get our way we won't play . . . There isn't any other location suitable for the kind of a retail shopping center that we want to put here in San Diego. There are sites that are available, but in our judgment, not suitable to our plans.

WILLIAM ROSSER, architect, predicts a Valley filled up with asphalt and smog.

As we all know San Diego is unique in its setting. Behind the coast line where most of us live, we still have some open space which makes life tolerable and even pleasant in a big city. We have Balboa Park, our canyons—although even they are being invaded by the bulldozers. And we have Mission Valley.

The threat to our city is certainly not by adding one handsome shopping center. The threat lies in the city's sprawl that is sure to follow all the way up the Valley, filling it with asphalt and smog. Commercial and tax pressures will force even the country clubs out.

In another 15 years, with 500,000 more people here, the Valley will fill up with commercial enterprises, haphazardly spotted here and there, destroying completely our most precious asset, open space in the city. The result—another Los Angeles. And I doubt if there is any person here who would rather live in Los Angeles.

If our Councilmen, most of whom are not experts in city planning, wish to assume the prerogatives of their professional Planning Department, let them first steep themselves in the entire subject of land and city planning before coming to momentous decisions . . .

The tax money you expect from developments, such as proposed here, will be a drop in the bucket compared to the money your children will spend trying to recapture some of the beauty of inland San Diego today. (Italics ours.)

ARTHUR JESSOP, Downtown merchant welcomes The May Company—but not in Mission Valley. He asks for a survey as to what is best for the city, and not for a merchant.

. . . San Diego needs The May Company and firms similar to The May Company . . . (but) it seems logical that if this 90 acres is rezoned *and one company controls it* (Italics ours.) that you cannot deny, ethically, the rezoning of the property to the east and west. And, in effect, we may as well consider all of Mission Valley commercial at the same time . . . Downtown and the Valley are but four minutes apart by car. When you consider that the possibility of building in the Valley—with parking in mind, and with modern buildings—the Valley should become equal to if not surpass the present downtown.

But several things are wrong. No city planner would deliberately choose (for a “downtown”) a spot that is a long east-west corridor. And no planner would choose a confined site into which three principal highways pour thousands of cars. No planner would choose the lowest site subject to flash floods, which history has proved can be disastrous. No planner, I believe, would create two major downtowns four minutes apart.

Now San Diego by nature offers the finest spot in the United States for tourists. And tourism is our largest non-government business. We have got one area left that can be developed logically and beautifully for this. The Valley is part of the Planning Department’s future plan for the tourist, and we are considering throwing it down the drain. As of now, I don’t know of any plan to take the place of the one that is being rejected that the Planning Commission has. And should a decision be made before considering these consequences, we may as well tattoo on the Council walls right here: “Thus died planning in San Diego.”

I appreciate the remarks that have been made by The May Company that they want one site and one site only. But they could change their minds by a vote of their Board of Directors. And then the city could consider the land use plan prepared by the Planning Department, or employ outside experts to advise what is best. And don’t forget that all the surveys that have been made thus far have been made with marketing in mind. *They have been made for the store owner . . . What we need is a survey as to what is best for the city and not for a merchant. (Italics ours.)*

GUILFORD WHITNEY, Downtown merchant welcomes The May Company—but not in Mission Valley. He sees Downtown decaying, and repeats the call for a master plan study.

I realize that millions of immediate expenditure is a most difficult proposition to overcome. You have before you the prospect of a large project, employing thousands of people, spending millions of dollars. Naturally it appears to you. But I wonder if you, as the Board of Directors of this city, have the facts to permit you to definitely know whether or not that establishment is completed, downtown values will depreciate to the extent of the increase from the shopping center.

You may know that in some of our California cities—and one of them is Fresno—the downtown area has gone backwards very, very rapidly with the development of shopping centers. Our opposition is not to shopping centers. We feel that they are a normal growth with the present trend in all the services needed by the people of this community. However, placing a shopping center of the magnitude of this one, with projected annual sales of 50 million dollars, almost half of what the central business district now does (117 million dollars) would be such a blow to downtown San Diego that, in spite of all the statements to the contrary, some of us feel that tax values would have to be depreciated, unless your assessor was unfair to downtown real property owners. I am sure that would not be your wish. But if we build another central city only four minutes away from downtown, we may end by having a slum business district in what is now our central area.

I would like to repeat what Mr. Marston said. As a merchant I would be very happy to see the May Company comes into San Diego *in the right place. (Italics ours.)* I feel the difference between what we

might term the potential tourist dollar, all the new money, and the potential dollars left after the removal of profits by chain stores in the shopping area, is something that you should investigate unless you now know the answer.

Therefore, I would heartily endorse the recommendation that you as a Council of this city employ specialists to make a survey not from the point of view of a merchant, but from the point of view of the community, as to what the best use of the area of Mission Valley should be.

HAMILTON MARSTON, Downtown merchant welcomes The May Company—but not to Mission Valley, and asks for a master plan study.

It is difficult for a merchant to have anything to say on a subject like this and not be suspect for attempting to stifle competition or for being shortsighted.

I would like especially to open my remarks by reading the resolution adopted yesterday by the Board of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce with respect to the May Company coming to San Diego.

“In pursuance of the policy of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce which is dedicated to expanding and augmenting industry and business in San Diego, the Chamber notes with special interest the plans of the May Company to make a significant investment and construct a major project in this area. The San Diego Chamber of Commerce believes the May Company would be a great asset to San Diego and welcomes its coming to the metropolitan area.”

Gentlemen, I know something about that resolution and something of the spirit behind it. I moved its adoption and it was seconded by Lou Overgard of the Lion Clothing Company.

Today you are being asked to change the land use of 90 acres in Mission Valley to create a great shopping center. You must know that a favorable decision will bring many more requests for the change of hundreds of acres in this central San Diego area. Do you know the consequences of what you are starting? What are its implications for all of Mission Valley and for all of San Diego, our city and our metropolitan area? We know that shopping centers are a fact of mid-twentieth century American life. But how do they fit into the pattern of motor age transportation and the pattern of residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and civic administrative land use of the modern American city, and specifically San Diego?

Your Planning Department made its start on the master planning of Mission Valley, and have recommended against the proposed zone change. Your Planning Commission divided three to two on the question, and reported it to you without recommendation. Is that all the technical preparation this social and economic problem gets? Are you gentlemen ready for the question? . This is no shopping center versus downtown issue. Half the downtown merchants are in shopping centers in other cities, and are planning to get them in San Diego as fast as they can. Nor is this issue involved in anyway with an objection to another retailer entering the trading area. That is something all retailers understand, and I doubt whether there is anybody else that does. Sears Roebuck, J. C. Penney and Montgomery Ward are some of the nation's finest chain stores that have come into San Diego in the past. It is only natural that more will come. They are welcome. And a Southern California neighbor, like the May Company, whom we already know, is particularly welcome. With the growth of this community there are great opportunities for capable retailers. All the 50 million dollars of sales proposed by the May Company center represent less than five percent of the annual taxable retail sales of the San Diego metropolitan area. And that doesn't take into account the food sales.

I would like to read another statement of policy of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce adopted at yesterday's meeting and adopted by a unanimous vote:

“The San Diego Chamber of Commerce recommends to the City Council that it should proceed with the development of a comprehensive master street and landscape plan for the metropolitan area and employ a firm of private planning consultants if necessary to do so, this plan to be developed in cooperation with organized public and private agencies in the San Diego area.”

W. J. SCHALL, opposition lawyer, quotes an editorial in The El Cajon Valley News supporting plan studies for Mission Valley.

“The Planning Department of the City of San Diego has spent five years making a study of proper land usage in Mission Valley. This study was started without regard for the advantages or disadvantages to any private business enterprise. The money being spent for this study is public money. The expenditure is justified because planning for proper land usage is a legitimate public responsibility. To see that Mission Valley is developed in whatever way will serve the public interest regardless of what any private interests may want, is mandatory to the orderly and healthy growth of greater San Diego. This land study of Mission Valley should be completed, and the recommendations of the Planning Department should be made public before any decision is rendered which will determine the ultimate destiny of Mission Valley. To grant a rezoning to any private business at this time would be an inexcusable waste of public money. To spend money on a planning study and then to act before the study is complete is tentative to throwing public funds out the window.

WALTER AMES, May Company lawyer, interprets the poll.

Very early in the planning for this project we hired Dr. George Kaplan, who we think has professional standing in this community. . . . He made one of the most complete surveys that he has ever made in this city. And he reports to us in an elaborate report that the people want this thing in a ratio of twenty to one.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The Kaplan survey showed 79 percent of San Diego housewives approving the May Company plan for Mission Valley. This is roughly four to one, not twenty to one. The survey did not account for the opinions of men or other non-housewives, and it was made before the public had more than slight acquaintance with the Planning Department's alternate plan for the Valley.)

FRANK CLARK, May Company executive, offers amnesty to opponents.

Notwithstanding the differences between ourselves and our opponents here today and their vehement resistance to our program, I would like to give this pledge on behalf of our company: That if we are permitted to build our store and our Center, we will extend our hands in friendship and cooperation to one and all, including those opponents, work with them to provide the City of San Diego with a new era of retail merchandising as to convenience and beauty of facilities, values and selection of merchandise. And we also pledge to you the City Council that we will assume our fair share of each and every community service which you have every reason to expect from us.

JACK A DONNELLY, lawyer for opponents, urges study by experts.

. . . If you for some reason feel you should not follow the recommendations of your Planning Department, of your own experts, then I urge that you select independent impartial experts to make a survey, study and report, and only after this is done should you make a decision.

Harry Cramer takes after the City Council

The advertisement reproduced here [not shown] appeared in the *North Shores Sentinel* July 2, after it had been rejected by the *Union-Tribune*. Ed Cramer, who placed the ad for his father reports that the only reason he could get from the *Union-Tribune* for its refusal was a statement by an assistant in the advertising department that the ad was “unacceptable” to him personally—just as though it had not been thoroughly mulled by the Copley brass and lawyers, principal among whom was Walter Ames who shepherded May Company past the Council.

The *Union-Tribune* coverage of events surrounding The May Company arrival in our town is a study in itself. On July 4 the *Union* reported that the Council had been faced with an attempted last-minute campaign prompted by paid advertisements in some neighborhood weekly newspapers. The ads charged

the Council with failure to protect the city's interests by getting easements for the flood control channel which engineers say will have to be built someday through Mission Valley behind the shopping center site. Later in the same column the *Union* reported that "the owners of the shopping center site . . . gave the City a declaration of restriction that in the event of flood control channel construction they will sell right-of-way across their property at what would be the fair market value of the land as of March 1, 1958, under residential-agricultural zoning." The *Union* did not say whether the "unacceptable" ad had influenced the terms of agreement. According to Assistant City Attorney Aaron Reese, the agreement was reached before the act actually appeared in the *Sentinel*, and before he knew anything about the ad.

Harry Cramer and associates, who own property and stores in the Linda Vista shopping center, are the prime movers behind the petition aimed at revoking the May Company go-ahead in Mission Valley. The Cramer approach is an enterprising one, hardly inspired only by academic interest in planning principles. In addition to the argument contained in the ad, the preamble to the petition charged that the City itself owns property (on Kearney Mesa) which is suitable for shopping center development and which could be "ruined" for the purpose by permitting a shopping center in Mission Valley. The petition preamble also stated that "it is bad planning policy to have two major shopping centers (downtown and Mission Valley) five minutes apart by freeway. This argument is somewhat at odds with the preceding one, but it certainly is a factor that warrants a careful professional study.

Our support of the petition is on the grounds that it offered the one chance of slowing down a too-hasty action by the City Council. Why, we must ask, did not the Council heed the respectable voices that said in effect: "Welcome to The May Company and let's not make a big move without being sure of the consequences to the general welfare."

A Child's Plea

SEVERAL months ago without any spur from her father, Ursula Britton, aged 11 and a patron of Palomar Stables, marched into her Grant School sixth grade with an anti-May petition she had prepared to save Mission Valley for horsemanship. She got six signatures from her classmates before the teacher caught on. The dismayed teacher did not use the occasion to instruct her charges on the democratic virtues of the right to petition, rather she indicated that nothing of the sort could be tolerated in her classroom. End of petition. End of story.

August 1958, San Diego Magazine (excerpt from San Diego Magazine, March 1983)

"The publishers of San Diego Magazine have authorized me to say that we are looking for an entire new site of candidates to support for election to the City Council. As quickly as the current office holders come up for re-election they should be defeated on the basis of their unanimously demonstrated incompetence on the pivotal matter of city planning, what to do about Mission Valley.

"Surely, everyone would agree that we do not want San Diego to become another Los Angeles. But just that will be our fair city's fate if planning continues here on its present dismal swamp-level. The collapse of planning for Mission Valley was bad in itself; it was worse as an indication of trends.

"*Trends*, did I say? *Drift* is a more accurate word. A city without a master plan is as badly off as a ship without the basic charts of navigation. If councilmen were to explain why they haven't pushed for a master plan, they might be expected to say that, under a free enterprise system, government shouldn't step in any more than necessary. To which I agree, and add that extensive city planning is absolutely necessary as a matter of public health—and incidentally as a matter of the health of the free enterprise system.

"I cite the fact that free enterprise gone wild in Los Angeles is literally poisoning city dwellers by the million. Smog is a deadly poison created by yeasty enterprise uncontrolled by government. And smog is the most conspicuous civic feature of Los Angeles.

“If our only objective in public health were to keep smog to a minimum in San Diego, there are certain basic large-scale planning measures that would be required to that end. These basic measures, as it happens, would add to the public well-being in other ways too. Parks might be constructed as byproducts of smog control: a great deal of open space throughout the fabric of a city should be planted heavily with trees (which literally convert carbon dioxide from auto exhausts into fresh air). That paramount public necessity, a clean and comfortable electric rapid transit system would reduce auto traffic and thus reduce smog.

“One way to get sufficient open park-like space throughout a city is to control the zoning along freeways and, wherever possible, to acquire in the public name a sufficient width of freeway right-of-way to include usable park development along the route. In this context, Mission Valley may be seen as a key to a healthy future. If the beautiful valley cannot be kept green and spacious, how can we expect any less glamorous stretch of land to fare better?

“Planning imperatives like this have not been faced up to by our City Council. It is no excuse that they may not have been faced either by the State Legislature and the United States Congress, both of which influence the design of cities. It is no excuse that politicians in San Diego would look awfully lonely fighting for parks and public transit before a public that doesn’t yet realize how important both are. It is no excuse—though inexcusable—that our newspapers lack sufficient vision to fight for the long-term well-being of their unique city.

“San Diego Magazine will continue to argue obstreperously for sufficient planning to preserve a precious natural heritage, and we’ll support any politician who shows the capacity and courage to think adequately of the future. We’re not mad at anyone. We’re just determined that San Diego shall remain the most livable city in America.”

September 1958, San Diego Magazine, 4, LETTERS

Goodbye sweet valley

This is to congratulate you for Mr. James Britton’s feature story in the August issue of SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE covering the re-zoning of Mission Valley. You have my keen admiration for the only true and honest reporting that has been done on this controversial subject.

None of us who opposed the rezoning objected to the May Company coming to San Diego. We merely wanted the Council to study our Master Plan, which evidently is now meaningless. The other thing was our objection to the way the news coverage slanted and misrepresented the facts.

It was refreshing to read your honest and courageous words.

Lou Overgard

I read with pleasure James Britton’s article on Mission Valley, although I didn’t expect to see my name in such large print!

Thank you for ably presenting the subject. I only hope someday people will realize some of us speak up for other interests than purely selfish ones.

Arthur J. Jessop

September 1958, San Diego Magazine, 39+, ART OF THE CITY: 39, Where there’s a Will S. there’s a way; 40, Who will get the musical chair?; 40, The Views of Arthur Miller; 41, Ruocco’s Garden City; 47, Van Cliburn

RUOCCO’S GARDEN CITY

GARDEN CITY is a term hallowed in the history of humanism. It applies especially to ideas generated in England late last century by Ebenezer Howard, so that wage slaves could take a train and get away at night to play and sleep a reasonable distance from the awful smokepot cities developed by the industrial revolution in the hot blast of its youth. American variations on the Howard theme include Clarence Perry's formula for defining neighborhoods by the walking distance to an elementary school, and Clarence Stein's arrangement of houses around small parks and trails so school kids never had to cross a street.

San Diego architect Lloyd Ruocco has a Howard-Perry-Stein type of conscience and vision. In March we exhibited his extraordinary esthetic sense as revealed in his own house. Below we present in his own words his refinement of the garden city concept with some important new ideas. Ruocco's design sensitivity is profoundly evident at all stages of his expanding scheme, from the positioning of two houses on opposite sides of a masonry wall to his linking of whole cities to form a metropolis. It should be emphasized in his behalf that while the scheme presented here is basically sound and universally applicable in either undeveloped or overdeveloped countries he is a connoisseur of diversity who does not expect the earth to be covered by endless repetitions of a single blueprint. To the charge that he is offering more "row houses", he would answer that most people now live in row houses—*without* the subtle amenities he proposes.

San Diego in particular needs the kind of thinking that Ruocco displays below because ours continues to be the fastest growing metropolitan area in America and we want it to remain a superior place as it grows. *Tractitis* is the name this magazine gives to the invasion of metropolitan tissues by endless proliferation of houses with little more planning than occurs in the "shrewd" minds of speculative builders. We know that this is like chronic and spreading infection—bugs in the bloodstream instead of healthy corpuscular flow—when there is too much of it in the wrong places. As a cure and preventive of the disease, our City Planning Department should be empowered by our City Council to raise its "subdivision map" requirements so that only neighborhoods of no-less-than Ruocco quality can be built.

Certainly our marvelous topography of mesas and canyons almost cries out for development along the lines of Ruocco's designs. With *suitable* earth-moving operations—rather than the present callous butchery-by-bulldozer—large stretches of San Diego County terrain could be brought under graceful development really fit for the good San Diego life on the Ruocco pattern, freely applied. By replacing the present witless standards of subdivision with thoughtful standards, our wonderfully varied landscape could absorb all the houses required and still gain the look of a park or garden rather than the merchandiser's floorshow.

With a higher order of "subdivision" standards to guide us, it would make great good sense for the City of San Diego to annex vast undeveloped square mileage, as it has recently (South Bay annexation, 21-1/2 square miles) and as it proposes to do again shortly (Miramar annexation, 40 square miles). *Without* higher standards such annexations will only speed smotheration and the downgrading of San Diego into a metropolitan mess.

In my opinion, it is nothing short of a crime against future generations for our city administration to piously encourage these annexations without first pushing for a metropolitan master plan that will guarantee livability [sic] to Heaven-on-Earth. The county administration also has its responsibility for the metropolitan master plan. In this connection it is astonishing that the County Planning Department has had for months the money to hire advance-planning technicians but has not yet filled the openings; this is partly explainable by the scarcity of skilled job-seekers, and partly by a too easy-going attitude at Civic Center.

In the absence of official planning action of sufficient consequence, SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE is proud to present the thinking of one man whose light blue eye is steady on the future. I submit that Architect Ruocco, who has not children of his own, is giving more thought to the well-being of your children and mine than the whole passel of sleek officials who sit in Civic Center, making business-as-usual deals and crowing about their "clean" government.

RUOCCO'S GARDEN CITY:

2. SKETCHES FOR A BETTEER WAY OF LIVING

by Lloyd Ruocco, A.I.A.

Caption: Here are seen the keys to coherent neighborhood design: the short dead-end street and the park-like kinderpath. The street frankly serves only the automobile. The path serves only people (and pets). Neighborly relations are possible across the street but are more likely to develop across the path.

Caption: In Architect Lloyd Ruocco's garden city concept, a typical house would be screened from the street (top of picture) by fences and would open up off its own garden into a kinderpath (bottom) where children would play and walk to school without encountering traffic. Adjacent houses might be joined together by soundproof masonry walls, thus saving space for special-purpose gardens within the lot, one for kids, one for adults, one for utility. The kitchen would be so placed as to afford a view of all gardens. Besides the garage or carport, there would be guest parking space at right angles to the street, as shown. Architecture is neutral, not showy, aimed at giving maximum use and pleasure.

A SUBJECT which has always interested me is how you would build cities that would be fit to live in. That may sound like an irascible statement because of all the money we've spent building cities—and of course everybody thinks of the city he lives in. I too own property here and have made my contribution in taxes. Nevertheless I think the American city is a relatively dull place in which to live. It could be considered dull in two ways—either by comparing what is known about designing cities to fit the 20th century, or by comparing with the art and architecture and other rich qualities, the humanistic qualities of historical cities that weren't upon the modern technological fast-buck idiom.

What is it we miss in the contemporary city? What would be some of the things you could do to make living in a city more exciting, more efficient, more gay—that would have the qualities we vaguely think would be nice if we had more of them? Of course, environment is not merely physical. It has to do with solving the mental roadblocks and hazards that we build up.

There should be a feeling of quality about a city. It shouldn't be merely the left-over result of various business deals. It should have an enriched atmosphere like a garden. Most people are up to the point of loving a garden. Too few of them are up to the point of working in a garden or giving up other things to pay for the garden.

When it comes to architecture and the civic things, we as a nation, I believe, are backward. There's no point of criticizing us up to this moment. The only criticism we can stick is about the future. Let us say we are thoroughly excused—condoned and not condemned for our elaborate past which was full of chasing Indians and stealing the resources and building the cities, and doing all the other big things we've done. It was a helter-skelter struggle for everybody. I don't want to spit on Grandfather. He lived a tough life. He didn't have all our schooling, all our research, all our technology. But now we are coming, I think, to a new phase, a phase represented by cast amounts of money stacked up.

The problem which we have sedulously avoided in the United States is the act of building a city, a new city right on fresh ground. We do have the money ready to build these cities, though we don't know it yet. We also have the incentives to build these cities, you know, as we now have incentive to build spaceships because the Russians sent up a Sputnik. As we get to know more about it, we're going to learn that the Russians have built new cities in a perfectly slapdash manner all over their country. Now they're not efficient in the sense we want our cities to be efficient, efficient in the sense that they're delightful places to live and work and do commerce.

The essence of the American city since we're a very nice wealthy country is that almost everyone would like to live in a one-story house with gardens around especially in the phase where they're going to raise their families, I think it's a natural and a desirable goal since we have lots of land in the country in

designing a city we should begin with the smallest unit, And the smallest unit, humanly speaking, is the baby.

3. THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE COMMUNITY

Caption: Linking up the dead-end streets and the garden paths, Architect Ruocco first composed neighborhoods (above) and their superblocks (next page). The neighborhood is a two-faced thing, turning inward upon path and park, turning outward to a tongue of land supporting apartment houses. Shops and entertainment enterprises. The superblock (8-12,000 persons) is a collection of neighborhoods with a central park in which schools for various age levels are located, the whole surrounded by freeways which in turn link superblocks together into a city.

Caption: The ‘nuclear city’ has nothing to do with bombs as Architect Ruocco has planned it, but it has an organic arrangement of superblocks around a “downtown” which includes major stores, theatres, civic and sports facilities, business and light industrial establishments(15-300,000 people per city). A similar linking together of nuclear cities would produce an orderly metropolis of two to three million with a central core containing the bigger, commercial, educational and governmental installations that would depend on such a population; heavy industry would occur on the periphery of the metropolis at points dictated by terrain and requirements. This whole sequence is only a pilot study, of course, and would be subject to great variation depending upon conditions.

Caption: The living room of a rectangle but you will never notice it as such because of interesting vistas on all sides.

Caption: The entrance is free of pretense, just a sliding door by the carport presided over by a John Dirks carving.

Caption: Inside the front door one is struck by the lengthening vista, with a fantastic garden pulling the eye to the far end.

Caption; The Ruoccos take special delight in their dining table, not so much for the food as the decorative possibilities reflecting the wares sold at the Design Center by them.

Through the imaginative bathroom window, a long view can be taken of unimaginative tract houses on the faraway hills. Ruocco’s proposals to transform tract houses are discussed in this article.

In the model city presented in these sketches, the houses were designed on that basis. They don’t follow any style idea. They’re simply sensible floor plans arranged in an area with three gardens. There is one garden for the adults and all of the adult living is at one end of the house so they can have some privacy while the entertaining can take place. It will include a patio which is wind-free, private both from the children and from the street, and tied in with the living rooms or the pretty rooms of the house. At the other end of the house, the children’s rooms and the family room will also face out into a garden of their own arranged for the more rugged uses indicated. We have the two gardens penetrated by a glass kitchen on the theory that since three are a lot of chores to be done in the kitchen, it should be the nicest room in the house as regards sunlight and garden view and so on. So we make the kitchen a long peninsula of glass, enabling the mother to be in the center of everything. So you will have two segments to the house, you divide and conquer your frustrations. These are modest houses and they could be expanded to more elaborate domains but I’m not interested here in the wealthy. I’m interested in average families, trying to figure out what would be a sensible plan for them.

The third garden is what you might call the landscape garden. It gives the family a large open area on which all the main rooms of the house look, and that can be landscaped in a way that you might call creative. It could have an intense grove of trees or a small area bordered by complicated alcoves with shade, and so on. It is a non-functional area designed to be beautiful and to give you a sense of space, very much as the English country mansions had.

A significant thing about this plan is that the entire area is arranged with demountable units that do not support the roof. During the natural change in the needs of the family, the interior of the house can be modified very easily. Also the lot arrangement is such that additions to the house can be made.

One of the features is that the houses could be grouped together in pairs on either side of soundproof masonry wall, a wall which would give at one and the same time a fire barrier, a sound barrier and a sense of solidity. Thus you have double the usual side yard, a usable space opposite the wall. For purposes of working up the concept on paper, I assumed a lot size of 75 feet width and 100 feet depth.

The entrances of the houses would be in most cases grouped in pairs, as would be the garages or carports. The street is purposely made too narrow for automobiles and children to play together. All parking is off the street. The cars turn in at right angles rather than parking along the curb, and this turns out to be quite an advantage when the flow of visitors is heavy. The streets are all dead-end.

COME IN 20TH CENTURY

I should mention that this plan has elements originated by sturdy 19th century Englishmen, Patrick Geddes and Ebenezer Howard and by others who felt that the 20th century was coming in with a great deal of noise and traffic; and people should do something big about it, not just fiddle along.

One thing that makes the modern city look goofy is the visibility of houses. Ninety-nine percent of all houses built are designed by a contractor scribbling on the kitchen counter of his preceding house, or by overnight draftsmen at \$25 each. That's how the tracts are built. If the tracts looked elite and beautiful and knowledgeable from an esthetic point of view, I would give them my vote because I like places to look fine even if they are awkward to live in. My question is why do we live? Do we live for comfort, or do we live for moments of exhilaration?

PLEASE ACCEPT

So I ask you to accept the idea that the street should be made up of open carports and fences and no houses shown. Eight-foot fences can be fascinating, cheap or expensive, whichever you wish, but mainly they should be planted out. When you look down this street you should see trees coming over fences, vines growing on fences, planting in front of fences—a modest width street with right-angle parking. The signature on the street front would not be the goofiness of your architecture, but a hand-sculpted piece, a creation in glass and wire of something that you had done yourself as a matter of self expression.

In place of the alleys which now usually occur where backyards meet, in this plan we have an area across which neighborhood relations can naturally flower. Through it runs what I call a *kinderpath*, for children, barred to cars. As you may see from drawing 3, the *kinderpaths* from several adjoining blocks converge upon a central playground for the younger children. As I have just said, the front is completely fenced in with locked gates so the youngsters cannot get mixed up with traffic. The children naturally are drawn to this path, in which there are wide places for small games en-route to a neighborhood playground, at which point may also be located a kindergarten or child-care center. Following the drawings it may be seen that each of the child care centers in turn connects by foot or bicycle path with an elementary school. In the center of each super block (drawing 4) is a junior high school, and near one boundary a high school, the latter accessible either by highway or through the car-free interior of the super block.

Adults and teenagers, of course, can go through the gates, jump in their cars and roll out into traffic in the usual manner. But they can also go pedestrian through the *kinderpath* if the like. Neighborhood relations are more likely to develop across the *kinderpath* than across the streets, reversing the present situation.

I think in this scheme we have developed a fluidity for family growth. If older people wish, they may stay in these homes after the children have grown up and left. Or they may want to shrink down into a small garden apartment. For them interspersed as shown in drawing 4, are wedge-shaped domains

accommodating neighborhood stores and apartment houses, doctors' offices, etc. Notice that these are close to the boundaries of the super blocks and thus handy to public transit. Their narrow ends open out onto a large park that runs through the middle of the super block. Not only oldsters but all the diversified types who prefer apartment living could find their quarters here. The stores would not be super supermarkets but quickie places where you pick up the things you were told to bring home and forgot.

Traffic in these densely-built up wedges would be possibly as heavy as in a large shopping center parking lot, but there would be no problem of speeding cars. At the end of each wedge there'd be space for outdoor pleasantries, open-air restaurants, perhaps. A church or two might appear as you turn from here toward the great central super block park.

Assuming that a circular linkage of super blocks is the most efficient form of a "nuclear city," we plan a major shopping center in one corner of each super block. By alternating these corners, as seen in drawing 5, a maximum number of motorized shoppers are served off the freeways that bound the super blocks.

Super blocks are geared to residential use exclusively. String a bunch of them together as shown and you circle an area that logically would have industry, offices and super shopping, bisected more likely than not by a cross-country super freeway. Just as each super block has its green park core, so the central district would have a greenbelt park setting it off from the intensively developed "downtown."

If the seeds of such a plan were planted in a great plain such as the present city of Los Angeles is built on, you would be able to make a great metropolis by linking together a chain of "nuclear cities" just as a nuclear city is made by linking together a chain of super blocks. Variations on the theme could be worked out for more rugged territory such as surrounds San Diego.

What I have been discussing is a city or metropolis of well-defined recognizable sections, based on neighborhood units related always to the distance a child can walk to school. Adults are encouraged to walk too, or to use electric runabouts within park-like settings, away from auto traffic. At his pace, neighbors might get to know and appreciate each other instead of always hurrying by because they are caught up in a brutal pace. Thus there might be a real chance of developing natural democratic government, literally at the grassroots level. People would take pride in maintaining not only their home grounds but their neighborhood, their super block, and their city because each of these would be precious and worth preserving.

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LLOYD PIETRANTONIO RUOCCO (rue-ah-ko) has a lean and hungry look which befits a man who has made it his business to pare off the excesses of civilization and grasp the pure spirit of things. Of his architecture it surely can be said that there is never any excess. To average materialist-eyes a Ruocco-designed house may seem as unattractive as an empty pantry shelf, and offhand he would seem the last man likely to emerge as a popular hero.

But let's not be offhand about Ruocco. Let's look closely at what he has achieved. I think we will discover that he is one of the best the common man has had west of Gandhi. The final paragraphs of our account will reveal a truly extraordinary scheme of Architect Ruocco's for taking the curse off the lowly tract house—which means practically any house these days.

First we should like to take the architect's measure in his own roost. An indifferent way of describing his house would be to say that it is "different." So different is it from his neighbors that the passing motorist looks at its location in the hills near State College and sees absolutely nothing other than greenery. The neighbors did the standard "sane" thing and built at street level, often on fill, putting up expensively-dressed fronts to the public eye. Ruocco—quite contrary and seemingly perverse—dropped his house into the natural contours of the site—and that meant even the roof was below street level in this case. Thus the house simply does not exist in the world that believes in putting up a front: it cannot be seen from

the street! And there is no other convenient point from which it can be seen as a whole either, for back of the house the land falls away in long rugged slopes.

On the evidence, Ruocco's roost has something in common with the concealed caves of time immemorial. But *quelle difference!* The sensitive modern's cave does not shut out the world. Rather the world is admitted on all sides—on Ruocco's terms. The result is a unique artistic masterpiece, outstanding even among the successes of American domestic architecture.

Since you can never size up Ruocco's house at a glance, you approach it with no sure idea of its dimensions, its cost or its retail value. By the time you are fumbling for the none too obvious front door you have been subtly rid of the real estate outlook and conditioned instead for a transcendental experience, believe me. When the door slides open you are confronted by infinity—a vista straight ahead so managed with glass, lights and mysterious glimpses that you can no idea where it all leads except inward, inward. You are now under the spell. Proceed.

Your visit should be at night, if you are to capture the experiences that are here described. A fire will be boiling in a great middle-of-the-floor pit. Naturally drawn to it, you will collapse in somewhat solid comfort upon a circular settle also sunk below floor level surrounding the fire. When your gaze falls upon the northeast corner of the room you will sit up with a start because you are suddenly unsure whether you are looking through a mirror or through a clear window: the view through the glass *almost* matches the scene on this side but you don't see yourself there. Are you at last free, a disembodied spirit?

Many things about the house work thus to take you out of yourself. Your sense of balance is put on trial and your other faculties heightened. You know that you must be visually wary of boobytraps, as it were, and so you are visually awake. A visitor who had not responded to the spirit of things in this house could easily smack into one of the slinky floor-to-ceiling panels that mockingly "separate" indoors from out.

If you are not otherwise spellbound, the hypnotic process will be completed by the gleaming stainless steel cylinder, three feet in diameter, poised above the fire, serving as flue, yes, but also summing up the reality-defying quality of the house: the shiny surface picks up lights in such a way as seemingly to turn the cylinder inside out as you watch it. You'd swear it was concave, not convex in shape. Are you really outside the flue? Are you through the looking glass? Are you a follower of Alice in Wonderland?

Observe some of the other features that have an air of suspension between reality and imagination. In the middle of the big room, embedded in the concrete floor, is a fine specimen of the century plant, that singular growth that perhaps looks better dead than alive. It is here an elegant year-round Christmas tree, delightful with baubles at any season. A characteristic Ruocco touch is partitions that seem to go only part way to the ceiling but actually have a foot or so of unframed glass hardly noticeable at the top. Your biggest crisis of adjustment will be in the bathroom which offers uncurtained floor-to-ceiling windows to the rabbit-inhabited hills, modified only by occasional panels of obscure glass. The "tub" is free-form, sunken Roman style, of terrazzo. The toilet hangs from the wall and the flush button is as deliberately hidden as the spheroids of an Easter Egg hunt. Adventure unlimited.

I don't know whether I have hammered enough to nail down the point that Lloyd Ruocco's house is an experience that make you a square of your former self, raises you to a higher power. It imparts some psychic equivalent of the overdrive in your car. Your engine is not working so hard and your passage through time is for a while no effort.

Of course the place sounds thoroughly impractical to the tract-house broken-mind. The most obvious objection is that it would never do for children, if only on the grounds of the plentiful plate glass. Leaving aside any tendency to theorize that children should be drilled to live in glass houses, let's simply acknowledge that Ruocco's own house was not designed for children but for adults who value above all the life of the senses.

Now we can go on to consider how this wonderfully ingenious architect might be exploited in connection with the housing problems of average families. Assume in the first place that he will always try to introduce esthetic excitement into any house he designs. Commercial eagerness would rarely cause him to make silly compromises or design as concessions to imagined popular preference. This relative purity of Ruocco's sets him apart from most home builders, and indeed from most architects.

Assume too that Architect Ruocco is an implacable foe of the tract look in housing. In this quirk he is not too different from many people who have lived in tract houses. One important fact that has emerged from post-war tract living is that sooner or later the inmates make more or less pathetic efforts to break out of the standardized living pattern imposed by the limited design sense of average sub-dividers.

But there is only so much amateurs can do to take the curse of houses that were ill-conceived to begin with. They can build fences and patios, add a room maybe (of they are lucky on lot size). There is a tendency, however, for a tract dweller's improvements to have the effect of hemming him in, self-centering his life. The neighbors become less interesting as time goes on and community spirit—half-hearted to begin with—is likely to wither as a tract ages. Withered spirit means slums.

Ruocco, like a Jonas Salk of architecture, thinks he is on the trail of a cure for *tractitis*. He thinks that whole neighborhoods should be the product of architectural design of the most careful kind. Not for a minute does this mean that the design would be rigid, frozen, take-it-or-leave-it. He believes that the essential thing about a neighborhood is its ability to change and grow. The place where the most flexibility has to be possible is in the homes themselves. Each house site in a neighborhood should be ready on short notice to accommodate itself to the needs of any family—whether it be childless newlyweds or childfled elders, solitary hermit or Lionel Van Deerlin (six children). The population make-up of a healthy neighborhood shall not be imposed by some master builder's calculations, but shall result from the natural forces of human attraction and repulsion, aided by architectural forethought.

The logical follow-through of Architect Ruocco's concern about the neighborhood unit is—paradoxically enough—prefabrication and mass production of houses, not whole houses but parts of houses, standardized parts from which houses of great variety in size and shape and character can be assembled rapidly. Pre-fabrication of houses was a dream even before Ford made the mass-production revolution, but no house-parts system has yet caught on in a big way, largely because the old wasteful methods of house building are so profitable.

As Ruocco sees it, our technology is now so advanced that if some individual or institution of sufficient prestige were to push the project, a vast new industry would be born to supply pre-fabricated house parts. These parts would include wall sections made mainly of materials that can best be handled industrially (glass, metals, plastics) but not neglecting the traditional graces of wood, leather, etc. Roof systems would be worked out so that ceiling and weatherproofing would form a sandwich with strength in the middle to easily span adequate spaces. Kitchen and bath would come in adaptable pre-fabricated sections, and all utilities would be engineered in.

As we noted, pre-fabrication is hardly new, and there are a number of fairly advance schemes in the air all the time. This distinctive Ruocco approach (worked out in conversation with Everett Herter of Coronado and other San Diego idea men) calls for a comprehensive laboratory of design to which manufacturers of materials and parts would supply their latest offerings but in which the principal activity would be *architecturally controlled research*. Over the years design refinements would develop—not according to the cynical forces that control auto design, but according to the high creative standards of the uncompromising architect interpreting the needs of society, remembering always that one of the psychic needs of society is flexibility and variety in housing.

Ruocco's hope is that some entrepreneur on the scale of Henry Kaiser will see the wisdom of his approach and invest accordingly. It is my impression, though, that Ruocco's concept of a design revolution in housing will not catch on with the big spenders until its worth has been proved in an actual neighborhood in which the superior designs of the architect have given several years of satisfaction. Accordingly, I think it is the responsibility of San Diego institutions of higher learning to consult Architect Ruocco carefully as

to the possibility of setting up a pioneer superior neighborhood in conjunction with one of the college campuses that are blossoming all over the region. In should think it would be an ideal investment for the University of California in connection with the proposed La Jolla campus, lest those environs develop no more handsomely than the tract-girdled State College. College faculty and students should be the first to appreciate superior neighborhood and house design.

University of California sponsorship of the Ruocco concept actually might *attract* the real estate interests which are the main pressure bloc against creating a La Jolla campus. The real estate powers themselves could *profitably* join in a venture to build truly exceptional houses in their precious acres. And our aircraft manufacturers would do wisely to look into the fabrication of house-parts as a suitable steady employment for their work forces.

It is not possible to give you a specific profile of another man's brainchild until it is out of the womb, but certainly Ruocco's own house is a stunning example of his sure esthetic touch and a hint as to some of the new values he would introduce to a designed neighborhood. It is hardly a complete catalog of the delights he would supply to meet more various needs, including the needs of children.

Though he would probably disown the connection, there is already a flourishing industry based on the hidden psychic hunger for flexible housing. Trailer parks are a crude example of the kind of neighborhood toward which Ruocco is pushing his thoughts. The best of trailer parks develop a pretty good community spirit and offer community facilities to make for common joy in living. The trailers themselves have advantages from a housekeeping point of view, but as design objects they closely reflect the sterile Detroit cynicism and take little advantage of the resources of the true architectural mind. But they are a foretaste of possibilities. Their main advantage is pick-up-and-go readiness. Their main disadvantage is uniformity and tightness of the living arrangements.

Lloyd Ruocco has not carried his contemplations so far as to eliminate the need for fixed housing foundations, but, taking the cue of the trailer, I would suggest that it is important in carrying out his idea of fluid neighborhoods to eliminate the cumbersome concrete slab or concrete footings that underlay the usual house. The foundation must be easily movable too. Further than that, portable landscaping should be introduced where possible. These innovations in turn might encourage flexible lot lines, and thereby hangs the chance for truly park-like residential neighborhoods that will not be very different from the enchanting early villages of New England—but will be vastly superior to the sub-divided tract “paradises” that comprise most of the housing now getting built.

In a February telecast, master architect Walter Gropius made the point that architecture only exists when the observer is elated by seeing and experiencing a building. Lloyd Ruocco is one of the few in our region who can deliver that quality. Let's make wider use of his talent.

October 1958, San Diego Magazine, 40+, Eggheads at Arrowhead; 43, A Look at Astronautics and Atomics Architecture; 54, Who Killed Commentary (KFSD-FM)?

November 1958, San Diego Magazine, 38+, 1968—parkway from border to border; 70, The Roth Quartet; 70, The Mexican Symphony; 71, A German to Watch

1968: When the magazine approaches its “majority,” the city will have parkways from border to border, an “uptown” outshining Fifth Avenue, a campus life bigger than Boston's and all the international trade and tourists it can handle.

I happened to strike San Diego (!, that's the right verb) for the first time in 1948 so I especially appreciate Jim Mill's nostalgic piece on that year, page 30. Below we'll try to get the feel of what San Diego might be like in 1968. This will not be a set of predictions but merely a projection of the city the writer would like to live in—what San Diego could be if shaped by sweet reason rather than by an unharnessed assortment of political and commercial pressures. The theme serves to knit together a number of arguments found in these pages over the years, with some additions. It will be seen that the picture

accepts and makes the best of certain Hard Realities which came along despite our editorial opposition. Other hard realities are dissolved in the dream.

NOVEMBER, 1968

A MOTORIZED TOURIST visiting 1968's San Diego for the first time is in for a treat unequaled anywhere in this country of countries. Ours has become the best-designed big city in America, a model for the regeneration of best cities everywhere. And it is really big, tenth largest metropolis in America.

The incoming motorist hits the city boundaries on six-lane freeways, whether he comes from the north, east or south, from the west visitors approach only by ship or plane, but the traffic from the prospering Orient is tremendous for reasons that will appear later in this account.

Coming from the east, the visitor is relieved after sloughing through the strong silent desert and the mountains to find that the City of San Diego has made a heavily landscaped parkway the full length of Mission Valley. (As he gets about the city he will find a surprising network of such parkways, more indeed than most Eastern cities boast.) The natural beauty of the valley has been preserved after a nervous battle between the sound development forces of the community and the milkers. There is no jungle of billboards, the few that exist are of an extremely high order of artistic design which is why they are allowed. Everywhere there is handsome architecture set spaciously amidst a growth of trees denser than anybody has a right to expect in parched California. The whole valley is given over to commercial recreation, which of course includes shopping in magnificent plazas surrounded by plenty of parking. Following the discovery of May's Law, first announced by the May Department Stores Company in 1958, it was determined by the City Planning Department and accepted by the City Council that there should be three ninety-acre shopping centers at judicious spots in the valley—with no valley retail activity permitted except on these reservations. Thus was created an impressive celebration of the great American rite of competition devoid of the usual mess. Shopping in Mission Valley has become so comprehensive that San Diego's downtown has had to undergo radical change. It became, like lower Manhattan, a financial and wholesale district primarily, heavy with warehouses, handsome with office buildings.* The booming port is the main economic base here; shopping continues to be an interesting feature but in a lesser way than a decade ago; a Chinatown has grown up with modern cast quite different from those of San Francisco and New York.

The new-era "uptown" shopping center of Mission Valley, more exciting even than New York's Fifth Avenue, is itself a drawing card for many tourists.

Interlaced with the shopping centers is a profusion of tourist accommodations featuring motels of the most advanced type. Through the valley is an inventory of sports facilities worthy of a great park, but supported by motels (and, in turn, supporting the motels). The need flood control channel was handled in the most ingenious manner, rather than an unsightly concrete slough waiting for rain waters that seldom come, the channel was dredged deep enough so that sea water flowed up the valley several miles sporting a picturesque variety of water sports and acting as a relief valve whenever the pressure of population overloads Mission Bay Aquatic Park, as it often does these days. Mission Bay Park is, of course, the climax of the wonderful valley where it joins the ocean. It is the largest and most intensively used aquatic park in the world—a triumphant creation by city officialdom after decades of struggle.

In the last mile or so of Mission Valley before it becomes Mission Bay Aquatic Park, the landscaping takes on a special grandeur, and at this point rises the most impressive structural complex in America's most important city—a civic center built around, and intermarried with the major traffic interchange! It was decided in the late 50's that traffic interchange at this point (the crossing of U.S. Highway 80 and 101 plus a railroad, a flood channel and several other roads) was so complicated a design problem and required so much land that we might as well make it one of the wonders of the world by including in the big traffic islands a number of public buildings rising many stories into the air and incorporating ample parking within their structures. It was a fierce design problem and aroused the horror of the highway engineers at first, but America's best design brains were brought to the task. The resulting governmental center is another national tourist magnet, outdrawing New York's Rockefeller Center even as San Diego's Cabrillo Monument has long outdrawn New York's Statue of Liberty.

In creating the governmental center, Federal and State agencies led the way. When State officials saw what a mess the county supervisors had got into with their efforts to build a courthouse downtown, they gave up plans to build on a block they had bought downtown, sold the site back to the natives, and moved to Mission Valley. The Federal Government soon followed with an office building and post office. City and county officials reluctantly gave up on their sick solutions downtown and trailed into the valley. The downtown courthouse was built as planned in the 50's, but it has since become a multi-purpose building in which function downtown branches of many public agencies whose main offices are in the Mission Valley governmental center. Just to the west of the governmental center, in Mission Bay Park, is a convention center second to none in national popularity.

COLLEGE TOWN

IF NEWCOMERS driving into town from the east on 80 are greeted by the marvelous civic reception just described, visitors coming in from the north on 101 have what is perhaps an even more significant reception. Sweeping past Torrey Pines State Park, they continue by another parkway, through the trees of which are caught glimpses of highly dignified and clean industrial activity. Most conspicuous is the General Atomics Laboratory for the peaceful uses of atomic energy. This looks enough like a college campus, but a short distance farther south the motorist finds himself actually driving through the center of the University of California's most advanced campus—advanced in the sense that the land planning and the architectural planning have carefully avoided the well-known limitations of other campuses of the university. The freeway's bisecting of the campus is not as serious as it sounds because various related segments of the university have been developed pretty much as islands unto themselves anyway, partly to overcome the curse of bigness, and also to fit the conditions of the site.

The visitor will do well to get off the freeway when he comes to the campus and prowl the neighborhood. Before his eyes then will unfold the most civilized college campus in America, and beyond that the most wisely planned college town in America. For North La Jolla has not just happened, like the usual American community, nor has it been "planned" by commercial sub-dividers merely. Its character was carefully controlled by the principal owners of the territory involved. These included a number of old La Jolla hands and the City of San Diego itself. Because of this favorable circumstance an adequate master plan was made for a college town of 90,000 *before* much of any development had taken place. Even before the public voted on giving land to the university, the city planners went to the university architects, Pereira and Luckman, and invited them to do a master plan for the entire college community. The public voted a resounding "Yes" in November, 1958, and the University then got Camp Matthews from the Navy, for a campus total of some 1000 acres. The P&L community plan has considerable resemblance to the garden city concept of San Diego Architect Lloyd Ruocco, published in SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE for September, 1958; both were based on well-known classic principles. As built in North La Jolla this new high-level of neighborhood planning has become another San Diego contribution to the art of building cities. It is being copied widely everywhere, and is especially popular in the South Bay region of San Diego, a region that developed slowly until very recently.

UP FROM THE SEWERS

SOUTH BAY'S slowness of development was for no better reason than that the north end of town developed so fast. The further north the city grew, the easier was contact with Los Angeles, the necessary nightmare metropolis. In recent years San Diego has developed into such a metropolis in its own right and Los Angeles has grown so impossible that there is relatively little need for our fortune-favored citizens to travel north. For the same reason South Bay has become more attractive residentially, with the pushing of utilities into the thousands of marvelous acres hugging the Mexican border.

That area benefited further from the fact that the county's biggest sewage treatment plant was placed at the mouth of the Tijuana River. The river naturally drains a far bigger watershed than any other river within San Diego's borders, thus the strategic placement of the major plant. It was found in general that sewage treatment should take place at the mouth of rivers, several of which reach the coast within the city boundaries. It was found also, on the basis of experience at Oceanside, that it was undesirable to dump

relatively untreated sewage into the ocean. Rather, the economic and wise thing in terms of a tourist industry city like San Diego was to convert sewage effluent into landscaping water. This was done, and accounts for the lush parkways throughout the city and for much of the dense landscaping of Balboa Park, Mission Bay Aquatic Park, and the numerous community parks in the city. The procedure was shown to be hygienic too, despite widespread doubts (Golden Gate Park in San Francisco has been so watered for years with nary an unpleasant whiff.)

The Mexican city of Tijuana was brought into San Diego's sewage scheme on a cooperative basis, and has made good use of its share of landscaping water. Tijuana is no longer the dustbin-and-sin city that former generations of San Diego patronized in picturesquely covert ways. The dustbin effect gave way to water, education flourished, and sin was made to pay its way. Open gambling on the Las Vegas pattern has made Baja California civically prosperous and progressive. It is now a showplace of Mexico, a handsome portal through which greatly increased motor traffic from South and Central America reaches the U.S.

South San Diego, long lacking in any significant theme on which to hang local pride, finally discovered its personality in terms of the South American traffic. Famous Latin American architects were invited to design dozens of spectacular business and industrial plants that make South Bay an industrial showplace. Industry, both heavy and light, became the great feature there mainly because there was so much room for it around the lower portions of San Diego Bay.

The growth was further supported by the opening of a southern channel from the bay to the ocean, in view of expanding ocean freightage from southern and far eastern countries.

SHRINKING THE NAVY

THE AIRPORT QUESTION, which seemed unanswerable in the 50's, finally became solvable due to the shrinking of the Navy's air arm when guided missiles took over the main load of national defense. When Navy had no further need of North Island, it became a sort of super Shelter Island, supporting a great deal of recreational marine activity, as befitted the north end of the bay. When Navy had no prospect of using a large portion of South Bay waters for a jet seaplane base, this area was built up with dredge fill and turned into San Diego's principal civilian airport. It also served as an air freight terminal and as an international airport through agreements worked out with Mexico. A conspicuous result of the agreement is a constant traffic of helicopter and autogiro taxis from Tijuana's airport to San Diego's. Such air taxis have become common in America, but are only allowed certain airways in San Diego in order to keep down the noise nuisance.

The Navy air arm shrinking process took several years during which time commercial jets were allowed to share the facilities of Miramar Naval Air Station, located at Miramar in the very center of the great mesa dominating the northern half of San Diego. City officials had hoped, rather unreasonably, that Naval Air Station would be the eventual civilian airport, but public resentment of the noise patterns emanating from there, and audible over an immense area, forced the airport development at South Bay instead.

Thereupon, Miramar Naval Air Station was generously transferred by the Navy to the City, with the stipulation that it be turned into a great public park to meet the ever-increasing need for recreational space. This park is now in process of development, again using reclaimed water from sewage. Already an 80,000-seat stadium is operating there, serving primarily the sports program of the University of California at La Jolla. (Citizen pressure forbade football stadium activity at the campus itself, which was all to the good from the academic point of view.)

As we suggested at the outset of this tour of San Diego in 1968, the freeway system was planned very comprehensively. Nonetheless, the crush of automobile traffic has now become so great that drastic action is called for. Down the center strip of each freeway rubber-tired rapid transit trains will operate before long. These will be designed, together with a system of far spread stations and adjacent parking facilities to take off the main roads the people who merely shuttle back and forth from home to job. Freeway interchanges are so designed that transit stations occur at the important junctions, with escalators

to transfer riders between levels. It is expected that the new trains will be so attractive as to offer serious competition to the private car on the counts of comfort and convenience.

The parallel problem of providing acres of parking everywhere has been modified somewhat by a system initiated by the University of California. The University permits only small electric autos to circulate within the campus. Some of these are taxis, or rentals, but many of them are owned by faculty and students who find them an extremely cheap mode of campus-to-home shuttling, especially because the University maintains a battery-charging system that goes to work automatically on parked electrics. The system has been adopted at other major points, notably our distinguished parks, Mission Bay and Balboa.

THE BASIN AND THE BAY

MISSION BAY aquatic park, as noted earlier, has been a huge popular success among water sports enthusiasts. But its significance is more than splashing in the brine. About 25 percent of the land area (the park is roughly 2200 acres of land and 2200 acres of water) is leased out to commercial enterprisers who have built an assortment of tourist facilities, including motels, a family club and a 10-story hotel with restaurants of superior quality, indeed so superior as to have moved San Diego from nowhere gastronomically speaking to nearly in the class of San Francisco. A major feature is a marine-land (aquarium and related exhibits) similar to Palos Verdes.

The landscaping of Mission Bay is so good, so imaginative and so esthetically rewarding that everyone in Japan wants to come and see it. Not only Japan but all the countries of the Orient know Mission Bay as a grand American gesture of recognition to the rich artistic heritage of the Orient. Throughout the buildings of the aquatic park, distinguished and authentic works of art from Oriental countries are incorporated into the architecture, not merely displayed but carefully built in, after the manner of the American genius, Frank Lloyd Wright, who did just this sort of thing so successfully. The City of San Diego itself is responsible for this far-seeing gesture, in a rare stroke of civic good taste, the city fathers decided against mere cute intellectual imitation of Oriental culture and in favor of a profound salute to the dignity of Oriental man. Architect Sim Bruce Richards, a Wright pupil, was made architectural advisor for Mission Bay.

This honorable program itself has done more than any other single American act to ease Oriental suspicion of American exploitation—and, at the same time, it has caused San Diego to be the special focus of the kindlier Oriental thoughts turned in America's direction. The solidarity of the Pacific Basin as an economic and cultural arena has not yet been worked out but it is hinted at in the growing affection—and trade—between Oriental countries and the port of San Diego.

ART IN THE PARK

BALBOA PARK is, of course, San Diego's crowning jewel. Among other things, it is one of the few places where any old and important buildings remain in this furiously moulting city. The California Tower and related layout of buildings date to 1915, but that is ancient in San Diego. A sensitive effort has been made to supplement these older structures with newer ones calculated to establish a museum center of commodity and delight. Three museums—anthropology, art and natural history—submerged their jealousies in favor of a serious growth program. The City Council gave the needed boost by asking and getting public approval to give the museums the same minute cut of the tax dollar that the Zoo had enjoyed for years. At the same time the Zoo's tax money was withdrawn because the thing was such a huge commercial success that it no longer needed tax support. Now the museums are well on the way to the same top-world rating enjoyed by the Zoo.

Architect Robert Mosher acquitted himself so well in designing wings for the Fine Arts Gallery (1958) that he was engaged to develop the entire museum complex. He had also remade the Art Center in La Jolla by 1960. Especially happy were his auditorium designs at both places, but best of all was his theatre for the Theatre Arts Foundation in La Jolla. By the early 60's, under his hand, San Diego suddenly found itself luxuriating in three intimate theatres where before there had been none. There was still the problem of large theatres (an opera hall, an orchestra hall, etc.). Several of these have now come into

existence through conversion of the Fox and Spreckels movie theatres downtown and remodeling of the Federal Building in Balboa Park. Indeed the park area containing the Federal Building and a miscellany of structures left over from exposition days, has been given thorough architectural study, resulting in a center of the performing arts comparing favorably with the great Lincoln Square Center of Performing Arts in New York.

Perhaps the most important aspect of San Diego's center of performing arts is the school activity associated therewith. Training in dramatics, music and dance, which started under park department auspices in the forties, has grown to proportions that suggest a Juilliard of the West, only with a special San Diego inflection: young people who grow up here get intensive training and performing opportunities. This, together with the other amazing community features we have described, works to keep our good young talents at home, in addition to attracting talents from elsewhere. Locally trained people have priority—if they are equal to their assignments. On that basis, for one thing, our annual Shakespeare Festival has grown to first place among such festivals anywhere. Our symphony orchestra has come to satisfying maturity in a few years. Opera—serious, comic or light—is now frequently mounted in splendid style.

MIRACLE OF THE MEDIA

ALL THIS miraculous blooming in the desert was helped along immensely by the emergence of a lively daily newspaper to compete against the stodgy Copley press. It started, unlikely enough, as the semi-weekly El Cajon Valley News. When Publisher Si Cassidy decided to take the daily plunge, he soon found that hungry readers from the entire San Diego metropolis were subscribing in unexpected numbers. After all, they could get all the syndicated comics and features that the Copley papers carried. In addition, there was the scrappy editorial policy and the strong talent for grappling with growth problems of the community.

Not less helpful than the dynamic newspaper were the editorial activities of TV stations, Channels 6, 8 and 10 all found increasing time for "educational" programs, whether beamed for school or home attention. Much of the education was on community development questions, and gradually public opinion arose to support those who dared to plan big. Popular Harold Keen (Channel 8) was especially effective when he decided to present his material with editorial impact rather than merely as a parade of interesting interviews.

One of the finest achievements arising out of the new climate of enlightened public interest was the establishment of metropolitan government modeled on the success of Dade County, Florida, pioneered in the late 50's by San Diego's former city manager O. W. Campbell. The City of San Diego practiced annexation at a mad pace for years until its boundaries now include most of the area covered by the highway diagram (page 8), except for the previously incorporated cities (Chula Vista, El Cajon, La Mesa, etc.). City boundaries still remain, but they are disregarded by those functions of government—fire and police protection, utility service, highways, etc.—that are mutually conceded to the metropolitan agency. Uniform planning and zoning standards are one of the benefits of the next era. Resulting economies are the feature most appealing to most voters.

There are still pockets of confusion and clutter but these show signs of yielding especially because the better-planned areas have shown such good profits in both money and satisfaction.

The exceptionally orderly, progressive and livable character of the San Diego metropolis of 1968 has come about only because the people were led to desire it in their own interest. Serving their own interest so handsomely, they also have demonstrated the self-renewing power of the American civilization.

San Diego has indeed become the Boston of the West Coast as Roger Revelle was suggesting in '58 but with a modern difference. In the 19th century proud Boston thought of itself as the hub of the universe, and certainly the center of culture in America. San Diego may think of itself now in the full flush of the 20th as the main point of contact between a renewed America and an Orient that has been given many new reasons to esteem the U.S. We push toward the 21st century with reasonable assurance that elements of

the world's population will peaceably and constructively co-exist—like the competing neighbor-cities that have agreed to metropolitan supervision.

War? It is so much a thing of the past that it doesn't even intrude on nightmares anymore.

**This editor takes exception to Mr. Britton's dreamy acceptance of three ninety-acre shopping reservations or "plazas" in Mission Valley and his kissing off of the downtown area as a major retail shopping center in 1968. All shopping centers we have seen, no matter how well designed, integrated and landscaped, are monumental bores in which to shop, and we rue the day that the excitement, the variety, the very unplanned atmosphere of a central, traditional downtown district passes from the American scene. Granted that San Diego's central city has to date certainly has not achieved the grace and energy of a Fifth Avenue or a Champs Elysee. But other European and American cities, with even worse problems of traffic congestion, building blight, and lack of either public parking or mass transportation, have made successful attempts to lick these problems, making their historic downtown sites rich in greenery, sophisticated architecture, fashionable shops, good restaurants, private art galleries, comfortable bars and theatres. No shopping center, however, many thousand automobiles it can pack around itself on acres of asphalt, can possibly capture this elusive flavor, the sheer fun of a commercial, cultural, entertainment complex that makes a point of preserving the best of its old and at the same time it builds anew to fulfill its historic meaning: the function of providing a central heart—the market place—for a City that thinks of itself as one community. Without this spirit and without this heart a city is characterless, a fit victim to be drowned by the sea of shopping centers pouring southward from Los Angeles. E.F.S.*

The question is whether by 1968 we already will have passed the point of no return away from what Ed Self and I both would prefer.—J.B.

December 1958, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY, 50, Progress and Poverty in **DESIGN OF THE ART CENTER**; 53, Everybody Loves Vincent; 54, Opera Nights and Nightmares

Progress and Poverty in **DESIGN OF THE ART CENTER**

CAPTION: This view of the Pacific from Prospect Street through the grounds of the Art Center, one of the watermarks of distinction for the community of La Jolla, has just been wiped out by the construction of the Art Center's auditorium, seen at left in the rendering below. The article discusses how the exception view might have been respected in the plans.

Last month in a dreamy mood we gave Architect Robert Mosher credit in advance on the theory that his firm's three art commissions in San Diego* would result in pace-setting designs that would raise the general level of architecture being produced here. We should like to think that American art centers or museums would focus the design wisdom of our era, as the cathedrals did the Middle Ages, or the temples the Hellenic glory.

But, more often than not, it turns out that museum building projects are approached in the same "practical" spirit that leaves most modern buildings reasonably useful but unreasonably dull. From a designer's point of view, there might be a slender defense that a neutral building is the best setting to display works of art. The rebuttal, again, is look at the cathedrals, or look at The Cloisters, the captivating medieval museum in New York City, or look at the new Yale university gallery, which as aggressive architectural strength in its own right and yet is hugely successful as an all-purpose gallery, according to no less an observer than Bob Mosher himself.

Of course a main consideration of the art in a museum is that it be changeable. This fact determines the direction in which architectural inspiration may work. In most cases, interior space should be large, unbroken by fixed walls or columns, with high ceilings. Unquestionably the chief opportunity for architectural success is the lighting. Ideally, wherever possible there would be natural skylight, controlled by mechanical devices and supplemented by artificial light only as needed under lowering skies.

ARCHITECTS MOSHER and Drew had little chance to work with exhibition space in planning a \$700,000 addition to the Art Center in La Jolla. Their assignment was to design an auditorium, for which a large sum had been left by the late Frank Sherwood. But, in linking up the auditorium building with the existing art center, there was a transitional area, wedge-shaped, which offered a real possibility of architectural triumph, a chance to relate the building to the site in a way that would carry into the future the precious uniqueness of this key segment of La Jolla. Instead, a "practical" solution was adopted, mediocre as compared to what might be.

To understand the discussion at this point, please consult the plot plan reproduced. It shows that the auditorium and the old art center are basically two cubes set at a slight angle to each other, following the street curve and forming the wedge mentioned above. It also completely blots out the view of the Pacific from Prospect Street. Yet the glimpse of the ocean at this point on the main thoroughfare imparted much of the town's visual personality, a glimpse limited splendidly by highly individualistic trees as in Bill Reid's photo. Most of the trees on the property must come down to accommodate the auditorium.

To make up for the lost vista, the architects could have treated the "wedge" in an open manner so that the passerby would be magnetized toward the building by the promise of a spectacular view of the ocean. Such visual openness would be relatively easy to accomplish except that the decision has been taken and the contracts let. The gallery that fills up the wedge could have two glass walls instead of only one. (Draw curtains would suffice to close the room as necessary, and it could be used mainly for sculpture which prospers when lighted from all sides.) The staff offices which also block the wedge, and hog the ocean view, could be placed elsewhere at only slight sacrifice of convenience. The space they now occupy in the plan could be a sea-view terrace with refreshment tables (the latter is standard with museums). The legitimate question is whether superior public service and esthetic results do not warrant some sacrifice of staff convenience, it may also be a legitimate question whether public building designs shouldn't be exposed to open criticism before decisions are made.

The sunken gallery and garden facing the street will be a handsome touch but they hardly take best advantage of the site. An open treatment of the wedge between the buildings would have preserved the "spirit of the place," something that formerly meant a great deal to La Jolla leaders.

Mosher and Drew who have to their credit the spirit of the magical place known as the Green Dragon Colony of shops, are capable of better design than the Art Center appears to be. The spare-boned covered walkway seen in the rendering is a discreet gesture toward the old-time character of the neighborhood, delicately echoing walkways found in the nearby Women's Club and Bishop's School. There is talk of unifying the neighborhood in modern terms by construction of a landscaped two-level parking facility on the old playground, moving the latter somewhat southeast. The parking pool would serve the school, club, hospital and art center. Mosher and Drew have the esthetic sense to do the job right. Will the leaders of La Jolla support right decisions or only half-right ones?

In general appearance, as seen from Prospect Street, the enlarged Art Center will be perhaps too plain, though plainness is certainly preferably [sic] to phony elegance, and even phony elegance is expensive at our time and place. Perhaps elegant plainness would be ideal here.

The problem of relating new to old is seldom solved in today's architecture. Mosher and Drew could not bring themselves to repeat the look of the old, though it is simple and quite "modern." Much less could they bring themselves to trick up the old block with a veneer to match the new. They elected to let the old just set awhile with the thought that a later time might find a more graceful solution. For the new structure what they did was design a simple cage of reinforced concrete post and beam, filling in between the exposed ribs with concrete block. Present intention is to use concrete block the same color as the old Art Center, but this in one opinion is a mistake, since the two are different textures, they should have contrasting color, the difference being frankly accentuated rather than glossed over.

THE BRIGHTEST part of the Art Center addition will be the auditorium proper, as things look in the plans. Sherwood Hall gives promise of being fine for lectures, concerts and films. Sight lines and acoustics have been carefully studied and seating will be the last word in unsolid comfort. The stage is not

large enough to accommodate little theatre properly, but presumption is that the Art Center will keep its auditorium quite active without staging many plays.

A complaint might be the handling of the theatre foyer, it might have been larger and lighted from the sky, in which case it would be the premiere picture gallery of the center. Here again Efficiency rather than Inspiration appears to have been at work.

The construction plans provides six large studios or classrooms (some with the north light). In addition to some already ready functioning. This space seems to promise that a major art school is in the making. The Art Center already had a distinguished record in this department, both before and since the arrival of Director Patrick Malone. Malone's accomplishment, incidentally, is impressive, he has encourage recognition of our advanced or experienced artists and has hooked up the Art Center to the main line of museum activity in America. The engaged plant should mean further leaps into sophistication, though it is hardly the pace-setting architecture we had hoped for. Perhaps this was too much to ask.

I think it is a sound ideas that public buildings should be submitted to the public for critical discussion while still in the plan stage. Attitudes so generated may or may not cause improvements in the building plans but it is a mistake to assume that building committees or officials always know best. Our botched county courthouse is the prime example of officials misled by notions of economy, and the Art Center seems to suffer deficiency to a degree. The Art Center may properly be considered a property building because of its property is tax exempt.

EVERYBODY LOVES VINCENT now that he's safely dead

For \$50 you can buy the complete *Letters of Vincent Van Gogh* if you get your order in soon enough. Vroman's Book Store alone had sold seven sets in the first two weeks after publication, and publishers' reports are that the first edition should be gone before Christmas.

For \$1.75 you could have heard Vincent Price read from the letters of van Gogh at the Pacific Beach High School, October 29, if you got your ticket early enough. Hundreds were turned away.

For 50 cents you could have gone through the turnstiles at the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco in October to see an extensive selection of Van Gogh's paintings. But the turnstiles were checking like the Times Square subway and the crowds before the pictures were as thick at the master's brushstrokes. The same show and similar crowds will be at Los Angeles County Museum in December.

For \$369,600 you could have bought van Gogh's *Public Garden at Arles* (a painting not a piece of real estate) in a recent London auction if you were the person who nodded in the highest bid.

The object of all this attention was a hard working "failure" of whom it is commonly said that he only sold a couple of pictures in his lifetime. Actually he "sold" the largest part of his output to his loving brother Theo in return for handouts that barely kept Vincent alive and supplied with painting materials. Brother Theo was an art dealer, and in the long view of history it now seems that he struck the greatest bargain ever made in picture dealing for Theo's family still controls much of their poor relation's work, and today Vincent is the world's most popular painter. The family also controls the letters which were addressed to Theo. Considering the figure of man that emerges in these letters, in these outpourings of an eloquent heart, it looks as though Vincent van Gogh will long exert an appeal like Lincoln's to the common man, and, like Lincoln, will long engage the uncommon man's respect. Vincent is both easy to appreciate and hard to beat for profundity.

The letters can be read with rich reward on many levels, giving lessons in tragic endurance, moral fervor and courage, or giving lessons in the art of painting. As a sample, we'll select a few passages tending to prove that painters grow largely by studying their own and others' paintings, a familiar enough attitude to painters but a prime lesson for students and gallery-goers alike.

All of the following thoughts were addressed to Theo around 1885.

“I firmly believe that my work will improve by seeing more pictures, because when I see a picture I can analyze how it is done.

“As to Poussin, he is a painter and a thinker who always gives inspiration, in whose pictures all reality is at the same time symbolic.

Speaking of Frans Hals painting of *The Lean Company*, van Gogh seized on one full length figure: “That figure is all gray from top to toe—I shall call it pearl gray—of a peculiar neutral tone, probably the result of orange and blue mixed in such a way they neutralize each other. By varying that keynote, making it somewhat lighter here, somewhat darker there, the whole figure is as if it were painted in the one same gray . . . Now into that gray he brings blue and orange—and some white, the waistcoat has satin bows of a divine soft blue, sash and flag orange, a white collar . . . That most splendid color scale against a black background of a gray cleverly mixed by uniting just those two, let me call them poles of electricity . . . I seldom saw a more divinely beautiful figure. It is unique

“What struck me most in seeing the old Dutch pictures again is that most of them were *painted quickly* . . . I have especially admired the hands by Rembrandt and Hals, hands that lived but were not finished in the sense that they demand nowadays. And heads, too—eyes, nose, mouth done with a single stroke of brush without any touching whatever . . . To paint in one rush as much as possible in one rush.

“What you write about a certain study of a basket with apples is very well observed, but does this observation come from yourself??? Because I fancy, I should almost say *I am sure* that you used *not* to see that kind of thing. However this may be, here we are on our way to agreeing more about the colors . . . Just to explain how that study was painted—simply this: green and red are complementary colors. Now in the apples there is a red which is very vulgar in itself; further, next to it, some greenish things. But there are also one or two apples of another color, of a certain pink which makes the whole thing right. That pink is the broken color, got by mixing the above mentioned red and the above mentioned green. That’s why there is harmony between the colors . . . I am awfully glad that you notice a combination of color, be it through direct or indirect personal perception.

“A man’s head or a woman’s head well observed and at leisure, is divinely beautiful, isn’t it? Well, one loses that *general harmony* of tones in nature by painfully exact imitation; one keeps it by recreating in a parallel color scale which may be not exactly, or even far from exactly, like the model. Always intelligently making use of the beautiful tones which the colors form of their own accord when one breaks them on the palette. I repeat—starting from one’s palette, from one’s knowledge of the harmony of colors, is quite different from following nature mechanically and servilely . . . *Color expresses something in itself.*”

There is much more along the same lines in the letters. One is tempted to speculate what Vincent would be doing if he were alive today. Probably his work would have elements like Matisse and Picasso, possibly touching something like Pollack or deKooning. Certainly, because of building on top of the painting tradition, his work would be “advanced” and difficult for the large public to follow. In part, his huge popular success came because of the time in which he lived, a time in which painters had not yet abandoned the recognizable image in their pursuit of the inner meanings of color and form. Vincent was essentially a painter, in love with what paint could do. To him the medium of color had its own life. That his why his work would have been more difficult and less appreciated if he were alive today.

It is a lesson worth pondering by the many people who are willing to pay [sic] through the turnstiles to see van Gogh’s paintings but who dismiss today’s painters with snorts of bitterness.

For those who cannot buy *The Complete Letters*, there are reference copies at the Public Library and the Fine Arts Gallery. It was courtesy of the Fine Arts Gallery that this review was written. Members of the Athenaeum in La Jolla (\$5 a year) may put their names on the waiting list to take the three volumes

home, all twelve pounds of them. In print also, at \$5, is *Dear Theo*, a 1937 selection of the letters edited by Irving Stone.

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Photographer Lynn Fayman, one of the town's steadiest champions of modern art, has begun a policy of offering his studios for weekend exhibitions by artists of his choice. First invited was Fred Hocks, who might be called the dean of the San Diego moderns. Hocks was born in Germany, came to this country in 1903, was infected with modernism by New York's famous Armory Show of 1913 and settled in San Francisco to become part of the advance guard in that city. The well-traveled Hocks, has been happily based in San Diego for a decade or so, and lives now in Del Mar with his wife, the lovely sculptress Paula Rohrer. In April he will have a show in Paris, followed by one in Barcelona; after that his intention is to settle in Majorca. In recent years, Fred Hocks has done a great many monotypes which carry forward all his old canny sense of form and color values, and add a lyrical joyousness which is a new note in his work. Abstract, of course, but bearing a tantalizing amount of recognizable image. The medium of monotype itself (manipulating paint freely on glass with brushes, rollers, stencils, etc., until the desired effect is achieved, after which it is printed onto paper) encourages a happy effect, the right note, incidentally, for Christmas giving, priced around \$30. A selection of Hock's monotypes will be on view through December at the Capri Theatre, where they will be a suitable counterpart to *Gigi*, the gay musical on the screen. Below, Fred Hocks in Fayman's studio.

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OPERA NIGHTS AND NIGHTMARES

THE OPERA GUILD bravely overreached its strength this year in bringing San Diego three operas. Purchased from the San Francisco Opera Company at a total cost of \$54,000, the three did not sell as solidly as expected, and the guild was left with a deficit of several thousand dollars. A top seat price of \$11 was deemed necessary to meet expenses, and many of the comfortable but costly armchairs were unoccupied despite a great deal of publicity, especially regarding the social excitement of opera going.

Besides balking at the cost of seats, some stayaways may have wandered if the opera would be sufficiently exciting artistically. Except for the handful of enthusiasts who bone up on plot and dialogue, most seatholders are confronted often only by a stageful of corny gesticulation and an earful of foreign tongue, only the high points of the music really stir them. But acoustics at the Fox Theatre are rewarding only in the forepart of the first floor and some parts of the balcony, lower rear is muffled and upper balcony is noisy. Even the best singers are hard put to bring down the house in applause.

This year, Massenet's *Manon*, which is subtle and clear French music, when the acoustics are clear and the production subtle, definitely made only a dim impression on the San Diego audience. It didn't come across. Evidence: the applause, only moderate in tone.

Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* was better sung than *Manon*, with especial magic in the ensemble singing. It got a better rating on our applause meter, but its good humor only partly registered on our laugh meter—because so few in the audience knew what was going on or what was being said. It's a silly story, but caught up in the spirit of the master's music, it's great fun.

Verdi's *The Force of Destiny* came off best of all. It was part of the composer's secret that his music is strong enough to reach people through thick and thin. This performance was well played and well sung, with the magnificent vocal powers of Leonie Rysanek rising above all other considerations. This is an opera with a thoroughly artificial story, and all the listener needs is some idea of the essentials, except occasionally the exact words are best ignored.

Los Angeles Times critic Albert Goldberg is forever calling for opera in English. Far better, it seems to me, would be an adaptation of TV's idiot board whereby clues to what is happening would be flashed directly on a screen stretched across the vast dark space above the stage. The clues could often be no more than descriptions of what is being sung. These "titles" could be glanced at or not, as each spectator

chose. As things are, there is no choice but to learn the opera in advance or sit through it punished by ignorance and only half-enjoying it at best.

An innovation that rendered opera intelligent might make repeat customers of many people for whom once is enough the way opera is usually presented. The idiot board continuity, indeed, might develop a considerable literary quality of its own and thus take the curse off the inanity of many librettos. The music would be more compelling than ever, and audiences bigger than ever without so much stress on gladrag, la-de-la.

Speaking of la-de-la, it is necessary again to say here that the social promotions associated with opera sometime result in intolerable absurdities. It is widely known here and elsewhere to San Diego's shame, that at least one famous singer of the San Francisco Opera Company has failed to appear in San Diego because she is a Negro and thus a little awkward to assimilate into the after-opera suppers and overnight guesting so dear to the hearts of the Opera Guild. Be it noted quickly that only a few guilders approve such benightedness; many members of the guild are generous, broad-minded, sociologically up-to-date and hungry for good singers regardless of hue.

Another way to rebuild audiences is to build a theatre. Recent years have seen repeated frustration in San Diego efforts to put up a publicly-owned theatre, and the prospects continue to decline.

However, in the planning stage at the moment, is a startling new concept of theatre that ties in with our previous speculation in these pages that shopping centers may displace old-style downtowns. Land has been offered in the Grossmont Shopping Center, a dozen miles east of San Diego's downtown, for a theatre of perhaps 2500 seats. Talk is of Kaiser dome construction (see SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE for December 1957). If built, this will use the acres of shopping center parking that are usually free at night, and will draw audiences by freeway from a very wide circle within which will be the old city of San Diego. This development would dim more than ever the old city's chances of a new theatre—unless it be conversion of Balboa Park's Federal Building, which was designed as a theatre but never completed as such.

One of the town's indefatigable opera champions, the beloved and generous Mrs. William Paxton Cary, still clings to the southeast corner of Balboa Park (Marston's Point). Mrs. Cary reminds us that architects Frank Lloyd Wright and Richard Neutra endorsed the site, and she believes a persistent campaign could put it over in spite of the town's scatteration of interests. But unless such a campaign is going to get under way very soon, there had better be some consideration or good wishes upon the Federal Building as a potentially economical yet satisfying solution. It could push toward 3500 seats and thus be large enough to permit reasonable prices for opera.

1959—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: Jas. (Eliz.), ed. San Diego Mag., h. 1433 Sutter

January 1959, San Diego Magazine, **ART OF THE CITY**: 32-37. Strength of Irving Gill.

The Art Center in La Jolla begins to regain status in the spirit world this January with a photo exhibition of Irving Gill's architecture. The Art Center itself was a Gill house originally, but remodeling offended the ghosts of history by erasing the Gill touch—for better or worse. Architectural scholars think it was for the worse since they keenly feel the need for America to hold on to the significant buildings done in the past, and Gill is rapidly becoming a darling of theirs. The present account will try to recognize the strength and the weakness of that San Diego architects work.

The Art Center officials could argue with much justice that their remodeling was necessary as a practical matter, but with the rise of Gill's fame they should at least blush in a token of embarrassment. After all, museums should lead the way in preserving historic architecture. After the blush they can regain face by taking the lead, becoming active propagandists for saving the good old things whenever destruction threatens, and even before.

This exhibition is a step in increasing local respect for our historically important architect. According to the catalog, more than half of the hundred buildings designed by Gill in his career from 1895 to 1935 were built in San Diego. Of these about 45 remain nearly in their original state, six or so were drastically remodeled and six or so have vanished. That's a pretty good record of survival as America buildings go. But it may be expected that the next 25 years will see most of Gill's work wiped out unless there are conscious efforts at preservation. Let the Art Center take heed.

What are Gill's strength as a designer? A fine, gentle essay by Esther McCoy in the exhibition catalog suggests many answers. She has made a thorough study of him and other pioneers for a forthcoming book, *Five California Masterbuilders*. This exhibition grew out of her researchers and the exhaustive camera record made by Marvin Rand.

The word *masterbuilder* throws the emphasis in the right place. The son of a building contractor was more interested in doing than in reading. Rather than a college education, he had apprenticeship with one of the best Chicago firms, Adler & Sullivan. His nephew Lewis Gill, also an architect and still living in San Diego, is quoted about Uncle: "He didn't know one style from another," and Miss McCoy suggests that was his good fortune. He made many experiments with structure. In the century's first decade he was pushing solid concrete for the "wholly sanitary house" and simplifying interior trim to the same end, even rounding corners where floors or sink counters met walls. Simplification became his passion, or rather he found it restful, as he said, "to see the simple cube house with creamy walls, sheer and plain, rising boldly into the sky, unrelieved by cornices or overhang of roof . . . I like the bare honesty of these houses, the childlike frankness and chaste simplicity of them."

Miss McCoy says, "The wide acceptance of the architect in a town of under 25,000 in the first decade of the century is extraordinary, and Gill deserves much of the credit. Architecture is also indebted to his clients, who sailed trustingly on an unharried course." This may be true of the West, but many small towns in the East accepted the architect as early as Thomas Jefferson.

But it follows that among Gill's early clients were some of the truly leading citizens of the small town: Lee, Burnham, Bailey, Scripps, Klauber, Wangenheim and Marston. George Marston was perhaps the leadingest citizen of his time, and we honor his sense of beauty with pictures of his estate, pages 38-39. If his standards prevailed would today be everywhere as beautiful as that estate. Such a result would require that we practice city planning as wisely as did San Diego under his tutelage.

Perhaps the finest thing about Gill's structures is the comfortable way they have with gardens. Many of the houses, still privately occupied, are the ripest kind of marriage between the buildings and luxuriant landscape. The finest example readily open to public inspection is the Bishop's School and the neighboring La Jolla Women's Club. The latter in particular is an architectural triumph because an absolute minimum of building is generally visible, seeming to consist only of round-arched walkways and heavy wooden pergolas which form a happy transition to the trees and shrubs.

The simple round-arch is the purest of Gill's forms, and may stand as the hallmark of his style. It has not only simplicity but elegance, a timeless quality of association with the forms of historic architecture and a belongingness where landscape is concerned. The latter point applies to the post-and-beam pergola. When the two motifs come together you have a style of great power that ripens beautifully with time—provided landscape is lovingly brought along.

Gill was acutely attuned to his mission. He described California after he arrived in 1895 as an opportunity unparalleled in history, "the newest white page turned for registration." He noted that "the wide plains, the noble mountains, lovely hills and canyons [were] waiting to hold the record of this generation's history, ideals, imagination, sense of romance, and honesty." From that statement alone we could deduce that Gill had the true architect's mentality, the sense of time and place and concern for honesty.

Miss McCoy gracefully tells how he took hold here. "He opened himself to all the presences, the adobes—earth forms—that gradually begin to appear in his own structures; the U-shaped plan of Ramona's marriage place, embracing a garden and closed at the end by a high wall; the single wall redwood houses,

'lovable little camp houses,' he called them, 'as natural a part of the foothills and canyons as the tawny mushrooms or the gray stone. There were the missions in whose long low lines, graceful arcades, tile roofs, bell towers, arched doorways and walled gardens, we find a most expressive medium for retaining tradition, history and romance,' he wrote in the *Californian*. Gill's style grew out of what he found in Southern California. To this he added the things that were missing, and it became an architecture as unobtrusive as the change of seasons; so integrated from the past, the climate and way of life that its correctness made it blend into the scene, as do the houses in a Cotswold village, or ones in Tuscany. That San Diego has something approaching a unity of style is due entirely to Gill whose own work was extensive and was widely copied by contractors and various draftsmen who had been through his office."

I suspect that Miss McCoy's diligent pursuit of her subject had impressed her with suggestions of a "unity of style" about San Diego that will not be apparent to most observers. Certainly Spanish and Mission influences are prominent here, but perhaps not more so than in Los Angeles, and certainly many non-Spanish and non-Gill influences have had free rein here too. The most prominent common denominator of San Diego "style" is the rounded arch, so typical of Gill, which finds its most conspicuous expression in the long arcades of Balboa Park's exposition complex, and in Cabrillo Bridge designed under Bertram Goodhue, Gill's arch-rival as it were.

We can say, I think, that Irving Gill's principles and the best of his actual work set a standard that San Diego should be very proud to follow more consciously than it does. The work of certain San Diego architects, men as various in their styles as Lloyd Ruocco, Robert Mosher and Bruce Richards, to mention only three, is in line with the Gill tradition. The Gill exhibition at the Art Center starting January 10th should be studied by all architects and builders with a view to renewing the strength of spirit in their own crafts, though, there may be little in the way of specific forms they will want to borrow.

January 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 38-41. The Weakness of Irving Gill—and the cause of his eclipse

The buildings on these pages—all except one designed by Irving Gill—make up a thumbnail sketch of the history of American architecture in the first third of the twentieth century. (1) the Renaissance madness, (2) the organ simplifying traceable to Louis Sullivan, (3) the Mission craze, (4) the "shoebox" international style, (5) the open-wall policy, (6) damn-the-cost opulence. Gill did not design the California Tower (6), and thereby was rung personal tragedy for the San Diegan, for the story of which we are indebted to Esther McCoy's catalog comments for the Gill show at the Art Center.

The tower was designed by Bertram Goodhue, chief architect for the exposition of 1915. Gill was at the top of his San Diego success just then and he almost got the exposition job because of his good standing with local leaders for whom he had built houses, particularly George Marston and Julius Wangerheim. But when it was discovered that the Easterner Goodhue, "such a distinguished gentleman who had made such a deep study of the Spanish-Colonial," not only would consider the post but wanted it very much, Gill lost out and his stock tumbled. His San Diego practice dried up as the fad for "authentic" Spanish took hold. Gill enjoyed a few substantial commissions thereafter, but he died in poverty in 1936, "almost forgotten" as Esther McCoy reports.

Looking at the pictures here, it is easy to see the superior sophistication of Goodhue. His tower is a triumph of scale and proportion, abstract matters that often eluded Gill. Ungainliness often crept into Gill's designs. His fountain is after a Roman model but it has no grace and is quite preposterous in the jumble of effects, including bronze portraits of the city's founding fathers who are submitted everlastingly to shower baths.

Gill's First Methodist Church gives San Diego a hint of Louis Sullivan's strong-honed style, as in the window arrangements shown here, but the complex masses of the church do not compose well. It doesn't compare remotely in design value with the Gothic churches of Goodhue in the East.

The Oceanside school is handsome and "modern" in the view shown here, but it is clownish in other aspects. Incidentally, this certainly was *not* the first instance, as the catalog suggests, of a classroom

wall opening completely to the outdoors; several San Diego schools, including Grant, Jefferson and Brooklyn, had such walls as early as 1914.

So Irving Gill's design sense did not easily handle the complex situations whereby the full strength of an architect is tested. It may be that his valued push toward simplicity was a product of his limitations as much as of his philosophy.

Not that simplicity always yields handsome results either. A careful look at almost any Gill building will reveal visual imbalances that might just as well have been avoided. The Darst Flats (4) seem to foreshadow the freely punctured cubes of Le Corbusier, but there is no sense of order in the pattern of the openings. In the Wilson Acton Hotel (3) the smaller tower at the right seems to bear uncomfortably on the window below it. In the Melville Klauber residence (page 36) the composing is really done by the great tree; take it away and the pattern of windows would yield little pleasure. Many of these exterior imbalances can be explained as the result of designing from the inside out, quite the modern way. Still, successful architecture requires some kind of visual logic on the exterior. In Gill's case this often was achieved only by plentiful planting—to which the simple wall surfaces were a good wife.

Gill's interiors also frequently showed clumsy design—too long and narrow, too low, too dark. An example of great interior design success, however, is the lofty balconied studio of the Bailey house illustrated on page 41. This was handsomely carpentered 50 years ago in redwood which was never finished in any way and still today has a honey look. One of San Diego's handsomest rooms and among the very best by Gill. After this blunt review of Irving Gill's design deficiencies, the reader is referred back to the pages where his strength may be noted, and be appreciated as the most significant and architectural innovator of San Diego's past. Buried and forgotten 22 years ago, he has come alive again through his work and is today more appreciated regionally than ever before.

January 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 42, The fine art of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau; 42, Mr. Cushman and the Planning Commission; 43, The brittle art of John Burton; 67, The Move 'Gigi'; 57-77, The Book: 'More in Anger'; 77, The Exploding Metropolis.

San Diego, 5 Jan 1959

Dear Mrs. McCoy,

I am so incensed, disgusted and discouraged over an article by James Britton in the Jan, 59 issue of "San Diego" magazine, using your material and Rand's photos on Gill's work, that I shall give out no more material to anyone until I find how much, if any control we have over who uses it.

This sensational stuff must be stopped, at least so far as I am able to do anything about it. "Died in poverty" indeed. He lived as he wished and at least had the asset of a well off wife. Must the public be feed this kind of stuff instead of a just appreciation of his merits and deficiencies?

We Must talk over this matter when you are next in San Diego.

Incidentally, I believe I have unearthed a bunch of material, letters, drawings etc. from the early days in San Diego when Gill was early in his practice here.

I hope to see this material in a few days.

Sincerely, Louis J. Gill

February 1959, San Diego Magazine, 69, Sidney Warren

February, 1959, San Diego Magazine, Vol. 11, No. 4, 44-45. ART OF THE CITY; The center for potentially the finest museum complex in America . . . plan showing basic scheme of development by the Fine Arts Society before the Putnam Foundation came along

February 1959, San Diego Magazine, the **CENTER** for potentially the finest museum complex in America

Above is the basic scheme of development planned by the Fine Arts Society in Balboa Park before the Putnam Foundation came along with a cool million and won for itself the land intended for the East Wing. The first thing to notice, with approval, is that the Fine Arts plan includes a great deal of covered walkway, conforming with the system of arcades inherited from the exposition of 1915. (The rows of dots represent the posts of the walkways.) Similar walkways are found in the development plans of the Art Center in La Jolla, served by the same architects, Mosher and Drew, so, while Art Center and Fine Arts Gallery are in strenuous competition with each other as indicated in the preceding pages, they will present something of a unified-front architecturally. Indeed if these walkways at both museums are handsome enough they just might inspire a widespread revival of arcades that would be entirely suited to San Diego. Meanwhile, any notion of removing the old arcades in Balboa Park, in order to widen Laurel Street, should be resisted.

The most foolish thing about the plan shown here is that the Children's activities room and the library open out on the same "studio court." The next most foolish thing is that the windows open out to the marvelous wooded view north of the building.

But there is a deeper flaw in the plan that arises because it is based on a partial and opportunistic approach to our museum potential. Our discussion of the Putnam Foundation suggests that rather than spend its millions on an entirely new building to house its own collection, it had more wisely to model to its own use the existing building (the one in the center of the drawing), improving the light and the humidity control, and donate perhaps half of its million to the Fine Arts Society for its development program.

The development program as shown here suffers from insufficient coordination with other nearby museum activity. Please bear in mind that out of the picture to the left (or west) is the Museum of Man, which emphasizes the culture of the Americas and has growth needs of its own, out of the picture to the right (or east) are the Museum of Natural History and the Electric Building, the logical location for a Hall of Science and Planetarium.

Considering the entire museum area, the whole West Wing of the Fine Arts Gallery, including Asiatic Gallery and auditorium had rather better be the East Wing, with the Japanese Garden leading out to the existing lily pond backed by the existing Botanical Building. The library should be there too, with doors opening onto the garden where people could crack books under trees.

However, the East Wing is where the Putnam Foundation wants to move in. If the Putnam Foundation *must* build there, then the auditorium should be even further east, east of the lily pond, in which case it would serve jointly the Fine Arts, Natural History and Science.

Children's activities and contemporary exhibition galleries being together poetically and practically, they should comprise a West Wing, interrelated in planning with the Museum of Man, and the wing; another auditorium should be built, mainly for children.

If our museum officials and city officials were equal to their responsibilities, they would see to it that the entire complex of museums be composed as a single grand design, an especially crucial consideration being the location of auditoriums for maximum use. Just possible the Bartholomew master plan study of Balboa Park will exert beneficial pressure in this respect, but that cannot be taken for granted.

February, 1959, San Diego Magazine, Vol. 11, No. 4, 40-42. Art of the City: **the CENTER for potentially the finest convention city in America**

Balboa Park is the scene for two dramatic plans announced in the fall quarter of 1958. The following discussion of these plans will try to provide more facts than have yet appeared in print, to read between the lines of the public pronouncements and to evaluate the prospects in terms of the general public's best interests.

As new president of the Convention and Tourist Bureau, bold Robert Peterson was expected to shake things up a bit. What he offered as the sure-cure for San Diego's convention blues was the

conversion of the mammoth Ford Building, sitting disused in the park since the exposition of 1935-36. In the great center patio, graced now by giant pepper and gum trees that hardly anyone has seen in their maturing years, Robert the Bold held a noon meeting attended by many of the town's mister-bigs, who sat eating box lunches. Bob gave the leash to several speakers, including Henry Foster who let everyone know that this had really been his idea years ago but no one had paid attention until now. Dr. Glenn Havens made a weak statement in which, speaking for the promoters of a Hall of Science and Industry who had also wanted to settle in the Ford Building, he announced that for harmony's sake his people would take the nearby Federal Building instead.

It became evident that the reason for the new fascination with the Ford Building as a convention center was twofold. 1) Converting it would be cheaper (estimate \$1-1/2 million) than building from scratch elsewhere, 2) the hotel people, whose properties in the last few years have become divided between the downtown and Mission Valley, suddenly discovered Balboa Park as a midway point between the two hotel clusters.

The Peterson plan clearly had the support of the councilmen and the mayor for two main reasons: 1) the alternative, building from scratch, would mean driving through an unpopular bond issue; 2) unanimous support from the hotel men was such a miracle that the plan might be justified as economically sound, at least in the short view, long enough anyway to get past the elections.

An acute reflection of the opportunistic nature of the planning process in San Diego is cast by the fact that the metropolitan planning committee of the Chamber of Commerce had concluded after careful study that the convention center should be built (at a cost of about \$5 million) in Mission Bay Park near the junction of Highway 80 and 101. The Peterson Plan came along just in time to tie the Chamber of Commerce tongue; the Chamber of Commerce thinking was not made public, though there are substantial virtues of the Mission Bay site which should be discussed publicly (and have been so discussed in these pages).

Keys to success of the Peterson Plan are enormously increased parking in Balboa Park *and* enormous enlargement of Cabrillo Freeway which runs through the park linking downtown with Mission Valley. It is not generally realized that the State Division of Highways intends to make Cabrillo Freeway eight lanes. This will mean tearing up the most beautiful parkway south of Santa Barbara just as its ripest. It will also mean changing the sense of the scene from a park with a reasonably scaled freeway running through it, to a torrential freeway with certain fragments of the park adjacent.

The traffic increase in Balboa Park, the increase of blacktop parking there, and the increase of commercial activity centering around a convention hall all spell drastic reduction in the park quality of the park, and this at a time when evidence is accumulating that a densing population like ours will need much more park space, several times more park space, not less. This is decidedly a question of the general welfare which is being ignored because the public at large is not adequately represented, certainly not by the present councilmen and mayor.

If, as seems likely, the city council is going to develop a convention business center around the Ford Building in Balboa Park, then it should at the same time announce the setting aside of suitable acreage elsewhere in the city for the major park, or parks that will be needed. Mission Bay Park can hardly be said to fill this need since it is a special purpose park, largely aquatic and largely commercial too. There is an opportunity in this connection for some of our large land holders, Roscoe Hazard in Mission Valley, for example, or the Fletchers in the Miramar area, to give acreage for parks that could be named in honor of them.

The makeshift of the Hall of Science and Industry to the Federal Building is a precious piece of petty opportunism that reflects credit on no one concerned. It happens that the Federal Building was given by the federal government to the city with the understanding that it would be completed as a civic theater. It has foundations designed for a sloping theater floor, a reinforced concrete shell within which an ideal theater shape could be achieved, and potential seating for 3500 with a balcony. If the Ford Building is going to be a convention hall, than it makes more sense than ever that the Federal Building should be a

theater, as part of a complete entertainment and convention center that *could* be the most attractive anywhere.

The Hall of Science properly belongs alongside the other museums—the Museum of Man, Natural History, Fine Arts, all of which are further north in the park along Laurel Street. The structure in that group known as the Electric Building is logical for remodeling into a Hall of Science complete with planetarium.

Fortunately, the City has already signed a contract with Harland Bartholomew & Associates, a St. Louis engineering firm hired for the express purpose of shaping a master plan for Balboa Park. Decisions about convention centers and museums will be held up until the master planners have at least made a preliminary swipe at their job. They were scheduled to start in January, and they will be under a lot of pressure. Will they proceed independently on the basis of planning logic, as planners should, or will they kow-tow to the politicians who hired them?

February, 1959, San Diego Magazine, Vol. 11, No. 4, 42-43. **The Putnam and Timken “Gifts”**

Due to an outstanding job of misreporting in the daily newspapers, many San Diegans may have the impression that the Putnam Foundation is giving its two-million dollar collection of “old master” paintings to the City, or at least to the Fine Arts Society. *The Evening Tribune* erred in a four-column head and in its story November 13th. *The Union*’s headline of the same day was no better but its story by Bryant Evans was essentially accurate: \$1,000,000 would build in Balboa Park a Timken Gallery which *would* become the property of the City, but only on condition that it be leased back on acceptable terms (minimum lease of 50 years) to the Putnam Foundation for exhibition of its collection, which would continue in its ownership.

Actually, none of the works of art in the Fine Arts Gallery belong to the public. Everything except the building belongs to the Fine Arts Society, a private corporation which theoretically could decide at any time to pack up its things and go elsewhere. That’s unlikely, since the Society gets free rent in a city-owned building in a strategic location in a city-owned building, and a large part of its operating budget is from the city coffers. And the Society is quite seriously dedicated to public service.

For many years the Fine Arts Society received gifts from the elderly Putnam sisters who lived in the tiled Palacio at Fourth and Walnut Streets. As their powers declined the bankers and lawyers took a firmer hand. The gifts ceased and the Foundation was formed five or six years ago. Now the Foundation is in effect its own fine arts society, keeping strict control over the Putnam fortune tied up in expensive works of art. In order to keep its tax free status, the Foundation must exhibit its works free to the public. This it has done by lending pictures to major American museums. Now the Foundation is ready to settle down in some one place. It just so happens that the Putnam Foundation management also controls the new Timken Foundation, made up of moneys from another family that formerly gave works of art to the San Diego Fine Arts Society; the Timken fortune in fact built the present Fine Arts Gallery. The sense of the recent sensation involving a total of \$3,000,000 was that Timken Foundation dollars would build a new Timken Gallery and the Putnam Foundation would display its pictures there. Thus splendid memorials to two expiring families would be achieved, and the family lawyers and bankers who are directors of the two foundations would retain their accounts indefinitely.

Under the circumstances, it seems odd that the trustees of the Fine Arts Society would “stand up and cheer” as reported in the papers, when they were presented with the foundations’ intentions. It was not so odd that Mayor Dail added a loud executive hurrah: the Putnam-Timken maneuver would mean reduced pressure on the city budget for cultural expenses.

In truth, the Fine Arts Society was being asked to move over and make room for another art-owning private corporation that wants to use part of the park. Literally, the Fine Arts Society has to give up an area in which it hoped to build a wing of its own. Moreover, the Fine Arts Society is expected to return to the Putnam Foundation on long-term loan many of the pictures given to the Society by the Putnam sisters before the foundation was formed.

One of the early efforts of the Putnam Foundation was to “pack” the Fine Arts Society board with members chosen by the Foundation. Such total eclipse was resisted by the Society but, to judge from the recent cheering, permanent partial eclipse is now acceptable to that body. It remains to be seen what future relations between the two boards will be. Which will dominate?

On the surface it might look as though any method for accumulating museum riches in the park should be eagerly embraced. Perhaps there should be a hundred separate foundations or corporations each with its own building in Balboa Park and each strictly controlling what goes on inside its building. But, where do you draw the line? Do you tell the 101st billionaire that he can’t build his memorial in Balboa Park because all the room is taken?

Realistically, things will never reach that pass, but there is a question here of omnipotent public policy. The City already has agreements with several private corporations operating museums and a zoo in Balboa Park. But each museum is in a separate field, there are no two of a kind. Having two art museums side by side makes as much sense as having two zoos, one, say for elephants, and the other for non-elephants.

There probably isn’t another art museum in the country that would have moved over for the Putnam Foundation as gracefully as did the San Diego Fine Arts Society. The local group was psychologically conditioned by a long-cherished hope that the Putnam Collection would come to it. The Society allowed one excellent director, Reginald Poland, to resign when he incurred the Putnam displeasure by doubting the quality of some of the family’s acquisitions. Another excellent director, Thomas Robertson, had his health and his museum career wrecked by the tensions arising from the political climate within the Society. A former president of the Fine Arts board, Edmund T. Price, told this writer we were in for “seven lean years” after the Putnam troubles arose; as of 1959 it has been just about seven years since the Fine Arts Society lost its standing as a potential chief beneficiary of the Putnam will and started maneuvering to regain same. The “will” has now been opened, so to speak, and the Fine Arts Society has received nothing except a self-sufficient neighbor.

Moving most of the “old masters” to the Timken Gallery will leave the Fine Arts Society in possession of much bare wall space in the old Fine Arts Gallery. The old building will have to serve for contemporary exhibits and activities when, in architectural justice, it is better adapted to the display of “old masters.” The fireproof Fine Arts Gallery was built and given to the City in 1925 by Mr. and Mrs. Appleton Bridges. Because Mrs. Bridges was a Timken, it would seem respectful of her intentions to use Timken Foundation funds to renovate the Fine Arts Gallery and make it the ideal repository of the Putnam Collection, changing the name Fine Arts Gallery to Timken Gallery. There would then be some Timken funds left over, perhaps half a million dollars, which could be contributed to the Fine Arts Society development fund for additional structures in keeping with a master plan.

Nothing like this is probable, because the banker and lawyer who dominate the boards of the two meshed foundations have much less understanding of art than they have of investment enterprise. One member of the Putnam Foundation’s five-man board is Banker Allen J. Sutherland who has much civic spirit but frequently appears as champion of the scenery painters who disapprove of too much artistic experiment. The other San Diego member of the board is Lawyer Walter Ames, who is not known to have any personal enthusiasm for advanced art, though his brother, Arthur Ames, is a leading Southern California art teacher.

Most art-knowing but shadowy figure back of the Putnam Foundation is Alfred Frankfurter, publisher of *Art News* and a widely-consulted wise man of art who plays both sides of the street and uses both front doors and back. This is to say, he promotes both “modern art” and “old masters,” hobnobs with the wealthy buyer and the lowly artist alike. Presumably, he will continue to advise the Putnam Foundation and, for the sake of his own reputation, will try to keep up the quality of its “old master” purchases, for which the Foundation has over \$300,000 a year. The half of Frankfurter that is devoted to “modern art” could be weighed in on the side of splitting the Timken money, as suggested above, but why should he care that much about the San Diego public’s stake in a second program?

If the City Council were functioning at a sufficiently high ethical level, instead of as a false-economy bloc, it would require the Putnam-Timken interests to fit into a master plan—instead of requiring the master plan, if any, to fit around the Putnam-Timken “gift.” The far-sighted thing to do about museums would be to bring them all together under one administration and support them by a small percentage of the tax dollar, such as the Zoo now gets. (The flourishing Zoo doesn’t need it anymore, but no move has been made to repeal the Zoo ordinance.) Then the whole museum program could be brought along on a respectable pattern of growth that would surely attract large donations from people whose first concern is to leave a legacy in the public interest. San Diego’s great friend, Mrs. Henry B. Clark, for example, might have made her recent gift (valued at \$150,000) to the museums instead of to the Zoo, if the museums had seemed to know where they were going.

Free competition sidelight: The Art Center in La Jolla made an ingenious bid to attract the Putnam Foundation by offering to assemble land just north of the Center on Prospect Street. Because of an atmosphere of “buttoned lips,” I could not find out whether the bid failed because the Putnam Foundation did not like the progressive character of the Center or because the Center did not like the aggressive self-control of the Putnam Foundation. It may simply be that the Putnam Foundation preferred to be in Balboa Park.

February 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 43, **Abravanel-Badura-Skoda Gifts**

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE the power of a woman’s committee—certainly not if it numbers 1300. The San Diego symphony has such a committee, and the current series of three concerts was completely sold out in advance. Other factors are: 1) Van Cliburn is included in the package, 2) symphony attendance is increasing in the country, 3) educated people are migrating to our corner of the country. Missiles are paying off in music—a most auspicious pointer to San Diego’s future.

For the first, all-Beethoven concert (symphonies 1 and 7, the Emperor Concerto) January 17th Maurice Abravanel conducted himself like the conductor of first rank that he is. In rehearsals, he showed that he understands the structure and input of Beethoven, and also that he understands how to get the boys and girls (it is a young orchestra, he said) to follow him enthusiastically into the sea, he speaks fluent, polite English, and lets body-English charge the air with command. In performance, he delivered a sound that had unity, coherence and emphasis, the three irreducibles of art. There was, however, a sense of heaviness, which was only broken in the finale of the 7th; this may have been because the strings were more numerous (and better behaved) than usual, while the winds were not as alive as they have been sometimes.

Pianist Paul Badura-Skoda is known for wonderfully rhythmic, discreet recordings of Schubert, anything but bombastic. He did not seem likely to produce the stentorian clangor needed to wrap up the Emperor, and in fact he did not do so; but the interior adagio was completely his, the finest music of a prosperous evening. If the box office continues so popular, there will be repeat performances of each concert starting in 1961, according to Manager Alex Haas. Next problem: a worthy auditorium.

February 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY, 46, Stamon’s Stable; 46, Music: Don Giovanni; 47, Paul Lingren; 48-49, The Book: “Modern Art Sweet or Sour” by Frederick Taubes

March 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY; 54, 58-59, Engineering in San Diego, a perfect rapid transit center ready to go; 60, The Book: “The Living City” by Frank Lloyd Wright; 61, The Groaning Keyboard—notes on a few of the winter’s pianists

ENGINEERED IN SAN DIEGO –
A RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM
-READY TO GO

Caption: Cross-country rapid transit system devised by San Diego Engineer Mathew Bayer will carry express passengers and freight via suspended trains from Los Angeles to Chicago in ten hours. Also shown are channels for heavy freight trains and trucks, ducts for carrying liquid freight and cable lines. Below

ground would be water “barrels,” the whole toll package surmounted by a highway. Upper right corner of picture shows system coursing through open country.

Caption: In 1951 German factories built modernized trains for the Wupperthal monorail system. Does this picture foreshadow possible future activity for San Diego factories?

Caption: *Above*, Mathew Bayer’s simplified system of suspended commuter trains, shown in place over the existing Santa Ana Freeway. It could also travel over existing railroad right-of-way or over river beds. *Left*, Bayer’s contribution to national defense: a suspended rapid transit train converted to carry missiles shown with a missile lowered like a bomb from a bomb bay, ready to be set on its launching pad.

Caption: **The quaint beginnings in Germany**

Looking for all the world like the cabinetwork of Dr. Caligari, the world’s first monorail system was dedicated by the German Kaiser (in carriage). Early experiments were made by an upside-down bicycle (below) which serves to warn us that only by turning out thoughts inside out can we solve the problems of a topsy-turvy world. *Lower right*, typical station in Wupperthal. *Opposite*, over the Wupper River. Erector-set construction is a quaintness of the past, but the idea has a great future.

IN OUR September issue of 1956, we argued for Brown Field near the Mexican border as the best place for our major airport, and suggested that it be linked with population centers of the metropolis via “monorail” or rapid transit. Since then Brown Field has become the one hope of the political “leaders” who formally scorned it. As to rapid transit, our political pilots have not yet gone so far even as to form a transit authority to consider ways and means.

The problem is so pressing in San Francisco and Los Angeles that the two cities have spent millions just on *studies* of solutions, and Los Angeles may actually adopt a system within a year. It used to be that San Diego could lag a decade or so behind those big-sister cities in solving its civic puzzles but we’re growing so fast that the time gap is closing and our headaches are nearly as bad as theirs, especially in traffic.

So we are glad to spotlight a San Diegan who is personally running well in front of the official planners with his original thinking about our biggest planning need: a balanced system of moving people and things rapidly over the ground.

Employed appropriately enough at Convair Astronautics, and living astronautically enough on Neptune Street in Encinitas, Engineer Mathew Bayer, German by birth, in his spare hours has nurtured dreams that would do credit to any inventor of America’s inventive history. As with most innovators, he builds on the known precedents in his field and dares to reach forward with concepts that must boggle the public imagination until time is ripe and the fruit drops on the public head.

Unlike many inventors, Mathew Brady is being careful to protect his rights in what he says may become not a million-dollar but a billion-dollar industry. His dreams of rapid transit began as a boy when he was acquainted with the pioneer “monorail”: installed 70 years ago along the banks of Germany’s Wupper River, thickly crowded by industrial population. At 35 miles per hour it wasn’t very rapid by our standards but the principle was clearly meant for speed. As of 1959, there are many proposals in the air adapting the German prototype to the modern tempo.

Mr. Bayer’s chief contribution features a system that would move express passengers and freight from Los Angeles to Chicago in *ten hours*, and elsewhere in proportion. While the next decade is almost certain to bring airplanes that will cover 2000 miles in less than *one* hour, Bayer feels that his ground-hugging system will always be in great demand because of its inherent safety factors. As engineered, the Bayer system need never give rise to a single serious injury—let alone the sudden death that stalks the airways—and presumably always will.

On the Bayer routes from Los Angeles to Chicago, passengers will ride in three-car trains, the cars each bearing 186 persons and designed like airliners, incorporating all the latest comforts. Obviously, it is a vehicle that could be built by San Diego aircraft factories.

Top speed is figured at 250 miles per hour. The tracks are hung from overhead electric-powered trucks that ride on double tracks—double to control sway. The tracks are in enclosures which reduce noise nuisance to the surroundings and guarantee that the trucks cannot leave the tracks. The suspension between tracks and train is such as to absorb vibration. Electronic sensing devices are liberally used to assure safety, and all movements are controlled by electronic brains at a control station. Manpower required for the system is minimal but includes an “engineer” for each train who mainly listens in to the controls and keeps a double check on central’s behavior. The electronic paraphernalia is again a major opportunity for San Diego industry.

The Los Angeles-Chicago run would use no real estate except the existing right-of-way of the Santa Fe railroad. Santa Fe indeed has already spent large sums of money studying monorail, according to Mr. Bayer. Railroads are interested because here is a way of reviving and developing business—by hoisting the rails in the air and whipping up speed. The multitude of fast train systems that will be needed in this country can follow public roads and sometimes riverbeds, in addition to railroad lines. So, purchase of land is the least of the costs.

Unquestionably, immense investment is called for nonetheless. But Mat Bayer has it figured out so that his system can pay for itself while increasing public service without increasing the public’s cost per mile of travel. What he has done in his financial figuring is to take the ancient device of the toll road and multiply several times—not, we hasten to add, multiplying individual tools but multiplying the sources of tolls. His system would bring together over one right-of-way a number of transportation lines that are now scattered. For his purpose “transportation lines” include pipes that carry gas, oil, chemicals, liquid minerals, even coaxial cables, telephone cables, high-tension electric cable. All these could be designed into the Bayer system in such a manner as to be more easily serviced than they now are. And—hold onto your drinking glass—the Mississippi’s inexhaustible waters could be pumped through Bayer-leased lines all the way to California! Bayer’s full package includes, as well, standard surface trains for slow freight, flanked by tracking lanes, and atop the entire structure high-speed auto lines.

Mathew Bayer’s carry-all is primarily for long hauls. For shorter systems that would serve metropolitan areas he offers a simpler and more graceful structure, pre-fabricated of monel metal and easily assembled over freeways or railways. The main truck of such a system, as it might effect San Diego, should run from Tijuana through Los Angeles to Santa Barbara, no less, with spurs east and west as needed. Travel time would be something on the order of 15 minutes from Brown Field to downtown San Diego, 40 minutes from San Diego to Los Angeles, figuring limited stops and top-speed of 250 miles per hour.

As with so many startling developments, really rapid transit could materialize as a result of military need, says Mathew Bayer. His new conception might have a racy part in the national defense if the government decided that the best way to “stockpile” missiles is to keep them dispersed on rails, ready to be moved at great speed to appropriate launching points. Accordingly, Bayer has designed a missile-carrier the same size as his people-carrier, large enough to transport present missiles. It is possible that an Atlas would be occupying the next car of your train, for all you would know.

Something like Mathew Bayer’s rapid transit design has to come, not only in San Diego, but in all metropolitan areas, and to cover the long spans between metropolis. When it comes it will plow up the existing pattern of cities just as the automobile did before it. Its benefits should be weighed *now*. Our planning activity should be adjusted *now* to allow for such rail traffic.

Certainly, 50 to 75 percent of auto traffic will be taken over by rails one day. That desirable situation will come sooner if we consciously work toward it, bearing in mind the improvements it will mean. Chief benefits will be drastic reduction in smog source and a reduction in highway carnage. Safety will be the most blessed feature of modern rapid transit, but convenience and comfort will be drastically superior to anything yet known in public transportation.

A wise San Diego would get into this thing right away, for the points of view of both government and enterprise planning. The production of trains designed along aerodynamic lines is a natural industry for San Diego. More than that, the creation of a going-system of rapid transit is a basic step to assure the special living qualities of the San Diego area. Whether we have sufficient foresight is the doubtful factor in this modern equation.

THE BOOK: The Living City . . . BY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

In his 89th year America's archetype of architects lays down a blueprint for reconstructing the entire U.S. (and tomorrow the world) as one continuous living city. His plan for "Broadacre City" first appeared in 1934, and this book about it is a rewrite of *When Democracy Builds*, published in 1945. A surprisingly contrite note by F.L.W. explains the repeat: "Well . . . the critics were all too kind. The style of the work seemed to me—yes—deplorable. Capitalizations by means of which I intended to emphasize significances actually confused them. Sentences, pregnant to me with meaning when I wrote them, utterly failed to clinch, or went into reverse. What to do? Rewrite the book."

Frankly, Frank, your rewrite is not easy to read either. Your mind is so inventive that you can hardly use a word without giving it a sharp new meaning that snags all but the happiest readers as surely as barbed wire. Also, you defy the most elementary rules of sentence structure. Your subjects of verbs and your antecedents of pronouns are veiled as the faces of a harem. Even your question marks are used in an original manner which leaves double meanings, many of them surely unintended.

Here is a passage that introduces the philosophy behind *The Living City*:

"Our share in the Americas—why not call that share Usonia (Samuel Butler's suggestion for a name for our nameless nation?)—can no longer be learned without good architects as essential interpreters of America's humanity. Creative architects. Nor can this nation afford to believe creative architecture is not to be its own logical interpretation of ways and means of life in our modern machine-man era. At, Philosophy, Economics and Religion, all old school, have failed us, and politics is becoming likely as prostitute in a drift toward conformity. Organic architecture now comes as natural interpreter of Nature. It should light the way."

Wright is saying here and throughout the book that the planner of environment must take all things into account Yet his own grand career shows how hard this is. His faults of English suggest faults that are frequent in his architecture and planning. In trying to realize his own conception, he fails to take account of factors that should rightfully be considered. For example, his Imperial Hotel in Tokyo is scaled too-small for the comfort of American guests. His roundish Guggenheim Museum in New York is utterly out of keeping with its squarish neighbors; it is indeed Wright's most stubborn act of defiance, as though he were saying, "Tear down Fifth Avenue and rebuild it to conform with my museum."

Wright's Broadacre City is a similar act of defiance, though only in word-and-picture form. The biggest thing he defies is the population trend. His layout allots a minimum of one acre to each man, woman and child for homestead; yet it has been computed that, assuming the current rate of growth, in 740 years there will be one inhabitant of Earth for each square foot of the globe's land. Wright, of course, would expect the population to be stabilized at an idea level. His plan is based on his personal appreciation of Jeffersonian democracy, where people are organically related to the good earth and to the good community. So, while *The Living City* is rocky reading, it is worth sifting for its gold.

April 1959, San Diego Magazine, 36, ART OF THE CITY: 38, Architecture Architecture Everywhere—C. J. Paderewski and El Cortez Hotel, Law Library; 41, To Improve the Council; 41, To Improve the World; 43, Martinon conducts; 43, Global Prosperity; 43, Drama Lab; 43, Spring is Strung

ARCHITECTURE ARCHITECTURE EVERYWHERE

AND NO SURPRISE OR SPONTANEITY IN ANY OF IT?

A SPEECH FEBRUARY 11TH BEFORE THE
SAN DIEGO CHAPTER OF THE
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

A thrilling attempt to apply architectural imagination in San Diego gave us an exterior glass elevator climbing the front of El Cortez Hotel in a channel choked with blinking neon stars. Architect C. J. Paderewski (in cab rising) is partly responsible for this and for other design innovations at the burgeoning hotel complex, most successful of which is the use of enamel panels of assorted colors that pick up and play back the enamel colors of cars in the busy streets. But brave hotel impresario Harry Handlery is not to be overlooked in assigning credit or blame for the extravaganza, many of the design excesses can be traced to his pinball machine touch—or to the bob-brained exuberance of sign salesmen. Photo by Julius Shulman.

WHEN your Entertainment and Torture Chairman, Selden Kennedy, invited my act, he said I could talk about anything from catching butterflies on up. I haven't too much to say about the architectural use of butterflies, except to observe that the blinking neon stars running up the tower of El Cortez Hotel have something like the effect of butterflies. That particular use of neon is perhaps not beyond criticism on architectural grounds, but it is moving, I think, in the right direction. That is, a pattern of lights consciously designed as a happy-making message for the passer-by, not merely as a blaring advertisement. It reminds of what Gilbert Keith Chesterton said long ago in a simpler day, speaking of the white lights of Broadway. All we had then were incandescent bulbs. He said the sight would be as spellbinding as fairyland to anyone who couldn't make out the letters and thus was undisturbed by the clash of advertising pitches. If white lights alone would make a fairyland, how much more delightful could be the colored spectrum of neon if a little design control came into the picture. Even without design control, there is an undeniable if somewhat raw and accidental beauty to a city street full of neon, but the thing to notice is that this beauty is most glamorous when heavy fog sets in and blurs the details. I realize that architects often think of the term "design control" as meaning control *of* architects' designs by bureaucrats, but as I am using it here it means control *by* architects, and others to produce good design.

To talk about design control in a city's use of neon is to talk about abstract art of a very large order. In fact, the term "abstract expressionism," which is used to describe a great deal of modern painting, would seem very appropriate to describe the process whereby widespread use of neon could be raised to an art form. What you are expressing in the case of neon is not the soul of the artist but rather the soul of the community, that is the way in which the community's little bundles of nerves, its people, act and interact to form a way of life. Let's face it, the community's life is largely a matter of exchanging goods and services. Neon is a system of signals, now in a fairly primitive stage, like the grunts of the caveman. Is there any reason why it shouldn't become a fine poetic language?

I speak of neon because it is so obvious an architectural form of advertising. There are other forms of advertising that already show considerable poetic quality, including the best of TV commercials and the best of printed ads.

Next to neon, as a form of advertising to which the architect should pay more attention than he does, comes the billboard. I noticed one recently that struck me as pointing toward better standards. It showed a Ford car against a background that was nothing more nor less than an abstract painting. There was no frame on that billboard, so it had a clean look. It happens that in the location where I saw it, the center of Hillcrest, it was jammed against a cubistic pattern of building shapes and did not come off to best advantage. I think that particular billboard would look more handsome and relatively inoffensive, against a rolling green landscape, because there is great visual sympathy between the forms of nature and the forms of abstract expressionism. If we must have billboards, and it seems we must, let's by all means make them relatively inoffensive through the resources of art. Abstract modern painting offers many secrets for architects who wish to take up this challenge. How much better, for example, our garishly colored filling

stations would be if they were designed on the same level as good modern abstract paintings, making the colors sing and dance together rather than merely grate and clash.

Perhaps you have seen some store windows in which modern paintings have been carefully tuned to the colors and shapes of the goods on display. Marston's and others locally have done this sometimes. The most successful examples I have seen were at Lord and Taylor's in New York and Worth's in San Francisco. These high fashion store widows hint at what whole cities of the future will look like when architecture is brought under more discipline than it now enjoys.

If I seem to have an inordinate fondness for abstract painting, I admit it gladly. I feel that the best examples of modern painting are among the finest products of the artistic spirit. And I feel that even the next-best examples have such a high degree of honesty about them that they are desirable things to have around.

VIRGIL THOMSON SAYS

HAVING DONE some wishful thinking about the possible beneficial influences of modern painting on architecture, I wish to call on a very wise man to give us an unusual perspective on the future of architecture. Virgil Thompson is a leading composer and critic of music. In the February *Atlantic Monthly* he writes about "Music's Tradition of Constant Change"—a wonderful title that in itself destroys a lot of misconceptions about "tradition" and "change." Evidently they are not opposed terms but related.

In listening to the following quotes, please try to translate as we go how the remarks might or might not apply to architecture. One of Thomson's key thoughts is that it looks now as if Western music had come to an end about 1914, when most of the epoch-making works of modern music had already been composed. He says: "Today there is little active change going on. There is only tradition. And that tradition includes all the modernisms of yesteryear. Music as a language, though long may it live, will not, I fear, be evolving much more."

Thomson claims that all the arts are in a slump, and gives a remarkable reason. He says: "All the arts are in a low part of their curve, because the world is up to something else. And one of the things it is up to is distributing its cultural produce to a world-wide market. It is enlarging and standardizing that market with a remarkable energy. And it has been possible to undertake such a standardization because we, the musicians, had already standardized, brought to completion, and officialized our whole tradition, classical and modern."

Thomson then asks: "So, what do composers do now?" And he answers: "There is only one thing possible: change the assumptions on which we operate. We shall have to forget for a time about novelty and change of tradition, and all such great big wordy ideas. I propose to you that every composer has plenty of small ideas, technical and expressive ones, and that these ideas are all valid if sincerely and competently acted upon. It is better to work with the ideas one really has, however minor they may seem, than to try to follow an outworn line like modernism-at-any-price. Especially in a time when there are so few 'modernistic' ideas available at any price. In other words, the tradition of constant change must be thrown overboard and freshness found through other preoccupations.

"The standardization of compositional procedures is a fact; we cannot fight that. Anyway, we have produced it ourselves both knowingly and inevitably, through intense and highly intellectual organization, over centuries of our whole musical tradition, creative and executional. The standardization of audiences is also a fact; and though composers have contributed to bringing it about, we are not wholly happy with the result. It is better for business than creative advance. Our dilemma is that we believe in creative advance but we are unable to make very much of it right now through technical innovation. Moreover, we are suspicious as a source of inspiration of mere expressivity, in our unconscious it lies close to commercial motivations and the relaxing of standards. So also for the tricky concept of sincerity."

VIRGIL TRANSLATED

AS I TRANSLATE those remarks of Virgil Thomson into terms of reference for architecture, they seem to frankly encourage eclecticism. They seem to say that an architect should thoroughly understand the best developments of the past, including the modernism of yesteryear, and base his work on them, not striving too much for novelty but trying instead to put the utmost quality, or sincerity, into whatever he does. It's as simple as that.

Certainly the comparison of architecture with music cannot be exact. While Thomson doubts that there are any more unexploited devices available for starting a radical new musical tradition, we may not feel the same is true in architecture. For one thing the concept of pre-fabrication has been licked yet, either artistically or industrially. A radically new tradition of architecture might develop in pre-fabrication just as auto design is radically different from the home-made carriage. We made prefer the artistry of hand-made buildings and hand-made carriages but we can't prevent the future from pushing out the past.

It seems to me that the central wisdom of Virgil Thomson, which is valid for architects, is that the artists in any field should bring forward as much as they can the values of the past to keep the future from being intolerable. This may not mean making quaint copies of past masterpieces, but it certainly means preserving the best of the old buildings until they can't possibly be preserved any longer. That is a project to which any architect could lend his energies. It seems particularly necessary here in San Diego where there is so little that is old, where there is so much pressure by the future to push out the past, and where one may have an uncomfortable feeling like living on the moon just because there is so little stability in the look of things around us. If it is true of music that the greatest pages have already been written, then sooner or later the same thing will be true of architecture, and it is a crime against the conscience of humanity-past and humanity-future to erase anything good that we can possibly keep.

Beside pre-fabrication, another area in which architecture may yet establish a radically new tradition is city planning. There are certainly plenty of precedents for city planning, but there is nothing in the past that quite corresponds with the planning that will be necessary to handle the coming populations. Yet, even as we say that city planning must be radically new, we realize how it must be rooted in tradition. For example, regardless of what might be the proper design standards for other planets, as long as men continue to inhabit planet Earth, grass and trees must be part of the picture—if tradition holds up.

At a recent convention here of the California Institute of Planners, a leading California city planner told me that most architects don't understand planning, that they can't lay out intelligently a large area involving many buildings. Yet your architectural literature is full of the idea that the planning of large areas is only an extended form of architecture, a job that *should* be done by architects.

COMPETITION REVIVED

HOW DO WE bring the great creative wisdom of architecture and planning into the forefront of the vast construction program forever underway in this country? It is true a certain amount of highly artistic achievement arises through the rough and tumble of the marketplace, but it is also true that most of the big jobs go to the architects who are most resourceful politically and socially, regardless of their artistic talent. It is true that there is a gradual rise in demand for artistic solutions as the great innovation of public education begins to take hold

But the design problems resulting from the population explosion and the general acceleration of modern times cannot wait for the slow growth of quality in architecture. The whole process of solving city design problems needs its own acceleration.

I think the key may be found in the old architectural device of formal competitions, in which a program for the competition is carefully set up by qualified people, entries in the competition are carefully *judged* by qualified people and money awards on some formula sufficient attractive to engage the energies of talented competitors.

The American Institute of Architects has generally sound competition regulations, which are supposed to be binding on AIA members. These would have to be broadened to permit city planners to take

part along with architects, in competition for city plans. More than that, there would have to be some way of shaking out the best ideas of the general public, which should always participate to the limits of practicability in the election of democratic institutions. I would identify a proper city plan in America as a democratic institution.

As a practical first step, I think every city needs an Art Commission to judge and recommend on all matters that involve the appearance, or artistic posture, of the community. Both San Francisco and Los Angeles have such art commissions and on them architects have served with distinction. San Diego has none. It's time we set one up, perhaps on the initiative of architects. There is one supreme caution to observe in doing so; an art commission should be made up strictly of people of trained and demonstrated artistic judgment. It should not have any members who are merely distinguished citizens who know little about art but are apt to know only too well what they like. The architect members of such a commission should be selected only from those architects who have shown that they put artistic considerations ahead of politics in the practice of their profession. In general, artists and musicians would be better commission members than museum directors and music association presidents, who are apt to be too political. Properly constituted, an art commission by its very existence would raise the prestige of the arts in the community—and the artists, including the artist-architects, would be the more valued.

To give our art commission unique force in the community, I think it should be able—as one of its duties—to prepare design critiques of individual buildings and of area plans, the critiques to be made available to the public over TV and through whatever printed media care to publish them. Certainly SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE would want to publish such material. Incidentally, the magazine would be glad to hear from any architect who has anything to say with regard to the constructive development of the San Diego region.

I should think a sound art commission would be the right agency to prepare the program and select the judges for competitions on one phase or another of city planning. In some cases, the commission might itself be the best jury because of its close devotion to the local scene.

BALBOA PARK

FOR EXAMPLE, consider the need for a master plan for Balboa Park. City officials did right in deciding that one was needed, but I think they went about selecting the masterplanner in the wrong way. The city manager's office did the natural thing, from the business administration point of view, Les Halcomb of that office invited applications from a limited number of firms fairly well known as planners. Two San Diego architects who had heard of the project submitted applications without being invited. The applications were weighed and voted upon by department heads, including City Manager Bean, Park Commissioner Calland, and Park Superintendent Allen Perry. The vote was unanimously in favor of the St. Louis firm of Harland Bartholomew.

Yet the firm's brochure, which I saw, was execrable from an artistic point of view. However, the firm had a long record of reliable business dealings, and an impressive list of jobs, leaning heavily to military installations. Bartholomew looked like the safest bet from a strategic administrative point of view. The esthetic question went begging, though as I understand it, part of the winning applicant's job will be to give landscaping and architectural advice.

MISSION BAY

OR TAKE the matter of Mission Bay Park. The Mission Bay commission is a notoriously political body, but it at least has the objective sense to realize that it is not competent to make esthetic decisions. Recently it came up with the request that a consultant be hired to advise the commission on design problems. This, in effect, is saying that the Mission Bay Commission wishes to hug the esthetic question to its collective bosom, to pick the brains of an advisor and then go whatever way it, as a political body, sees fit.

Now, there could be no guarantee that San Diego architects would win against outside entrants if there had been open competitions for the master plan of Balboa Park and Mission Bay Park, but at least it can be said that they would have a certain advantage in the competition because of long familiarity with the local scene, with local traditions and with local sentiments. In line with what I said earlier in this talk, it is of utmost importance that there be continuity in a community insofar as possible, with proven old values carried forward, skillfully modulated by innovations.

Incidentally, there should yet be opportunity for architectural competition in Balboa Park. The cluster of museums, for example, has such a magnificent potential that any new construction there should be preceded by the most careful search for designs equal to a dazzling future. And if a convention center is to be developed around the Ford Building, there is the same need for securing the maximum architectural value. It may be that plans already advanced in these cases would be able to stand up very well in open competition. But it's possible too, that valuable new conceptions would be uncovered.

DOWNTOWN

THE NEED for an architectural conception to revive our Downtown as an attractive place to do business is only too familiar to San Diego architects. The initiative in this case has fallen to the Downtown Association which at first turned its ears toward grand schemes of out-of-town architects but shied away from the costs involved, and is now talking with San Diego architects in the hope of doing *something* as cheaply as possible. In that mood, it seems to me, we are likely to get a second-rate, second-hand solution, with the architects doing their best to accommodate the merchants and bankers who are not very confident of their investment and, therefore, will probably not dare enough.

By that I don't mean to imply that San Diego architects are only capable of second-rate, second-hand solutions. What I mean is that the combination of architects who feel lucky to have wangled a commission and clients who are too timid, can only produce a mediocre result. It is practically an axiom.

The perfect illustration of that axiom is our courthouse fiasco, the biggest public building project and the biggest architectural mess in San Diego history. Not only is it a mess in its failure to provide for space needs, but when finished it is likely to be an inferior piece of work from the artistic point of view, judging by the already completed satellite building, the County Law Library. How could it be otherwise than mediocre, when it is the project of a committee of four architects trying to compromise their own differences of outlook and to accommodate a timid program laid down by a group of small-town-type politicians, our Board of Supervisors?

The four architects are not to be blamed because they accepted the commission, even though they might have realized that no good architecture could come out of a committee. The Board of Supervisors, on the other hand, can be blamed for parceling out an architectural job in this way, because the Supervisors are paid to serve the public interest and they should have striven for superior architecture.

Part of the function of an Art Commission might be to save us from such sins of our public officials. An Art Commission could clamor for open competition in the design of all public buildings, as well as in the layout of whole sections of our city, as need arises. Raising the city planning function to the level of open competition would have the effect of keeping the whole process before the public more than it is today. Thereby, the public would have a chance to become enthusiastic about good planning, and support us.

If the Cedar Street Mall for public buildings had been presented as the result of an open competition, it might have had a great deal more appeal than it did to the voters. With that plan defeated, our demoralized officials have floundered along without any plan for grouping public buildings. There are vague hopes that something in the way of a public building group may materialize by accident as one building after another goes up in roughly the same area. This, however, is the worst possible form of city planning. In effect our public building group will be a monument to those two conspicuous qualities of our time, accident and opportunism, when in reality it should be the highest expression of architectural intelligence. The latter will come about if San Diego architects take the lead. It is pleasant news that Sam

Hamill is now trying to shape up a city-center committee, mainly of businessmen, but I feel that an Art Commission would be more to the point, an art commission dedicated to seeking artistic clarity in the city's growth, and made up of people who could recognize artistic clarity when they saw it.

(These observations about downtown prospects do not take account of the possibility of urban renewal projects that might get as much as two-thirds of their financing from the Federal government. The Downtown Association is readying a proposal that might latch onto this source, and the City Planning Department is studying a concept of public buildings that might benefit under Urban Renewal.)

TIME MAY BE SHORT

EVERYBODY appreciates fine architecture after it has become a fact, and has been lived with awhile. That is why it is justifiable for democracy to invest in fine design. A more widespread support for good architecture and good city planning will drive out bad architecture and bad city planning. I think it is worth turning to Virgil Thomson once more to expand our view of the long-range issue. Paraphrasing his conclusions in the *Atlantic* article referred to earlier, and substituting the word *architecture* for the word *music*, here is how things look in his terms:

“We are fighting individually against the distributors and the standardizers . We are fight for our lives and for architecture's life, because all this inundation of the world with sure-fire classics and banal modernization can kill the art of architecture. It will require the efforts of many people all over the world to counteract architecture's present incipient sclerosis. And the time may be short. But I for one should hate to see the day when there will be architecture, architecture everywhere—and no surprise or spontaneity in any of it.”

That's Thomson, amended for our purpose. It seems to me that San Diego is in a unique position to produce architect and city planning that has surprise, spontaneity and many other virtues, just because it is not encumbered with too much bad building from the past. Though “the time may be short,” let the stars—or butterflies—of El Cortez stand as a glimmer of hope in that direction, and let the architects take measures that will gain public support for vital architectural progress.

DISRESPECT FOR THE LAW LIBRARY

THE MISERABLE STATE of public building policy in San Diego is reflected on page opposite. The County Law Library, just built, and pictured here, is devoid of any setting. It simply occupies one corner (Front and B Streets) of a slum block surrounded by delirious business houses, after the manner of the Salvation Army. Will the prudery of the starched arrival save souls? The neighborhood is likely to improve haphazardly, but there is no evidence of a worthy plan.

Across from the Law Library, a courthouse is being built. The only spatial relationship between the two is propinquity. There is no subtle visual “adjustment” such as we have a right to expect in the name of architectural art, especially in public buildings. On the contrary, the Law Library features one of the greatest blunders known to modern building science: an immense “picture” window that will look out on no better prospect than the painted concrete sidewalk of the courthouse cellblock. The whopping glass is so located that it must catch sun glare from the courthouse in the morning and must catch direct sun in the afternoon; therefore, the enormous, expensive drapes probably will be closed most of the time.

Judging only the exterior as a visual phenomenon smiting the passerby, we readily note other outstanding faults. Black granite facing (allegedly from Escondido, but probably from Minnesota*) was used liberally with the obvious intention of striking the note of dignity and smartness that good citizens should associate with the law and lawyers: it only manages to look tired and dull. Up-to-dateness was essayed by way of an aluminum screen that is handsome enough in close detail but fails to work at any distance in an architectural sense because its scale is so small as to suggest a misplaced lace curtain.

The B Street façade of the Law Library betrays a bad modern building practice that has cast a cheap look over many an expensive structure. I refer to the use of plywood forms leaving an imprint on the

surface which, when painted, suggests to the eye a flimsy plasterboard wall rather than the dense monolithic concrete that in fact exists. To complete the catalog of ground-level mediocrity in the name of Law, the sun-screening on this façade is of no character whatever except janitorial utilitarian. And to top the inept package there is that most commonplace of architectural lapses, the naked roofshack housing mechanical equipment—an idiocy comparable only to the tin can worn for a hat by the ancient and dim-remembered comic strip character, Happy Hooligan.

Will the behemoth courthouse be any better looking? Probably not, unless the Bar Association rises in the might of its intelligence and insists on an upward revision of the esthetic standards. A place to start with is the question of why paint concrete when the stuff looks infinitely more distinguished in its natural blotchy state.

*Granite has to be shipped to Minnesota for “planning,” so it is cheaper to get midwest stone and save half the freightage.

HOW TO IMPROVE THE CITY COUNCIL

THIS MAGAZINE cannot make any formal endorsement of candidates for the city council in the general election of April 21st. However, my personal view is that the two women remaining in the race should be elected, and I hope connoisseurs of good government will put money, energy—and their votes—into the campaigns of Mrs. Jean Camody Self (no relation to publisher Ed Self) and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Ely. Though the council posts are non-partisan, it may be noted that Mrs. Self is a Republican running against a Democrat (Incumbent Frank Curran) and Mrs. Ely is a Democrat running against a Republican (Incumbent Justin Evenson). So at least my personal endorsement wears an air of non-partisanship. More important than political affiliation in each case is that neither appears to be in this thing in order to take care of the business interests of cronies or special groups. It happens that their husbands both work for the San Diego Unified School District. Mr. Self as a principal and Mr. Ely as a buyer. Both women are strongly interested in education: the Selfs have five children, the Elys seven! In talking to each I got the strong impression of a candidate whose overwhelming interest is the development and maintenance of a city fit for children to live in. Their answers to my questions were straight-forward and did not have the sickly cast of calculation and cliché that you get talking to a routine politician. I can’t guarantee how they’ll shape up under the pressure of the job if elected, but I feel that they would work for many of the crucial improvements that have been advocated in SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE. Is it not a fair assumption that the two women might improve the City Council’s record of civic housekeeping?

HOW TO IMPROVE THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD

ON MARCH 15th the State Department’s George V. Allen informed TV’s *Small World* audience that Negro contralto Marian Anderson’s appearances in the Far East comprised the most effective single effort in the current official American program of winning friends by sending abroad our cultural torchbearers. On March 13th the same Marian Anderson stood in a reception line at the Grant Hotel after a concert appearance in San Diego and was moved to observe: “I’ve never seen so many people who don’t understand the United Nations.” The remark was not amplified and we do not know whether she referred specifically to San Diego, Southern California, the Wild West or Western Civilization. Anyone who feels the sting personally may wish to attend the observance of the AAUN’s San Diego chapter of its tenth anniversary April 23rd. Details in this magazine’s Master Calendar supplement.

It must be said that in most cases it would be easier for an American Negro performer to impress the Far East than to become the guest of honor at a post-concert reception in San Diego. The Anderson reception resulted from the initiative of a Negro sorority. When Leontyne Price sang here, the Civic Music Association decided to give no reception, and the same singer was by-passed by the Opera Guild because of the reception dilemma. However, when the eminently motherable Van Cliburn scheduled an appearance here, local receptionists eagerly adjusted their antennae to get their signals on the blow-out planned by piano pusher Harry Callaway. Alas, word came from New York that Mr. Cliburn doesn’t care for receptions. The blow-out went phfft.

Like Eleanor Roosevelt and Helen Keller, Marian Anderson has become a living statue to the virtuous life, and appeals to people everywhere for the heroic size of her personality rather more than because of her specific talents. Stripped of her personality overtones, her singing cannot be classed with the best, such as Fischer-Dieskau's. It is remarkably uneven of projection and interpretation. But there is a sublime simplicity that overwhelms in strongly simple compositions like Haydn's *Spirit Song* or "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice" from Saint-Saen's *Samson et Delilah*. When the music leads up to its long-sustained climatic notes in middle register, the special quality of the Anderson voice reaches everyman, envelops and embraces him like the voice of his mother as he would prefer to remember it. Regardless of lapses from classical standards, this is a medium of tremendously consummate artistry, definitely an instance of song subduing the beast in man. Miss Anderson's arrival as a modern saint is based on the deepest kind of native purity.

MARTINON ET CIE

THE SEASON'S best symphony concert here had Jean Martinon conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the best of his program was the disarming early symphony of Bizet. What made the playing so much above average was the Martinon conception of style, a Frenchman playing French music as though he were speaking his native tongue, with transparent clarity, melodious celerity and freedom from murk. Even the audience, and certainly the orchestra, must have felt in the very posture of the conductor that he could not countenance a muddy or excessive sound. There was no sense of excess even in the Roussel *Bacchus et Ariane* which developed immense colorful climaxes. The Prokofieff third piano concerto was well contained too, though it is music loaded with deliberate ugliness matching the disjointedness of our century. Soloist was Andre Tchaikowsky, so aggressive as to seem always in front of himself (though not necessarily ahead of the conductor), a dazzler to whom music slower than allegro would seem ill-suited. Less finely performed but still grateful to hear was Rameau's overture to *Dardanus*, a piece structured like a suite and reminding us that a neglected composer's operas may still be rummaged for usable music separated out from "impossible" librettos.

THE PROSPECTS FOR GLOBAL PROSPERITY

FIRST of the season's Globe Theatre productions, *The Boy Friend*, was a popular success about which I cannot write a one-line review because I didn't see it. The second and third productions, *The Happiest Millionaire* and *The Waltz of the Toreadors*, were both retarded in their artistic impact by unevenness of acting talent and a certain routine quality of production. It is certainly true that plays that depend on witty conversational exchanges require actors of dynamic range and force and clarity of voicing.

In general, the Globe Theatre has not progressed as rapidly in artistic development as many of its supporters would wish. As was indicated here in a review of last summer's Shakespeare, the Globe board is aware of the problem and anxious to solve it—both in the annual Shakespeare and in the winter season. A thought then expressed on this page was that the Globe should try harder to smoke out the best talent in the San Diego region, and invite occasional guest pros.

Evidently the Globe management feels that San Diego is not able yet to yield enough main talent to stock a Shakespeare summer, plans for this year will make a certain number of lesser roles available to local people, but the top eight actors or so will be Equity, that is professionals with good union standing. This is in line with suggestions made by George Peppard, successful New York actor and son-in-law of Globe president Lowell Davies. Peppard wrote and the board noted that there is gradually growing up a scattered brotherhood of young professionals with sufficient aptitude specially for Shakespeare so that any theatre enterprising enough to attract a number of them into the same place at the same time should prosper artistically.

Best wishes are in order for the Globe in taking a bold step that will involve a summer budget of \$65,000 as compared with \$55,000 last year. If the professional pool (shortly to be recruited in New York by directors Craig Noel, Allen Fletcher and William Ball) turns out to be a distinct improvement over previous mixtures of amateurs and students the same formula logically will be extended to the winter season.

However, professionalism is never a guarantee of quality. Mr. Niko Lek in *Waltz of the Toreadors* was that rarity at the Globe, a paid pro, but by far the better performances of the play were on the few nights when San Diego's homegrown and still mainly amateur Victor Buono, age 20, substituted in Lek's role. Despite a serious encumbrance of too much weight, Buono submerges easily in any role and stays under like the Nautilus until mission is accomplished, whereas the experienced Mr. Lek could only manage an air of Balkan-managed confusion that obscured the play's vibrancy.

Always there should be room at the Globe for the occasional person who comes up through little theatre bulging with talent but not always choosing to submit himself to the torments of that dubious ticket, commercial theatre. Not to be forgotten are the older pros who have quit the business and should be encouraged to rediscover their better selves under amateur standing.

HEARWELL LAB

THE GLOBE THEATRE shows no signs of doing anything about its poorish acoustics, but I can recommend one little theatre that provides a most satisfactory listening solution. That is Director Charles Newman's "drama lab" at San Diego Junior College. It is housed improbably in what appears to have been built as a standard classroom space nine feet high and the staging is a makeshift arrangement sprawled against one long wall of the rectangular room. On the flat floor there are folding chairs for perhaps 100 people. What the viewer sees is a foreground screen made up of silhouetted fellow audience members through which glimpses may be won of the brilliantly lit (and generally well rehearsed) actors, always clearly audible. The result is a very special sense of involvement with the whole affair, and this is heightened by the magical way in which the performers leave the stage—not through doors, but by stepping from the light to the darkness of the aisles, dragging their roles behind them and seeming to merge into the audience. This accidental formula works with best effect when a play like Shaw's *Major Barbara* is long on talk and light of action. Watch for Newman's worthwhile agenda.

SPRING IS SPRUNG: This sturdy woodcut by Doris Allen is in the April show of the Art Guild at the Fine Arts Gallery. It was made on mahogany plywood (twice as large as the reproduction) and printed by patient hand-rubbing of the paper against the inked wood.

Timeline: May 6, 1959—Final stage of dredging operators for City at Mission Bay begun

May 1959, San Diego Magazine, 54+, ART OF THE CITY: 54, Globe's Best (A Streetcar Named Desire); 56, Storm Rising (John Storm); 58, 72, Death Comes to the Art Center (Patrick Malone); 59, 74, Shaking the Rigidity Out of Our Schools; 59, Something About a Dame (Myra Hess)

June 1959, San Diego Magazine, 41-45, THE EXURBANITES: A Madison Avenue flannel man coined the term: Does it ring true here?

EXURBIA is suburbia, only more so. It is flight from the flight from the city. It means more miles than anybody between home and work. Its practitioners are way out, far gone. The exurbanite is the commuter raised to the highest power of endurance. Presumably he endures the mileage because what he goes home to at night is worth the candle. Certainly he needs the candle at home, for he doesn't get to see much of it by daylight.

New Yorkers who qualify as exurbanites live in a belt that includes Fairfield County in Connecticut and Bucks County in Pennsylvania, and they get there mainly by train. San Diegans head for the hills north and east of town, and would never get there except for high-powered land fish that are everywhere at hand.

Paradoxically, getting away from the traffic and the web of city tensions that it signifies would seem to be the main drive of the exurbanite. More deeply still, he would seem to crave maximum contact with nature and a far remove from the organized patterns in which he sees his fellows caught. Merely *suburban* living, after all, is a form of tightly organized religion in which a man is more answerable to his

neighbors than he is to his own soul. The would-be soul-owner these days takes to the sparse and rugged stretches on the heels of the hermit proud of his individuality.

So I thought until I looked into the book by A. C. Spector, *The Exurbanites* (J. B. Lippincott Company) which put the term in circulation in 1955. Spector takes the exurbanite soul apart, seam by seam, or seem by seem.

Very noticeably he is dealing with special cases out of his own experience. He is talking about that special breed, New Yorkers, and that special sub-species of New Yorker, the flannel man of Madison Avenue and the communications industry. Spector is—or was until his scorching book came out—a member of the subspecies, a television editor of NBC. Clearly he is a compulsive word slinger who has to put down in print the sentences of scorn that kept bubbling in his brain as he contemplated his neighbors and himself. The book is not sober sociology, but Bob Hopeworth caricature and highly entertaining as such.

Playing it reasonably straight for a few pages. Spector invented the name “exurb” and identified it as generally further from New York than the suburb on the same railway line. Its houses are more widely spaced and generally more various and expensive. The town center tends to quaintness and class, rather than modernity and glass, and the further one lives from the station the better.

Spector defines the outer limits of New York’s exurbia as 50 minutes from Grand Central by train. Within the circle so described will be a mixture of suburbia and exurbia, show the potential exurbanist shows his stripes by “what he instinctively rejects and what he instinctively includes as within the realm of possibility.”

The wry author gives the growth pattern of typical exurbs and recalls something of their past. They are alike in being physically attractive for the most part, and for having been settled early in the country’s history. Indeed, the exurbs are rich in historical tradition: the British landed in Westport (Fairfield County); Washington crossed the Hudson at Sneden’s Landing (Rockland County). Bucks County was the scene of a dozen minor skirmishes of the Revolution, in northern Winchester (as today) Tories undercut the insurgents, and so on. An occasional statue or commemorative plaque reverently disposed in these neighborhoods, attests to the brave days when, or marks where famous men lived, or were born, or spent the night. But the original settlers have largely removed.

Into the vacuum created when the original settlers departed, there came at the turn of the century the immigrants, chiefly Italian and Polish. Some of these still farm the stony meadows, their descendants with a glint in their eyes, have accepted the exurbanites as fair game, moved in on them and in the capacity as storekeepers or handymen, cheerfully ream them at every opportunity.

“Meanwhile in the age of robber barons, there had come those who, sleek and fat, bought up huge tracts of the choicest countryside, imported crops of sheep to crop the lawn to the proper length, and settled down to a splendiferous life of Veblenian fofoeraw. Forty-, fifty- and even one- hundred-and-ten room castles went up. Some of them are extant, their present-day owners having weathered the Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The pleasancess have been whittled away to permit the incursion of pre-fab bungalows, the messuages have been rented to deserving, relative indigent Old Dealers; but the owners still hang on, crusty and unreconstructed.

“The notable change came in the 1920’s and 1930’s. Numerically it was trivial, culturally it was decisive. It was the relatively brief residence of artists. They were dedicated folk, they came to work, not to play . . . They were looking for three things: something inexpensive, something quiet and remote, something not too far from New York galleries and museums.

“On the heels of these pioneer artists came a few writers, then a trickle of stalwarts from the group that completed the Algonquin’s Round Table. A handful of Broadway figures ventured timidly out into the country, blinked their eyes in the unaccustomed sunlight, and began tentatively casing cowbarns, while visions of experimental summer theatres danced in their heads.

“And now, in many cases, driving out the pioneer artists and writers, came the last appreciable wave of exurbanites—the commercially successful artists and writers and editors.

“The exurbs would not have filled only because the suburbs were overflowing and there were still people who wanted to move out of the city for the sake of their children or for their own piece of mind. The limelight had first to play on a few of the city’s darlings—the Broadway figures and the commercial successful artists and writers; the tall tales in the gossip columns has first to tell of gay weekends around the swimming pools of the sleek, the witty and the casually extramarital. The rest was foreordained. Slowly at first, and latterly with a rush, those on the fringe of the arts decided that what was good enough for artists would be even better for them—and besides they deserved it more since they had more money. In this wave were the most important executives of advertising, and the more important executives in the business side of radio, newspaper, magazine and book publishing industries. Just after the second World War came the biggest influx of all, the junior executives, those who follow the market leaders, the up-and-coming eager beavers, men in their middle and late thirties, the ones who wanted to do the-thing-to-do.”

So, as Spectorisky sees it, the exurbanite is no individualist, but a sheep that crops the grass to the right-length; and otherwise cuts the image expected of his station, his railway station. The book gets very devilish caricaturing the subspecies exurb by exurb, it finds entertaining variations within the type, but that’s New York. The San Diego exurbanite is quite a different figure, a different subspecies of modern man. In the following pages you will discern his profile.

CAPTION: The headshrinker bags a golden harvest when the flannel man turns rustic.

CAPTION: Certainly the manner of his life is schizoid in the extreme.
. . . Drawings by Robert Osborn.

June 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: Point Loma (Japanese) Tea House

June 1959, San Diego Magazine, 54, 100. ART OF THE CITY: University of San Diego an architectural failure.

IT MAY BE APPRECIATED that the jaundiced I who fills this space did not spoil the party last month by parading his critical reactions to the architecture of the Catholic San Diego University in an issue devoted largely to recognizing the important Catholic growth in our region.

However, it seems proper to follow up while the subject is still reasonably fresh. A copy of our May issue should be on hand to illustrate the remarks below.

We start with the sturdy old cliché that architecture reveals much about the people who build it. Anyone who has sloughed through textbook history should realize how historians pick up from the ruins of buildings, and how much they prize intact monuments of entombed cultures like Chartres Cathedral.

Chartres gives pause to the fleetest tourist, and to Philosopher Henry Adams it gave many chapters of a great book, *Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1905). Adams found Chartres a mirror of the virtues and aspirations of the times reflecting Christian faith at its highest strength and glory. Would not his stern, unflinching mind also find that San Diego University reflects the same faith desperately fighting its own decline?

All the good works of the modern churches cannot snatch from the jaws of history the consumption of the past. Adams himself made the clearest statement of the basic change when he suggested that the dynamo (today we would say *machine*) has replaced the Virgin as Western man’s object of devotion.

There may be continuing valiant efforts to reclaim the Christian scale of values and the Churches may be involved in these efforts, but it is doubtful that tomorrow’s historian will be charmed by today’s

catch phrase, the return to religion. He may see today's sects as practically engineered social constructs in which the organized building units—the souls—are often coated with a thin stucco of nostalgia, pseudo-religious ornamentation like so many Hazard cement blocs.

A ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP

is not likely to speak of the return to religion, though he may keep it in mind. For him, the True Church is unalterably central to life on earth, and the House of God must be centrally convenient to any large concentration of population, preferably near the market place. Bishop Charles Buddy acted masterfully within his tradition when he selected the site for his university and diocesan seat. A silver dollar might be thrown from the hilltop campus and fall on the site of tomorrow's principal San Diego market place, the May Company Shopping Center.

The hilltop site is exposed to view that no one traversing the San Diego scene can fail to notice the modern Catholic installation proudly rising above the metropolitan scene as certainly the most favored located institution in the entire region. Those who savor the history of the town will be delighted that the entrance to Mission Valley is now framed by Spanish monuments—the university on the north, and on the south, the Serra Historical Museum honoring the padre who founded the chain of missions in the earliest days of California settlement. It may be judged too that the snug little museum reflects the geranium-breeding gentility of prewar San Diego while the university, at a distance, has a strained look seeming to echo the aggressive ambitions of boomtown. The two monuments are as far apart psychologically as placid Herbert Hoover and restless Richard Nixon.

Seen from a distance the university is impressive in spite of the unsettled order of shapes, mainly because of the unifying off-white color and the magnificent dome and spire, two elements that serve no practical purpose but only a spiritual one, denying that men are of the earth merely and raising all eyes above the walls that encompass practical affairs. We do not have to go along—except for the ride—with the late, tantalizing Frank Lloyd Wright—who took a quick look (before the dome and spire appeared) and asked is it a college or a prison.

Still nursing the distant view, an observer with acute antennae will be troubled by the strongly geometric multiple pattern of cubicles that jazzes up the hill southeast of dome and spire. This arrangement is actually apartments for dedicated faculty, but it suggests nothing so much as mass housing or rabbit warrens.

MOVING IN ON CAMPUS,

it is these apartments that are the most glaring architectural mistake. They completely fail to take account of the wonderful ways in which West Coast Man has learned to use hillsides. Relentlessly, sun and sound must bounce off the tiered walls and rattle the inmates. A teacher would have to be inward-dwelling indeed to live in this unkind casbah.

The university high school, just above the apartments, is perhaps the worst recent high school construction in the county. Minimum in all respect, it provides teachers and students plenty of psychological undertow to swim against daily. It seems to prove the contention heard from Catholic parents that so much money had gone into the university itself that the parochial high schools were being skimped. It is boxy construction, like the dullest tract homes. It is not simple in any subtle sense, but only plain. It does have a token ornamentation, quite out of place, though intended to tie it in with the rest of the campus. Chiefly this consists of a series of pinnacles along the roof line, confectionary in quality as though extruded from a pastry tube.

Moving on to the central buildings of the campus, curious and proliferous, mainly inspired by the Plasteresque style of Renaissance Spain, so named because of its suggestion of silversmith tooling. At its best the style added great visual beauty, though even in old Spain it often degenerated into mere spinach. Under modern shortcut methods, replacing the hand labor of yore, the spirit has quite fled from most efforts of this sort.

IN SAN DIEGO IN 1929

Frye and Smith printed a sumptuous book titled, *Old World Inspiration for American Architecture* by Architect Richard Requa that opened with these words:

“The greatest obstacle in the path of architectural progress in America is the prevailing notion that a building of architectural pretension must be designed in some recognized ancient and exotic style.

“It is the established custom to decide even before the plan and practical requirements of the building are given serious consideration. Some preferred style is arbitrarily selected with little, if any regard for fitness or congruity. Then follows the painful operation of distorting the plan and subordinating the purposes of the structure to the correctness of its external treatment. The result is a forced and more or less impractical interior dressed in an inappropriate exterior . . . Seldom is such a building in harmony with its environment or a true expression of its materials and purposes. Its alien ancestry is offensively obvious. Lack of inspiration and ingenuity results in banal, spiritless imitation without character or reason.”

I can only invite the reader to look at the University of San Diego in the light of these 30-year old remarks by a Catholic San Diego architect. It would seem that even back in 1929 should have had to disapprove USD’s whole approach to architecture. It will be remembered that last month Wally Homitz reported that “Mother Hill chose Spanish Renaissance for the College of Women and thus set the pattern for all University buildings.” This meant that among other architectural limitations accepted at the start an old-time arrangement of windows that offers very poor lighting for classrooms. It means many other “distortions of plan” to stint the exterior. Most ironic of all, in the Requa frame of reference, it was not even a very high tribute to Spanish architectural history.

Requa, out of the fullness of his Spanish blood and studies, wrote: “It is invariably the early productions designed during the creative period that are conceded to be the best examples of a style and the finest expressions of esthetic art. They are simple and sincere, free from pretense and shams. Inspiration and ideas were often received from the styles of other countries, frequently foreign details and construction methods were appropriated, but never was a national style wantonly plagiarized. The Spaniards, for instance, borrowed freely from their neighbors the essential ideas of their architecture, but emphatically and persistently affirmed themselves in building. Not only we initiate instead of imitate and set our minds and energies for the task of originating suitable styles for our country, can we hope for real architecture in America.”

In those words the sincere non-revolutionary architect Richard Requa was moving toward the fundamental re-thinking on the basis of which a revolution and rebirth of architecture has occurred during the last generation. Modern architecture today is capable of such inspired expression as the University of Mexico though it must be admitted that the vast majority of modern buildings are devoid of inspiration. Seeing so much “bad modern” around him, Bishop Buddy—who certainly has little time for architectural or esthetic training—might well have retreated to Spanish castles even if his heart did not dwell there already.

IN LINE WITH THE TRADITION

of the medieval cathedrals, it seems to me that one of the strongest moves a Catholic bishop could make to reawaken faith, allegiance and devotion would be to build better modern than anyone else, better even than the whiskey and soap tycoons. Evidently, that secret has been discovered in Europe, where some of the most effective modern architecture is Catholic churches.

As things stand, Bishop Buddy has reared a monument that has about it an air like that of Forest Lawn. To some that may mean intimations of immortality, but to me it suggests that Death dresses too prettily. Almost any architect that you will meet will tell you that USD is a pronounced architectural mistake—unless he feels the need to mince his thoughts. So sure am I of this that I hereby offer to publish any statement of an architect who wishes to go on record as approving the esthetics of the university.

Against these esthetically-oriented views we may set the most favorable opinions of persons involved with the school as a school. One teacher who was for years a professor at San Diego State College says the conditions under which she works at USD are infinitely better, she was referring more to the general atmosphere than to the buildings, but another teacher feels strongly that the traditional trappings of the architecture and especially the interior decoration—heavy with antiques—have a sobering effect on students, rendering them more respectful of the educational process than they might be in modern buildings that seemed designed mainly for comfort. A student whom I encountered had the utmost pride and personal satisfaction in her collegiate surroundings. So Bishop Buddy's colossal undertaking is not without its appeal. Indeed its appeal may be much more widespread than the disappointment it evokes. Nonetheless, it can only be considered a failure and a lost opportunity in the evolving terms of architecture. It is a failure because it lacks design vitality, *not* because it draws on the past.

July 1959, San Diego Magazine, 59+, **ART OF THE CITY**: Letter from Mitch Angus, Mission Bay Commissioner, and A Reply; 60-65, The Wings of the Dove (Arthur Dove)

MISSION BAY: THE GREAT REAL ESTATE PIE— AND HOW TO GET A SLICE

IN FIVE YEARS MISSION BAY should be fully shaped up as the world's lushest man-planned aquatic park—a delightful dessert after the hard-earned meal of American prosperity. Its 4604 acres will have been divided by Dredge, the great iron hand of Deus ex Machina, into roughly half land and half water. Nearly a third of the land, leased out to lucky investors, will have been “improved,” as the hopeful common term has it, with structures catering to the off-water demands of the pleasure-bent. The water will be restless with more boats than waves, and beyond the endless ribbons of sandy beach the soil will erupt with varied landscaping deployed to break up the masses of cars and people that will converge daily on this most glorious of California's swimming pools.

In *ten* years, unfortunately, Mission Bay will be the biggest traffic jam this side of Grand Central Station, if I read rightly the implications of the population explosion—together with San Diego's peculiar tendency to attract more than its share of the fallout. The very fact of Mission Bay's excellence in the early 60's will have increased the rate of population drift into San Diego County. Indeed, everything we do to capitalize the natural livability of this unique county is going to accelerate our numerical growth. It seems to me that we will make a disastrous mistake if we do not count on a metropolitan population of at least 10 million by century's end—rather than the timid horizon figure of 2-1/2 million on which most of our current planning is based. Ten million, after all, is less than the present-day headcount in New York City—where the clear climatic attractions are airless nightclubs and the overheated theatres.

The population trend is mentioned here so we will not be too self-congratulatory about the imminent success of Mission Bay. The Bay is a singular piece of park planning, but it does not relieve the obligation upon the City Council and the Board of Supervisors to plan much more extensively than they have for a complete system of metropolitan parks equal to the needs of a multi-million-population made up of people who will have leisure such as the masses never knew before. Most especially, a major *central* park will be needed, the difficult mountain vastness to the east is not the answer. One thinks of the 6-acre Scripps Ranch as ideally located for a park central to the growing metropolis. Perhaps the present owner, Mrs. William W. Hawkins, will be so kind as to bequeath it, in line with the great Scripps tradition of public service.

Alternatively, our good Navy might release Camp Elliott (27,985 acres) in due time for the same purpose. In general the Federal Government should be educated to convert military reservations into parks as time shrinks military need; such reservations are often located where they will serve to open up the texture of metropolitan areas and give needed relief from the orgy of over-population into which we are heading.

I would earmark Camp Pendleton (200 square miles) as a particularly important park, separating forever the region of San Diego from that of Los Angeles. Only far-sighted private owners or the Federal Government could be expected to resist the picayune outlook of local majorities that would rather see all land on the tax rolls—and open to speculators, the future be damned.

MISSION BAY IS BEING GIVEN over by public decision to a kind of controlled speculation that represents a new dimension of cooperation between enterprise and government. The basic idea, supported by the City Council, is to take in just enough money from leases to pay costs of serving the park—about a million dollars annually as now computed. The specific figures presented to the City Council April 6th by City Manager George Bean were: \$900,000 estimated operating expenses when the Bay is fully operative sometime in the 60's; \$950,000 estimated revenue from leaseholders. The \$50,000 surplus of income over maintenance expenses would not be counted as profit but rather as covering that portion of public utilities used primarily by leaseholders.

Though it is freely acknowledged around Civic Center that Mission Bay is the most exciting piece of real estate in this city, which as a whole is one of the happiest hunting grounds of the ground-hunting business, the entire legal possibility of the City's gaining a tidy profit (which could be used to great advantage in developing other parks) is being carefully ignored. The political reason for that seems to be that an official can't justify giving over park land to private operators anymore than is necessary to make a particular park self-supporting. It follows from that reasoning that the City will extract the equitable maximum from those operators who are lucky enough to get their adding machines planted in Mission Bay. Let's see if that will be so.

Mr. Bean's letter, April 6th, stated that the leasing conditions "are widely circulated and as many proposals as possible are solicited." The circulating and soliciting may be considered an unqualified success for the City Manager's Office—or rather that of his assistant Les Halcomb, who is a Mission Bay Director—has been showered with large colored renderings and even an occasional scale model showing what investors are ready to do if only the officials will give them a slice of the Mission Bay pie. The choice between competitors for any given slice of the pie will be made by considering design layout, financial ability to perform, experience, proposed development schedule and rent to be paid to the City," according to Mr. Bean's letter. Mr. Bean told this reporter that competition may result in brisk bidding, in which case the bidder offering to pay the highest rental may be awarded the lease. This, Mr. Bean said, would permit reduction of the total land given to leases, thus preserving the balance of expenses and revenues, indicated above—and making more land available for strictly public park use. It will be well worth watching to see if this actually happens.

THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER will have to meet an assortment of leasing terms, the most interesting of which are the architectural control provisions that will govern the look of things. Architectural control starts with the master plan of the park, which specifies what may be built where; this has already been worked out in its essentials after heroic threshing over a decade of design. There will be standards of building design and landscaping conformity to observe, these by their very nature cannot be worked out in rigid formulas, though the Bay already supports some attractive pilot specimens: the Bahia Motel is a respectable piece of design, the landscaping at the Bahia and elsewhere in the park, developed by Mr. Roland Hoyt, is of high quality and appropriate local character,

Indications are that use standards and visual standards will be relatively high in Mission Bay. To its credit, the Mission Bay Commission has recommended the hiring of a consultant to keep track of visual standards and the adherence thereto by lessees—at least in the design stage. For this purpose Les Halcomb urged the outstanding landscape architect, Garrett Eckbo, and his firm, Community Development Planners, which includes Whitney Smith and Wayne Williams, and city planner Simon Eisner. Mr. Eckbo has tremendous interest in an assignment like this, and had already made a few trial passes at the judging of entries before he was hired. He was a close contender for the job of designing Balboa Park, having been passed over for that job, he stood early in line for the Mission Bay assignment. Mr. Halcomb's choice here can only be praised.

THE IMPORTANT MR. ECKBO deserves a digression at this point. He is a 46-year old UC and Harvard graduate of wide experience as designer and teacher. He has spaded more soil in Southern California than anywhere else. and his influence has been far-reaching through his 1949 book *Landscape for Living*, one of the really articulate statements about the ingredients of our environment. In it he shows an easy acquaintance with the full range of cultural influences which we lucky ones ought to recognize and apply in our daily affairs. Here's how he opens up:

“A serious analysis of landscape development must be in terms of the world we live in, the allied arts, the construction industry, and society in general—as they are and as they are becoming. None of these are the same today as they were yesterday and none will be tomorrow as they are today. We must examine today in terms of yesterday in order to project the potentiality for tomorrow. This book's intent is not frivolous, sensational or opportunist. Nor is it thought of as conclusive, definitive or messianic.

“The professional, commercial and amateur designers of landscape, in their work, have failed to recognize the technical, social and cultural changes that have occurred in the world in the last hundred years. We live in a world whose advances are based on the continuous expanses of the use of the scientific method beyond those fields called exact, to such as esthetics and sociology. The scientific method is one that takes nothing for granted, accepts no precedents without examination, a recognizes a dynamic world in which nothing is permanent but change itself.”

Eckbo asks: “When architecture moves from Vignola to Frank Lloyd Wright and LeCorbusier, how can landscape design remain with Repton and LeNotre (designer of Versailles gardens, 17th C.)? What of the current expression in every creative field, of a world which has developed from permanent poverty for the majority to potential security for all in 200 years?”

The reader may find in those few sentences that our Mission Bay design consultant will take the large view of things. Those who suspect that a big talker might not be a first-rate performer should study the plentiful evidence of Eckbo's design skill in his book. Though not beyond criticism, he is surely one of the best of a breed that is all too scarce to do the world's work in his line. In fact, the chief question about Eckbo's usefulness to San Diego may be that he is too busy as a far-ranging consultant to give us enough of his time. It would be too bad if we got only an underling in his office for most of the design decisions; in that case it were better we consulted the excellent landscape people who are residents of this area. Eckbo, incidentally, has a high regard for Roland Hoyt, pioneer Mission Bay landscapist.

What Eckbo will do in effect is act as one-man jury for a series of architectural competitions, whenever proposals are considered for a particular facility in Mission Bay. As now set up, the procedure calls for each potential investor to submit architectural plans of his own choosing. The weakness in this is that we can only get the best of the designs submitted, none of them may be of the highest order of modern American architecture, and San Diego's prestige will suffer by that much. It seems to me that an improved procedure would be for Mr. Eckbo to conduct a series of architectural competitions *open to all architects*, Prizes would be awarded by the City, and then investors would be invited to bid for the privilege of building and leasing on the basis of the winning design, costs of the competition to be absorbed ultimately by the lucky bidder. Incidental to such architectural competitions, and very valuable to the city, would be a good deal of publicity advertising the quality of our intentions.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that the investors who come up on top will have one of the best “deals” available anywhere. Traffic in the park can only increase fantastically, and it will consist largely of spending types. Because water sports will be crazy big in Mission Bay, a good deal of money will be made from boat and motor sales, fuel, boat slips, boat repairs, etc. However, the real profits will be in food, liquor and room rentals. Therefore, hotel and restaurant combinations in various guises will be the main interest of investors. So true is this that it would not be amiss to regard the bay park as one immense hotel zone, even superior to the lower end of Mission Valley as a hotel-investment target.

The city planner's recognize this, and the public seems disposed in the main to go along with it. There is nothing secret about it. The secret thing is the scurrying around among the blue-chip boys to align themselves with the right people in the hope of outmaneuvering competitors. Many rumors but little hard

evidence has come to our notice that indicates effective influence-peddling aimed at our Civic Center servants.

We did learn definitely of some choice Christmas gifts that had been bestowed at Civic Center by Del Webb, the most controversial of enterprisers eyeing the bay, and we heard what we can only report as a rumor that a very high official of ours had his tabs picked up on a recent visit to New York. One career man at Civic Center recently returned a *case* of whiskey out of deference to his own conscience.

In the light of the recent pathetic election, which showed only a tiny percentage of the public cares, it would be easy for city officials to fall into the habit of playing money games with them what has. We can't say that a drift has set in, but we'd be glad to publish any concrete evidence one way or another.

Career-man Les Halcomb, a professional administrator, says influence is not making the decisions, and City Manager George Bean says that maneuvering won't get the blue-chippers anywhere. He cites the case of the zealous promoter who so far forgot himself as to offer \$1,500,000 annual rent if he could have the whole of Catalina Island, please; some 400 acres, even before that choicest piece of made land had been dredged out of the bay muck! He wanted to subdivide it for homes. Bean said no, thank you, it is a public park.

Of course the City Manager did the right thing in that case. But one may still conjecture how many millions would pour into the City coffers if the City itself saw fit to subdivide and lease out individual homesites in part of the bay to the highest bidders. As we'll see a little latter on, this in effect has been done in part of the bay *without* appreciable income to the City.

MISSION BAY COMMISSION, which advises the City Council, has at least two members closely allied in a business way with local moneymen who have big designs on the bay. This again does not prove that influence will make the decisions, but it does suggest a fair question: should not the commission be composed of persons who have minimum business interests?

Even if influence-peddling did not become a main factor in distributing the pie, it may be that the people in our city government who will make the decisions are too disposed to favor business interests in the bay. Mr. Bean's letter of April 6th states that "although the maximum legal term of any lease in Mission Bay is 50 years, it is considered to be in the best interest of the City and the lessee to have leases for as short a term as is consistent with sound financing and other economic and operational requirements."

That listens fine, but the thing to watch is whether the leases tend to be 35 years, which is still too long, or whether they will be brought down around 10 to 15 years, which, in the opinion of experienced observers, should be about right to assure the City's freedom to revise the park in line with changing needs. Under modern conditions of rapid turnover in values, a 25-year lease quite conceivably could result in slum-like patterns of obsolescence in the last 10 years or so of the span, unless leases specifically obligate up-to-dateness and first-class operation. (There seems to be a trend for operators of first-class hotels, for example, to pull out profitably after 10 or 15 years, selling most holdings to second-string operators who find it most profitable to weasel on modernization.)

On the question of obsolescence, the Bean letter seems to demand the miraculous. It says: "Possible obsolescence due to changing conditions, changing use habits or other causes must be recognized and anticipated at the time the leases are executed."

That bespeaks good intentions, but how does the City guarantee the performance? A rough draft of leasing conditions sent out to prospective investors for Quivira Basin, the portion of the bay ripest now for development, says: "Any changes or alterations must have prior City approval. But that is the same as requiring changes to meet new conditions. The rough draft says: "The City shall have the right to, at all reasonable times, inspect the premises and to cause any unsatisfactory conditions *relative to maintenance* of the property to be corrected at lessee's expense." The italics are ours; the City may require maintenance, but not revision of uses to meet new conditions. The rough draft says: "Lessee may not assign any of

lessee's interest without City approval." This would control opportunistic transfer of buildings from one operator to another, but would depend on the politics of the moment.

Manager Bean's letter to the Council says: "The lease would be subject to periodic review to insure that reasonable maintenance, modernization and operational practices are followed consistently. But the rough draft lease sent to prospective investors says nothing about this desirable feature. City management may have the finest intentions in the world, but can we be sure that is true of the City Council? Should one not conclude that the safest procedure is to keep all leases to 15 years or less? After all, the honest city government would always be glad to renew if conditions warranted. At the very least, the City should write in clear escape clauses in case of obsolescence.

I brought up the discrepancy between these two documents with Mission Bay Director Les Halcomb, and his answer made clear that the lease policy is still evolving. He explained that the April 6th letter to the City Council is later than the "rough-draft" lease and more clearly represents the probable terms of leases. He assured me that leases will be subject not only to making changes in line with changing Bay policy, but that the City will be able to buy up any leases that are not in keeping with future Bay uses. In that case the City will pay "depreciated value," which is a great deal less than market value.

A WORD OF RECOGNITION is due the high standards of our city manager and his staff. Mr. Bean and Mr. Halcomb are steering a bold and difficult course, in so far as the political climate will permit, to see that Mission Bay becomes an exemplary work of public enterprise. They are not afraid to take stands in cases where ambitious *private* enterprisers may wait ready to howl like wolves.

A prime case of managerial courage involves the Del Webb interests. Del Webb bought an old lease which controls 26 acres along the shore around Crown Point (which juts into Mission Bay from the north and is no doubt the most coveted real estate surrounding the park.) He offered to give the City 16 acres if he could keep the other 10 on a 50-year lease and build a set of luxury houses on which a number of well-off San Diegans had hungry eyes. After some stormy weeks it was decided, the Mission Bay Commission backed the manager's view that the Webb idea was contrary to Bay policy. The resourceful Webb people were ready with another proposal, a deluxe hotel of 365 units involving over \$4,000,000. But meanwhile the City technicians were coming to the conclusion that there is no suitable route for a needed traffic artery tying La Jolla and Pacific Beach to downtown San Diego except right through the Webb property, reducing his 10 acres to 6! Furthermore, the road would have to go through a number of other privately-held leases along the westerly edge of Crown Point. The thunderclap news—previously unsuspected by the "victims" was being broken by city managers as we went to press.

One of the complexities of Halcomb's job is to see that Bay development doesn't lag. He feels, for example, that as dredging along the eastern shore is completed next year, a major hotel should be built or building in the area midway of the Bay boundary along U.S. Highway 101. For this ideal tourist location there are already many contenders including Conrad Hilton, the Western Hotel Corporation (owners of the St. Francis in San Francisco and the Caravan chain of motels.); George McCabe and Lydia Bailey (Rancho Bakersfield); the aforementioned Del Webb; even Big Bill Zeckendorf, most formidable of the new financial mastodons. The winner in that competition will get 20 to 40 acres and provide 400 to 600 rooms with banquet facilities for 2 to 3000.

Along with the urge to haste will go the danger of mistakes. I think these can best be fought off by conducting architectural competitions to achieve maximum design quality and by writing leases that assure flexibility. In addition, it seems important to me that rentals as stiff as the traffic will bear should be charged operators who are lucky enough to get a leasehold on Mission Bay, so as to amass a fund that can be used in developing other needed parks.

LONG LEASES IN MISSION BAY have already caused the City plenty of trouble. The 70-acre De Anza Trailer Park doesn't look as good as it should because when the 50-year lease was negotiated in 1949 (by the City Council without much benefit of the City Manager function), sufficient controls were not built in. The presumption was at the time of lease-execution that this would be a compatible park use, a place for visitors to the city to park their trailers for a limited stay. In effect, De Anza has become a sub-

division of small homes, which is exactly what some of the trailers settled there function as. Neither the natural desires of the residents for higher standards, nor the embarrassment of politicians, has caused this section of Mission Bay to attain the design standards that are envisioned for the whole, though the operators are assuredly doing all right by themselves.

Perhaps the clearest evidence that less policy in Mission Bay bears the utmost consideration is the happy case of Bill Evans, owner of the 125-unit Bahia Hotel, the first hotel in Mission Bay and the only one so far. In the first five years of his 50-year lease he has done well enough so that for the year 1959 he will pay about \$50,000 rent to the City, figured on the basis of 5% of his gross income on rooms, 5% of the bar and 1% of the restaurant. His total gross income for 1958 was \$1,271,829, of which he paid \$40,483 in rent.

For Quivira Basin the minimum rent will be 5c per square foot of land and 2c per square foot of water. As gross income piles up for the lessees, the City will get more than the minimum, or about this schedule: Food (primary purpose) 3% of gross income; Food (subsidiary purpose) 1%; liquor 5%; Marine hardware 4%; Boat & motor sales 4%; Fuel 5%; Commission sales 10%; room rental 7%. All other sales or service 7%.

As now master-planned, the large sleep-and-eat enterprise at Quivira Basin will be a hotel of at least 100 rooms and including restaurant, bar, snack bar, slip rentals, clothing, jewelry and sundries, sales shops, occupying 8.54 acres of land and controlling 3.08 acres of water. Estimated minimum investment is \$750,000. The City, according to its own estimates, should get about \$82,000 rent from the enterprise within the first five years as follows: Bar \$23,000; Boat slips \$3,950; Restaurant \$10,300; Rooms 38,300; Miscellaneous \$6,450. THAT INDICATES A TOTAL 5-YEAR GROSS INCOME FOR THE INVESTORS OF OVER TWO MILLION DOLLARS, with the bar yielding almost as much of the total as the rooms. The City plans to take 5% of the bar gross; 7% of the room gross; 1% of the restaurant gross.

On this particular hotel the City is recommending a lease of 50 years. So it is reasonable to conclude that any subsequent project as large or larger—and there will be several—will also be offered 50 years control, unless the feeble public conscience should demand otherwise.

There is no doubt that it is possible to design a motel of such quality that it will be more charming and desirable 50 years hence than when new. But that is not the prevalent standard in the building business, and it does not conform with the thinking of money-lenders. Under the rate of change that besets modern man, 25 years is almost the maximum period for which economic uses of a particular installation could be assumed at the same level on which it was initiated. At the end of that time most modern buildings will either have decayed or lost their appeal. Thus, in the name of civic wisdom, there would seem to be little civic excuse for the City Council offering a 50-year lease to the builder of any park structure.

IF WE ASSUME THE BEST intentions of the City in the matter of requiring compliance with design standards, there are plenty of instances that show the City's tendency to bow toward the heavy investors. In Mission Valley, for example, how does one explain the conversion of Mission Valley Country Club into a high-class eyesore called Stardust Hotel, with glaring white roof and solidly choked parking lot to offend the passerby, just as surely as any eyesore in the poorer section of town? The governing decisions in this case were those of the owner, Mr. Harry Handlery. The City Planning Commission, as usual, was asleep.

One has only to compare the Stardust Hotel with the neighboring Town and Country Hotel or the new Presidio Hotel to see the difference between good and bad design. I don't accept the argument that the City doesn't have sufficient controls to prevent such lapses as Stardust. A City Council with stomach, muscle and vision could support sound architectural standards anywhere in the city through the legal device known as architectural control, and spiny officials could refuse building permits to willful or ignorant spoilers of our precious environment.

It would seem natural that the endorsement of standards will be easier in Mission Bay park, on land owned by the City. As this discussion suggests creditable moves have been made toward design quality, but there is room for improvement of both standards and enforcement decisions.

One of the last hotels to come in the Bay will be the very most desirable spot of all—near the junction of Highways 80 and 101. This hotel probably will rise many stories into the sky, giving patrons incomparable views of the materialized dreamboat park. The skyscraper hotel will be pointing in the direction in which San Diego residential construction must go soon, up, up, up. If our skyscrapers are carefully spaced, they should be the most desirable living quarters in all America. It's too bad we can't build a dozen of them right now with observation decks from which citizens could really appreciate the superior city that is struggling to be born here.

CAPTION: These three renderings are entries in the bidding for one of the choice leases at Quivira Basin—a hotel site calling for at least 250 sleeping units, bar, restaurant and, oh yes, boating facilities. There are by no means of equal quality, and a key man in deciding among them will be Garrett Eckbo, landscape architect to be engaged by the City as consultant.

July 1959, San Diego Magazine, Letter Josephia S. Francisco, niece of Richard Requa, her uncle was neither Catholic nor Spanish.

August 1959, San Diego Magazine, 42-50, ART OF THE CITY: California Western [University] Situation; 50, Of Kindness and Criticism

September 1959, San Diego Magazine, 50+, ART OF THE CITY: 50-52, Symphony in San Diego; 52, The Poor Call Girl; 53, Pied Piper of Spanish Village (Guy Williams); 54-56, FM Station KPFK—The House of Intellect; 56, Britton Given Air; 56, 109, Respecting Kindness and Criticism

October 1959, San Diego Magazine, 53+, ART OF THE CITY: 53, Making the best of California; Inspired master plan for University of California at La Jolla; 61, First maneuvers in the university community; 62, 114-117, Progress Hits Sorrento Valley; 65. Three Nights at the Opera

November 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 65, How good is Bartholomew Report?

Harland Bartholomew, the man from Missouri*, said “show me” and proceeded to listen to various groups that had ideas how Balboa Park should be used. Then he spelled out what he thought on the same subject and made a lot of people mad. But one lot or another would have been mad, no matter what he said. The emotional attachment of the citizenry to this choice piece of landscape is wondrous to contemplate.

Bartholomew is only part way through with the perpetuation of a Balboa Park master plan, for which he will be paid \$35,000. The final report will be the proper basis for deciding whether he was worth the money. His preliminary report on *Alternate Uses of Buildings in the Prado and Palisades Areas* left assorted doubts.

It is an orderly and lucid report. If all its suggestions were carried out, the park would continue to serve for a long time just about as it does now, except that some of the commercial activity would be banished. Some of the buildings would disappear and others would be built. Some activities would be shifted, and the more important ones would be given room for growth.

In my opinion, the report falls short because it does not aim high enough. In this respect it reflects the practicality of the City Manager, who ordered the report in the first place. Manager George Bean's job is not to inspire grand new ideas for the destiny of the city, but to conduct the city's business in an orderly and economical fashion. His efforts have the blessing of the taxpayers association—which is another way of saying that he has not presumed to offer imaginative or daring concepts. The Bartholomew firm was

chosen exactly for the reason that it has a business-like reputation. The question of the firm's design imagination was not paramount.

Naturally, Mr. Bartholomew is going to stay within the frame of his own reputation and the expectations of his client. It's as though Mr. Bean had said to H.B., "For heaven's sake, don't go off the deep end and make proposals that are going to be enormously expensive. We have a hard enough time getting enough budgets for the parks, and the people of this city could never stand for a great new load of taxes."

In truth, Mr. Bean had very little contact with the Bartholomew people. Bean's able assistant, Les Halcomb, is the chief agent of the city in hatching plans for both Balboa Park and Mission Bay Park. In preparing the Bartholomew's contract, Halcomb did not tell the planners how much money the City was prepared to spend on the future of Balboa Park, although the contract did include this statement, "Financial and administrative problems are to be given adequate consideration in development of the comprehensive plan in order that the plan represents a reliable as well as desirable objective."

If I were Harry Bartholomew and had the slightest knowledge of San Diego's recent money-starved public policy, I should conclude that a "reliable" plan for Balboa Park means a low-cost make-do. That would be further brought home to me by the fact that my contract was for only part of the necessary work; a good deal of it having been done by City employees in order to reduce my fee. (The idea of a master plan for Balboa Park was first brought up three years ago by then City Manager O. W. Campbell and shelved because too expensive; the consultant fee dropped from about \$90,000 to \$35,000 when the research load was lightened.)

Well, an orderly and frugal investment in Balboa Park is not enough. A great deal of money should be spent there as a bold capital investment that may be expected to pay off many times over as the city grows. The master plan should be at least as bold and daring and imaginative as the one that gave us the Exposition of 1915. The buildings created then are the chief marvel of the park 44 years later—and our most dazzling attraction for visitors. Will the fruits of the Bartholomew-Bean stalk be of similar distinction in the world 2003, 44 years from now? I don't think so.

If the little town of 1915 could do so much, why must we do so little? Are we trying to prove Mr. Khrushchev's thesis that capitalism is running down? Are we so degenerate that we stand by with a faint smile while our own dear fat sacred cows sink in the quick sands of enveloping communism? What Americans do with public works projects like Balboa Park is a clue to their capacity to meet growing challenges such as Mr. K. represents.

To cut the ranting and get down to a hard look at Bartholomew's interim report, it examines one by one the buildings along El Prado (Laurel Street) and in the so-called Palisades Area (Ford Building, etc.). Each building is reviewed as to its historical background, its appearance, architectural significance, and structural condition. Mr. Bartholomew then evaluates the cost of maintenance for each, estimates its future life, suggests possible alternate uses, and finally comes up with a recommendation coyly labeled "tentative disposition." It is Mr. Bartholomew's series of "tentative dispositions" that caused the eruption of small explosions ruffling the complacent muddle of our society. My evaluation of the evaluation will follow through Mr. Bartholomew's sequence. Direct quotation from the report will be in smaller type.

Along El Prado, Bartholomew first looked at the **Administration Building** left over from 1915:

The Administration Building is so situated that it blocks the full view of the California Quadrangle as one approaches the Prado from the west. Architecturally, the building is neutral, being more plane and boxlike than any other structure along the Prado. The building's architect, Bertram G. Goodhue, summed up the appearance of the building as follows: "For heaven's sake, tear down first of all the Administration Building which has always been an impertinence coming against the massive gravity of the permanent group behind it."

H.B.'s tentative disposition is to tear it down as soon as the administration offices can be relocated. Fair enough.

THEATRE DREAM

The report's one big surge of inventive thought came in its treatment of the **California Quadrangle**, three major buildings surrounding the Plaza de California, dominated by the California Tower and presently occupied by the Museum of Man.

The inadequacies of the California State Building as a museum were expressed quite pointedly as early as 1917 by architect Goodhue: "There is no doubt . . . about the California Building not being adapted to general museum purposes. It was hardly expected to be, but was intended—at the time of its designing, at any rate—to be used after the Fair was over for an auditorium of some sort, that is for either theatrical, musical, political or lyceum purposes."

Since it is so eminently unsuited for museum purposes, means of putting the California Quadrangle Buildings to a better use should be found. The rotunda of the California State Building could be converted into a public assembly facility for the Museum of Man. The end result, however, would be undesirable because this museum needs a facility with a sloping floor with a small stage at one end. Furthermore, the rotunda would have to be completely darkened during the daytime, thus negating the aesthetic quality of the domed space. The room would be used by comparatively few people and for a comparatively short time each day. This would be a great waste of the space and would fail to capitulate on the potential of the rotunda.

Use of the building as either an opera house or a civic theatre was rejected for the reasons mentioned above and because the structure is not large enough to warrant its being seriously considered for such use.

On the other hand, the rotunda of the California State Building could easily be turned into an arena-type theatre or theatre in the round, that is a theatre with an acting area in the center and the audience encircling the acting area. Only stadium-type risers, theatre seats, theatrical-type lighting and an acoustical treatment of the dome need be added to convert it to a five to seven hundred seat theatre. Besides since scenery is not employed in this type of theatre, the fire regulation problem is virtually eliminated, nor are structural considerations of primary importance in such an undertaking. A stage house could be added by projecting either the north or west wall of the rotunda outward.

On the northeast corner of the Quadrangle there is a workshop that could remain in this use. The existing lecture hall could be utilized as an experimental theatre. The remaining rooms could be used for dressing and prop storage, costume storage, etc. Existing restrooms would be adequate for the new use. The southern portion of the Quadrangle contains a Boardroom which could remain in that use. The long, vaulted gallery along the south side of the Quadrangle would make two experimental theatres seating one hundred to one hundred fifty persons each. There are additional rooms in this section for costume and scenery storage, rehearsals and classrooms. The St. Francis Chapel could continue to be used for weddings, interdenominational services and religious pageants. Outdoor dramas could be staged in the Plaza de California (once the through traffic is eliminated) and the façade of the California State Building would for this purpose serve as a backdrop of unmatched distinction. The California State Building should be converted into a theatre along the lines suggested above and function as the nucleus of a Theatre Arts Center to be located in the various other California Quadrangle Buildings. This appears to be the one practicable use which would take full advantage of the nobility of the building. (There is a possibility that the "Theatre Arts Center" that would result could be operated under the auspices of the San Diego Community Theatre group and could be utilized as an expansion of their present operation of the nearby Old Globe Theatre.)

This is indeed a charming prospect and a very choice theatre complex could result—though not without drastic acoustical construction that would transform the interior appearance of the California State Building. However, it would be forever a small-scale theatre operation whereas in my opinion Balboa Park

should be the scene of a total theatre activity at least as grand in scope as New York City's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, now a building. Lincoln Center will contain separate theatres for opera, symphony and dance, plus numerous smaller theatres and the complete Julliard School of Music, foremost in the nation. I think San Diego should aim to develop in Balboa Park a similar operation, including great schools of music, theatre, dance, etc. Further along in this discussion we will consider just how and where. It may be noted here that we already have the rudiments of such a program. We only need to raise our sights.

Continuing to fondle our theatre future, Harland B. gave a sympathetic look at the **Old Globe Theatre Complex** (1935).

The Old Curiosity Shop and the Falstaff Tavern were reproductions of their Elizabethan counterparts. The Globe Theatre itself is a reproduction of the Old Elizabethan Globe Theatre in England. Unlike the original playhouse, the pit of this building was roofed over in 1936.

The Falstaff Tavern and the Old Curiosity Shop have been converted for use for set construction, costume sewing, property storage, office space, and an intermission snack bar. The entire plant has been described by Sir Cedric Hardwicke as "one of the most beautiful and best equipped Little Theatre plants in the world." The theatre should remain until such time as maintenance costs become excessive. Then the building might be reconstructed anew in permanent construction, taking care to preserve the authentic architectural theme of the Elizabethan era.

This makes good sense—provided the replacement is better designed than the present candy box, and provided it is to be just one among many park theatres. A reproduction, or rather approximation of Shakespeare's theatre will always be desirable to perpetuate the Shakespeare Festival. Besides it keeps alive an echo of our English heritage to counter the prevailing armada of Spanish buildings.

ART FAILURE

After its brief moment of high fancy the report suddenly plunges to abject submission, averting its attention from the **Medical Arts Building**.

No discussion of this building is warranted because the city has already expressed its intention to demolish it. The cleared site will be made available for the construction of a wing to the Fine Arts Gallery.

The **American Legion Building** was bypassed for the same reason, and the **Fine Arts Gallery** itself was judged suitable to continue as is. Here Mr. Bartholomew shows his readiness to adjust to the wishes of his client, the city administration. The City—in its respect for money—is perfectly willing to let the Fine Arts Society have its own way in designing its wings because the money will come from public subscription or from private gifts with strings attached rather than out of the city exchequer. However, the Fine Art Society's board of trustees does not have the strength to produce a quality of architecture that will be a sufficient replacement of the dream palaces built in 1915. To begin with the Society has let the design commissions go to two different architects, different as day and night, Robert Mosher and Frank Hope.

Hope got the east wing because of the quantity of pseudo-Spanish work he has done, and because he is a most personable gentleman. He was chosen not by the Fine Arts Society but by the trustees of the Putnam foundation, which put up the money with strings attached. The Putnam trustees are lawyers and bankers ill-qualified to distinguish good from bad in architecture, though they surely know what they like. What they like in a case like this is unbreathing monumentality, and Hope's busy office will turn it out with business-like dispatch.

Mosher (and partner Roy Drew) got the west wing because they too are personable gentlemen and stood in well with the right people. Here again the Fine Arts trustees did not award the contract strictly on design merit, but it happens that the La Jolla team of architects is capable of nicely adjusted esthetic results, though their remodeling of the Art Center in La Jolla may not in all respects prove their virtue. They will ponder and ponder their wing, and will want to do a masterpiece. Can they lick the limitations of budget and that knottiest of problems in architecture, the relating of new to old? Their tendency is toward honest

simplicity, but this will not be a sufficient answer along El Prado, where “high style” is called for to maintain the mood established by the designers of 1915. High style needn’t mean old Spanish. In fact certain new ideas now in circulation would be a better complement to the old Spanish than any imitation—old we are able to build under present building-trades conditions. There is a rich variety of “High Modern,” involving sculptured walls with glass, etc., as beautifully set forth in *Horizon* for September.

The disparity of approaches on the two wings is an esthetic crime of which no worthy Fine Arts Society would be guilty. The most glaring delinquency involved is that there was *no* consultation between the two architects except for a preliminary meeting called by Halcomb. The Fine Arts Society has defaulted on a major art of architecture problem, and there appears to be no one in city government concerned enough to see that a master plan of architectural esthetics is developed *before* any new buildings go up in the park. The failure of the Fine Arts Society as a *group* does not mean that its individual members are all unequal to the challenge. But somehow our community talent does not seem to come to the fore.

THE RULES

Mr. Bartholomew is supposed to include architectural advice in his master plan, but as I have suggested he does not seem to be supercharged with inspiration. If he were equal to the opportunity, he would demand a halt on all park buildings until he could conduct the open symposium of design minds that could generate an architectural demand worthy of the park’s future.

At one point in his report H.B. does offer “criteria to guide the appearance of new buildings in the Prado area”—criteria rather hastily assembled “in order not to delay progress” on the two gallery wings. In view of the vacuity fostered by the Fine Arts Society, H.B.’s gesture toward esthetics smacks of locking the padlock gate after the thoroughbred has been stolen.

But here’s a part of what he offers in the way of esthetic guidance:

1. The generally uniform architectural treatment—all buildings being in one style or another of Spanish-Renaissance architecture.
2. The number of buildings and the extent of the area they occupy giving a greater environmental impact than would be the case if they were just a few isolated structures.
3. The presence of the handsome system of arcades tying the whole assembly of buildings into a harmonious composition.
4. The mature landscape planting.

The essential character of the Prado Area as described above should be maintained in perpetuity by the careful and sympathetic design of each new structure that is to replace one of the old temporary buildings. The master plan for the park would show the general arrangement of arcades, buildings and pedestrian circulation in the area. Arcades and new buildings would be required to be harmonious with Classic Spanish architecture. This is not as restrictive a requirement as it might appear. There are many styles of Spanish architecture some of which utilize most simple and direct building forms and arrangements—quite well suited to the uses contemplated for the Prado Area. In addition to this general rule, the following specific rules should be followed:

Control of building design can be limited to conformance with the objectives of the master plan and the appearance of elevations facing Laurel Street and the proposed roadways that would be built to the north and the south of the Prado Area. The following specific standards are suggested:

- (a) Building height should be limited to two stories or 35 feet with towers being exempted. There would be no objection, rather it would be most desirable, if existing towers would be replaced. Other towers would have to be reviewed individually as to the relationship with the over-all design and particularly the relationship to the California Building.
- (b) Buildings should be of masonry construction (concrete, stone or plastered brick). Any ornamentation should be of permanent materials.
- (c) Colors should be white or of appropriate pastel shades.

- (d) The amount of fenestration should be controlled. The percentage of allowable area of openings in relation to the total surface area of an elevation should not exceed 15 percent.
- (e) Unless hidden by arcades, the general scale of a new building should be in keeping with those that are in view from the new building.

The above rules should be adequate to assure a continuity of aesthetic effect during the long period of years that will be required to replace the temporary buildings and to assure a desirable building composition when the rebuilding has been concluded. It is important that scheduling of demolition, building of new structures and rebuilding of existing structures provide for a good appearance of the Prado Area at all times.

Well, your rules are *not* adequate, H.B. You are correct to stress that new building should be harmonious with Classic Spanish, but it must be remembered that harmony in music evolved and evolved until it included a great deal of vibrant sound that was formerly intolerable. In architecture, too, creative minds will strain forward, adding new values while getting very far away from the old. At this late date—and considering the limitations of our building industry—academic attempts at “Spanish Renaissance” design are apt to be deadly dull, like salon music. It is conceivable that tremendous architectural harmony could be achieved and still violate all five of your controls, H.B. Your rules are a negative approach, not good enough to give San Diego distinction in the evolving future. It would be more to the point for you to prescribe ways and means to assure that the very best architectural talent of America will be brought to bear in Balboa Park, as it was in 1915.

I like what you say about the importance of the arcades in the over-all design, H.B., but I wonder if this too has been approached only as a matter of keeping what we have, like a pressed flower. Has there been sufficient study of possible improvements? One idea that should be explored is the possibility of an interconnected promenade *on top of* the arcades—affording unique views, separation of traffic, and ready access to second floors.

MORE MUSEUMS

To continue our procession up El Prado, Mr. Bartholomew advises that the **Botanical Building** should continue in its present use indefinitely. The **Food and Beverage Building** “should be demolished. An appropriate use for the site will be proposed in the master plan.” Logically this should be a museum usage—transitional between natural history and horticultural—and will be so designated in the final Bartholomew plan, or I miss my guess.

The report visualizes a rather stagnant future for **Spanish Village:**

The present use of the Spanish Village as a gathering place where artists and craftsmen may be observed at work by the public is considered appropriate for Balboa Park. The provision of the studios is a form of encouragement to the amateur artists and the public exposure to and appreciation of art is heightened. There are no other logical alternate uses for the Village.

It seems to me that the highest and best use of the Spanish Village is as a great outdoor cafeteria, with the immense courtyard occupied by tables surrounded by umbrellas and trees. There are assorted food caterers nearby who would reject this use of the Village, but the elegant Café del Rey Moro, the humble hot dog stands, and the fenced-off Zoo cafeteria do not add up enough eating facilities for the teeming future. Except for the building housing kitchen and chow line, the Spanish Village *casas* could be maintained indefinitely by makers and sellers of pictures and tourist merchandise. Items now sold in the various museums could be vended here too.

We come next to the solid, sturdy **Natural History Museum;**

Originally built (1933) as the first building of a Natural History complex that was intended ultimately to occupy all the Prado from Park Boulevard to the Lily Pool, its Spanish-Colonial architecture was designed to be in harmony with the 1915 Exposition buildings. Should continue in its present ____ indefinitely. An

area for its expansion should be designated on the master plan adequate to accommodate a scientific library, a children's museum, and a new lecture hall.

The several children's quarters and lecture halls associated with the various museums should be coordinated as part of a total plan for El Prado as suggested by me in SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE for February 1959. The Museum of Natural History may have been designed to be in harmony with the 1915 Exposition buildings, but it is certainly the poorest structure *visually* along El Prado, concrete evidence of the fact that the American building industry year by year has become less able to do right by the old Spanish idiom.

To modify the ugliness of this building, the system of arcades should be extended in front of the Natural History Museum. Pedestrian circulation on top of the arcades could be joined to the existing building in architecturally dramatic ways that would redeem the blah of the present scene.

I wonder, too, if the system of arcades should not be extended across the heavy traffic of Park Boulevard as pedestrian bridges. The old streetcar station which closes the view at the Park Boulevard end of the Prado should be replaced by a building that should become the chief architectural attraction of the park. It should be taller than the California Tower, a glassy skyscraper, perhaps, from the upper floors of which the entire park and the city beyond might be surveyed. Such a building would require to be subtly related to its environment, an architectural masterpiece, the symbol of the new San Diego as the Cal Tower is of the old. The proper use of the skyscraper would be to house park and museum administrative offices and such other functions as need office space in the park. In the hill below the tower could be constructed shelf on shelf of parking as required.

Having reached the east end of the park and crossed Park Boulevard via pedestrian bridge to the glass tower, we may briefly trace Harland Bartholomew's route back along the south side of El Prado. He suggests demolishing the **Electric Building** next year and landscaping its site "until such time as it is feasible to build a new building." In my vision of a well-knit museum complex, this spot could well house a science and industry museum, and I should think the present building could be put up with for such a purpose, until funds permitted a permanent replacement. It is, after all, a ground-story structure with ready egress in case of fire.

H.B. suggests that the **House of Hospitality** be rebuilt in permanent materials about as is, and that it continue in about the same use as at present. This seems generally appropriate, though there is room for improvement.

The last Prado structure reported on by the Bartholomew Report is the **House of Charm**, so named long before it became the nest of San Diego's artistic starlings, the amateur scene, fruit and face painters who go under the misleading name of San Diego Art Institute. Though a few of their number have genuine talent that should be rescued from the prevailing atmosphere, the group as a whole has no rightful place along Museum Row, but might deserve to be catered to elsewhere in the park system, if at all. H.B. would shoo them to the Spanish Village and tear down the House of Charm. Here again, I think the building might serve a museum use until funds are on hand for permanent replacement. Museum of Man could go here—or it could interchange locations with the science and industry museum.

If there is one thing that should be easily apparent about the Prado area, it is that here the possibility of a comprehensive museum center hardly rivaled elsewhere in the world. It would be a shame to approach the future of this area in the niggling, starved manner reflected in the Bartholomew Report. As will be seen below, H.B. is willing to scatter the museums in order to make do with the leftovers. He also accepts the incompetent concepts of the several competing museum boards who have no real interest in the interrelation which could make for standout greatness.

A FEDERAL CASE

Turning his attention to the Palisades area, Harland Bartholomew recommends that the **Floral Association Building** (A) and the **Photo Arts Building** (B) be treated as part of the circle now oddly

known as the **House of Pacific Relations**, the whole caboodle to continue as a miniature United Nations with each country's American descendants exhibiting civility toward all others in the circle, and exhibiting too the visages of their ancestral folk art. I wonder if the future's demand for outdoor eating arrangements might not bring this group into line for another cafeteria like that suggested above for the Spanish Village.

The failure of H.B.'s design imagination becomes most apparent when we check his "tentative disposition" in regard to the **Federal Building** (D). First he reviewed the intriguing history:

This building was erected for the 1935 Exposition and housed the exhibits of the Federal Government. Basically it was designed for eventual conversion to a municipal theatre and was presented to the city for that purpose at the close of the Exposition. For that reason a temporary flat wooden floor was floated over earth which slopes from west to east and which is graded to accommodate a permanent sloping floor. The reinforced concrete walls are windowless for the same reason and the rear of the building has a false wall where a proscenium arch was to have been installed, replacing the temporary wood stud wall now found there. In 1948 complete plans for a 2,500 seat theatre were drawn. The Capital Expenditures Program for 1950-51 included \$187,000 for the remodeling but opposition to the project on the grounds that a sloping floor could not be used by conventions forestalled action at that time.

In the meantime, the funds which had been earmarked for the conversion were diverted to other projects and a series of other auditorium sites, some in Balboa Park, were explored. It was not until 1955 that the conversion idea was again revived. As talk of securing a municipal theatre again assumed momentum, the Chamber of Commerce urged that the proposal to remodel the Federal Building as a theatre be reviewed. The conversion idea was soon overshadowed by an unsuccessful attempt to build a new civic theatre costing \$3,500,000 opposite the Zoo parking lot on Park Boulevard.

Then H.B. weighed the cost of converting the Federal Building to a civic theatre against the cost of converting it for the Museum of Man—and concluded that it should become the Museum of Man. One of the reasons:

The Mayan theme of the Federal Building ties in well with the archaeological exhibits of Mayan and Aztec culture which are now featured by the Museum of Man and the large open spaces in the building would be ideal for the display of replicas of the great stelae which require considerable ceiling heights.

Among H.B.'s reasons for rejecting conversion of the Federal Building to a theatre:

While a "Little Theatre" placing primary interest on the development of the drama as an art form is appropriate for Balboa Park, a facility primarily devoted to the presentation of drama as a form of commercial entertainment is certainly a questionable park use. Several studies have been made indicating that a civic theatre should be located on a site in the downtown area. Of greater significance, however, is the fact that the converted Federal Building would not meet the community's needs. The need for a municipal theatre seating between 3,000 and 3,500 has been indicated by several studies. Not only would the 2,500 seats which could be installed in the Federal Building be inadequate, but the structure would have to undergo a complete and costly face-lifting on the exterior as well as the interior which would amount to a virtual reconstruction.

This means that H.B. is quite content to let the Federal Building retain its present architectural ugliness for the indefinite future. In my opinion it was a misbegotten design in the first place, not at all compatible with the Prado buildings, though its sound basic structure warrants rebuilding, in the course of which its appearance should be transformed to comply with a new and worthy architectural concept of the Palisades area. Here again, H.B. should call for a symposium and competition of architects to produce the highest quality of design for our park's future.

THE GREAT MODEL

As noted earlier, New York is at the moment setting the pace for tomorrow's builders of cultural centers. Manhattan's Lincoln Center of the Performing Arts has a site not nearly as good as the Palisades

area of Balboa Park. Lincoln Center is not in Central Park but near the border thereof, and it bears roughly the same traffic relation to Manhattan's somewhat scattered downtown as in the San Diego situation. In other words, it is taxi distance from the main shopping centers and the main hotels. And New York's convention center, the Coliseum, is near Lincoln Center, by the way.

Lincoln Center is a breathtaking total concept, architecturally and culturally. Its several theatres will be sized for optimum enjoyment of the particular arts, not oversized to pack 'em in. The opera house will be the biggest; present aim is 3,800 seats but the expectation is that the final figure will be 3,500 or less in order to satisfy the acoustical problem. The symphony hall, home of the New York Philharmonic, will contain just 2,400 seats. The theatre, to be shared jointly by ballet and operetta, will be adjustable from 2,200 to 2,500, though experts in operetta or musical comedy say 1,800 should be the maximum. So it seems the Bartholomew Report accepts obsolete as the basis for a judgment of the Federal Building, which seems to me perfectly ideal for conversion into a symphony hall. Opera we'll come to in a minute. Certainly—in consideration of the inevitable expansion of cultural interests in our affluent society—San Diego should officially determine to develop in the Palisades area of Balboa Park a center for the performing arts at least as good as Manhattan's Lincoln Center, including several auditoriums and related schools. As for the school, the Park and Recreation Department already has the rudiments in its various dance and music classes partially sustained by tax funds—and a larger share of the tax dollar will naturally become available as public cultural demands rise. As for the commercial aspect of entertainment arts, a more affirmative planner than H.B. would stress that ticket sales will largely pay for the development costs and—if the center gives promise of being truly outstanding—private memorial bequests should materialize in the millions of dollars.

THE KEY

If my pitch is true, then H.B.'s "disposition" in regards to the structures in the Palisades area should be weighed accordingly. While he would retain the **Balboa Park Bowl**, (F) he has marked for demolition all the buildings on the Palisades that we have not yet discussed: the **Municipal Gymnasium** (E), the **Ford Building** (G), the **Conference Building** (H), and the **Balboa Park Club** (J). The club (10) he would replace by a similar facility for the following reasons:

It is one of the few buildings in the park that can legitimately extend the usefulness of the park into the evening hours while accommodating those uses that are appropriate for Balboa Park. It would not be unreasonable to anticipate that a modern reconstruction of the club would return revenues sufficient to make the entire operation self-sustaining. The reconstruction need not necessarily take place on the exact site as the existing structure, but may be shifted to a more advantageous location more in harmony with the angle of the proposed Museum of Man. The removal of several of the Palisades buildings would permit the installation of more adequate parking areas adjacent to the building and would improve the approach to (and appearance of) the area around it.

In that statement you have the key to H.B.'s basic concept of the park: get rid of half the buildings and thereby reduce the parking problem. His concept seems far from adequate in view of the tremendous population heading our way—but it does fit in with the present puny scale of official thinking as regards public investment, particularly do we weasel on park investments. The Bartholomew Report rests on the unworthy assumption that Balboa Park will always remain our largest central-like park. An adequate park designer's attitude would be to agitate for the eventual conversion of Miramar Air Station at Camp Elliott into a major central park for the metropolis.

An ominous note is rung by H.B. in discussing possible improvements to the Balboa Park Bowl (new stage facilities, theatre-type seats, etc.).

Before any funds are expended for improvement of the Bowl there should have been sufficient experience with operations of the expressway system to conclusively demonstrate that traffic noises will not make the Bowl untenable.

Whether the open-air Bowl is ruined by traffic noise or not, it is certainly true that the park-like quiet will be transformed by the building in the park of a four-level interchange and related freeways. It seems absurd then for H.B. to reduce the number of buildings within which the traffic will not be noticeable. And his crowning absurdity is to replace the Ford Building by a “pedestrian overlook”—as though it will be possible to overlook the girdle of traffic.

THE NEW FORD

Despite its foolish aspect as approached from the front, where it looks like a giant washing machine of the 30's the Ford Building is incredibly beautiful, considered as a plan (see San Diego Magazine for February 1959). It is mainly one great circular floor, an enormous unroofed patio surrounded by a high-roofed promenade circle which was originally filled with industrial exhibits. The patio is large enough for 3,750 seats, allowing for a stage at one end. It, therefore, strikes me as suitable for conversion to an opera house—considering the all-important promenade in which various suitable exhibits could be installed to vie with the costumes paraded at opera intermissions. By the time acoustical and sight lines were adequately accounted for, the opera house might not have more than 3,200 seats—which is about what New York City is likely to end up with.

My own “disposition” for the Ford Building, as contrasted with H.B.'s, would be to make it and nearby structures—available for a strictly limited number of years to the convention people—with the express understanding that a permanent convention home is to be planned by commercial money for a more suitable location outside the park. Let the convention people install moveable seats on a flat floor for now, but let them build a stage that will suit eventually for opera, and let them forget about the balcony that would mean a too expensive rebuilding. (The balcony would not be necessary for an opera house.) If they *must* have a balcony, let it be planned so that it will have a fit future for opera. In general, the rebuilding should be done with an eye to an opera-house future.

Of course an opera house will not be used only for opera. But since opera will be its highest use, the Ford Building would be figured accordingly.

NEEDED: A THEME

As a feeble tailpiece for his report, Harland Bartholomew offers criteria for the appearance of buildings in the Palisades Area:

The above analysis indicates the advisability of retaining only four buildings in the Palisades area on a permanent basis. These should be:

1. The House of Pacific Relations complex
2. The Federal Building, converted to use by the Museum of Man
3. The Balboa Park Bowl, remodeled and with a tractable cover if possible, and
4. The reconstructed Balboa Park Club

Because these buildings are well separated from each other and from the Prado Area, there is no need for an architectural theme or any great architectural conformity of one building with the others. Colorful, gay, contemporary architectural treatment is recommended for the remodeling of the Bowl and the rebuilding of the Balboa Park Club.

Against this limp conclusion, I would argue that there is indeed a need for an architectural theme. Color and gaiety may well play their part in such a theme, and I would say that some modern conception of arcades should be a very prominent part of the scheme—as they are in New York's Lincoln Center. The blacktop parking in the central plaza should be done away with in favor of trees and gardens and paths and fountains and pools and sculpture. The parking should be in the hills back of the buildings, shelf on shelf as required, with various access roads to the freeways.

The buildings themselves should all be retained in present uses—including convention uses—until such time as components of a great center of the performing arts can be financed on a determined schedule. Fees should be charged for present activities and the funds earmarked for the building program.

Meanwhile, a symposium of design brains should be called into session and kept in session until it comes up with specific plans of the highest architectural order for both the Prado and Palisades areas of Balboa Park—plans that will be good enough so that visitors to the year 2003 will open their mouths and gasp at the product of our community foresight.

This review has been necessarily harsh to Mr. Bartholomew's earnest and qualified staff. I should like to end by saying that their thorough work would deserve unqualified acceptance if we were the unaspiring generation that the report seems to assume.

HOW TO DO IT

The City Council is considering a 4 percent tax on transient hotel and motel room rentals, such as is applied in a number of cities, notably New York. This tax would bring it about \$400,000 next year and would increase annually as the city grew. The fund COULD be earmarked for tourist and cultural accommodations of the highest quality, such as those suggested in the above article.

*Harland Bartholomew is the distinguished founder of a giant St. Louis firm of city planners, civic engineers and landscape architects. Of the firm's six heads, Eldridge Lovelass took charge of the San Diego survey; young landscape architect Robert Horn headed the study team resident here.

November 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 91, **FRED WIGHT'S INVOLVEMENT**

FRED WIGHT is one of the signal powers in the world art scene. As writer and assembler of shows, he has done as much as any one person to bridge the distance between artist and public. His presence at UCLA in recent years as director of the art gallery is one of the state's luckiest breaks since the discovery of gold.

As painter, Fred Wight is somewhat influenced by the muscular painting style of his mother, a Cape Cod original whose strength compares with Grandma Moses' as Mammy Yokum's with Olive Oyl's. But Wight is subtle, and there are arresting mysteries in his best pictures, such as the one conveying the giantism of the redwood tree, and a portrait of Sigmund Freud that manages to express in paint the awfulness of the penetrating mind. These two I was privileged to see in Wight's Los Angeles house, they are not included in this October show at the Fine Arts Gallery, where, in my opinion, most of the pictures are rankling failures. The picture titled *Island II* is a typical attempt to amalgamate figures and scenes; it fails because the figures, particularly the frontal female, are so badly drawn as to repel the attention. Poor drawing is again evident in the *Artist's Son*, which has the high aim of expressing the *delicacy* of a youth's approach to adulthood. The best knit picture is the one of the two adults recumbent on the rocks, and the *Burning Bush* is a memorable image. Wight is to be admired especially for the content, the human involvement that seeks to inform his brush.

Mr. Wight himself would never approve some of these pictures if he were their juror rather than their painter. But no artist can get far enough away to see his own results as they will strike another, and he sometimes has to be protected from his smiling friends. This particular one-man show is clearly a courtesy gesture of one gallery director to another, though it doesn't necessarily mean that Warren Beach's student paintings will be exhibited at UCLA. In the slackness of standards that prevails at the Fine Arts Gallery superficial courtesies are more important than artistic judgments, and this is a condition that should be corrected.

An improbable cultural exchange between two San Diego city councilmen was reported in the *Tribune*:

Harley (young square and an enemy of zen): “Coffee houses? You mean those places where crazy people get together?”

Kerrigan (a grandfather who sometimes sports red flannel shirts at Civic Center): “They aren’t crazy. They just have a different way of life. They desire to express themselves in a different way.”

Gramps Kerrigan should get a hero’s medal from the arty crowd. If he did, it would probably be made of a crushed beer can or coffee cart (sorry, no wine bottles), in keeping with the differentness of which he speaks.

To become different has become more and more the urge of the average artist. As in the coffee houses, their differentness often comes out wearing the same look, but it nonetheless amounts to a successful escape from the old encumbrances. In sweeping up the bourgeois scraps the artist is often arrested by new combinations that suggest themselves and seem to have life of their own, while mocking the more familiar world. So we have the assemblage of rusty keys and beat lock faces by Russell Baldwin, which speaks so nervously—an unintentionally—of man’s fumbling attempts to unscrew the inscrutable, and Richard Morris’s *Space Plowi*, made mostly of wood scraps swept together as found rather than shaped to suit a pre-conception. Are these works of art? Absolutely. If you don’t think so, you don’t understand the meaning of the term. Are these great works of art? Absolutely not. Greatness involves a singularity that is quite another thing from the average differentness of the coffee house culture.

Timeline: December 1959—Work on West [Mission] Bay, west of Ingraham Street Bridge completed

December 1959, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY, 56+, Downtown Tomorrow by James Britton (excerpt from San Diego Magazine, March 1983)

“C. Arnholt Smith became a hero in some quarters when he sprang plans for a 20-story office building downtown. All the worriers about downtown’s future drew their first easy breaths since the May Company showed up with a scheme for diverting much of the shopping traffic to Mission Valley. Within two years the Walker Scott department store will have shifted its center of business gravity from downtown to a suburban spot, and so very likely will Marston’s. With these two toward the east, with the May Company on the north, and a new Broadway department store venture positioned to the south, downtown San Diego surely will be finished as the region’s main shopping center.

“So the worriers had much cause for alarm. The town’s richest tax assessment area might go into a steep decline. If it skidded into the pattern familiar from other cities, it would yield less tax income to the City, and at the same time the cost of service provided to the area by the City would rise. In other words, it would become an expensive, slumpy slum.

“Some property owners would be happy about a decadent turn of affairs, which would mean they wouldn’t have to spend much on maintaining their property. Then taxes would be more likely to go down than up, and because of the general pressure of population they would be able to extort high rents for their worn and splintered floor space. It is this shoddy business formula, more than any other one cause, that explains the diseased look of most big cities, so inexcusable in prosperous America.

“Because San Diego has a sore plenty of parasitic landlords, downtown loused along in unattractive condition for years before the merchandising Diaspora threatened. Such efforts as any group made to look ahead and plan necessary changes were effectively blocked by eyeless exploiters, some of them hypocritically screaming “socialism” to rout their betters with a scare word. Even if all foot draggers cannot be accused of preferring slums, the voting citizenry as a whole can be charged with lacking a two-thirds majority of faith and pride in the future of their city—a city that insists on returning many-fold every man’s investment.

“Perversely, it seems that the voting majority can be sold on public works only if the illusion of economy is cultivated. Real economy won’t sell, but the illusion will. Thus, a new library was possible because the voters responded to the seeming frugality of using a piece of land already owned by the city.

Similarly, a new courthouse is going up now on a site part of which held the old courthouse. The uninformed voters had no interest in whether these were the best sites (they weren't) and the prevailing public indifference allowed indifferent officials to produce a library that is bad architecture and a courthouse that hardly deserves the name of architecture at all.

“At one point the Downtown Association listened to the bold thinking of Victor Gruen Associates, architect-originators of the downtown shopping mall fever that is spreading through the land. To do it right, Gruen would require sustained team-play by the assorted owners of a large number of adjoining blocks. This was impossible in San Diego.

“Some of the more spirited downtowners got together this year under the name San Diegans Incorporated and flexed their brows, determined to think big. They placed their main hope in a governmental gimmick called urban renewal, something so mysterious that, according to a survey by the Independent (a now-defunct San Diego newspaper), 77 percent of the people don't know what it is.

“Aware of the antagonism based on colossal ignorance, the City Council huddles together in the storm cellar. Its members know the value of urban renewal in cutting through the hopeless knots of profit intrigue that breeds slums, but they don't dare move against the “will” or the “will not” of the putrescent majority. Councilmen nurse a vague hope that “education” will come along and convert the inert public corpus into a corps of enthusiasts, after which the Council will dare to act on what it already believes is a good thing—urban renewal.

“Let's look for a moment at Mr. Arnholt Smith's plenty-story building. The design by architect Frank Hope attempts to gain an air of cosmopolitan amenity by operating the ground floor as a kind of garden or plaza, following a conception used successfully in New York. But the building goes straight up for all its height without the slightest setback from the sidewalk. Due to the absence of any skyscraper control laws in San Diego, next week's newspaper could see the announcement of 100 skyscrapers, 100 stories high, all tightly packed to the sidewalk's edge and creating a condition of sunless and inhuman canyons like New York's Wall Street as well as being inferior caves in which to work.

“The point is that we need a skyscraper zoning law that will assure that each building has proper light and air and parking. Such a law will be much harder to establish after one skyscraper goes through without controls. Just what the law ought to specify is a matter for careful consideration. Certainly, skyscrapers downtown should be reasonably close together (while tall apartment houses in outlying locations would observe a different set of standards). Los Angeles has a new law permitting buildings to go to any height, provided they are surrounded by a certain specified percentage of open ground for parking and landscaping. This is an improvement on New York's skyscraper laws, but it is not the ultimate. San Diego could do better than either of the monster models.

“A skyscraper law for San Diego might limit the high-risers, one to a block, thus wringing a certain advantage out of the smallness of the present blocks. As in Los Angeles, a bonus could be granted. When block owners knocked their block heads together and planned as a group, they could go high, high, high, but whenever only part of a block was ready for new building, it would be limited by law to relatively few stories. I can imagine a highly practical and yet potentially beautiful state of affairs whereby tall towers would rise more or less from the center of many blocks, while lower construction around the periphery would house a judicious mixture of parking, restaurants and such shops as the area required.

“It might even be that the height of all peripheral construction surrounding the skyscrapers could be kept at about the same level, thus stealing one of the secrets of the beauty of Paris. Then the roofs could be converted for pedestrian pleasantries, including gardens where skyscraper workers could eat their lunches from brown bags with a feeling a feeling that this world is their oyster. Furthermore, the city could build its future sidewalks at second-story level, leaving the streets for autos and trucks—and street floors of buildings for parking and deliveries.

“This order of planning may seem outrageously futuristic, but it must be kept in mind that the future is catching up with us faster than it ever did before, and some of the planning concepts sketched here are being talked of seriously among responsible people in other big cities, notably Los Angeles.

“While I think that geographic position and other factors will oblige our downtown to develop an increasing concentration of governmental and business skyscrapers, there will also be “close-in” skyscraper apartments for tenants of various incomes, including the wealthiest. Presumably these will not increase the delinquency problem downtown, but rather will tenderize the tough business texture of the area with all sorts of cosmopolitan, after-dark attractions. Thus a commercial theatre district may develop.

“Whatever the degree of official planning we are able to arrive at, one thing is certain. Traffic and parking must be brought under control unless downtown is to become more oppressive than it is. This is distinctly a case where government intervention can be described as the only guarantee of curing oppression.

“In using the word *oppression*, I am dealing with the esthetic, or “feeling” of downtown. While not easy to put in words and not easy to keep in mind when architects are struggling to meet the demands of business-minded clients, the elusive esthetic is as important as your soul. Without it, you’re dead. Tomorrow’s people, one must believe, will grow up with more cultivated feelings than are evident in the welter of today’s commercialized unfeeling. So buildings and urban situations that do not have a superior esthetic will be outmoded; they will lose their appeal.

“We don’t worry enough about outmoding. If anything, even an expensive building is outmoded, we throw it away and produce a replacement without regard to waste. This is a raging sin on which a Papal Bull is long overdue. The Law of the Conservation of Matter should be amended to require the conservation of buildings that matter. Buildings should be planned to last for centuries, and we should be educated to cherish them for centuries. If we had such an education we could start to produce period architecture again after the long dry period in which almost the whole world has built nothing but utility shacks of various sizes.”

December 1959, San Diego Magazine, 64+, ART OF THE CITY: Murray, Strassner, Adams and Morgan

1960—**POLK’S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas. (Eliz.), ed. San Diego Mag., h. 1433 Sutter

January 1960, San Diego Magazine, 46+, ART OF THE CITY: The Puzzling Sculptors—James Lee Hansen, Jane Ullman, Malcolm McClain, Ray Jensen, 46; Our V.P.—Love and Rediscovery, 50; Art Center Expands, 51; A New Auditorium, 52.

February 1960, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: 48+, Splendid Vision of Mission Bay: Garrett Eckbo

CAPTION: This scene at Shelter Island gives an idea of how large portions of Mission Bay should look when developed.

CAPTION: At the northwest corner of Mission Bay messy view featuring phone poles and billboards (left) gives way to handsome new Catamaran Hotel (right).

WHAT WE SEE is the tile of how-to-do-it in words and pictures prepared by Community Facility Planners of Pasadena to guide San Diego in developing Mission Bay aquatic park. It is a text worth your closest attention because it shows what design imagination can do for a city when it is given free play.

What’s good for Mission Bay would be good for the city as a whole, by the way. And why stop there? Truly, the kind of thinking that went into this study has universal application in a world that festers with ill-made cities, and lacks any really well-made ones.

Which is not say that what we see is ultimate perfection, and that the world can do little better than adjust itself accordingly. But the principles involved in the report are so right that I feel cheated of points to carp about. Perhaps my most pungent gripe has to do not with the esthetic of what we see but of what we smell; the printing of the report was done by some method that trapped strong chemical vapors in the pages of the book. After two months, I can still open my copy of *What We See* and be smitten by ammoniacal whiffs. Is that a subtle way of assuring that the reader stay awake, or is it a way of exporting Pasadena smog?

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLANNING is a talented design squad, headed by Landscape Architect Garrett Eckbo, City Planner Simon Eisner and Architect Whitney Smith. A majority of the crew have come up through the University of Southern California, though UC and other top schools are well represented. The office is currently at work on marina projects for Moro Bay, Lake Meade and Ventura harbor. Certain staffers should be signaled out for credit in connection with the Mission Bay study. Of course, Mr. Eckbo was father to the landscaping decisions and Architect Smith contributed the main architectural advice. A strong-minded blast at the clutter of Mission Beach (the residential strip between Mission Bay and the Pacific Ocean) and a healthy viewpoint of traffic management were verbalized by associate planner Lyle Stewart. The Wellesley-tuned brain of Mrs. Royce Neuschatz imparted a gloss of humanist thought to the text as, for example, in these opening paragraphs.

MISSION BAY AQUATIC PARK . . . 4000 acres of land and water, 31 miles shoreline dredged out from a marshy duck pond to offer recreation for three million people annually by the year 2000. The 12,000 boats which will call Mission Bay home port will provide a quiet panorama of sails . . . and impressive rank of yachts . . . a playful covey of paddleboats. The three million people will fish on piers for the afternoon or board a commercial vessel for a deep-sea fishing weekend . . . they will swim, hike, ride, picnic, play, explore watch. They will stay in fancy and less fancy hotels, cottages, trailers, tents. They will eat at chowder bars or elegant restaurants, They will lie on the beach and watch sand castles under construction or wander about and watch fishing and boats and tides and the plants and animals who like the edge of the water.

WHAT WILL THEY SEE? That is the subject of this report, how to make Mission Bay Park a beautiful and exciting place, as wonderful to look at as it is to play in.

THE REPORT IS . . . a set of design principles and concepts to guide the integrated development of the *whole* park. This report studies the complete physical environment—architecture, landscape, waterscape. The principles in this report will serve to coordinate the work of the many designers, technicians, administrators and businessmen who will all have a say in what Mission Bay Park will be like and look like in the future. Those people will be concerned with a specific part of the Park, a certain facility. This report suggests the character and spirit of the whole Park, which must be far greater than the sum of the parts. It determines the general character of the total scene and of all the large component areas which can be dealt with as cohesive units.

I have underlined the last two sentences because they bespeak the only basis on which any large geographical area (a whole city even) can develop design quality. Can it not usually be said of our present cities that the whole is *less* than the sum of its parts? (With apologies to math teachers everywhere.)

The design team explains why controlling design principles are needed:

Mission Bay Park is a huge land area under City control. It is almost four times the size of Balboa Park. It will be central in the San Diego metropolis and will affect and be affected by its surroundings. Like Balboa Park, it will be a symbol of San Diego to the City's millions and to visiting millions. The City has recognized that an area of this size and importance cannot be allowed to just grow. It has initiated this project, which calls not only for comprehensive land planning but also for comprehensive visual planning. What people are is their basis for judging the Park and the City, what people to see in Mission Bay Park will largely determine the kind of time they may have there.

Like many other large recreation facilities, Mission Bay will be a partnership between public and private enterprise. Some 300 acres have been set aside for commercial lease sites—for restaurants, hotels, motels, sports fishing, boat and fishing tackle rental, slip rental, boat storage, repair, launching facilities, the full gamut of sales and services related to aquatic activities. The lease sites are only seven percent of the total land area of Mission Bay Park—but they are the key to the character, spirit and quality of the entire park. On these sites will be the Park's largest buildings, its most bursting activity, the most people.

If each of the small parcels which comprise this critical acreage were subject to strictly independent decisions as to physical development, the result would be chaos. Three hundred acres of uncontrolled whimsy in building style, sign, parking and landscape patterns could produce in Mission Bay Park a visual disaster which would downgrade the entire park. Neighboring Mission Beach is a convenient example of the urban anarchy which could threaten Mission Bay Park.

Underlining again, to emphasize especially significant statements. May I ask: if the City Fathers have decided that one large area cannot be allowed to just "grow" because the result would be chaos, how can these same dads be content to let the rest of the city stumble along without benefit of similar design control?

The easy answer, of course, is that the dads have legal control of the park land, whereas the rest of the city is wide open to any man's exploitation. Design control throughout the city will only come when there is sufficient citizen demand, and this will only arise when there is much more vigorous education on the subject. Our grandchildren may begin to enjoy the fruits, but we are probably fated to rattle around in a restless churn of urban chaos only occasionally relieved by moments of poise—in our backyards and parks. But there may be a quite sudden change if the country is forced to shift from a war economy to one involving vast public works.

IN REVIEWING the report by Community Facilities Planners I can't resist jumping now to the section that lashes with fighting words at Mission Beach. Why this particular stretch of urban chaos is crucial to the success of Mission Bay Park appears in the first paragraph below, and what to do about it follows in no uncertain terms.

Mission Beach, which occupies the narrow tongue of land between Mission Bay Park and the Ocean, is part of the park's setting. The Park and the community are important to each other. This narrow strip of land represents Mission Bay Park's opportunity for a link with an Ocean Beach. Mission Boulevard, the busy highway that runs down the center of the narrow strip, is one of seven principal points where the visitor will get a first view of the Park. The Community itself stands to benefit greatly from having the unique park at its doorstep.

In order that the Park may realize its link with the Ocean and give an appropriate expression to Mission Boulevard and the community, in order that the community may realize the potential benefits which the development of the Park holds for it, straightforward thinking and bold action are called for to solve the community's problems.

Mission Beach presents visual as well as planning problems when Mission Bay Park is viewed in context. Large areas of Mission Beach are severely overcrowded. The land is so completely covered with buildings, streets and alleys that there is scarcely space for the visitor to park his car in order to patronize the City's businesses and motels or to enjoy Ocean and Bay.

This Report recommends the development of broad, beautifully landscaped pedestrian ways to join Bay beach and Ocean beach. At present little or no open land exists. These walkways would enhance Mission Beach properties as well as enrich the Park.

As for the Mission Boulevard view today, the traveler's eyes are filled with a bewildering vista of telephone poles, public and private signs, buildings of all ages, colors, materials and architectural styles, trash cans, miscellaneous bus benches advertising restaurants and mortuaries. Peering up a cluttered alley in hopes of a glimpse of the water, the traveler finds a building blocking the end of each alley. The terrain

is low and level, affording no chance to see the exciting panorama that would exist from even a twenty-foot elevation.

In the vicinity of the Fun Zone, however, there is relief. The Fun Zone is open space, allowing the only visual and pedestrian connection between Bay and Ocean. This space should be all means remain open. There should be a pedestrian way designed and maintained as an integral part of the Park, setting the standard for development and redevelopment throughout the community of Mission Beach.

This Report strongly urges the investigation of applicable provisions of the California Community Redevelopment Law and the Federal Housing Act and the construction of appropriate urban renewal activities in the older developing areas of Mission Beach, to relieve overcrowding and to open up the proposed pedestrian ways. Federal loans and grants would make possible major public improvements. Also, under urban renewal programs, long-term low-interest loans are made available to homeowners in a renewal project area for needed property improvement. Utilizing the "owner-participation" provisions of both State and Federal law, the community of Mission Beach and its property owners could realize maximum benefit.

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, creeps who prefer their own pace, may keep this fine plan from being realized. Particularly, the urban renewal device will be fought by men of little vision even though it could mean maximum profits to them and great public benefit.

Though the Community Facilities Planning report does not specifically say so, Mission Beach is the logical location for a string of skyscraper hotels and apartment houses such as are found along the ocean beach in Miami, Rio and other ocean resort cities. It is not enough that the property owners should wait for investors to come along piecemeal and gobble up the strip, if the skyscrapers are carefully interrelated according to an advance master plan, our casual cliff dwellers would gain an environment far superior to any other city's.

Another desirable feature for Mission Beach not touched on in the CFP report would be double-deck arrangement of the main drag, Mission Boulevard. The fast traffic should be on the upper deck so that maximum connection could be maintained as CFP suggests, between bay and ocean. Such an arrangement should be planned now so that the great new skyscrapers sure to come in Mission Beach could be adjusted architecturally to the traffic pattern.

The idea of through highways traversing the park is diametrically opposite to the principle of making the park an entity. Highways chop up the park rather than unify it. To sixty-mile-an-hour traffic the park would be two minutes in a vast urban continuum . . . The great benefits to Mission Bay Park is both function and appearance that would result from the absence of through traffic would seem to outweigh the slight inconvenience to the motorist of driving an extra few minutes. Unfortunately, qualitative benefits cannot be measure in dollars or in time and are therefore often sacrificed to benefits which can be so measured.

What a world of sense is that statement! And how well it applies to the City as a whole: wherever a freeway goes, it chops the connectedness of an area just as surely as though it were a raging river.

So, if we must have through traffic, it should be elevated, say the Community Facilities Planners, "permitting the local park roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and indeed the park itself to flow uninterrupted underneath; furthermore, an elevated highway would allow the panorama of the entire bay and bay shore to unfold before the motorist."

As shown in the CFP sketch (p. 52), through traffic would be confined to Midway, Ingraham and Ventura Boulevards, and all three would be elevated as they cross the park. A Bay Boulevard, proposed by City traffic engineers after much study, would be erased from the plans if CFP advice is followed, and the great Cabrillo Island would not be traversed by any road at all. Only feeder roads would enter this island, ending in carpark arrangements, the bulk of the island left negotiable only on foot, bicycle or possible horseback.

The planners would prefer to see the entire park created in the same manner as Cabrillo Island, that is with feeder roads only and no fast through traffic, but as this surely can never be we'll pass over their plea. The thing to plumb for is first-rate design in elevated roadways that will add to, not detract from the total park situation.

A most revealing fact is that the park overseers felt obliged to contradict the carefully laid plans of the highway engineers at several points. By extending the implications again to the whole city, can we doubt that a truly adequate master plan for the metropolis would contradict the highway engineers at many additional points?

I think it's too bad that the Eckbo people didn't comment forcefully on the rather disastrous relation of Highway 101 to the park, but they had to stop somewhere. Since 101 will remain the route by which most newcomers will catch their first glimpse of Mission Bay, should not this main artery also be elevated? Or, rather should it not consist of two speedways, one on top of the other, the lower for freight traffic, the upper for scenic driving? As in Mission Beach, it is important to decide this now so that the architecture which is going to come in may be designed accordingly. Double-decking at any time would be fought by short-sighted adjacent view window owners, but these are not so nearly numerous as they will be.

AGAIN AND AGAIN in their pages Community Facility Planners dwell on ways and means of elevating park users. They were not thinking of the quantities of alcohol that will profitably be dispensed in the park. Their persistent concern is to take away the curse of flatness natural to an area that was once marsh. Their emphasis on the third dimension is one of their most valuable contributions.

Surrounded and fringed as it is by urban development which, regardless of use or economic level, has the "monotony of variety" (when everything tries to look different and all ends up feeling the same). Mission Bay Park has both the need and the opportunity to become a great oasis of quietude, calm repose, unhurried meaningful activity, rich sensory experience of happily balanced relations between land, water, buildings, trees, paved and green open spaces.

This can be achieved by close control of all physical development, however small or large, with the unified character of the entire Park and its various zones and areas constantly and clearly in mind. The visualization of ultimate character must be strongly felt in terms of qualities, forms, materials and relationships, yet it must remain flexible enough to absorb new creative and functional ideas.

The physical form of the Park has been designed to provide maximum shore-line around its bays, lagoons, basins and coves. This form makes it possible to orient the maximum number of people toward the water. Mission Bay will be a hub of marine activities for those who come to participate in them and for those who come to watch. The Park is also for those who come to relax, to meditate, to quietly enjoy the near-water atmosphere. All facilities must be designed for lookers as well as doers, and substantial areas in the eastern half of the Park will be primarily for quiet recreation. That the doers and lookers will always be in view of each other will lend richness to the experience of both.

Design should henceforth seek for maximum connection between land and water—variation in width and scope of beaches and rip-rap, steps, ramps and piers and platforms out over the water. These connections will make possible movement perpendicular to the shoreline—out from it, or down from it to the water. Perpendicular movement contrasts and balances with the normal parallel movement *along* the shoreline which emphasizes the unity of the smaller coves within the large Bay. This balance of movement, perpendicular and parallel to the shoreline, will add variety to the experience of both doers—boatmen, fishermen, swimmers, and lookers – tourists, visitors and the superintending public.

The single strongest element creating continuity between land and water should be a promenade zone where people can walk along all shorelines throughout the Bay. The promenade should parallel the top of the rip-rap or edge of the beach—not rigidly but freely, meandering over land, rip-rap, beach and water, linking land and water in ever-changing ways at the same time creating a space for circulation, activity, relaxation. The promenade zone is not for walking only, it is for sitting, chatting, sketching,

watching boats launch, seeing a fish get caught, possibly even for diving from. The width should vary but should not be less than 15 feet.

The walk itself and all its “furniture”—seats, rails, lights, tree boxes, trash receptacles—should be consistent in character throughout the Park. For instance, three typical walk treatments might be: boardwalk, pebbly concrete, sandy or gravelly trail, these would be used throughout the Park. Seats, rails, plantings and other furnishings elements would be consistent in form, but variable in color and detail

Raised Housing

Guests in the hotels, motels, and other Bay housing accommodations should be perpetually aware that they are in a great aquatic park. Unfortunately, topography and shoreline where present guest housing is situated make it difficult to see the water and its activity from more than a few steps back from the shoreline.

To improve the water view, housing should be raised at least one story above the ground; this will have the advantage of freeing the ground surface for parking and other uses. Multi-story construction will improve views as it goes up, and taller buildings will offset the flatness of water and terrain, creating landmarks visible from afar. Careful location of multi-level buildings will avoid congestion and sprawl. This Report recommends that at least 50 percent of all guest housing floor areas be at least one story above the ground, and that guest rooms and guest gathering places be planned with a view of the exciting, ever-changing Bay.

Additional measures to further improve the physical and psychological connection between land and water may include the following:

Water elements of all sorts—canals, basins, fountains, pools, lagoons—should be designed and developed throughout the land portions of public and lease areas. These will not only improve the interest and quality of the land developments, but will provide a comfortable transition in scale and detail to the broad expanses of the Bay.

Marine symbols—pilings, piers, boardwalks—should be incorporated in land facility developments. Individual designers will be responsible for the maintenance of dignity and good taste, and the avoidance of “corn” and cliché.

Boat units, snack bars, bait stands, beaches, shelters, diving boards and platforms should be provided *on extended pier or float areas over the water*, to create a leisurely approach to the experiences of boats and water, to increase the comfort of boat users and to provide an observation platform for pier-side superintendents.

A variety of walking levels over both land and water, and the possibility of crossing from land to water above the promenade will make it possible for more people to see more activity from more interesting angles.

The word for Mission Bay today is: *flat*. The water is flat. The elevation of surrounding lands and islands is only five to twelve feet above water level. The major exception is Crown Point, rising to 59 feet above the water. Cabrillo Island is proposed to rise to 20 feet, and the southeast corner of the Park along floodway is proposed to be 44 feet in elevation. The figures indicate a continued flat and featureless topography. The line, curving forms of islands and shorelines on the Park Master Plan lead one to expect comparable contoured curves in the skyline profiles of those land forms. What a disappointment to discover that such profiles are not planned and that the islands are merely flat shapes a few feet above the water.

Mission Bay needs three-dimensional land sculpture to contrast with and emphasize the clear pane of water . . . to reflect the fine, typically California hills north and east of the Bay . . . to make more

interesting and dramatic relations to the water possible for more people by elevating them above it on slopes and terraces.

Compare the view from Crown Point with that from Ventura Point. Compare Lido or Balboa Island, whose flat interior lots have *no* view and *no* water character, with Catalina Island where every view, even though far interior, is exciting.

AN ARCHITECTURAL procedure especially dear to Americans throughout their history, and most especially to Californians intent on bogging tourists is the reproduction of esthetic triumphs from other times and places. As in Balboa Park, such copies can be far better than impoverished originally, but the underlying faith and premise of the CFP approach to Mission Bay Park is that the combined intelligence of today's American designers can produce *distinguished* originality if guided by sufficiently high motives and protected from cheap commercial impulses. Thus these paragraphs:

How Not to Develop Aquatic Park Character: There is always a temptation in a waterfront setting to copy from the waterfronts of the world, to re-create Italian fishing villages, Paris quays, South Seas beaches. This approach has been consciously *rejected* for Mission Bay, for it would lead to movie set design, self-conscious quaintness as contrasted to real and meaningful recreation. This Report wholeheartedly advocates capturing the *flavor* of the world's waterfronts—the excitement and interest, the variety of activities, the beautiful views, the variety of land and water relationships.

No limitation is to be placed on the architectural “style” used by any tenant or public agency. Instead, this report establishes standards of land coverage, open space, circulation and parking, colors, materials, signs. Using these as guides, architects can evolve interesting, beautiful and functional structures. Following these standards, buildings throughout the Park will vary and yet show a family resemblance, a distinct Mission Bay character.

Once again, my favorite refrain: a whole city could develop character if it subjected itself to these same fundamentals of good esthetic order. Even if individual architectural masterpieces should not materialize in Mission Bay, the total fabric of the Park should develop in time the richness, the design fascination, of an Oriental rug (without the geometric regularity), if the CPF standards are followed. Very simple buildings, like the barns of New England or Pennsylvania, yield all the esthetic quality one can ask *when* they fit gracefully into their environment. *Out* of context, the most beautiful buildings can look absurd.

So, relatedness is everything.

Buildings and plantings should be organized to complete the visual experience of topographic spaces. Buildings and plantings working together can achieve environmental control and visual impact impossible for either alone. They can enclose and shelter spaces, separate them from or join them to other spaces; they can enhance by framing in depth distant vistas or intimate detail; they can contrast openness and closure, sun and shade, hard and soft light, smooth and rough, formal and informal. Tree patterns should supplement architectural patterns, accentuate the topography, humanize roads and parking areas, create a sense of space, scale and three-dimensional unity throughout the Park and within each zone.

The objective for the Park landscape as a whole is the achievement of relationships between continuity and accent. The continuous elements are low buildings, trees, grass, roads, water. The accents which enliven and enrich the view are tall buildings, engineering structures, steep topography, stony points, vertical trees. In use as well as physical appearance we are seeking a delicate balance of continuity and accent . . . flow and interruption . . . action and reflective pause.

BUILDINGS of assorted size and uses in the Park will have a strong family resemblance governed by certain generic controls spelled out as follows:

Walls. 1) One and two story buildings to be all heart redwood stained, vertical boards on 12" module with bats (bats may vary in size). These materials apply to all buildings except those on Cabrillo Island which shall be 4" x 12" surface dimension concrete blocks painted.

2) Buildings over two stories to be reinforced concrete or plaster. Spandrels may be other approved materials. As there will be few buildings of this height, it is suggested that the final determination of the materials and structural system in those buildings be determined in joint conference between the tenant's architect and the Design Review Committee.

Vertical exposed structure. 1) One and two story buildings to be wood, preferably large in scale and where feasible repeating the round pier caisson shape to be used in the water. 2) Buildings over two stories to have steel or concrete frame.

Roofs. 1) Shingle or shake, redwood or cedar. 2) Metal. Pattern and detail must be approved by the Design Review Committee. In general, bold ribs at 2'-0" or less spacing will be acceptable.

Height. It is hoped that where feasible, tenants will be interested in building the first floor somewhat above the ground level, from one to three feet for two reasons:

1. The floating character recalls the dock and pier construction providing a harmonious relationship as may be seen in many waterfronts of the world.
2. Even the slightest elevation will give much better view of the basin and its activities.

These design standards will produce architecture similar to the handsome structures on Shelter Island. The basic controls seem correct, but the terms might have to be a bit more flexible.

The discovery of height in Mission Bay is already taking hold. The boatel planned for Quivira Basin, originally two stories, has been revised to eight stories, and two or three hotels will come along beside Highway 101 going as high or higher.

IT IS A TEMPTATION to quote every page of *What We See*, almost every sentence of which sparkles with applied design intelligence. Skipping firmly, we come to the all-important matter of park "furniture."

Lighting structures, benches, signs, trash receptacles, telephone booths, fire alarm boxes and similar items of outdoor "furniture" will appear throughout the Park. They are numerous . . . and conspicuous. Let us not overlook these important elements. Let us instead design them especially for Mission Bay Park, let us use them to identify and unify the Park and express the marine atmosphere. Many otherwise fine developments have fallen short of their usual potential because ordinary standard furniture was used, standard items which are often uncomplimentary to each other and to their environment. At Idlewild Airport in New York, by contrast, the soaring sculptural lighting structures magnificently express their air-oriented location.

The illustrations suggest that these important elements of furniture can be used to identify this great Marine Park, and how, through form, color and material, they can represent their nautical environment and relate to each other. Each item of furniture can and should be simple, interesting, functional, and harmonious with the Park atmosphere. The illustrations are ideas only, not specific designs. This report recommends that a competent design firm be employed to design all these necessary elements to enhance and blend into the Park environment.

In addition to the above statements concerning design of lighting *structures*, a word is need on the design of the lighting itself. This is another area where comprehensive, integrated design is called for. Lighting should complement architecture, landscaping, topography. Lighting design must balance intensity, location, maintenance and vandal-proofing. The magical quality of sparkling lights reflecting on the water

can be utterly destroyed if bright floodlighting is used. However, flood lighting of certain structural elements can be extremely effective if in character with the total designed results.

Considering the quality of light, I would think it advisable to forbid all use of neon in Mission Bay park—if only because we get too much of it everywhere else and it is seldom used in a way to enhance design. It is simply a bold gimmick to attract attention, too bold for a quality park. However, the suppliers of neon would give any politician a rough time if he tried to limit its use.

CPF do not quite come to grips with the neon question. The report does say, however, that “no sign shall be devised or constructed as to rotate, gyrate, blink or move in any animated fashion.”

Otherwise, there is much detail in the reported intended to keep signs discreet. A good point is the confining of all signs to a few specified type faces, but it may be that the selection of type faces needs a little more study. A point that may appear troublesome in a design sense is this: “Existing trademarks, logotypes or symbols identifying a tenant or product may be used subject to approval . . . In general these will be allowed provided the official type faces are used in addition. This *could* mean and unsightly rash of Coca Cola buttons and the like.

The feature of the CPF report that will do most to unify Mission Bay appearances is a color chart to which all structures are expected to conform. The chart permits varying shades of gray-green stain on wood exterior walls, mocha and olive for plaster walls, dark brown for columns, black for roofs. No glaring masses of light-colored building will rise in the park. Snappier colors are allowed for trim: oyster, charcoal, blue-green and deep coral. As with the type faces, a continuing study might decide that some of these colors, especially the trim colors could be improved upon.

IN GENERAL, from my point of view, one of the few weaknesses of the Community Facilities Planners is that they do not promote competition in design of buildings, furniture, etc. As quoted a few paragraphs back, speaking of furniture, they recommend “that a competent design firm be employed to design all these necessary elements.” Very likely they would have in mind the industrial designers Richard Selje and Robert Bond, who designed the tentative furniture illustrated. But it is perfectly apparent to me that if we want the best design possible—not merely the best design of which a particular designer is capable—the way to get it is to hold an open competition of ideas. Then a board of professional judges can pick the best of the ideas submitted.

A related question is who will decide whether each new building project in Mission Bay Park conforms with the principles laid down by CFP? Mission Bay Director Les Halcomb (who leaves government this month to go to Remington Rand Corporation) thinks these decisions can be made by a committee that includes the new Mission Bay director, an official from City Planning (probably Richard Weiser, who is an architect) and a member of the CPF (which Halcomb thinks should be retained indefinitely for that purpose). However, CFP themselves recommend that the Mission Bay Commission and Park Director rely for advice on all design questions and negotiations on a Design Review Committee composed of practicing professionals in design fields.

In other words, the Mission Bay Park Director should *not* be a member of the Design Review Committee unless he happens to be a professional in a design field, which is unlikely. This board should be completely free from politics or expediency, and make its decisions on esthetic grounds only. Of course, politicians would always have the power to upset the decisions of a mere design board—unless public opinion intervened.

CFP cite a 1958 book, *Planning and Community Appearance*, published in New York by the Regional Planning Association. Persons trained and experienced in judging three dimensional forms and their interrelationships are to be found in a number of different professions. Perhaps a balanced review agency might include one or more planners, architects, landscape architects, civil engineers, artists and art critics. Needless to say, one essential qualification in addition to competence in esthetic judgment is an universality of appreciation, an ability to meet any particular designer on the grounds of his own esthetic understanding.

This is clearly a formula that would further the quality not only of Mission Bay but of the whole city. It seems to me that a design review committee for Mission Bay should be established now, and later expanded into a municipal art commission, something any forward-looking city should have.

EVERYTHING CONSIDERED Community Facilities Planning design study of Mission Bay measures up nobly to the requirements of a city that aspires to top standing in a world of urban culture. It is the equal of that other superlative plan, the University Community College Study for a college town in Torrey Pines. The City Council and City Manager deserve every congratulation and support—provided they maintain the pace of improvement implied in these documents. When in doubt, gentlemen, kindly remember that the only alternative to adequate ideas of order is—chaos. .

March 1960, San Diego Magazine, 69+, **BOOM or BUST? Watch Our Dust**

The earth hereabouts took a stupendous mauling in the 50's and is likely to get pushed around even more in the 60's. Earth-mauling equipment already comes in carcasses big as the late tree-chewing Brontosaurus. Surely the machine will grow to battleship size if that proves a convenient way of reducing the land to big business terms.

If the powerful equipment is not evil in itself, it does make more urgent the question of where and how it is used. Foolish men with iron muscles and dollar nerve can now erase all the endearing features of the landscape, replacing them only with a double-entry tundra, long on asphalt, cold in concrete.

Living in Mission Hills and driving downtown repeatedly, I have watched Reynard Way change in less than a decade from a pleasant, easy thoroughfare sporting many of the features of a parkway, to a choked and treacherously hardened artery lined with curb-parked cars and fed by numerous driveways compounding the traffic. Years ago the Reynard hills were teased to yield up their fine sand which was in demand for brick-making and foundry use. Weather and creeping groundcover ennobled the scars, ripening a landscape of unusual character, full of charm so long as it was lightly built upon. In the last few years wholesale machining of the hills to make marketable plats has destroyed the character and permitted a clotted jam of buildings low in architectural IQ, an odd miscellany of shops, apartments and light industry paced by rug cleaners. Untended, the adolescent complexion may get worse, not better an unbeautiful boil of shops may be expected to erupt shortly at the junction of Cypress Street and Reynard Way.

It's going to be a spectacular mess, but the property owners cannot be blamed. They are only building what they think is economically sound in the absence of any evidence that there is a higher use. The City Council *can* be blamed for not caring enough to put forth the case for an intelligent arrangement of the area. The City has no master plan or policy applicable here.

Reynard Way is medium in size among the hundreds of canyons that rumple the terrain of the metropolis. The smallest are only gulleys worn by the draining action of recent rains, and the biggest are the handsome valleys that open to the sea. The entire network is simply the natural circulation pattern set up by waters that at one time or another moved upon this land. Thus the canyons are a monument to Nature, a force that was once stronger than man. If the brash biped is now getting the upper hand, then it is unacceptable that his works should fall below Nature's standard of drama and beauty.

COME ON VALLEY

Anyone who has glanced occasionally at Mission Valley over the last five years has seen positive drama and questionable beauty develop. The drama is a kind of architectural parade in celebration of the great American game of Make-a-Million. Super-colossal roadside attractions timed to take full advantage of the new freeway system, displaced the two-by-four-and-tarpaper booths that offered vegetables from the surrounding fields. The ultra-motels include some that are gladdening to the eye and others that are acutely repulsive to sensitive souls; alas, it does not necessarily follow that better looking motels do the better business but they certainly haven't lost trade because of their attention to appearances.

The City, in the hands of inadequate politicians, was unable to control the Nevada-type eyesores just as it has been unable to control the valley's conversion to other kinds of commercial activity. Chances are that the May Company (illustrated on our cover) will be a visual asset to the Valley, arrayed in more trees than any shopping center yet built. This writer argued loud against the siting of May Company in a Valley that should stress tourist and recreation uses, but the loser can afford a grace note of appreciation for the company's announced intention of landscaping to a fare-thee-well.

It is worth pausing to reflect on the fact that May Company will use at first only two-thirds of the 90 or so acres it controls. The sophisticated company has learned elsewhere that when it builds it pushes up the value of surrounding property, why should the company itself not plan to profit by this increase? Look for continued pressure to intensify the commercial uses of Mission Valley, and don't expect too much resistance on the part of councilmen who are no strangers to speculation themselves.

It is worth pausing to reflect, also, that the area where May Company might more profitably have gone (if we had a top quality master plan) has been allowed to drift into a nondescript collection of mixed uses. I refer to the Midway section bounded on the south by the Marine base, on the north by Mission Bay, and on the east by Highway 101.

There is still need for firm master planning in Mission Valley in order to make the most of what is yet to come. Billowing in the night dreams of the landholders are many big projects not yet announceable. In particular the motel people cherish various schemes for convention facilities. Tender is the case of Henry Handlery who controls a spacious acreage owned by Stardust, he has a 50-year lease arranged some fourteen years ago at very low ground rental; he has wanted to do a big convention hall east of the motel but is snagged by some financial consideration or other. Problem of the Valley motel people is that if they don't move fast on convention facilities the Mission Bay hotel builders may skim the cream by providing built-in convention quarters along with room service.

The new emphasis on self-help convention space among hotel people somewhat blunts the question of publicly-built facilities. With Mr. Handlery's plan firmly underway for a large convention annex to his downtown hotel, El Cortez, Mayor Dail lately kissed the corpse of the once feverish idea of converting the Ford Building. There remains a vague prospect that the City Council will push for a very large convention hall in the southeast corner of Mission Bay park, possibly tied in with a sports arena.

PARK OR DUMP?

Focusing now a few miles north, we may steel ourselves to traverse the Sorrento Valley that even a year ago was as graceful as Nature had left it, and boasted of poetic clusters of trees. Today the trees are gone and much of the valley floor is a dull flat of bulldozed earth designed to invite development as an industrial park. Many of the hills have been leveled in steps. We reported last October that the promoters speak of doing a quality development, and we raised the question whether commercial considerations would overpower good intentions. The model which is shown to prospective builders is quite impressive (see photograph, page 47), featuring architecture of some personality. But unless a major industry comes in soon with a pace-making construction program, the Sorrento Industrial Park is going to emerge as a patchwork of whatever elements can be attracted.

As part of its efforts to maintain standards, the development company promised the City that it would seek a zone upgrading from M-2 (which permits heavy and nuisance-making industry) to M-1 and M-1A, with deed restrictions to govern appearances. So the Sorrento people were surely dismayed when work leaked out that the City Manager's office, with the approval of the Planning Department, was drawing up terms so the City could sell 40 acres of nearby Torrey Pines Mesa to North American Aviation for a "research center," and that, further, the City hoped to develop most of 200 acres it owns on the mesa into a "research park." Among others interested is a top medical research firm.

THE MASTERED PLAN

A strange business this. It is easy to see that Torrey Pines Mesa is the ultimate prestige location for a big business firm: North American and many others would find it a snap to maintain their supply of hard-to-get Ph.D.'s if sited hard by a UC campus on the same status level as General Atomic. BUT—just a matter of days before the dickering with North American became apparent, the City Council had finally accepted, unanimously, the master plan for “University City” developed by experts last year (and excessively reviewed in SD Mag for October). In that master plan there was not a word about using Torrey Pines Mesa for a research park. The area in question was earmarked in the plan for apartments designed to house faculty and students near the campus, and possibly for one or two resort hotels.

I asked City Planning Director Harry Haelsig whether the great master plan was going to be nibbled to death. He said “absolutely not” and defended the research park idea as an improvement to the master plan. “We’ve found that we can get all the apartment housing we need south of the campus,” he said, and he reminded me that the planners always expected the idea to be flexible. Besides the City has sought for years to woo all the clean industry it could get, and rightly so.

There still remains the question of why not a word in the plan about research park possibilities. One of the main purposes of a master plan is so that all citizens, not merely those who have the inside track, may plan their own enterprise accordingly. In this case, North American and the City of San Diego were brought together in secret discussions, while Sorrento Industrial Park’s developers weren’t even invited to bid.

It may be that Sorrento Valley, in its present state, stripped of charm, would not appeal to North American and other potential research parkers. But it seems to me that the City should have strained its powers of persuasion to interest North American in Sorrento Valley, so as to assure a high quality of the valley industrial zone. I gather that this never occurred to the top people in city government.

It seems to me that as much as possible the perimeter of any college campus should be graced by housing in one form or another, and related facilities. It is certainly not the best planning to lump all apartment housing on one compound; it smacks of ghetto. Let the Ph.D.'s who shuttle between campus and corporation do so in their Jaguars (they are not likely to walk a block anyway); let lean-pursed students and absent-minded professors live near enough to walk, piggyback or cycle. Even on precious Torrey Pines Mesa let there be economical housing available on the basis of merit instead of money.

SELL OR LEASE?

I think Mr. Bean and Mr. Haelsig were quite wrong in their handling of this matter—the sudden improvising of a research park and the sudden drastic changing of a freshly-accepted master plan. Obviously they were overwhelmed by the political implications of the situation. Their bosses are an ill-educated group of councilmen elected by a mentally undernourished public. The bosses know that a public stretched on the rack of speculative growth will grasp gratefully at any new industry brought into town, regardless of weakening effects that may only take toll later.

A related error, also backed by popularity, is the City’s eagerness to sell the land it owns. The objective is to make the land productive of taxes as well as to pick up some quick cash to ease the burdened budget. But all lands owned in the public name represent a tremendous bargaining strength in case the City wants to encourage particular types of development. Unfortunately, there is risk that a particular group of men in control of the government will want to use this advantage in a manner that does not promote the long-range public welfare. A general policy of leasing rather than selling would enable governments to correct mistakes made by their predecessors. As Mission Bay shows so well, the City can get both superior planning and impressive income by leasing the land it owns. Would it not be wise to lease all City-owned lands rather than sell them during this period of tremendous growth when the City is almost sure to get the short-end of any bargain with high-powered dealmakers?

SAVING SPACE

These several examples of planning gone astray might never have happened if years ago the City had created a policy governing the orderly development of canyons. Our network of canyons and valleys represents the finest pattern of open space any city could hope to have. They should be kept open so far as possible—and very carefully controlled if they must be built on.

Belated but nonetheless welcome is a report on *Open Urban Space* prepared at Harry Haelsig's direction by Douglas Duncan of the City Planning Department. The specific spur that prompted the report was the City's concern about Maple canyon. This is one that feeds into Reynard Way. It is similar in character to the Dove canyon of which Bill Reid took such a revealing picture (page 68). Dove fell to apartment house use because the developer had more sense of purpose in his own terms than the City did in its. Maple is under pressure to go the same way as Dove.

The City's motive is to hold on to Maple canyon for possible use as a main artery from Laurel Street. But in the terms we have been discussing there is a serious planning question whether the highest use of Maple canyon is as a busy road or a passive breathing space, a semi-park in the midst of an intensely built-up city. Similar dilemmas await many canyons. If there is to be any chance of resolving the questions intelligently, the City Council must have a clear and adopted policy of *acquiring* such lands. Balance this, if you please, against the City's itch to sell the land it owns!

The report on *Urban Open Space* got good coverage in the newspapers. I am glad to note that it is a handsome stretch of unminced wordage, introduced by a sketch of a great clam shovel menacing a daisy. The report, and the subject, will get further mention in these pages. For now I'd like to direct your attention to one of Planner Duncan's most effective allies, General of the Army Omar Bradley, a great iron clam who cares about daisies. In an attack on American apathy and short-sightedness, the man-o-war said these manifest themselves "in the disappearance of our nature preserves, in the debasement of our countryside, in the pizza palaces and honky-tonks, with which we have littered the land."

"Each of us," said ***** Bradley, "has the need to escape occasionally from the noisy world which surrounds us and find refreshment in the grandeur of nature. Yet, year by year, the scenic treasures are being plundered by what we call an advancing civilization. If we are not careful, we shall leave our children a legacy of billion dollar roads leading nowhere except to other congested places like those they left behind.

"As the pressures of civilization mount, it seems to me that we probably as much need for part-time Thoreau's as we have for full-time nuclear scientists. Since the beginning of mankind, people have always drawn great strength from their nearness and kinship to nature. If we close off this source of strength, by plowing under scenic resources, we may soon find ourselves in trouble. We may soon find ourselves so baffled by the pressures of civilization that we risk damage to ourselves as a people and therefore to our institutions."

By institutions, General Bradley, of course, does not mean savings and loan. His hint is that the whole non-Communist way of life may be softened for the kill by its own confusion. It is our choice as individuals whether to coast along with the mess or take an active hand in clarifying our culture. The best place to start clarification proceedings is in our city planning.

NEW ZOO

Six major additions are planned this year for the San Diego Zoo at an estimated cost of 282,000. All were designed by Charles Faust, who also made these drawings. Shown here are four new animal enclosures which will follow the moat plan introduced in this country in 1927 at San Diego's zoo.

Below: American alligators will be moved to their new home within two months. With "alligator country" pools and foliage it will be the only one of its kind in the United States.

Above is the rhinoceros area, long and fairly narrow, to give animals adequate running space and still keep them in view of visitors.

Still on the drawing boards are a tropical rain forest and a moving sidewalk. The rain forest is projected as an inside walk-through, free flight bird cage which also will house reptiles and mammals. There will be a 100-ft. waterfall behind which visitors can walk, and plans call for electrically-controlled, twice-daily rainfall to maintain tropical atmosphere. Elser Elevator Company will build a split-level moving sidewalk to carry people up a 90-foot ravine on zoo grounds. More than 2,000,000 people, 72% of them from outside this county visited the zoo in the past year.

Caption: This projection of the new giraffe enclosure may be slightly changed, because exact location has not been decided. There will be room for six giraffes. The zoo now has three and is negotiating for three more. (Cost of the giraffe unit has not been estimated.)

Caption: The mound in the new prairie dog enclosure is designed so the animals can make their own burrows. Well underway, this project should be completed next month.

April 1960, San Diego Magazine, 56, 102, Salk vs. Revelle vs. Dail; Who's Mayor Around Here Anyway?

Roger Revelle *might* make a far better mayor than the one we have. But Revelle has not been elected and Charles Dail has—by a very strong popular majority.

Not that Revelle has ever run for the office, or even thought of it. He has his hands full as Director of Scripps Institute of Oceanography, first unit in a major University of California campus being developed north of La Jolla. It's a job that brings out the politician in a man.

If Revelle is not the mayor of La Jolla either, he is at least the most active political force in that choice area of our metropolis. I doubt that his politicking is aimed at personal glory or profit. I have the impression that all his maneuvers are dedicated to the creation of a La Jolla campus second to none in quality. This applies, I think, even to his operations in land control up there. It is my understanding he has bought up whatever property he could.

City officials decidedly feel that Revelle is hard to keep within bounds, that he doesn't always play according to their rules, that whenever they make a move they are likely to smack into the ubiquitous Roger. Their pique goes so far as to wish, if not actually demand, that the University send them someone they can deal with.

In this light, Mayor Dail's display of hostility toward Revelle in open Council session on the afternoon of March 16th is the more understandable. On that day, Revelle was in full oratorical flight arguing before the Council the position of the U.C. president and board of regents on the question of giving land to Saint Jonas Salk (who plans a biological research center). Mayor Dail interrupted, but Revelle kept on talking. Dail said angrily: "You're not in a university classroom now, you're in the City Council chamber, and I'll complete my statement."

Dail's lengthy statement at this point included a reference to "individuals speculating on land up there," and he urged the need for a master plan.

Oceanographer Revelle, whose size and dignity are somewhat like George Washington's (though he has more wit and education than G.W.) rocked with the angry waves and then apologized to the King of the seaside city. If one wanted to caricature the confrontation it would have to be the elegant-mannered rich-kid against the pug-nosed dead-end kid. But that would be unfair to both. Revelle stands for much more than snobbery, and Mayor Dail, within the limits of his outlook, is consciously trying to build a city.

Prize irony of the situation is that Revelle was the one who focused Salk's interest in La Jolla in the first place. It was part of the Scripps director's long scheming to create absolutely top academic status for his campus.

Revelle took the canonized medicine man up on the mesa and showed him the northern part of William Black's La Jolla Farms, eighteen acres for sale at perhaps \$20,000 an acre. But Salk's hawk-eye wandered farther north and embraced some 70 acres, part of which was a dedicated park and part of which was owned by the City. Revelle told Salk that the city-owned portion was reserved for the university, but Salk said he was going after it. Weeks later, Revelle, excluded from the discussions, learned *accidentally* that city officials were fixing to give Salk all he wanted!

The same Bill Black had been beseeching the city to *lease* to him and his friends the area that Salk wants so that they can create an unparalleled private "executive" golf club. Balck offers \$10,000,000 rent for a 50-year period—which at least gives some idea of the kind of money the city could get by leasing rather than selling the land it owns.

Clearly, Dail and many of his cohorts in city government resent the tendency of La Jollans to manipulate their own affairs, as for example insisting on a separate post office even though the "town" is legally only part of the City of San Diego. The tension is most evident perhaps in the dispute over whether to call the campus UC at La Jolla or UC at San Diego. (A disinterested observer would say that UC at San Diego is absurd because it will be easily confused with the Catholic University of San Diego. "UC at Torrey Pines" appeals to me as a pretty way of resolving the issue.)

Evidently the determination of Civic Center to show La Jolla who is boss now goes so far as to rearrange the university community without first conferring with university officials. On March 18th, city officials went before the regents to explain the Salk center deal *after* the Council had voted to accept it. Incidentally, the voting public has the last word on the giving of public lands, and there is no certainty that the public will approve this time.

A good question is whether Dr. Salk needs 70 acres. (Much of it will go for estate-type residences.) Another good question is whether we really must give him land instead of leasing it to him. City Manager George Bean did raise the question of long-term lease but was told that Salk's board in Pittsburgh would not accept. Fearful of losing the prize catch, officials did not press the point. But it seems to me that they should have pressed this and a few other points without fear. WHERE ELSE IS THERE A DEVELOPING UNIVERSITY THAT OFFERS COMPARABLE ATTRACTIONS FOR HIGH-LEVEL INSTITUTES LIKE SALK'S?

Our university concept is unique, the ideal focus for other iniquities. A striking piece of new evidence, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare wants to create an Institute of Health near or on Torrey Pines campus. This again is a product of Dr. Revelle's far-ranging contactual life. (He is as traveled as Eleanor Roosevelt.)

It is not hard to imagine such name outfits as Mayo and Menninger seeking La Jolla sites too, once the institute momentum is developed.

Even locally there is institute activity which might logically tie up with UC. An important and ambitious program is projected by the Western Behavioral Science Institute, directed by Dr. Richard Farson with present quarters in the La Jolla Town House. Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation is another important medical activity and might better be near the campus than in the present building, Scripps Hospital on Prospect Street. (If the Scripps Foundation *did* move, it should be possible to retain Scripps Hospital as a local hospital.)

The mayor confused some people when he said there is need for a master plan on Torrey Pines Mesa. Many had the impression that the "University Community Study", accepted by both the regents and the city council was a master plan. In reality it was an elaborate declaration of intent, subject to considerable variation. What's needed most now is a reasonably specific master plan for the university campus itself, and such a plan is being made by the Los Angeles architects Risley and Gould. The plan will conceive of the total campus as *several* universities self-contained in manageable size, each with its own graduate school, and separated by rather dense landscaping. Here again is uniqueness of the highest order.

Next in urgency, or perhaps more urgent if the city is going to continue its feverish dickering with possible corporate settlers, is a master plan of the institute life pressing in around the edge of the campus. Neither Dr. Salk or any other involved individual should say who goes where. The specific siting of specific institutes should be done by planning experts sincerely motivated by the determination to arrange the most logical pattern. Expert opinion might determine, for example, that Dr. Salk belongs on the site now held by the Theatre and Arts Foundation. (This is mentioned for discussion only; it is not offered as the “correct” situation.)

It is Mayor Dail’s job to see that the peripheral master-planning is done in the proper spirit. It is Director Revelle’s job to produce the campus master-plan. Dail and Revelle should each curb any tendency to undermine the other. Of greatest importance is that leaders work together harmoniously to yield the maximum public benefit. There’s a long row ahead and it is intolerable that these two should be at odds. Let the highest public conscience prevail.

April 1960, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: **BOX SCORES—ARCHITECTURE IN REVIEW WITH AN ESPECIALLY LOW MARK FOR STATE COLLEGE**

Do you have on hand a copy of the March San Diego Magazine? Would you care to comb over some of the buildings illustrated there? There may be some point in doing so.

On page 49 of that issue is the curvaceous roof of the Lutheran Church (Designed solely by Architect Robert Des Lauriers, not in team with Richard Wheeler, as captioned last month.) emits an interesting reverse echo of the Carlton Hills skyline as though the voice of God were really at work here. It is at least the voice of Science and Engineering speaking with the specific intention of producing a beautiful effect. But the adjoining new subdivision suffers from politis and rowitis—utility poles lacerate the scene and the houses are in the familiar routine rows, a situation no worse certainly than most subdivisions but less good than it might be for the same money.

Why does not the church, any church, take upon itself the responsibility of exploring and promoting better neighborhood layout patterns? I’ll be glad to steer committees of pastors to appropriate material such as the neighborhood plan of Architect Lloyd Ruocco which we published in September ’58. By the way city planners have computed that Ruocco’s plan—with all its character-building benefits—would cost a subdivider no more than the usual dull row plans and, despite impressions to the contrary, the plan could be acceptable to fire and police departments.

On page 50 was a shot of the new Unitarian Church. Though soundly architected in some practical senses, it is a major disappointment to me on the spirit plane. Unitarians elsewhere have achieved magnificent architecture, and one hoped that the San Diego parish would produce a fame-worthy church such as the soaring beauty (reproduced) recently in Fairfield, Connecticut, for less money than ours. Considered as a distant object in the landscape, our Unitarian has a sat-on quality attributable chiefly to the thick fascia of roof edge, which also makes the building appear smaller than it is. Close up, the same fascia has a Gargantuan effect, and the whole group of buildings suggests bold power and proud affluence, hardly the heritage of Emerson’s faith if very much of today’s general culture. Another condition that may have a scrap of meaning is that while this church is located on the rim of a grand and impenetrable canyon, as tough probing infinity, it will be noticed never by the throng of humanity but only by a handful of cul-de-sac neighbors and by the parishioners themselves; it cannot be seen from any much-traveled public road.

Of particular moment is Dr. Edward Little’s doughty attempt to engineer acoustical distinction for the Unitarian Church. We cannot give a final accounting until the organ is installed in April and the remaining aerial bugs are shaken out. For now we may note that in the first weeks the parish was divided between those who found themselves in a diabolical echo chamber, especially when the sermon was in progress, and those who found the sound “thrilling”, especially when music was in progress. Dr. Little is determined to keep the “thrill” and crisp up the pastor electronically, which is not the same thing as roasting in hell.

Another notable effort to achieve acoustical satisfaction was the Sherwood Hall addition to the Art Center (page 51, March). In contrast to the “live” Unitarian Church this hall was designed “dead” or nearly so. That is most of the surfaces (except the ceiling) in the listening area absorb or diffuse sound and do not bounce it toward the listener. However, the stage was designed as a reflecting shelf with the result that a speaker using normal voice can be heard with complete clarity in the back row. My impression after hearing several music programs there is that Sherwood Hall is a shade—just a shade—on the dull side for music. But, I hasten to add, it is so much better than any other auditorium within reach that it is by far the first choice for any music project. Dr. Arnold Small advised on acoustics. One of the basic ironies of acoustical science is that a hall cannot be ideal for both speech and music, without the use of amplifiers or elaborate devices to change the reverberation time.

Visually, Sherwood Hall is superbly satisfying within. A miracle resulting from its subtle proportions, its repetitive surface ribbing and its subdued color is that it seems three times as big as it is. Costly its raiment as the purse could buy; rich, not gaudy: the gold carpet alone cost about \$25,000. The color is gold, not the thread.

The new Art Center complex considered from the exterior is a tantalizing essay in deliberate rawness, “brutalism”, as they say in Britain. The rawness of concrete frame and concrete filler wall is handsome when handled with feeling, as here. I was at first inclined to scoff at the pillars that are thicker than necessary, until I realized that their massiveness lends an air of substantiality that to link us all the way back to Stonehenge, the mysterious pre-historic monument in Salisbury plain. Art for art’s sake? No, art for the sake of human satisfaction, perverse or otherwise.

It is the Prospect Street approach that I am speaking of, where the new effects strike a mood touched with sadness that reminds me of Hawthorne’s Salem—there is a chill as though witches should be somewhere about, especially at night when the lighting is at the level of scooped pumpkins. Even the trees—a melancholy blasted gum and four new sycamores of crotchety limb, develop the ghostly character. Altogether it is a sight of rugged, compelling “ugliness”, like the face of Lincoln.

Spinster Ellen Scripps’ old house and Bachelor Franklin Sherwood’s memorial are united in architectural matrimony behind the stern insistence of the arcades, though there is some uneasiness in the relationship, the two seem appropriately feminine and masculine. Again because of the arcades chiefly, the new Art Center definitely fits into the circle of its neighbors, adding to the impression of unforced unity that lifts this area to first place among the region’s cityscapes. The character is helped greatly by prodigal landscaping. Someday it should be thought to banish autos from the streets that tie together this rare center of church, school, club, hospital, museum, and develop it in an even more park-like way. Meanwhile, the magic could be much enhanced by a more careful attention to night lighting throughout the distinctive neighborhood.

Continuing to rifle last month’s magazine, we find Architect Frank Hope on page 52 boldly engaged in projecting skyscrapers. I say in April as I said in December that the U.S. National Bank Building as planned is repeating old mistakes, particularly in crowding the tower to the sidewalk’s edge. Much better is Hope’s study for the Hallmark Building, which features a roof garden at the third or fourth story level with parking beneath and the tower rising above the garden. Something like this should be *required* for tall buildings by our planning commission and city council.

If words could jump up and down, mine would stamp all over the picture of the State Office Building about to get built downtown. This promises to be the worst abomination yet foisted on our fair town by the State Division of Architecture: a crops of muscle-bound bureaucrats which seems set on eliminating all artistic value for architecture. Call it the State Division of Art *from* Architecture.

The State Office Building is an architectural fraud on many counts. The State Division men simply threw a box around the amount of space called for, on the false theory that this is the cheapest way. It is cheapest in money to build a box with minimum variations of plan, but it is expensive psychologically. And psychology is the basis of architectural success. Specifically I am thinking of the people who will have to work here, and the citizen-visitors and tourists whose instincts to raise their eyes in admiration of a

public building will be sorely frustrated. The workers will find themselves filed away in such a building as index cards are filed in metal cabinets. The citizens will be reminded that they are to their government as digits are to statistical charts. A government building, which should always set an example for human use of enclosed space, is rather designed in this case to stand as a symbol that man is a victim to his machinery. And stand it will; this is no temporary make-do but a rock-solid structure designed for long life. If our local officials cared enough they would demand something handsome, more happy-making. Governor Brown and Senator Fisher should care to.

Have you noticed the gruesomeness of State College lately? Many besides myself have shuttered at the new buildings there. These are all from the cold designing hand of the State Division of Art from Architecture, sometimes with uneasy assistance from local architects. Again the blight is from a false sense of values in Sacramento. The Division seems to say: "Give 'em the space they want, build it to last, but don't waste any Division time trying to promote the quality of space or appearances. It's bureaucracy at its worst, treating people like cattle. The Chicago stockyards do not have so odious an esthetic stench as the San Diego State campus.

Architects invariably complain about the Division of Architecture, which takes work away from them, and some think it should be abolished. I would agree, unless it can somehow be converted from an enemy to a friend of the art of architecture.

A particular service was done by Pre-Mixed Concrete Company, which generously displayed fifteen pictures of State College in its ad on pages 124-125, March. The reader may wish to visit State on Founder's Day (April 15th) and see for himself the many bad architectural features. Staff will be there in force to explain the very good educational features of our leading educational institution.

Among the worse miscarriages of sense at State is the Humanities (!) Building or Nabisco Factory as at least one salty prof calls its in honor of the feeble waffle pattern used as decoration outside. "Humanities" is made up of two long two-story blocks, one containing classrooms, the other faculty offices. An intermix of the two functions would have been wiser. It's a long hike for some teachers from class to cell, and a longer hike for students who might wish to drop in on favorite academic personalities, especially if the latter are on the second floor. No one has time to climb stairs anymore. Sum and substance: "Humanities" is a reinforced concrete ghetto, filled with ripe and ready mentors, wistfully listening for youthful footsteps in the hall, consoling themselves with more or less pointed "research." What should have been the crowning delight of "Humanities", the auditorium is in fact an unpleasant travesty; its most annoying feature is a series of ribbon lights that beat steadily at the audience, much brighter than the brightest lecturer.

Making the best of an admittedly bad architectural situation, professors will tell you that they were given pretty much what they asked for in the way of specific workings spaces and equipment. In other words, these highly trained men successfully demanded the tools of their specialties, but they did not show an equal interest in the broad social and aesthetic questions that determine an environment. Thus, State's faculty, heavily weighted though it be with doctors of philosophy, is largely responsible for the miserable quality of the campus. It's a false presumption that if they had banded together in group insistence on overall design standards, State would be something to show off with pride. Does this reveal a prevailing deficiency in the general education of faculty members?

Maybe it's just a failure of emphasis which can still be remedied. State is making a significant move with the addition of an urban geographer to the staff starting next year. That could be the beginning of a healthier accent on environmental design within the campus and within the community at large.

A STERN VIEW OF THE SMPHONY

The mildest Sherry is Rod, who m.c.'s discussion programs for Channel 10, On Sunday, February 21st, Rod was purring along in the usual friendly vein when one of his guests erupted in a cadenza of his own inspiration. It was Isaac Stern, the prodigious violinist, but he as talking, not playing. Stern said that if

you have a nuclear physicist in town he goes to the top socially and financially, but a worker in the arts may have all the ability and experience in the world and yet get kicked around.

Stern continued in approximately these words: "Right here in San Diego you have the case of your symphony manager, a man of wonderful ability and experience, who has been fired because of a conflict of personalities. Sometimes art is only an adjunct to a *social* occasion." [Italics ours.]

On hearing this, SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE's public affairs writer phoned Dr. Burch Mehlin, the gentle pediatrician who is manfully laboring through a term as president of the San Diego Symphony. The good Dr. Mehlin has been deeply distressed by the conflict around the symphony manager Alex Haas, but he was the proper person to give the official rebuttal, if any, to the Stern statement. Dr. Mehlin would only say for publication that Mr. Haas (68) was retiring. "We all get along in years," observed the soft-spoken M.D.

Because of Stern's TV remarks there were a number of distressed spirits in the seats of the Russ that night when he walked on stage as violin soloist. The benign strains of Bruch and Saint-Saens calmed all souls for the nonce, but after the concert symphony conductor Earl Murray talked to Stern. As a result, past midnight, Stern telephoned a statement to a tape machine at Channel 10. He said the statement was to be used at the discretion of Mr. Murray and Tom Abels (symphony promoter). In it he did not take back anything he had said in the afternoon, but he went on at some length to praise the San Diego Symphony and to urge public support for it. As of March 20 the Stern statement had not been fed to the public but, because of the double-take, Channel 10 realized that it had a news story and decided after careful investigation and despite requests "to leave the dog lie"—that a certain portion of the story should be told to the people. So news director Pat Higgins said on the air that Haas had been fired, that the Symphony board was divided about it, and that a quasi-public body like the Symphony should have announced the dismissal rather than trying to cover it up. The station said nothing more about Stern's role.

Symphony board men could validly say that their silence was an attempt to protect Mr. Haas in his pursuit for a new job, except for this: Haas had let it be known that he considered himself the victim of a dirty deal; it was Old Friend Haas who was the source of Isaac Stern's information on the subject; and an influential board member, Morley Golden, had resigned over the way the Haas matter had been handled.

Was there another reason for the Symphony's silence? The following letter from Conductor Murray to me suggests the board's motivation.

Dear Jim:

Just a brief note—but one I hope you will read with the same seriousness I feel in writing it. This note is neither for nor against Alex Haas. In fact I am not speaking of individuals, I am speaking from my heart for music. At the moment the Symphony Association is launching its annual fund drive. The results of that drive will affect the future of our orchestra, and through them the future of music in this community. If the San Diego Symphony should fail—for any reason whatever—it will be next to impossible to repair the damage. It is essential to the welfare of this community that nothing be permitted to interfere with this drive. The drive is for music. You know, as well as or better than I, the necessity for public confidence in our organization soliciting funds. Any controversy is harmful, and refutation cannot correct the damage. Let's not permit personalities to triumph over principles. No one is more important than music itself. The Symphony Association, despite any faults or failings, is the best—and in my opinion—the only immediate hope for music in San Diego. Please, think this over more than once before acting.

Sincerely, Earl Bernard Murray

If I felt this was in any sense a personal letter, I would not publish it without asking Mr. Murray's permission. But clearly it is an official letter representing the Symphony position to a section of the press. It is roughly similar to the stand the Symphony took in asking Channel 10 to please say no more about the controversy on the air. Bristling with editorial independence, Channel 10 decided to air the story at least briefly, and I decided to publish it in some detail. I cannot for the moment grant the right of any small

group to take hold of a public agency and conduct its affairs as though it were a private business. I think indeed that all public agencies should operate publicly, and that all their deliberations should be open to the press. If democracy has any meaning, it lies in public affairs publicly conducted.

Mr. Murray's letter was certainly well intended, but it put too much reliance on a smiling mask. The fact is that the Symphony drive for funds in March was decidedly harmed by the emotional confusion arising from the Haas controversy, *exactly because the Symphony had tried to cover up*. If the Symphony had publicly stated its reasons for dropping Mr. Haas, doubts might have been neutralized and checks written more readily.

Having decided that Haas must go, the Symphony board was generous enough. He was given nine months notice that his contract would not be renewed. After the Stern fuss, they decided to buy up seven months of the Haas contract and get on without him. They still did not make public any charges against him, but rather issued glowing words of gratitude for his services. The inquiring reporter does not yet have any official notice as to the right and wrong of the dismissal. We are supposed to accept the board's action without question.

Like most boards, the Symphony board is a motley crew, who only partly know what they are doing. Did they err in hiring Haas, in firing him, or both? Their firing action got opposed reactions from leading lady supporters. 1) Mrs. Harry O. Juliani of Oceanside, sympathizing with Haas, indicated that henceforth she would support L.A. Philharmonic rather than San Diego Symphony concerts for Oceanside (there has been bruising competition from L.A.). 2) Mrs. Roy Munger of La Jolla sent \$1000 to the Symphony after the removal of Haas; she it is who sponsored the guest appearance of Conductor Arthur Lipkin, who is available for the full-time job in case Mr. Murray slips or is tripped off the podium.

Mr. Murray is the Symphony's fair-haired boy right now, but if the board should turn against him we would not hear about that either, except as a dismissal with hollow praise. As he says, no one is more important than music itself—if we accept that to mean individuals should not be allowed to stand in the way of musical quality. That goes especially for any board members to whom music may be an adjunct to a social occasion.

Anyone for opening up the boards?

April 1960, San Diego & Point Magazine, Two National Awards for Britton, 12, 122.

SUDDEN national honor has come to Associate Editor James Britton, who for ten years has walked the lonely path of the critic. Within a two-week period his work in San Diego Magazine has won two major awards. First, the American Institute of Architects gave him second prize for architectural journalism in its annual Journalism Awards Competition, and then the Fund for Adult Education of the Ford Foundation granted Britton a fellowship for a year's study of city planning and art history.

The AIA prize of \$250 was for an article, *Downtown Tomorrow*, in December's magazine and for general excellence of architectural coverage. First prize in the newspaper division went to George McCue of the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* and in the magazine division to Grady Clary, writing in *Horizon* magazine. The A.I.A. also awarded Certificates of Merit to *Time* and the *Nation* for a series of articles on architectural subjects.

Britton plans to study at one or more universities and travel to urban centers in the United States during his year under the fellowship. Grants totaling \$210,000 have been awarded to 40 adult educators, newspapermen and broadcasters by the fund which was established as an independent organization in 1951 by the Ford Foundation. C. Scott Fletcher, President of the Fund, said 29 men and eleven women from 20 states will have grants and "take leave of absence from their work for up to one year of study and training to broaden their knowledge and increase their skills."

In the past, Britton in Point Newsweekly and Magazine San Diego, the forerunners of San Diego Magazine, often has been a Nostradamus. Years ago he warned that San Diego desperately needed a true

master plan for a growing city. One of the first articles he wrote after coming here from New York, was a discussion of the inadequate plans for the then-proposed new Public Library. And before ground was broken he wrote that the new County Courthouse plans were architecturally poor. It was James Britton who started the long-losing journalistic fight against location of the May Company shopping center in Mission Valley and advised keeping Mission Valley as a green park area. However, a May Company official who followed Britton's battle, recently ordered: "Plant plenty of trees in the area around the store. Those people down there are nuts about trees."

A.I.A. announcement of Britton's journalistic prize said: "We awarded second prize to Mr. Britton for his article in San Diego Magazine for an original and critical estimate of the development of downtown San Diego. Written for a local audience, the author did not hesitate to level hard-hitting criticism. The jury was impressed by the high quality of writing Mr. Britton maintained in a series of articles in this magazine. The jury consisted of Thomas H. Creighton, editor of *Progressive Architecture*, Joseph Waterson, editor of the *AIA Journal* and Ken Simendinger of Henry J. Kaufman and Associates.

May 1960, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: **SAN FRANCISCO AT BAY**

CAPTION: The Crown Zellerbach Building at Market and Bush Streets in San Francisco yields fine photos at every turn. Triangular site was scooped out to provide a sunken plaza, a variation on Manhattan's Rockefeller Plaza, with bronze abstract fountain by David Tollerton of Big Sur. The 20-story monument to Mies-ism in architecture is worth almost a million per foot, it occupies only one-third of its site and is sheathed by two and two-thirds acres of glass. The firms of Hertzka and Knowles and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill were the architects with Charles Bassett as chief designer.

CAPTION: Apartments and offices set tall in parks may be the order of the day following the great competition among nine developers for the Golden Gateway contract to rebuild a rundown section of San Francisco. Pictured on opposite page and below designs by architects Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons and DeMars and Reay. Note park features and screened parking below landscaped terraces.

CAPTION: Three architects, Warnecke, Dailey and Guren propose widened streets with landscaped islands, street level plazas and elevated plazas. In the distance, one of their proposed tower apartments.

CAPTION: A park stretches before the Ferry Building, with tall trees screening the elevated freeway.

CAPTION: Architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill proposed three enormous apartment buildings on stilts with "richly balconied facades."

CAPTION: Architects Welton Becket & Associates designed apartments that rise above "spacious elevated plazas."

CALIFORNIA'S QUEEN is a flossy. The most alluring city in America is an almost total slum, a prostitute nursing a diseased body while daily decked out in glamorous costumes, patterned of ever-changing mountain and water views. Seen at a distance, San Francisco looks quite self-possessed, but to come close is to be shocked by endless evidence of urban corruption. The city hall, with its mammiform dome and gilt decorations recalling the loose love and loose gold on which the town was founded, exerts its tired charm in a district commonly called Tenderloin and squints out in all directions on decay matching the scabrous artworks that frequently appear in the galleries.

Beat is the image and beat is the city, but residents and visitors wallow happily, preferring San Francisco as least marked by bourgeois predictability. If not quite everyman's skid row, she does bubble with conspicuously high alcoholism. On the other hand, her conversation, her art and music, are often of champagne quality. She has abandon and she has determination. The secret of her magnetism surely lies in the gamut of possible adventure she holds forth.

Confined in a limited area at the end of a peninsula, San Francisco is already as crowded as a Hogarth engraving of Discomfort robbing Pleasure. Rentals are absurdly high and hard to find. Though it's a walking man's town in unusual measure, there are enough cars around to cause talk of banning them in Golden Gate Park on Sundays because of the jams.

Seldom was a city so ripe for renewal. Seldom was a citizenry so touchy about how it is done. A major issue there is how to retain the grace while eliminating the disgrace; a few freshly committed, monstrous errors have pointed the question so that it gets unheard of space in the lively San Francisco papers. In particular, bold new freeways soar on stilts above the picturesque clutter and above the groans of the esthetically wounded.

Freshest monster of all is the Jack Tar Hotel, as insolent in the cityscape as ten Las Vegas type motels piled on top of each other. Its drive-in convenience and juke-box tone will cause it to prosper, though the loyal San Francisco reaction is one of disbelieving horror. *Chronicle* columnist Herb Caen summed it up in a devastating item:

John Edward Upston, a firm believer in the traditions of S.F., closes his eyes every time he drives past the garish new Jack Tar Hotel on Van Ness—but the other day he kept his peepers shut too long and went through a red light. He explained his reason to a cop, who looked coldly at the building, with its Southlandish merry-go-round sign, and nodded. “Drive on buddy,” he said. “I don't blame you.”

This is a piece of critical journalism, powerful out of all proportion to its size. It rocked back and forth across the town in conversations that left the Jack Tarred forever with deserved ridicule. Rare is the newspaper that will presume to criticize commercial buildings (The San Diego dailies will not.), yet it is important that they do so because every visible structure adds or detracts from the city's public figure. To me, any building is put on public exhibition when it can be seen from a public street, and thus courts review even more challengingly than art exhibits, which are usually hung indoors.

THE MOST PRECIOUS part of San Francisco is the towerful financial center, moneyheart for the entire West. It too has been threatened with stagnation since the big companies discovered the advantages of building in the suburbs. The old-fashioned skyscraper (yes, they are antiques now) does not allow sufficient amenities for today's choosy employees, not does it any longer assert the cooperative-image so effectively as a carefully planned commercial castle in more open country. A few new scrapers have been built on the old model in San Francisco, far from making a big impression they actually have been greeted with scorn in some cases.

Many San Franciscans were surely disturbed that their town was not cutting a distinguished figure in modern terms, none more so than Jerome D. Zellerbach, very much a leading citizen, serving now as Ambassador to Italy, a fortune-kissed man of sharp eye and sharp judgment. Piqued specifically by a *Time* review of cities which passed San Francisco lightly by. J.D. ordered an expensive new home for Crown Zellerbach Corporation from Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, architects who had to their high credit a number of corporate prestige buildings in other cities, the most famous being Lever House in New York. It helped greatly that Nathaniel Owings of SOM was also a San Franciscan brooding about his city's future. With the firm's wonderson, Charles Bassett (38) as head of the design team, SOM turned out a building that would have been enough by itself to put San Francisco on the modern map.

Nowhere on the new Crown Zellerbach building is there any giant lettering or corporation symbol such as reduces the skyline to alphabet soup in most places, including downtown San Diego. Yet simply because of its design distinction, everyone in San Francisco is talking Crown Zellerbach and so is much of the outer world, as we are here. Already, building industry publications have been full of it, and *Harper's* for April earned a perceptive article by Alan Temko reviewing Crown Zee and its patrician neighbor, the John Hancock Life Insurance Company building, also designed by SOM's Bassett and itself adding no little to the new urbanity.

In the correct Periclean spirit, the giant-opening ceremony for Crown Zellerbach brought together a select audience which was treated not to a glorification of the company so much as a perspective lesson in

the history and hopes of San Francisco. Guests received a handsome dramatic book, *The City of Gold*, written for the occasion by Steven Warshaw, based largely on the exhaustive research of Mel Scott, who himself has just come out with a great giant volume, *San Francisco Area: A Metropolis in Perspective*. In *The City of Gold* Crown Zellerbach received due recognition, no more. The city was the obsession. The book promptly became a collector's item. Crown Zee and neighboring Hancock became the subject of an exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art, and another fine book, *Two Buildings*, was prepared as catalog.

Perhaps the most poetically-touched gesture in the Zen-touched city is made by Crown Zee's elevator shaft rising all the way to the sky in absolutely uninterrupted planes of dark gray-green mosaic. It looks boxy in photos but it has an astonishing virtue in fact. All the furnishings of the street, including cars and people, take on the heightened appeal of pageantry as they come into the same field of vision with the magnificent simplicity of the shaft. The new vendors and the stock brokers and their secretaries, the lampposts, the fire hydrants and even the trolley wires, all acquire visual zing they did not have before. Well, except the secretaries. Furthermore, the clarity of design in all parts of the Crown Zellerbach building and in the generous space around it causes the surrounding buildings to be appreciated anew for their design value—which is quite high in many cases in a romantic way. One feels again that it is great to be a pedestrian and great to count the rewards of sight.

THE MOOD of renewal by design is infectious. Mr. Zellerbach also influenced an SOM study for redevelopment of a nearby blighted area, now called the Golden Gateway but originally a slough which was filled in and developed over decades as a produce market and rat resort.

SOM developed a total design for the area that made handsome good sense as to land use, spacing of buildings, pedestrian amenities, auto control, etc, but they made the mistake of showing simple glass cubes, all alike, for the big buildings. There was a strong reaction in leadership circles against the "housing project look", considered unsuitable especially for individualistic San Francisco.

At the right time there came a change of command in the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. The new director, M. Justin Herman, is another of the fully conscious types to whom the intangibles of good design are indispensable, and he has the blandishment, the eloquence, to impress even the hardheads with his reasons. In a short tune he has become one of the most effective public figures in town, and so deftly as to cause few enemies while doing a job that could easily breed hostilities echoing the Civil War. This last remark is not made lightly, one of the glaring problems is to manage the dispersal (and integration) of the large ghetto of Negroes that had grown since World War II.

Justin Herman salvaged the good features of the SOM proposal for Golden Gateway and wrote a prospectus inviting other bidders. He called for apartment house structures totaling 2200 units with one covered parking space for each unit. Also, a public garage for 1300 cars topped by a landscaped pedestrian mall, and topped also by another apartment or office building. Herman observed of the latter: "It will have the commanding position in the entire development overlooking the historic Ferry Building and San Francisco Bay. It has the potential of becoming one of the monumental buildings of the West."

The prospectus contained statements that may seem like promotional exaggeration but really reflect the intentions of the governing forces in this case. "A developer or developer-group, whose proposal is accepted has the rare opportunity not only for an attractive business undertaking but also for the creation of a residential development which in its setting of the community, marine and park views and other San Francisco features should command world attention and renown. Such a development created on a foundation of imaginative architecture and free of monotonous or institutional character should provide—beyond the expected returns to investors and the amenities of residence—a monument to the credit of the developer and city alike. The Golden Gateway residential development is intended to symbolize anew for San Francisco its role as the City of Delight."

Notice, above, the intention of avoiding "monotonous or institutional character." The prospectus further stated that the Agency "favors but does not require the redeveloper to use different architects or designers for each major structure for the purpose of providing enjoyable variety . . ."

The word “competition” or “contest” appears nowhere in Mr. Herman’s prospectus, but that’s what he was whipping of all right. Nine developers emerged ready to spend over \$50,000 apiece on architectural studies and models just to reinforce their bids! By deadline time Justin Herman had on his hands a wealth of pictorial materials (from which the illustrations of this article were selected) and a collection of scale-models such as seldom has been brought together. Because he had failed to require that the models be all of the same scale, they weren’t and so comparison was somewhat hampered. But nonetheless when they were put on display (in the Agency’s headquarters at 525 Golden Gate Avenue) visitors were invariably entranced and elated by the experience. The developers also prepared costly exhibits for the San Francisco Museum of Art, where the most effective device was a stereopticon viewer giving 3-D glimpses of the models.

The popular exhibits served at least three useful purposes. 1) The citizen got a specific view of what good city planning might produce; 2) the governmental agency involved got a deserved reputation of really caring about what it was doing; and 3) the developers, win or lose, got much publicity as did the architects.

WITH ALL THIS attention to esthetics still the informed citizenry was restless. The *Chronicle* devoted its whole editorial page effort April 4th to the Golden Gateway, which it called San Francisco’s most exciting civic contest. Said the *Chronicle*: “By its location, the Golden Gateway will be a monumental decoration or blotch, on the city’s face. Which it will be is shortly to be determined. It is the duty of the people who select the design to see that the coming generations who will live in and look at the Golden Gateway will feel pride rather than disappointment . . . Right now is the time to bring forth criticism and suggestions . . . The most glaring shortcoming of all the plans is that each of them within itself, shows a monotonous similarity of design. In most the same tall building is repeated four to five times.”

So it is clear that none of the bidders justify Justin Herman’s hint in the prospectus that designs by different architects be included in the total package. The *Chronicle* has an Irish drinking man’s remedy: “It would be interesting if, on a magic night, a leprechaun could be admitted to the Redevelopment exhibit and shuffle the buildings around, hit-and-miss, from plan to plan. Somewhere in the group a design might emerge that is suitable.”

More soberly, the paper added: “Redevelopment rules apparently do not provide for the mixing up of architectural contracts. Such restrictive rules fly in the face of the history of art and architecture. Shall we say to our grandchildren: ‘Too bad it looks so awful . . . There was a rule . . .’?”

The ability of Justin Herman to meet this criticism should not be underestimated. When he announces the final selection from among the bidders this Summer, I expect he will somehow have wrapped up a design that is a further improvement on those submitted. To help his Agency decide, an architectural advisory panel, comprised mainly of premium architects from around the country, carefully analyzed the proposals at the end of April. Chairman was San Francisco’s Mario Ciampi, who in his own words again expressed the high intention that is so much in the air: “The goal is a city which rivals the great cities of ancient Greece and the Renaissance; a work of art designed to enrich and delight the human spirit, a place where citizens can live and work with enthusiasm and dignity.”

Very likely the winner of the development contract will be asked to take on several of the excellent architects involved in the clash of ideas. In that case the Golden Gateway in a few years will materialize with various facets such as appear on the pages you are now reading. One thing the bidders had in common was commons, that is campus-like areas of landscape in which it would be a pleasure to walk, A point at issue is whether these should be the level of the surrounding streets and thus easily penetrated by all comers, or raised one or more stories in the air, in which case they may become relatively exclusive. A serious charge is that the whole scheme is projected as though children didn’t exist.

There is no denying that Golden Gateway will be the ultimate in desirable housing, to be afforded only by those who least need to save on transportation costs. The expectation is, however, that many who live here will daily negotiate on foot the distance between home and nearby office buildings. Subsequently,

it will be possible to remake chunk after chunk of the outworn city on the new model, and a much healthier living pattern will have been established. Along the way, solutions are bound to develop to the tough economic problem of bringing rentals down to where a frail income is no longer a guarantee that Americans must live in substandard housing short on amenities. A dramatic breakthrough on that is shaping up in, of all places, Los Angeles. I'll try to have that story soon.

The Golden Gateway is only the most striking of devices by which San Franciscans are making over their tired frump of a city. Already in effect is a fairly good master plan for upgrading Civic Center, balancing the stony landmarks in a simply surround of glassy, open-faced moderns. Further along than any other city is the design for a rapid transit system on which the voters will speak soon. Through it all the concern is how to become respectable without becoming dull. Rising suddenly from the depths of its civic debasement, San Francisco is today a model of alertness as to not only the future but the present possibilities for the delightful life—freed of the social diseases resulting from over exuberant exploitation.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR SAN DIEGO?

WHAT CUES should San Diego pick up from the San Francisco experience? Just as much as she, we need architectural competition to propagate civic good looks—competition not only for public buildings but for private ones, and certainly for the Urban Renewal projects that are bound to emerge (Almost all the territory between Broadway and Market Street downtown is nearly comparable to Golden Gateway, and so is much to the north of Broadway.) The reclamation of downtown should not be allowed to occur at any lesser design level than San Francisco's. If that city can attract developers eager to spend big money just to compete for a prize piece of real estate, so can San Diego, the nation's fastest-growing big city.

A capable staff from our City Planning Department is at work now on a master plan for downtown. Somewhere along the line, a good number of experts in city planning and architecture should be brought in to give the benefit of their criticism and advice. Also, somewhere to the end of the line, a comprehensive model should materialize on which various alternate ideas could be tried and studied. This should be big enough so that precise indications of building uses and land shapes could be indicated. Then, as new building projects are proposed for the area, miniature buildings could be fitted into the area model to prove their appropriateness.

Coming along in two months or so will be the final report on Balboa Park by Harland Bartholomew and Associates. Judging from advance indications, this will amount to a master plan adequate in some respects, inadequate in others. Obviously, here again is a case where models should come into play—a basic model of the park one which miniatures of the museums, etc. could be mocked up and studied by all the public, experts and mere park lovers alike. That prime American invention, the suggestion box, should be close at hand, and the comments carefully noted by city officials. After such a public review will come the time to settle on a building and rebuilding program for this most precious of civic assets.

Intelligent use of models would be following a practice that has developed in some advanced European cities, it is long overdue in America. I think it is so valuable an asset that a forward-looking city should have a model-making staff regularly at work. It would also be a worthwhile industry, with growth potential, for models are coming in very big with big builders throughout the country. It might even be a suitable activity for Convair, as a side line. Because models are educational tools for all ages, the end result of their widespread use will be more effective democracy.

Beyond the fun and games with models will be needed a great willingness to loosen up money, public and private, for building at a higher level of excellence than we commonly do now. Everything cannot be as expensively built as Mr. Zellerbach's tower but we could easily afford to work closer toward the design standard exemplified there, and to get away from the flimsy cardboard look which prevails in San Diego today. And if we must continue to build flimsily, we could at least get about the business of proper land use as exemplified in Golden Gateway. Once land use is intelligently arranged, architecture can be trusted to grow in quality with benefits for everyone.

A MUSICAL REVIVAL MEETING IN THE CITY OF GOLD

A SEQUENCE of four visits to the Opera House in San Francisco gave me an impression in depth of San Diego's young conductor, Earl Bernard Murray. He had returned to guest-conduct the orchestra whose instrument cases might have served him as cradle, where his popular father Ralph Murray still plays tuba and presides generally as personnel manager. Many of the veterans of the Monteux conquests are gone, and women fill the musical chairs in unwonted numbers as the San Francisco Symphony struggles to maintain its reputation through a crisis period in which orchestra and lovers are all broken up around the baton of the socially-contracted conductor Enrique Jorda, whose passionate musical enthusiasm is not consistently matched by directorial effectiveness. (He is effective in some things, especially choral.)

Visit One was to hear the orchestra conducted not by Murray but by young Bernard Haetnick, whose new "permanent" post is with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. Other than that he is probably not remotely a successor to the late Edouard von Beinum. He certainly did nothing for the floundering San Francisco orchestra, nor it for him, the audience received a lapful of dismembered Haydn and Brahms symphonies.

Visit two was Murray's first rehearsal. I was so struck by the coldness of sound that I wondered briefly whether the San Diego orchestra wasn't more worth hearing. But prevailing sureness of intonation was a clue that the S.F. crew was capable, if inhibited. The prodigal son on the podium platform spoke sharply of the old family circle. His most revealing order was: "Play on the beat, not after the beat." One of America's top orchestras had slipped to the extent of badly needing such elementary injunctions."

Visit Three was Murray's first concert, first of three offering the same program. The starting piece, Gluck's *Iphigenia in Aulis* overture, sagged uncertainly away from the taut classical line required; thick and muddy textures developed where resilient clarity was the nature of the thought. Carl Ruggles' *Men and Mountains* and Kodaly's *Dances from Galanta* were better prepared and better received because of their attractive rhythmic or color mixtures. Beethoven's *Eroica* was not better than good; it hardly sounded as though the composer had an urgent message. In sum, though up over Haetnick, it was not a particularly stirring concert but it got generous reviews from those fine listeners, Alfred Frankenstein (*Chronicle*) and Alexander Fried (*Examiner*). The S.F. strings sounded far superior to S.D.'s, but we seem to have a more effulgent clarinet and flute; even our brass, while less controlled than S.F.'s, tries bravely for more color and often attains it.

Visit Four was Murray's final repeat concert, the end product of a week's effort by leader and led. I should have been bored to hear the same program again, except that it was almost as different as singing in the shower after a heavy snore. From the orchestra there radiated an air of jaunty confidence. Murray was completely immersed in his music and he brought the team in with him. This was no playing for an audience, it was a sounding together for the love of it—and the audience had the good fortune to peep upon and overhear the love affair. The Gluck was cleaned up so it gleamed, and such a work so played in enough proof of a conductor's basic command. The Beethoven had gained values too, but it was a little on the pastoral side, considering what a tonal battle the composer implied. In truth Murray is a bit lacking in personal glint to fire up an audience for the big German wars. What he specifically achieved was a refinement of ensemble that evidently left the musicians glowing with rediscovered pride. The unpretentious Earl Orpheus Murray can produce a truly musical concert, and he can build an orchestra. Good for San Diego.

June 1960, San Diego Magazine, ART OF THE CITY: To Hell with the Airport

WHY SAN DIEGO SHOULD SHARE A SUPERJET AIRPORT IN THE DESERT WITH LOS ANGELES AND SANTA BARBARA

CAPTION; The coming supersonic planes (above) should not be allowed over San Diego at all. Airport expert Courtney Matthews (right) suggests how to handle them.

DEATH VALLEY is the nearest thing on Earth to that popular national hotspot, Hell, and Death Valley is where San Diego's jet-age airport should be. "Real estate is cheap there," said airport planning expert Courtney Matthews when I suggested the ultimate in no man's land as the proper spot to launch and lower the many supersonic plans now shaping up on the designers' boards.

Matthews was born in Los Angeles 50 years ago and has kept a bird's eye on Southern California growth and overgrowth ever since. As a pilot he became versed in air traffic patterns and port requirements. As an electronics engineer he got into design of our air traffic control systems. Talent and circumstances pushed him to the front rank of airport planners.

His habit of seeing large qualified Matthews to be a principal figure in preparing San Diego's distinctive University study (San Diego Magazine, October 1959), but airport planning is his main work. Besides free-lance consultation to various cities, he is heavily involved in the heady planning activity of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, a company with extraordinary diversification of interests (which includes a deadly serious and active pursuit of rapid rail transit). An especially ingenious project of the company is combination airports and marinas, such as currently contemplated for Santa Barbara. Lockheed has long operated the airport at Burbank, where I visited Courtney Matthews and was treated to his brilliant original cogitations on the solutions of everybody's air trouble. Rather than quoting Matthews directly, the following account will be based on his thoughts with a few of my own added. Deliberately, I will omit to distinguish between his and mine in order to keep from putting him at odds with any of the politicians who inhabit his business life. You may be sure, of course, that the main drift is his. His conclusions appear to me so sound that I should expect anyone who reasoned carefully from the same information to arrive at a similar pattern.

THE HORRIBLE realization has grown in recent years that all the graceful geography from Santa Barbara to San Diego (and Tijuana) is stewing together in one vast megapolitan glob. Of course, the dozens of municipalities involved will continue to fight each other so long as possible, but certain working arrangements will have to be made in spite of traditional short-sightedness. Of first importance is an interrelated airfield network.

At present San Diegans may fly anywhere in the world by first taking an air hop from Lindbergh Field to Los Angeles International Airport (which is less than a half hour from San Diego by air). Santa Barbarans enjoy similar access to the world's airlines except that S.D. has a decided time advantage over S.B.: our Lindbergh Field (five minutes from downtown) is one of the world's most conveniently located airports.

However, L.A. International Airport is intolerably overloaded. There simply is not enough space overhead in which to maneuver all the planes that come around trying to land. So a second international airport is planned at Lancaster 60 miles to the north. One would naturally think this would take care of things for a few years at least. But the schizophrenic fact is that Lancaster is already obsolete while not yet started. Moreover—and this "moreover" involves billions of dollars spent within the last decade—practically every civilian airport in the world is incapable of handling the principal long-distance planes that are certain to enter service within the next decade!

Not only are the airports incapable but they cannot be made capable. This claim goes for Lancaster and it goes for such another giant mis-step as the new Washington International airport for which Congress—after much study—has just appropriated 62.5 million dollars. The simple reason for this calamitous state of affairs is the nuisance factor of the forthcoming planes. In particular, engine noise and sonic boom will be like nothing you have heard yet in your most harassed moments.

The new planes will be geared to rip through the air at three or three and one-half times the speed of sound (2000 mph or more). And the evolving species won't curl up and die under the curses or prayers of the quiet-minded. For, ironically, the belly of the lightning whale will be the quietest, most comfortable of all the flying wombs, a blissful eraser of time. The demand for such service—crossing the continent in little over an hour, L.A. to Paris in a morning—will build up inevitably. The clenching proof that the

monsters are coming is that they will be more economical to operate per passenger-mile than any present means of transit.

The *Wall Street Journal* on May 20th quoted Gen. Thomas D. White as suggesting post-Summit revival of the B-70 supersonic bomber development program. The B-70 would be the prototype of the needed civilian transport. *The Journal* noted persistent rumors that Russia is building a supersonic transport and would undoubtedly be glad to be first in selling such a plane to the world's airlines.

SO WHAT is all the gabble about a jet-age airport in San Diego? This magazine has tried to keep up with the best thoughts on the subject. Four years ago we talked up the virtues of a hands-across-the-border airport at Brown Field (near Tijuana, Mexico), the spot city officials are now pushing for all they are worth. Three years ago we talked up the virtues of a dredge-fill airport in South Bay, similar to the one Col. Seifert is now pushing for all *he* is worth. In 1960 we find all the talk and promotion is irrelevant. In the swirl of the changing times it becomes evident that San Diego's jet-age airport doesn't belong in San Diego at all. It belongs in or near Death Valley.

In April a TV and radio poll was conducted by the Building Trades Council, which favors South Bay. When the replies were counted, South Bay won, 1036 to 22. (Just one voter favored left field, Miramar Naval Air Station). This means only one thing: when people think of air travel they think of convenience vs. inconvenience, and the paramount consideration is how long it will take them to get to the airport. South Bay is nearer than Brown Field for nearly everybody.

When last seen Mayor Dail was still out in front with his Brown Field bandwagon, trying to get it started with a handcrank. A balloon over his head on May 11th contained these words: "Now the city of San Diego again has an opportunity to achieve community solidarity on an airport location. The only location now available from a standpoint of feasibility, acceptability and availability is Brown Field . . . I fervently hope that small, militant group that is opposed to Brown Field will now recognize the need for this city to move forward in preparing a submission to the Federal Aviation Agency for approval of this site as a commercial air carrier port for the jet age. Further drum-beating now for any other location in our area can only add to the confusion and uncertainty."

The Mayor's remarks were based on the fact that the Navy had just trained its big guns on the Colonel and his crowd who were gaily marching along the shore to take possession of the South Bay site. Navy said a civilian airport there would interfere with its own flight patterns. The naval harrumph stopped everybody for a new round of head scratching, and the *San Diego Union* piped up with another editorial favoring Brown Field as a "truly international jet airport."

The *Union* assured us that "high Mexican officials have indicated a deep interest in working with San Diego in cooperative facilities." I don't know how reliable that is but I do know that a Tijuana official told me that Tijuana's own airport runways could and should be extended to accommodate the biggest jets. (American experts doubt that the terrain around Tijuana airport would permit such an extravagant layout.)

Another element in the puzzle that hasn't had much publicity is the attitude now forming in the FAA to limit the length of runways in built-up areas to something like 10,000 feet. If this becomes a hard and fast ruling it will force the bigger transports into open country, and would point us straight toward a situation envisioned by Matthews.

THE THING about Death Valley is that land promoters would have hard time selling it for any of the usual development orgies, even if it were not a national monument. Even California-sized population waves would evaporate before they reached that hellhole. But an airport could operate there, because the terminal buildings have to be air-conditioned anyway and so do the planes. There would be no danger of residential sub-divisions creeping up the runways, little danger even of industrial encroachment.

Enough land could be bought cheaply to fully isolate the airport. The air-conditioned nightmare of such an airport would be surrounded by mile on mile of uninhabited desert. There would be no one around to complain about noise, no neighborhood councils to seek injunctions or raise law suits. (The strained

nerves and neighbor-relations around big airports today are one of the horror stories of our time. The Loma Portal unhappiness arising from Lindbergh Field flight noise and danger is only a mild sample of the misery encircling L.A. and S.F. airports.)

For strangers it should be explained that Death Valley, lowest and hottest place in the United States, is in the Mohave Desert 200 plus miles northeast of San Diego. Or, saying it another way to bring the picture more into focus in air-flight terms, Death Valley is less than a half hour away after you board at Lindbergh Field, one of the “feeder transports” now being built to go 475 miles per hour. Lockheed has such a plane on the boards, an improved model of the turboprop Electra. In San Diego, Convair is developing a two-engine pure-jet transport that will serve the same medium-range traffic at even faster speed.

Such smallish planes will not be overly objectionable above population areas, and they will be easily accommodated at airports no larger than Lindbergh Field. So, what we have in immediate prospect is a fast taxi that will shuttle you from downtown San Diego via Lindbergh Field to Death Valley in less time than most people must go by car from other cosmopolitan centers to their suburban airports—just as San Diegans regularly go to Los Angeles International Airport in half the time it takes to get there by car from downtown L.A.

Clearly, a superior port in Death Valley should be tied to a network of smaller airports located conveniently to population centers, as Lindbergh Field is. This network of smaller airports should fan out from the Death Valley hub within an arc that would include all of Southern California (and Tijuana). By the same logic a network of inferno-type airports should be established throughout the world in desolate places, from which, in turn, networks of air taxis would radiate.

COURTNEY MATTHEWS that two superjet airports suitably located, one south and one north, will be within 20 minutes feeder time for 95% of California inhabitants—and for many in neighboring states. His system will not permit any one city to get the jump on another as regards international travel. That will be hard on a lot of opportunistic politicians.

Mr. Matthews did not say that Death Valley was necessarily the best spot for his Southern California regional airport. But I couldn't resist latching on to the poetic name of Death Valley to describe a center for transportation machines which are forever flying within the Shadow of the Valley of the Death. One thing to remember about the supersonic transports, by the way, is that they will be so expensive to build that safety engineering will be even more important than it is today. This is one reason for a carefully engineered system of airports.

The regional airport could be many miles from Death Valley and still be in uninhabitable desert—which is the basic idea. Indeed, a more likely area than Death Valley itself would be Camp Irwin, which is 75 miles nearer to the Coast cities and still very much desolate desert. Air distances from Camp Irwin are: to Los Angeles 125 miles, to Santa Barbara 175 miles, to San Diego 175 miles.

The Matthews scheme would permit the shrinking of Los Angeles International Airport to such size that reasonable neighborhood relations could be restored. And the wave of legal troubles with which the city is already threatened would be averted. Brown Field and South Bay might both have a future on a smaller scale than now talked of. Certainly Lindbergh Field would retain its extraordinary usefulness. And Montgomery Field on Kearney Mesa would come into fuller use, as would Gillespie Field in El Cajon and other scattered fields serving the far-flung metropolis.

Since, at the time of writing, Matthews has not made public his revolutionary concept (though he may have before this is printed), it is probably unreasonable to expect that Mayor Dail, Col. Seifert, the Chamber of Commerce (which favors South Bay) and other champions of this or that field should already have adjusted their sights and sites accordingly. However, the Matthews' concept has circulated for weeks in planning circles and so should have come to the Mayor's attention, at least.

In any case it would be fortunate if the City did own Brown Field in order to control the vast development bound to come in that vicinity, now naked. Also, it probably would be desirable for this city to join with neighboring National City and Chula Vista in developing a modest field in South Bay—with the attendant improvement of the harbor. This latter project will have to wait a few years at best—until the Navy air activity fades away. Either of these two projects will be hard to sell to the penny-pinching voters now that the opium dream of an international airport all our own has gone up in smoke. This is one case where planning may fall short because the spoon-fed American public is not mature enough to make the kind of investments the future demands.

Paradoxically enough, though, the necessity of getting together on air traffic patterns may result in the first significant advance toward a truly United Nations. The feeble world of politics cannot hold out against the fierce birds who threaten apocalypse if they don't have their way.

By taking the immense step of pooling regional resources in the creation of mutual super-jet airports, cities like those in Southern California will have a reasonably stable framework within which to work out their separate but related destinies. I'd say that Courtney Matthews hit on a system of links that will mark the breakthrough into an era of new coherence in the human environment.

Let's understand *now* that unless we consign the coming supersonic transports to the hell of the desert we will be consigning ourselves to a living hell of shattering sounds for the next 15 years at least. The system suggested above is needed *now* even though the whole pattern may be obsolete as early as 1975! In that year the incredible acceleration of change in the aircraft industry will have yielded the "ultimate vehicle," according to another Lockheed whiz, Chief Engineer Robert A. Bailey. Here is what he told the Airport Operators Council last year in a symposium on airports of the future:

"It is inevitable that the SST (supersonic transport) will be followed by the supersonic VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) transport—the single-type, all-purpose vehicle for the approximate period of 1975. This all-purpose aircraft will be capable of both supersonic and subsonic flights and will therefore be used for long, short or medium length flights. It will be economical; it will haul freight and passengers between major air terminals of the world, and it will operate out of small airports in isolated places. Combining simplicity, low maintenance and operating costs, with enhanced productivity . . . it could satisfy all the stringent demands of the futuristic, supersonic transportation era. The VTOL/SST represents the optimum vehicle for transportation on earth."

IN THE LIGHT of the above discussion, should it not be possible to but through the reigning confusion and come up with airport(s) planning equal to our foreseeable needs? Surely the projections of Messers Matthews and Bailey suggest a world living in peace in heavenly cities, with Hell under strict supervision.

July 1960, San Diego Magazine, Art of the City, 40; The Promise of Tijuana, 40; A Proposal of Marriage (Guillermo Russell), 46; Architecture and Wood, 66; New Life at the Art Center, 82.

August 1960, San Diego Magazine (no articles by James Britton)

September 1960, San Diego Magazine (no articles by James Britton)

October 1960, San Diego Magazine, 55, 124, OUT OF THE CITY: In and out of Central Park.

I was glad to see Wally Homitz howling in the September issue against the diminishment of Balboa Park. Contemplated from New York, that park seems even more precious than it does at home. Your newish city is surely going through the same cycle experiences as the fat old cities, and could benefit from observing closely the character and character flaws of the mother metro. I'd like to talk parks here, but first—

You have read how the Negro is erratically breaking out of the Congo jungle to assert his rights in "our" civilization, but have you realized the extent to which the same thing is happening in tension centers

like Manhattan? Here the jungle is Harlem, world's densest Negro ghetto, just north of Central Park. In the past decade there has been a spectacular breakout. Blacks mixing evermore in White circles.

A Negro was elected president of the Borough of Manhattan, it is no reflection on his race that he turned out to be a crook, as so many politicians do here. Just this year the Board of Education started transferring Negro students out of their own ghetto districts, so they could go to better "White" schools; there were no incidents worth headlines. Black and White voluntary pairings across the sex line are much more in evidence than pre-War, but then so are homosexual pairings with or without regard of color.

It would be a challenge of Dr. Gallup's resources to determine just what percentage of today's sex-going public is activated by strongly-held principles and what percentage by cynical pursuit of excitement. I can only report the evidence of my eyes; one sees over and over again in New York in 1960 Negroes who are at least as attractive as the clearest Whites, handsome to begin with and aided by all the charms of toiletries, fashion, manner and money, also many whose chief asset is intellectual or artistic force.

It is not hard to understand a young White falling for a young Black so advantaged. Even the old reluctance to produce striped children is on the wane. Like it or note, all of this must be seen in the light of Arnold Toynbee's recent observation in the *Times*: there are over-pigmented (Blacks) and the normally pigmented, the vast majority of mankind.

Despite the new radiance of Negro power, prestige and personality, Harlem is still a fearful slum, complicated now by the piling on of immigrant Puerto Ricans, and breeding ground of the most vicious criminals. These in the 50's took to frequenting Central Park as the easy place to trap victims for rape, robbery and murder; they now so dominate the park that no intelligent citizen of any hue cares to stroll there alone, certainly not after dark except in a few well-lighted fringe areas. It is widely believed that the police have abandoned the park to the criminals because there is more crime than they can cope with in other sections of the city. Balboa Park may never get in this fix, but the lesson should certainly be kept in mind.

CRIMINALS ASIDE, Central Park has not been so encroached upon by non-park uses as Balboa Park. Over a century public sentiment has been strong enough to hold off the pressures of Greed which sought to grab the real estate for profit. But something new happened this year. Mr. Huntington Hartford gave the city \$600,000 to build a café in the southeast corner of the park (safe enough from marauders). He is also building a museum outside the park, a little to the west. No one could complain about a dandy café that would be open to the public, no one, that is, except nearby business interests who resented a competitor coming in with no land-cost. City officials were glad to accept. Some of the credit for the public facility would rub off on them, and few people would remember that it was not the result of conscious city planning.

The new café is expected to be an architectural wonder, designed by Edward Stone. It certainly could be, with its priceless setting. However, it seems to be that the city should have gone Mr. Hartford one better and offered to put his museum in the park too. Mr. Hartford's site outside the park could then have been sold at auction and the money put in a fund to buy and develop appropriate sites throughout the island for badly-needed neighborhood parks and playgrounds—to leaven the mass of Manhattan and to lighten the burden of asphalt jungle crime. This formula could be repeated extensively with builders who would put up appropriate structures in keeping with a sufficient master plan. That would be conscious city planning.

By this process Central Park would undoubtedly lose its woodland wild quality, but that is just the quality that has made it safe for criminals. Without appreciably lowering the population of trees in the park it would be possible to add enough buildings and roads and lights so as to make the whole area safe again for civilized users. At the same time it could become the most happy marriage of big city and park amenities. When the virtues of such a scheme were demonstrated the tendency would be for the entire island to open up with enough greenery to strike the balance satisfying to live with. That there is a strong and general yearning in that direction is indicated by the enormous number of street trees that have been planted in the past few years, quite transforming sections of the town.

Look at the paradox of the Guggenheim Museum. Here is the final titanic effort of America's epoch-making architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, his only building in New York. Sadly, I have to regard it as an architectural disaster, for several reasons. Its continuous spiral-sloping floor is continuously restless, and restlessness is the last factor that should be built into a museum. Adding to the esthetic commotion is the shuffling of the crowd magnified to a roar because the acoustics were ill considered. Dangerously, the crowds are exposed to a wall that circles up and up, but which, because it is low and pitches inward toward the feet, could throw people to a marble death in the well. The painted concrete substance of the structure appears too heavy to carry out the soaring inspiration of the spiral design. But that is only a visual reservation. When all complaints are recited, it remains a respectable monument to a great man; probably its best future use would be as an architectural museum with special emphasis on the memorabilia of F.L.W. himself. Certainly it will always be a magnet for crowds, whatever it may contain.

Sorest of my grievances is the way the Guggenheim conflicts with its neighbors, like the Johnny in a parade with whom everybody is out of step. Upper Fifth Avenue where it faces Central Park is an inspection shape-up of assorted buildings. Few of these have individual distinction but they have one thing in common: they stand more or less square-shouldered, eyes front, forming a rank that is in itself one of the architectural wonders of New York. Where other men wore coats, F.L.W. wore a cape; where they built square, he built round. The Guggenheim in its chosen situation fails to look its own best and it wrecks the look of the Avenue. Particularly offensive is the ugly bulk of an apartment house newly built to the north. If the line up had been preserved, only the façade, not the hulk, would have been noticed.

If the Guggenheim has been placed across the street *in* the park among the trees it would have looked its best. Wright, the art of architecture, and the public, all would have been better served. A park setting helps any building, good or bad. And I do not necessarily have in mind Father Wright's favorite whip-line: Doctors bury their mistakes, architects plant vines to cover them.

What does this have to do with San Diego? I think it means that more buildings should be planned for Balboa Park than are recommended in the Bartholomew report, particularly buildings for the performing arts which could be ideally located in the Palisades Area. For a starter, the Federal Building could be converted into a Symphony Hall.

Then, if defunct Camp Elliott has not already been carved up by the sub-dividers, arrangements could be made to transfer it from the Federal Government to the City Government to serve some of the park purposes squeezed out of Balboa. The big trouble with this big idea is neither the City Government nor even the San Diego Park Board really wants more parks: they don't know where to get the money for maintenance. My feeling on that last point is that the performing arts are going to come in very huge as money-makers in San Diego as elsewhere before many years, for there is an increasingly educated audience eager for such fare. A share of the profits could be used to maintain parks.

As it may be worth noting, New York city officials are now scouting rather desperately for land far outside the city limits to serve as recreation parks for the eight million city dwellers who are no longer willing to settle for hopscotch on the sidewalks of New York, and who no longer find Central Park as rewarding as it once was.

November 1960, San Diego Magazine, Art of the City, 46; Your right to live beautifully, 46; Visionary ideas for San Diego's Future (Museum of Modern Art), 47.

December 1960, San Diego Magazine, 59: **VOICE OF THE PEOPLE**

Editor, San Diego Magazine

Along with many of my fellow citizens in San Diego, I view with sorrow and regret the ravages made in the name of progress in our beautiful Balboa Park. I understand there is to be another section cut off the park on the North side to make way for another freeway and that in time El Prado, Laurel Street, is to be closed to all traffic, even to those who for the sheer enjoyment and spiritual uplift they obtain, choose to drive through the park on their way to business or pleasure.

In the name of progress our world-famous buildings are to be torn down and more modern appearing ones erected in their places. Citizens in San Diego do not, it seems, realize that they have the most beautiful park in the world. Its beauty derives from the palatial buildings, their spacing along El Prado, and the setting which they provide for tropical vegetation.

When I recall the war-torn buildings of Vienna, Austria, and Nuremberg, Germany, and how those citizens, who can ill afford the cost of restoration, have so painstakingly restored their revered buildings, I wonder what has happened to our civic pride and to our appreciation of our world-famous park. I am told that to restore the buildings permanently would be too costly, but I am not convinced. Surely our prosperous and expanding city can afford to tear down and re-erect one building every two or three years without placing too great a strain on the city's budget. Where additions to existing buildings are contemplated, why can they not be exteriorly constructed to conform with the style of architecture now prevailing?

It is, I realize, late to be making this appeal to San Diego citizens, but I trust not too late to save our city's most beautiful possession, Balboa Park.

(Mrs.) Eleanor B. Edmiston

December 1960, San Diego Magazine: **VOICE OF THE EXPERT**

Balboa Park is without a doubt, San Diego's finest cultural resource. Even though some three hundred acres have been lost to freeways and other encroachments, the park still represents 1,100 acres of the richest civic design in Southern California (Disneyland is a triumph of free enterprise.)

In recent years parts of the park have become exceedingly shabby. Public interest in the park's future led to the development of a new Master Plan for Balboa Park, the fourth plan in the park's ninety year history.

In 1958 the city retained Harland Bartholomew and Associates, City Planners, Civil Engineers and Landscape Architects, to prepare the new master plan at a cost of \$35,000. Some eighteen months of study, under the direction of Eldridge Lovelass, resulted in an eighty-six page report, popularly known as the "Bartholomew Plan." It was presented to the City Council last July. As expected the report is a thorough, workmanlike job containing summaries of existing problems, estimates of future attendance, future use recommendations, a Master Plan showing buildings, roads, parking and landscaping, and finally a recommended program for financing the plan. Unfortunately, the report is also sterile, unimaginative and completely devoid of that kind of vitality that breathes life into a plan. What one misses is a bold stimulating approach to revitalizing public interest and participation in the rebuilding of this great community asset.

The recommended improvement program will cost approximately \$21,572,000 spread out over the next twenty years. Three quarters of this cost, some \$13,850,000, is earmarked for replacing existing buildings, mostly in the Prado area. It is hoped that most of the 21 million dollars will come from "public subscription" or be contributed by the semi-public agencies that are presently using the buildings. In these days of heavily endowed foundations and paternal institutionalism, financing by public subscription is an old-fashioned and inefficient approach to the problem (without the failure of the recent Tri-Hospital Fund Raising Campaign.)

The distinctive character of the park as we know it today was created by two expositions, or, if you please, "world fairs." The first and most productive in terms of our architectural heritage was the Panama-California International Exposition which ran from 1915 through 1916. It gave us the magnificent California State building, the Prado with its delightful Spanish-Colonial buildings (built of lath and plaster with a life expectancy of two years), the beautiful Cabrillo Bridge, and lush tropical landscape. Also the animals left over from the exposition formed the nucleus of the San Diego Zoo. The California-Pacific

International Exposition of 1935-36 left us with additional facilities, such as the Old Globe Theatre, the Spanish Village, the Alcazar Gardens and the Balboa Park Bowl.

In short, the character of the park today is the result of an imaginative approach to the park's development in the past, but nowhere does the Bartholomew report explore the possibilities of creating yet a third and perhaps even grander exposition, to recapture the public interest, raise the 21 million dollars and renew the dilapidated buildings in the Prado area—not to mention the new buildings and landscaping to delight future generations.

Such expositions are not a thing of the past. In the near future, other American cities will be asserting themselves through expositions and world fairs—Seattle in 1961 and New York in 1964. Perhaps a similar expression of San Diego's character is exactly what the city needs now to attract renewed national interest and offset the growing recession. The Bartholomew Plan neglected this function of the park and subsequently fails to reflect the spirit and vitality which created the park.

Gordon Edwards

December, 1960, San Diego Magazine, 60, 126. ART OF THE CITY: Heed the Voices and Save the Park, by James Britton.

Heartfelt and guileless, the best Voice of the People is registered above in an unsolicited letter addressed to a magazine which cares. Mrs. Edmiston surely represents majority opinion among those who bother to think about the issue raised. Whether a majority of the people do bother to think is beside the point. The point is that ethical government officials will pay all possible attention to the expressed opinion of those who do.

In the left column is a letter, also unsolicited, from Gordon Edwards, a Harvard-trained professional planner, one of several capable young men recently added to the County Planning Department. Mr. Edwards deserves the highest regard for speaking out critically in a time that most older professionals would never sing in public because to do so is not good lodge-brotherhood. Praise be to him that he concentrates his intelligence upon the future of the city, disregarding the San Diegotistical code of smug complacency.

In November, 1959, this magazine predicted that the Bartholomew Plan for Balboa Park would be just about what the fresh eye of Gordon Edwards finds it to be: "sterile, unimaginative." We then suggested bolder planning, particularly to provide museum and performing art facilities second to none in the world. To finance such wonderworks we did not propose another exposition, as Mr. Edwards does, but rather proposed the earmarking of a hotel-motel room tax (\$400,000 a year or better) for redoing Balboa Park in such a manner as to insure San Diego's continued primacy as a tourist magnet while adding immeasurably to the town's value for residents too.

The idea of another exposition in San Diego would be more attractive if there were not so many scheduled events elsewhere. With the big exhibitions shooting the works in other cities, San Diego would get only a warmed-over or second-rate show, more headache than benefit. Even if a first-rate commercial expo is improbable, San Diego *could* produce a *continuous* exposition of the best achievements in the various arts which make life worth the mileage, but plan it to be absolutely first-rate, like the zoo, or don't expect it to amount to much in tomorrow's world.

The first and foremost of the arts that enhance life is the art of environmental design. An unfamiliar term, maybe, but it's an art which affects you, plus or minus, most of the time, indoors and out. All architecture is part of it, and so is the specialty known as landscape architecture.

Whole cities could be triumphs of environmental design, but in fact they are mostly makeshifts because of conflicting pressures by landowners. Parks are often superb examples of environmental design because they are large tracts of landscapes under one ownership, usually public, so conflict is lessened and applied intelligence is allowed to flourish.

It would be useless to suggest that all the land in the city should be publicly owned—the public wouldn't stand for it even if it were proved desirable. But the public should not only stand for, but insist upon, official city planning activity of such high quality that individual owners can develop their land for maximum effectiveness with profit for all. The present generation of grown citizens is ill-informed on this subject, and so it is the more urgent that the public schools should step up their efforts, now almost non-existent, to inform the coming generation what a good city would be like. (Superintendent Dailard take notice, please.)

The best way to educate adults and offspring alike as to good city planning, or environmental design is to spread out samples for them to try on for looks and fit. Such a sample is the hauntingly nostalgic Main Street of Disneyland, in which all the charm of your oldest memories is recreated and all the offensive clutter of real main streets deleted. Another sample of man-made improvements on the natural environment is the string of dream palaces along El Prado in Balboa Park. Mrs. Edmiston is right: they—or at least their spirit—should be preserved.

Are your city councilmen equal to the challenge? Are they run-of-the-mill politicians willing to settle for run-of-the-mill solutions to growth problems in most cases? It must be said they have occasionally stirred themselves to sponsor imaginative projections, as in Mission Bay and “University City.” But a couple of commendable efforts does not excuse them from lapsing into dull answers for Balboa Park.

Vigorous prodding might change the official picture, but who's going to do it? The danger is death by cultural committee: most of the town's cultural projects are in the many-fingered but anemic hands of committees and boards whose members are often more concerned with being good Organization Men and Organization Women than they re with the vitality of the arts involved.

Such committees readily impress the City Council in the absence of stronger voices for they give a passing semblance of representing the community. An example is the Fine Arts Society's governing board, which is laboring to bring forth a wing for the Fine Arts Gallery. Plans were published in November. They are not at all in the same mood or spirit, the same “style” that prevails now along El Prado. Robert Mosher, one of the architects for the Fine Arts Gallery wing, describes his firm's approach in this case, as “derivative Spanish Plateresque,” meaning that there will be faint suggestions of the same style as the Gallery itself. That to my way of thinking is the worst kind of mistake, as in the many derivative Federal Style Postoffices around the country.

On the basis of its half-completed plans, the Fine Arts Society has been advertising for contributions to the building fund, promising immortality, no less, to those who give. Basically it is a worthy cause, and I would recommend that gifts be accompanied by requests that plans be revamped to reflect the architectural character of El Prado.

There has been published a wretched rendering of the Timken Gallery, which the City Council intends to allow, yea welcome as replacement for the dilapidated palace just east of the Fine Arts Gallery. It would not do to comment about this architectural effort on such flimsy evidence except to say that a “modern” building, whether made of marble or cheese, will at one stroke destroy the grand continuity of nostalgic Spanish which makes El Prado San Diego's most talked-about display. Both the Timken wing and the Fine Arts Gallery west wing will be in currently fashionable modes. They might even be acceptable architecture—anywhere but along El Prado.

While San Diego is in the process of killing off its main architectural distinction, San Francisco is doing exactly the opposite—bringing the dead back to life. The grandiose Palace of Fine Arts (near the Golden Gate Bridge) was built about the same time as our Prado buildings, also of “temporary” construction and also part of an exposition. The Palace in its days of exposition glory etched such a rich memory in the mind of one San Francisco youngster that, at the height of his moneyed seniority a couple of years ago, he gave a million dollars, no less, to rebuild it in permanent materials. The city itself, realizing that many others felt the same way about the Palace, added another million for the rebuilding.

It remains to be seen how far \$2,000,000 will go at today's construction prices. The important thing is that San Francisco is making an effort; a spirited individual and the town's officials have shown dollars-and-cents determination to preserve one of the unique features from out of the colorful local history. Note that what they would be preserving is the *spirit* of the original building, not the flesh. Not a scrap of the original material (mostly chicken wire and plaster) would remain.

The very idea of copying ancient buildings has fallen into disfavor of modern eyes, as architects strained to bring in the exciting new way of building, based on new methods. Yet just suppose that never again was there to be built any copy or replica of historic landmarks. After a sufficiency of time and erosion, the Earth would be completely erased of such perishable treasures as the Taj Mahal and Chartres Cathedral. Looked at thus, there is clearly need for more not less, attention to periodic re-housing of the spirit of the great architectural designs from the past.

The spirit of El Prado is worth that kind of attention, even though the buildings to be copied were mostly copies in the first place. The "practical" designs prepared by the Fine Arts Society and the Timken Foundation should be rejected by the City Council, which should insist on architecture that conforms better with the spirit of El Prado.

This need not be as expensive or as inconvenient as it sound. The truth is that the spirit of El Prado was pretty much a matter of dazzling facades, behind which practical layouts of space for exhibition purposes were arranged.

It would be desirable to rebuild as permanently as money will allow, but there would be no reason against rebuilding those facades in cheap lath and plaster similar to the original materials, especially since we would be dealing frankly with facades—mock-ups or stage-sets if you will. After all, the original "temporaries" lasted 45 years.

The chief opposition to such a program might be architects whose vanity was slighted and the New York bankers, administrators of the Timken funds, who would probably favor in stereotype terms a prideful freestanding monument. However, there is plenty of room in the area to lay out all the floor plans now planned for the wings and still preserve existing facades and arcades.

My reasoning here is architectural heresy, I know, and the potent ghost of Frank Lloyd Wright will plague me, but I am proposing that we consider first and foremost the psychological value of the Grand Illusion that is—or was—El Prado. This psychological value is not only for tourists. Everyone, whether he knows it or not, needs occasional reminders that there is some background, some heritage, behind his spinning days on earth.

What we have along El Prado, without quite realizing it, is an intensely interesting architectural museum which people come to see. (One is not to be confused by the fact that this museum is outside its own walls, and that within its walls are other museums!) In the nature of the case, the "exhibits" are full-size copies of "old master" buildings (Some good and some no-so) which originated in other places and times. Also part of the architectural exhibit is the very interrelatedness of the buildings, a masterpiece of environmental design. It's a museum that could be made even more impressive by further refining the historical evocations. It could not possibly be improved, but only destroyed by proceeding with the two misconceived "practical" buildings now fixing to muscle into the grand parade of El Prado.

December, 1960, San Diego Magazine, 61. **ART OF THE CITY:** San Diego's "Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts," by James Britton.

Surprise. This scale was made to show the traffic arteries now being built in Balboa Park. Incidentally it is graphic evidence of what a superb center for the performing arts San Diego could have with a little effort. Indeed, the lower left corner in this view looks like just such a center fully flourishing complete with parking.

The circular structure is the mammoth Ford Building, a majestic piece of architectural design usually underestimated because its front view is its weakest feature. It could be splendidly revised into an opera house with grandest foyer and the grandest circular promenade deck in opera history.

Next to the Ford Opera House is the Bowl now used for summer symphony and Starlight musicals on a rather too cozy sharing basis. It might be fitted with sides and a roof if freeway noise becomes a problem. The two enormous rectangular buildings could be revised for rehearsal halls, workshop cares or whatever is needed.

The square roof at the left edge of the model belongs to the Federal Building, a gigantic, solid, concrete affair capable of being adapted into an acoustically engineered symphony hall seating 2500 or 3000 lovers, symphony lovers. It was in fact designed to be a civic theater and was given to the city with the understanding it would be completed as such.

One excuse for not completing the Federal Building has been that there was not enough parking space. But, as the model partly shows, the canyon back of the building is going to be filled in and paved for parking. With this new and ample parking in mind Bartholomew & Associates, hired to survey the park, suggested that the Federal Building be used as a king-size banquet hall, replacing the Balboa Park Club.

It may be doubted that an enormous banquet hall will be needed in the park, what with all the new banquet facilities built or planned by hotels. On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that a home of its own is needed and deserved by the San Diego Symphony, which is bound to grow in answer to the rapidly growing audience for good music. Therefore, I believe the Federal Building should be converted into a symphony hall. A really good architect could transform this hulking box into an architectural wonder; nothing less will be good enough for San Diego.

1961—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas. (Eliz.), ed. San Diego Mag.,
h. 1433 Sutter

February, 1961, San Diego Magazine, 14, 16, 108. Letters.

The gallery debate, part II:

As a long time member of the Fine Arts Society, even when it was called "Friends of Art," and as an artist myself, I wish to enter an emphatic protest against the design of the proposed addition to the Fine Arts Gallery.

I have always held the talents of Mosher and Drew in highest esteem, until they failed to carry out the simplicity and charm of the Irving Gill architecture that surrounded and was part of the La Jolla Art Gallery. The opportunity seldom comes to perpetuate the beauty of a center such as that in La Jolla, and it is sad to see it lost.

To my mind the sensitivity of an architect to the atmosphere of his locale is a prime test of his ability. Usually only a person who is unsure of himself inclines to be a "show-off." Surely this proposed addition cannot be the work of the firm who gave us the charm of the Green Dragon Colony—where the structures maintained the original feeling—of many of the lovely homes with restful oriental feeling on our hillsides. Surely the plans must have been mixed and we view a handsome structure created for the new University City or Torrey Pines Mesa, where it would be most appropriate.

I am not an old foggy who lives in the past. I prefer the freedom in the concepts of modern architecture. If the California Tower and the Fine Arts Gallery were to be razed in a few years, I could bear to see the new addition go up. But such is not the case. The tower in Balboa Park is now as much a trademark of San Diego as is her harbor, and I am sure the sensibilities of all who pass through our park would be rudely offended by the incongruity of the geometric pattern of the new addition in contrast with the Spanish curves of the permanent structures beside it, which, after all, do blend so beautifully with the tawny rounded hills beyond them.

If this design has been accepted, which I cannot really believe is true, then we have again sold a part of our birthright from our founding fathers down the river. This compounds the felony of the new freeways in the park. We have no *right* to alter the Spanish concept of El Prado. The Harland Bartholomew report, in which we have wisely invested, states so clearly that there are many types of architecture which would blend with what we already have in the park, especially if it is all tied together with the arcades as they strongly recommend.

The park belongs to the people of San Diego, and not even the Fine Arts Society, which has only their good at heart, can afford to trifle with the Spanish atmosphere that was created there 45 years ago. Whether the old world architecture is the best suited to the park is not the question. It has been here for so long that it is now a part of [the park's] use, a wonderful heritage from our two fine expositions. Let Mission Bay Park be the setting for enterprising architects with new ideas. There is so little peace and harmony left in the world, let's keep it, as *it was made* in Balboa Park.

Mrs. John G. Clark

Voice of the architect.

I have read with care and interest, Mrs. Edmiston's letter and Mr. Britton's "Art of the City" which appeared in the December issue of SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE.

My sympathy with Mrs. Edmiston's view is great. Certainly all of use in San Diego take warm pleasure in our park and in its great environment. I heartily agree that all plans aimed at altering the park should be eyed with suspicion and that every new addition should be conceived in the grand spirit of the existing buildings and landscaping.

Too, there is much to be said for Mr. Britton's view, if you accept the premise that there are only two choices for the architectural development of the Park.

As I understand Mr. Britton, he offers us, on the one hand, a "practical modern building, whether made of marble or cheese," or on the other, the repetition of nostalgic copies of past glories from old world cultures.

Mr. Bertram Goodhue, the eminent architect of the great California Building, is quoted as having repeatedly described the other temporary structures along El Prado as being only moderately successful examples of their style and unworthy of saving. I suggest that the answer to the great and pressing question of the architectural environment of the Prado is neither black nor white as Mr. Britton would wish us to believe. Unfortunately, in his article, he has drawn out of context only one sentence of the rather comprehensive description I personally gave the editors in which I outlined the manner of my firm's development of an architectural grammar we believe suitable and appropriate for the Prado.

This statement, taken alone, only serves to mislead the reader.

Had a more comprehensive description of our development of the design for the Fine Arts Gallery been included with Mr. Britton's remarks, the reader would have been given a more accurate picture of the current situation, and thus would have been in a better position to draw reasonable conclusions.

The real question before the people and the City Council is not whether the future buildings should be "Modern" or Spanish. The point is, will they be appropriate to the existing environment and will they be good architecture?

I also find it amusing that Mr. Britton uses in his argument for re-building the Prado in the Spanish style the example of San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts. To compare this masterpiece, designed by the great California architect Bernard Maybeck, to the temporary buildings along El Prado has the effect of elevating them to a position somewhat above that in which they should realistically be placed. The charm

of the temporary structures and the pleasure that they give us in undeniable. However, we should recognize the fact that this charm is due primarily to the luxuriant plant material surrounding the buildings, the arcades, and the pleasant play of light and shade on their facades. These qualities should be inherent in any new buildings which are suggested to replace them.

We love and are proud of the Prado but, I think, we should recognize that it has a great future as well as a distinguished past. Toward this end let us work and put a top to simply debating the question from the point of view of style, Spanish or "Modern."

We hold that our times are worthy and wholly capable of developing a significant and appropriate environment.

To those who esteem the great traditional architecture of Europe, as indeed we do, I would point out that Europe today is leading the world in the building of great contemporary works which are integrated with the best of the past and which offer a bright opportunity for the future.

ROBERT MOSHER.

Mr. Britton replies:

Architect Mosher did indeed talk with the editor, but my own last effort (months ago) to talk architecture with Mr. Mosher met a positive refusal. Also, Fine Arts Gallery Director Warren Beach refused (more months ago) to discuss gallery expansion with me. Still, these columns are always open to those who consider themselves inadequately quoted.

I did not compare San Francisco's Palace to San Diego's Prado as to merit of architectural design (and, being on the East Coast, I did not select the illustrations—which may have implied quality at points where there wasn't any). I did indicate that both have a comparable place in local history, and that they are equally deserving of preservation. I suggested that (in this particular, very special case) modern planning should be worked out behind facades that retain the effects which have dazzled generations. That is, marriage of "Modern" and Spanish, not a choice between them.

I stated (my opinion) that some of the Prado buildings were "good," some "not-so," and suggested that the Prado "could be made more impressive by further refining the historical evocations." My final sentence, though not necessarily the final sentence, was: "It could not possibly be improved, but only destroyed by proceeding with the misconceived 'practical' buildings now fixing to muscle in on the grand parade of El Prado."

JAMES BRITTON,
Cambridge, Mass.

Ed. Note: Mr. Mosher discussed the philosophy underlying his firm's design for the Fine Arts Gallery wing for an hour with me one day, eloquently and in some detail. This material was summarized and sent Associate-Editor-on-Leave James Britton, who was preparing an article on the subject. Mr. Britton, very properly, edited it for his own use. Because of the great debate which has developed following publication of Mr. Mosher's preliminary drawings for the wing, we feel the architect should have his day in court. Therefore, we have asked him to argue his case in this magazine together with drawings and photographs, when his final models are completed. Says Mosher: "All I ask is that the people of San Diego withhold their judgment until they can see with their own eyes what we propose. We would like them to base their judgment on fact and not on surmise."—E. F. S.

May, 1961, San Diego Magazine, Letters.

Britton: "Contradictory horoscope,"

In a letter published in San Diego (December, 1960) Gordon Edwards states that the Bartholomew Plan is “sterile, unimaginative, and completely devoid of that kind of reality that breathes life into a plan.” The only reason given for this remarkable statement is that the planners did not recommend creating an exposition for the purposes of renewing and redeveloping existing landscape and buildings and of raising an estimate twenty-one million dollars. In his accompanying article, Mr. Britton quickly disposes of Mr. Edward’s reason but chooses to keep his description since it conforms to his opinion of the plan even before there was a plan. At the same time he expresses himself in accord with the views of Mrs. Eleanor B. Edmiston, who has since become known in local circles as the leader of the Balboa Park Protective Association.

A fascinating aspect of Mr. Britton’s agreement with Mrs. Edmiston is his statement that “she surely represents majority opinion among those who bother to think about the issues raised.” Not only does this critic know what he thinks of the Bartholomew Report before it was written, he even knows majority opinion before it is tested. This display of logic is typical of his reasoning throughout. He is equally clairvoyant regarding the new wing of the Fine Arts Gallery on the basis of what he calls “half-completed plans.” Then he contradicts himself by saying in one paragraph that the new building will be “derivative Spanish Plateresque” and in another that the building will be an example of “modern” and “currently fashionable modes.” Obviously, it cannot be both and assuming that the first description is correct, why is “derivative Spanish Plateresque” at odds with the Plateresque design of the existing Fine Arts Gallery?

One would think that after conceding that the buildings in Balboa Park are “mock up,” “stage sets,” “dream palaces,” “nostalgic Spanish,” “copies” and “dazzling facades,” Mr. Britton would have given himself sufficient reason to recommend a drastic revision, but the aforesaid individual is, if anything, independent. Though he blandly announces he is committing “architectural heresy,” he concludes that we must preserve the status quo because “everyone, whether he knows it or not, needs occasional reminders that there is some background, some heritage behind his spinning days on earth.” In view of this extraordinary conclusion, it is interesting to note that three and one-half years previous the same man recommended that we replace the temporary buildings in Balboa Park with modern glass architecture (San Diego, July, 1957). One wonders what his conclusions will be subsequently.

Ultimately, Mr. Britton’s argument hinges on the premise stated at the conclusion of his article, which is that “man needs some heritage.” Insofar as it pertains to buildings from the past, which are slavishly copied and travestied in future times, this point is certainly debatable. The history of architecture shows that the Plateresque and Baroque buildings, which exist by way of distant association in Balboa Park, had at one time a definite place and meaning within a culture whose members recognized their significance. But the heritage they symbolize, and symbolize not too well, since Mr. Britton describes the buildings as “some good, some not-so,” is not and never has been an American or Southern California heritage. The buildings represent to me, and perhaps to others, a time when our American millionaires attempted to buy European architecture stone by stone and to haul it back to American where it was painstaking re-erected; for which practice these same “culture vultures” were held in contempt by European connoisseurs and in derision by our American satirists, such as Mark Twain, Henry James, Sinclair Lewis, H. L. Mencken and Frederick Lewis Allen.

The aesthetic mistakes committed in trying to transport an alien culture to the New Work is aptly demonstrated by our own local mistake of erecting a pseudo-ecclesiastical facade in the Balboa Park area when what is housed inside is (Russians take note) a Museum of Man. The point I wish to make is that Mr. Britton, trapped by inconsistencies and gifted with an internal horoscope, refuses to concede that compatible and harmonious change is possible and in the process demeans native talent and ingenuity.

Richard W. Amero.

May 1961, San Diego Magazine, Letters

Britton for imitative mediocrity?

It is a matter of record that the architect who designed the present buildings in Balboa Park recommended to the City Fathers that the buildings be immediately removed. His reasoning was sound—the buildings were not constructed for permanency. If they were allowed to stand, the citizens of San Diego would become sentimentally attached to the structures, and when the time (which he estimated at thirty years) came to remove the buildings, a furor would arise as to the removal or replacement, or whatever.

Well, here we are at that point—it has happened exactly as he predicted.

I am surprised at James Britton's attitude concerning the current discussion of the Balboa Park project. He admits that the best museum buildings do have charm. Well, it is only the best buildings of any period that have charm. Building a good thing is no more costly than building a bad thing. I point with tongue-in-cheek at the hundred thousand rock piles which resemble Cinderella's two-car garage.

Because a thing has never been does not explain why it can never be. It is time that San Diego assumed some position of leadership in its planning, its architecture, its relative importance to other areas of similar numbers of people, Why should we continue to settle for imitative mediocrity?

Whatever we build now will be left as a heritage for future generations of San Diegans. As long as we must build, let us build something that represents this age of culture—something which is indicative of THIS age of design, materials and building methods. Let's not give the grand old lady in Balboa Park a face-lifting, and then send her to the ball in her grandmother's nightgown.

Any worth-while municipal, or, I might add, any other project costs money. In all good sense, if we cannot build the entire project at one time, let's build a part of it, but let's plan. And whatever does rise on the hollowed ground should be planned with an eye to the future, not a grasp at the past.

James P. Erdman, A.I.D.

Mr. Britton replies:

When I mentioned "derivative Spanish Plateresque," I was quoting Architect Robert Mosher who thus indicated his intention of producing compatible appearances. Judging from such evidence as was available, however, I felt the loose term "modern," complete with quotation marks was applicable.

Generous expanses of glass could be introduced among the park buildings because it is a neutral material, miraculously accommodating, non-competitive with its neighbors. In the daytime it reflects sky, trees and neighbors, thus enriching any situation. At night it allows the life indoors to warm the outer scene. The main thing to avoid on Museum Row is an intrusion of aggressively "new" masonry forms.

For readers who haven't followed each inning, I might mention that my judgment of the Bartholomew Plan was based on the preliminary report which patently foreshadowed the final report. Criticism aimed at architecture and at urban design should come in the earliest possible stage of the planning. For this reason I advocate that all important projects be put forward for public consideration in elaborate presentations involving scale models and other graphic devices. (More on this point will be found in the article of page 39 – Ed.) I think the persons involved in building Democracy's environment should seek and weigh many opinions before pouring the concrete. If opinions are proved no good they can be thrown away, but buildings once put up, are seldom torn down because the design is unhappy. When will San Diego tear down its new courthouse?

James Erdman is right. It is time San Diego assumed some position of leadership in its planning, its architecture, its relative importance to other areas of similar numbers of people. Why *should* the city continue to settle for imitative mediocrity?

1962—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: no entry for James Britton

Timeline: 1962—Bond issue for Mission Bay rejected by voters

September 1962, Los Angeles Magazine, 19+, Is Ours the Worst-Planned City?

(James Britton is an award-winning architectural writer and art critic. In 1960, he was granted a year's fellowship in the study of city planning and art history by the Fund for Adult Education of the Ford Foundation. This is the first of a series of articles he is writing for *Los Angeles Magazine* on the changing face of the city and other urban problems.)

It's too bad it all happened so fast, but there may yet be time to plan our way out of the nightmares which have scarred other cities—if saner views prevail.

Being Americans we naturally assume that the good is going to win against the bad in this great Western “drama” we are acting out here in Los Angeles. Ours will not only be the biggest but the best city. Will it really? I submit that the question is wide open. We'd better look at the situation with care before we count on it. To construct a wide enough frame for the picture let me tell a small true story which at first may seem unrelated.

Spring of '61 I sauntered in the streets of New York's Greenwich Village with Sari Dienes, a painter who has been through all the schools of thought and has a valid art sense. She's an accepted member of the New York School, if not quite accepted for “The Club,” that sanction of the arrived darlings of the dealers. We were stopped in our tracks by a hurling figure in white, a cook inspired to quit his premises and deposit in the gutter two copiously smoking pizzas, burnt black except for a few struggling bits of flesh.

Seri's eyes lit up as though she'd been privileged to witness the end of a world. When the circular cinders cooled, she tenderly carried them back into the shop to unstring the rest of the man's nerves. “Please,” she said, “may I have a box for the pizzas?”

Next day the pizzas found a place on her studio wall, mounted and framed, converting an eerie suggestion of the world's hemispheres thoroughly done in. The smell went away in a month, leaving only the carbon memory of a struggle. Nonsense? Or potent imagery?

Whether you are amused, appalled or apathetic, the Fine Arts have given away to the Find Arts. The exploring edge of this art often yields results as preposterous as the pizza puzzle. There are the “assemblages” or “junk art” in which cast-off items of all sorts are forced into uneasy relationships. These are the “happenings,” a sort of stage production in which people and junk get involved in unexpected ways.

Today's cities by and large are junk art. They are “happenings.” They are contraptions that destroy themselves. But because they are filled with a rich variety of people there is always the prospect that they will, in parts at least, be transformed into places of self-satisfying beauty. Certainly the better architects and planners do try to bring human amenity and delight to the scene. If their efforts are often weakened by compromise, it is because cities, like Hollywood movies, are made for profit. The movie fabricators take inventory of people's emotions and convert them to box-office. The city fabricators take inventory of people's needs and convert them to real estate. Sometimes—not often enough—there is real heart in the enterprise. This applies, of course, to any city.

In Los Angeles you are conscious of the present tense; there is no flavor of the past, no feeling for the future, said Kate Bell, quoted in Matt Weinstock's 1947 book, *My L.A.* It would be a pleasure to find evidence that her judgment is no longer true, but the evidence seems to be that it is true today not only for Los Angeles but for many cities where it might not have been so readily applied in 1947. New York City tears down many old buildings, including many fine ones, at a faster rate than ever before, and puts up so many bad ones with a few good. Philadelphia, with the best intentions of preserving its historical heritage and projecting a respectable future, has managed to build at its heart some massive architectural mistakes and at least one ill-conceived park. San Francisco, with the country's most sophisticated standards in “urban renewal” architecture, fails to relate old and new values with enough care. Nowhere is there really

sufficient vision for the future, not even in Paris or London, both of which are now suffering Western-type disruption of the unique harmonies which formerly prevailed.

If these paragraphs have a gloomy air, they will seem sprightly compared to the indictment you can read in Jane Jacobs' 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which has shaken the planning profession to the bottom of its souls (sic), Jane in person is so wonderfully warm as a Jane can be, but in the book she poses like a fishwife shrilling from her window into the streets, cat-calling and throwing the bottles (glass) at officials who come to tear down old buildings and put up sterile new ones. Here's how she goes on:

"My attack is not based on quibbles about rebuilding methods or hair-splitting about fashions in design. It is an attack, rather, on the principles and aims that have shaped modern orthodox city planning and rebuilding . . . I shall mainly be writing about common, ordinary things; what kind of city streets are safe and what kinds are not; why some city parks are marvelous and others are vice traps and death traps; why some slums stay slums and other slums regenerate themselves even against financial and official opposition, what makes downtown shift their centers, what, if anything, is a city neighborhood . . .

"Look what we have built. Low-income projects that become worse centers of delinquency, vandalism and general social hopelessness than the slums they were supposed to replace. Middle-income housing projects which are truly marvels of dullness and regimentation, sealed against any buoyancy or vitality of city life. Luxury housing projects that mitigate their inanity, or try to, with a vapid vulgarity. Cultural centers that are unable to support a good bookstore. Civic centers that are avoided by everyone but bums who have fewer choices of littering places than others. Commercial centers that are lackluster imitations of standardized suburban chain-store shopping. Promenades that get from no place to no where and have no promenaders. Expressways that eviscerate great cities. This is not the rebuilding of cities. This is the sacking of cities.

"Great cities are not like towns, only larger. They are not like suburbs, only denser. They differ from towns and suburbs in basic ways, and one of these is that cities, by definition, are full of strangers. The bedrock attributes of a successful city district is that a person must feel perfectly safe and secure on the street among all those strangers.

"The first thing to understand is that the public peace—the sidewalk and street peace—of cities is not kept primarily by the police, necessary as police are. It is kept by an intricate, almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves . . . This is something almost everyone already knows: a well-used city street is apt to be a safe street.

"The second thing to understand is that the problem of insecurity cannot be solved by spreading people out more thinly, trading the characteristics of cities for the characteristics of suburbs. If this could solve danger on the city streets, then Los Angeles should be a safe city because superficially Los Angeles is almost all suburban. It has virtually no districts compact enough to qualify as dense city areas. Yet Los Angeles cannot anymore than any other great city evade the truth that being a city it is composed of strangers, not all of whom are nice. Los Angeles' crime figures are flabbergasting. Among the seventeen standard metropolitan areas with populations over a million Los Angeles stands so pre-eminent in crime that it is a category by itself. And this is markedly true of crimes associated with personal attack, the crimes that make people fear the streets.

"Los Angeles, for example, has a forcible rape rate (1958 figures) of 31.9 per 100,000 population, more than twice as high as either of the next two cities, which happen to be St. Louis and Philadelphia, three times as high as the rate of 10.1 of Chicago, and more than four times as high as the rate of 7.4 for New York.

"The overall Los Angeles rate for major crimes is 2,507.6 per 100,000 people, far ahead of St. Louis and Houston which come next with 1,634.5 and 1,541.1, and of New York and Chicago which have rates of 1,145.3 and 943.5.

The reasons for Los Angeles' high crime rate are undoubtedly complex, and at least in part obscure. But of this we can be sure that thinning out a city does not insure safety from crime and fear of crime."

Unless we can find some way of shaking off that indictment we must conclude that Los Angeles is the worst-planned big city in America so far. Our consolation is that Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles is so changeable. If we have made the biggest mistakes, we can make the biggest corrections. We may be the first to wake up to the Jacobs' thesis the proper planning of cities, the wise design of environments for crowds, is a matter of public health and safety, a matter of life and limb and loins.

It would be comforting to blame our machines. We could point to the automobile and that the very name means going its own way. There is a question of whether the apparatus of modern life dictates to us, but Mrs. Jacobs warns against blaming the auto too much.

One often hears it said admiringly that Los Angeles is the first major city to grow almost entirely in terms of the auto. No doubt, without the consequences set in motion by Henry Ford's revolution, the region's wonderfully fertile lowlands would still be safe for growing green things and the first million of population would still be well into the future. In retrospect it's too bad it all happened so fast, for only today are the arts of architecture and urban design beginning to arrive at concepts that will make lasting good sense of our environment when they are put into effect. To recapture the region's special virtues now is a bit like trying to unscramble an egg.

The triumphant money-mover and city shaker, William Zeckendorf, said last year that acres and acres of Los Angeles should be swept clear of their dingbat slums, and their inhabitants housed in vertical communities, skyscraper complexes that cover a minimum of land. He said also that he was considering a scheme whereby 100 acres of mountainous terrain would be assembled in one ownership and 99 of those acres would remain ruggedly natural. Only one acre would be developed, and this would feature skyscraper living for more people than would normally cover the 100 acres with houses. He did not say how long the 99 acres would remain virgin.

Mr. Z. does not go so far as to say level the mountains, but I think a good case could be made for just that. In a thoroughly logical solution most of the people would leave the lowlands where they breed smog and head for the hills where the climate is superior and smog has less chance to ripen. Our great earth-movers would engage in a creative cut-and-fill operation that would cancel all Paul Bunyan legends. Our land planners and architects would budget the planed mountain shelves and design structures to whatever height the population required. The result would be an Olympian skyline city—every man a god looking down on immense green valleys where oranges would grow again, cows would low, and men would only be permitted who came by non-belching transportation.

Imagine the lowlands from Santa Ana to San Fernando freed of their slum tracts, their commercial clutter and the mulch of their industry, and with the economic base that these represent distributed in the mountain ring. Some industry would stay below, and every variety of recreational activity would flourish in spacious parks. Vast dredge-and-fill operations would infiltrate the lowlands with a network of waterways for water craft and water sports. With auto traffic reduced to a tenth of the present volume, half of the freeway lanes would be plowed up and planted. At a few rapid transit stops throughout the lowlands an intensive new variety of city life would develop, extremely vertical within very restricted ground limits, clusters of interconnected towers with all city-life functions close at hand and with many levels of pedestrian circulation.

Rapid transit (to be treated at length in a future issue) is the key, of course, to any reformation of Los Angeles. If the proposed subway or monorail along the Wilshire corridor receives sufficient design intelligence it can justify its existence as a great "island" in the sea of green that we have decreed for the lowlands. Ah, but cities do not grow by anyone's degree—and they shouldn't. They should be the product of an intensive debate in which all voices are heard, including mad ones which call for leveling the mountains.

Alas, instead of debate we hear now mostly a babble in which millions of “little” people who are nursing the best plans they can think of, are angrily shouting down the officials, the bureaucrats, the professionals, the egg-heads who are trying to see the picture large and give it some meaning. It is because of the babble that our cities are junk art, “happenings,” contraptions bent on destroying themselves.

Nowhere is the babble more in evidence than in the minute of the typical planning commission. The Los Angeles Planning Commission shows signs of being in a particular state of strain right now, with the babblers riding high politically. One of the town’s most statesmanlike citizens, Dean Boelter of the UCLA school of engineering resigned recently from the commission because of the deteriorated atmosphere, and there is only one commissioner left who brings an educated point-of-view to the complexities of city planning. He is Melville Branch, Jr., who enjoys a major reputation as professional planner, as teacher, as consultant. Branch is no enemy of the people. In fact he insists that the free play of economic forces must be fully accounted for in planning. But he is naturally at odds with the merely political members of the commission, and it would be surprising to close observers if he can much longer put up with the circus atmosphere at city hall.

Mayor Yorty shows signs of comprehending the magnitude of the city planning responsibility. He probably dreads the civic consequences of continued confusion, and he is currently studying an ultra-modern approach to cutting confusion through _____ rate data processing equipment. But whether he has the personal vision and creative detachment to rise above his own compromising political personality in the public interest is another matter. His planning commission at present reflects his optimism entirely too much for the good of the future.

Politics is familiarly defined as the art of the possible. Greatness, on the other hand, is the art of the impossible. If we think of Shakespeare or Rembrandt or Beethoven or Jefferson or Lincoln, we find that the important things they did were impossible to anyone else. A democratic community could attain greatness if it went through enough soul-searching to come up with a viable design for its own environment, its own future.

To date, Los Angeles is the worst-planned metropolis. Are we going to leave it that way?

October 1962, Los Angeles Magazine, 22+, the Wilshire Corridor—Key to Rapid Transit?

Caption: Top MTA’s design shows passengers boarding escalators to and from proposed “Backbone” Route subways. Surface stations are planned to provide park-‘n-ride facilities. Toilers wait for subways at one of designated stations along 22.7 mile route extending from Wilshire through downtown to El Monte.

Backbone is a word much favored by all unless they happen to be jellyfish in which case sting is the thing. So when “backbone” is used to describe the first section of a rapid transit system for Los Angeles and way stations, we’d like to think that we’re on the right track.

As proposed by the Metropolitan Transit Authority, the “backbone route” would have conventional subway trains running under Wilshire Boulevard from Century City, just west of Beverly Hills, to a point just east of downtown Los Angeles where they would emerge to a ground level and rip through the center of San Bernardino Freeway as far as El Monte. Neither end of this route is planned as a permanent “terminal.” The line would be extended in both directions when money was available.

Surely the earnest men of MTA—most of them appointed by Governor Knight and reappointed by Governor Brown—feel they are offering the best that can be achieved in the atmosphere of pressures and counter-pressures that influence governmental decisions. But I don’t feel that what they are able to offer is good enough for West Coast Man, a breed which aspires to outwit oppression and attain new levels of excellence in all things.

If Los Angeles may be said to have a business backbone, Wilshire Boulevard must be it, especially since the coming there of so many new buildings postwar. Not the brain or the kidneys or the liver, but the commercial backbone. Still we can’t overlook the tendency of business scatteration which we

noted here last month, citing a Coldwell Banker authority, W.W. Morrison. In shifty Los Angeles there is no guarantee that the Wilshire “corridor” will continue to build up more densely than any other section.

Wilshiremen, be wary! MTA’s subway may spring a serious leak. I speak of money, not water. If the Wilshire trains continue on out San Bernardino Freeway as planned, surely the station stops on the freeway will be more accessible to more people easily, than the station stops along Wilshire. An office building near El Monte shop, for example, could be reached comfortably via train by a junior executive in Beverly Hills, and his six sweet stenogs could drive via freeway from the immense population pool of Riverside-San Bernardino. The lower cost of land in El Monte would not discourage the emergence of such offices in competition with Wilshire.

Not only the Wilshire property owners but all of Southern California stand to suffer if the momentum of Wilshire growth dribbles away through a rapid transit leak. The boulevard has a good start in becoming the most distinguished street anywhere. If it loses its backbone character, ours will be a spineless city, a jellyfish culture.

As I see it, rapid transit in the Wilshire Corridor should not continue out east or anywhere else. It should be a closed-circuit doubling back on itself, forever circulating crowds with the 12-1/2 miracle miles that lie between Los Angeles and the University of California campus. Properly tied together with fast transit, this corridor and the unique complexes at either end of it could comprise the city that our suburbs have been notoriously in search of these many years.

Thus, all 12-1/2 miles of it, is our metropolitan core, California size. It can be, more than it is, a meaningful university city—but only if the entire stretch, not just its downtown end, is nurtured consciously as an urban entity. On the sweeping scale of Los Angeles, 12-1/2 miles of compact central city is not too much to plan for.

A closed rather than open-ended transit line will cause the Wilshire corridor to fill out with several million residents plus transients so that all the area will be a shapely-island of Manhattan-type life. By careful design our version can be without the faults of the original.

Comparison of Manhattan and the Wilshire Corridor shows remarkable similarities. Both are 12-1/2 miles long. Each has at one end a dense cluster of big buildings, largely given to finance, wholesaling and government. Each has toward its other end a top university. Manhattan has Central Park and Fort Tyron Park, Wilshire Corridor has MacArthur Park, Hancock Park and the Los Angeles Country Club. Manhattan has Fifth Avenue and Park Avenue. Wilshire Corridor has the phenomenal boulevard which promises to radiate more brightly than its two New York counterparts combined.

Subways had a deal to do with the density in the island of Manhattan, but the very fact that it is an island had a decisive bearing. Great crowds could shuffle to and from the outer boroughs, but also great crowds found it convenient to live within the island. In the case of the Wilshire Corridor, “Manhattan West,” as it were, the island effect could be created by requiring a change of trains for anyone going outside the Wilshire loopde loop.

If that reasoning is valid, the Wilshire transit line should execute a loop action downtown, touching all the main basis—Pershing Square, Civic Center, Union Station, Bunker Hill—before entering on the return run up Wilshire. At its western end, the line should make another loop, closing the circuit. Here the three important stops would be the UCLA campus, some point near the San Diego Freeway, and Century City. The freeway stop would be significant to draw off crowds moving on that route. These crowds would come by car and park in special structures nearby, or they would come by SD Freeway rapid transit some day. The Wilshire line would make similar contacts with other freeways and other rapid transit lines at whatever points were most strategic.

For good reasons, monorail for the Wilshire line was the first choice of MTA consultants, Daniel, Mann, Johnson and Mendenhall (“Dim Jim” for short, even in the office). Understandably, property owners of the miracle mileage opposed a monorail in the middle of their proud boulevard, and it was opposed for

Sixth Street too. The Wilshire interests approved the more expensive subway, to be built with public money and with minimum disruption of the Wilshire business crust. It is actually planned as a tunnel job, hardly disturbing the asphalt above,

The Wilshire line could indeed be a subway if we had the money. Subways are not necessarily noisome, though none as yet been built of pure joy—and MTA's subway will be rather meager and uncharming if built according to preliminary sketches. It would be a monstrous mistake, of course, to build one that people preferred to stay out of. New York's subway has become so degenerate and repulsive that many people no longer recognize its existence. Thus surface traffic is compounded, not relieved.

So subway in Los Angeles, especially along Wilshire, must be pleasurable as well as swift. That means even more money than is now contemplated. If I were the legislature, Mr. Unruh, I would reason that gas-tax money should build the subway, on the theory that a balanced system of mass and solo transportation is the only assurance that the individual car driver will find motoring anything but misery in the future. The subway would improve the functioning of the freeway system by siphoning off many of the cars. The same gas-tax money could be used to build immense parking structures, preferably underground, at appropriate places in relation to the transit and the freeways.

Of course parking would be "free" for freeway drivers, and so would the transit lines. Indeed the transit should be free to all users who qualify as car owners, gas-tax payers. Furthermore, the important objective of increasing the number of riders per auto could be attained by extending free transit privileges to all persons who step out of cars in freeway structures.

San Francisco politicians have tried to get a small percentage of gas-tax allocated for rapid transit, but cow county legislators are impossible to sell on this. And probably no legislator will stand up for a really effective measure requiring the rate of gas-tax to go up rather sharply. An immediate step that might be pushed effectively is to require that all freeways be so designed as to permit rapid transit in the median strip when and if necessary.

In general, center strips of our elaborate freeway system would be fine for rapid transit to serve the far-flung metropolis, and this could be trains running at ground level where there was room, or on elevated roadbeds where necessary. In certain places it would be necessary for transit to take off on routes of its own, and these, most likely, should be overhead roadbeds, neatly designed of concrete. These need not be detrimental to neighborhoods, as freeways sometimes are. They could be quieter than average city streets. With landscaping they could give parkway quality to streets below them. Altogether, they could function in the landscape with something like the aesthetic aplomb of the ancient aqueducts.

Needed right now is a rapid line from International Airport direct to downtown, Goodell Memorial, Inc. is ready to build one as a private venture. Quite rightly the *Los Angeles Times* cautioned editorially that this not be allowed to interfere with the required overall metropolitan system. If Goodell is to go on stilts down Harbor Freeway, as it wishes, will there be room for metro trains below it on the same freeway? Will Goodell still be interested if it is understood that a cheaper (or free) public metro may later be available from the airport, perhaps via San Diego Freeway, with a transfer to the Wilshire line?

One matter of urgency is to bring the University of Southern California campus (and Exposition Park) into easy contact with downtown, with Wilshire Corridor, with UCLA. A metro line which does this might cloud the Goodell enterprise unless both were planned in conjunction.

Everything that one considers about rapid transit shows its immense power to shape our environment. It simply must be done right or the entire metropolis will be an expensive slum. Doing it right means that only the highest design standards will be acceptable. "Design" refers to location of lines, articulation of connections, character of vehicles and—not least—appearance factors.

Because I don't have to build it, I have been able to sketch broadly a system that might do much more for us than the one offered by MTA. I claim no special powers except that I am free to put design considerations first, free from compromising political pressures. MTA's own consultants command much

talent and would cut a much better figure in design terms if they too were free. Somehow, whoever does the designs that are finally used must be able to work with better outlook than prevails now.

Would the answer be to give all transit design to the State Division of Highways and charge them with responsibility for a balanced of freeways-plus-transit in the name of public safety? Where they got the funds would still be an issue. The rate of gas-tax would surely have to go up because good balanced design would mean less use of cars. Cities should contribute funds—heavily. And the federal government should increase its share.

MTA should be thanked sincerely for its efforts and relieved of a job it is in no position to do right. MTA's rightful domain is running transit systems, not designing them.

I have wound on about the Wilshire line as though it might be a subway. But there is an important question that would have to be decided once and for all before any subway was built there. If Wilshire Boulevard is to be the most magnificent street in the West, should it be grade-separated? I think it should—not to provide a raceway for cars but to give smooth maintenance and smooth dignity to whatever traffic the boulevard carries.

Grade separation would mean that certain cross streets would go under the boulevard. Other streets would feed cars into Wilshire and draw them off, but cross no longer. To get both grade separation and subway is not impossible, but they would have to be designed together.

With grade separation, through traffic would be easier than now, even if kept at a moderate rate of speed. My own preferred arrangement would be to eliminate all through-traffic on Wilshire and allow only slow vehicles for localized convenience. Then it would be possible to reserve the middle of the boulevard for rapid transit trains running at ground level. These would be “carriage trade” trains though open to all comers. They would be ultra-quiet, ultra-sophisticated, their route lined with hedges and flower beds a la Park Avenue, New York. It is true that the trains of Park Avenue are below the street and no one would think of letting them be seen because they are dirty and noisy. The clean, trim trains now possible would be a handsome addition to a handsome street, a positive benefit to property values and to the public life. Sooner or later some city is going to get on to this fact. Should Los Angeles not take the lead?

With a surface transit system on Wilshire each of the station stops would develop an extensive area of pedestrian mall walkers crossing under the train bed, probably by escalator. Also, in connection with the depressing of cross streets below the station stops a good deal of underground parking could be constructed. If we tuck enough of our parked cars out of sight the day may come when we can gaze upon the city and see more people than cars. That is rarely possible now. Try it.

As a further refinement worthy of a very special street, some form or other of unique conveyance for local traffic on Wilshire might be dreamed up, maybe miniature electric autos available free on the boulevard after the manner of supermarket carts. San Francisco's cable cars, Central Park's horse-drawn hansoms, even Disneyland's horse cars are in the right spirit. One of the most charming of all conveyances was the open-deck bus that once plied both Manhattan's Fifth Avenue and our Wilshire.

As things now stand in urban affairs, the synthetic Main Street of Walt's wonderland is one of America's best stretches of city planning. Similarly calculated for pleasure, Knott's Berry Farm is a satisfying experience for crowds on the move. Our sober-sided official planners and architects should try to capture some of that spirit even in their more serious undertakings. When enough design tone enters the picture of our cities will be worth the investment of our lives. Wilshire Boulevard, with its evolving high order of architecture and urbanity, is the key to the city and metropolis of Los Angeles.

1963-64—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas. (Eliz.), publ. Cal Review, h. 3515 Front

May 1963, Los Angeles Magazine, 27+, San Diego's New Coastal Kingdom (Mission Bay Park) luxury at bay . . . San Diego's new COASTAL KINGDOM

(the seaport city has turned a former swamp into an imaginative wonderland of parks, resorts and soul-nourishing architecture)

“The Beverly Hills crowd is our best market,” says one San Diego hotel man, “but we have to ride herd on them or they do expensive damage wherever they go. But it won’t do any good to write about it . . . They’re beyond the reach of an insult . . . they’re insulated by money.”

Beverly Hillbillies, notwithstanding, San Diego is becoming an increasingly favored shopping spot for the moneyed and the unmoneyed of Los Angeles, especially those going to the dogs and horses and bulls over the border.

Until recently, however, overnighting in the SD fun-belt meant choosing from a gamut that included at one end moldy auto courts dating to the 20’s and at the other end the magnificently refurbished gingerbread castle, the Del Coronado Hotel. (Perched in relative seclusion on the beachfront of Coronado Island, the Del was likely to surround the tourist in so much *fin de siècle* elegance he’d forget he had anyplace else to go.)

But then San Diego discovered it was failing to exploit fully its most natural attraction: an unsurpassed fairyland of water. As a result, the auto courts are fast giving way to what *Time* magazine called San Diego’s “sybaritic” waterfront motels, very much the last word for the affluent society on the move. Surprisingly, for sybarites who run in crowds, or even families, the beat may not cost too much more than the least. For example, Half Moon Inn, one of several motels spread gracefully along man-made Shelter Island in San Diego Bay, is extravagantly appointed and extravagantly laid out around an enchanted garden that is worth a visit in itself. From the windows a reflective guest might bask in the garden-plus-pool view of the more exciting panorama which surrounds the Half Moon—small boats in harbor and in action. Yet the prime suite will sleep about six for about \$10 each per night and a complete kitchen will permit massive savings for those enjoying sufficient self-control.

Shelter Island—very much in the mood of Newport but less crowded—is only a small part of the water indulgence just now coming to flower in San Diego. A little to the north of San Diego Bay is Mission Bay, formerly pretty much of a swamp punctuated mainly by duck hunters and so few of them that migratory birds made a big thing of it.

Today Mission Bay Aquatic Park is probably the biggest and most imaginative marine playground under construction anywhere, certainly the biggest on the California coast. As of now, the resources already developed in San Diego are causing other coastal developers in other cities, including Los Angeles, to begin a thorough assessment of water frontage that they, too, may have been wasting.

Things were rougher in the early days, of course. Mission Bay Park official Ben Hagar likes to tell an old tale of Daddy Cabrillo, one California discoverer who did not settle down here. “Mission Bay was discovered by Cabrillo in 1542 when a group of sailors from his ship became lost while searching for fresh water in what is now known as Mission Valley, which then flowed with a visible river. Not knowing there were two bays, the water party left the ship in San Diego Bay and, because their return course led them to Mission Bay, they thought their ship had sailed off without them. A search party from the mother ship found the lost lads. Otherwise, San Diego might have developed a white population much earlier than it did.”

Understandably enough, Cabrillo named the water trap *Bahia Falsa* but just as understandably that name would not do now that the bay is heading into a big commercial future. The great water park is the city government’s official effort to capitalize on the fact that San Diego, being most southerly, has the most desirable oceanside conditions. “Capitalize” is used advisedly. The town is tax-poor for its size, and desperately needs the income that smartly catered tourism brings.

Mission Bay itself is financed largely from leases to major vacation attractions. These include several alluring resort hotels built fully in the spirit of Kubla Khan. The hotels offer all the facilities expected of modern hostelry with a rare “plus,” the widest possible range of liquid indulgence from bar

through pool to bay and adjacent ocean. Also, because of strategic position, the hotels of Mission Bay capture a portion of the town's businessmanly togetherness.

One doesn't have to be a water bug to enjoy a day or a longer stay at Mission Bay. The main resources of the rather big city (San Diego is 16th in the U.S.) are all within five miles. The airport is adjacent to the bay but the park is so big—4000 acres—that the jet sounds do not intrude. Proof: the elderly sensitive daughter of Mark Twain lived for years at the park's Bahia Hotel.

The patrician Henry James advanced the idea that every man should partake of country club conditions. He was not thinking for the moment of the social in-fighting but of the fine physical environment characteristic of the best exclusives. It does appear that democracy is indeed advancing toward some such happy, grassy state, and Mission Bay Park is exploring the way. For all the water, it is not all water-oriented. Nearly half of the area is dry land, already started on an ambitious program of land-scaping and land-sculpture. The latter means a deliberate scheme of varying the contours and elevations of land masses to relieve the natural flatness of what was once a vasty marsh. Today, beach areas are usually complemented by generous stretches of turf on which picnickers and strollers disport with all the picturesqueness if not the formality of an *après-midi sur le Grand Jatte*

The aspiration of architecture, as of democracy, is to exist in a park setting. Mission Bay Park has been and will be a dream situation for the architects—a chance to show their best. There are certain limitations, but these are actually more friendly to the architect than he sometimes appreciates. Aesthetic guidelines amounting to reasonable architectural control were set by Pasadena landscape architect Garrett Eckbo and colleagues so that all structures are low-lying heavily cushioned in greenery, but the future is sure to bring at least four skyscrapers. About 600 of the park's 2100 acres of dry land have been made available, mostly on 50-year leases, for commercial development. Four major hotel operations are already in business. At least two of these are now planning high-rise towers. The other two are likely to follow suite for suite to keep up.

So, somewhat accidentally, Mission Bay will honor a basic principle of modern architectural thinking: skyscrapers in a park, widely spaced. Their height will give enjoyment of soul-nourishing views, and their separation will avoid the infernal eclipsing of light, view, and soul, that goes on as a matter of course in badly-jammed downtowns.

There is one mirror tower now that is the squirreliest thing imaginable, a first-class conversation starter. It erupts out of Vacation Village, most improbable of the four hotels. It serves only the purpose of view—and conversation. One climbs what amounts to four flights via winding stairs surrounded by playful open-work construction—a jungle-gym not limited to children. The whole thing is a three-dimensional doodle which goes into a wild and witting scribble at the top, a decorative headdress such as Hedda Hopper never had, whipped up of the steel rods that are normally used to reinforce concrete. It's as though a sculptor were reclaiming the sky from the TV aerials. Not a bad idea. Could not TV aerials be sculptural fantasies?

Vacation Village is from the office of San Francisco architect Eldridge Spencer, who ironically enough also serves as design-consultant to strait-laced Williamsburg on the sober East Coast. The mystery resolves if one remembers that prosperous architects often employ a variety of young designers, who may or may not get credit for work going on under the office name. Spencer, or some young designer in his office, tore up the Building Code, as a good designer should. For foundations he stipulated pilings throughout, so that great wooden poles dominate his design, some of them rising high to serve as roof supports. Roofs are free form, made of 2 x 4's nailed tight together. One giddy notion in the dining room was to run the electrical BX cables all over the ceiling in squirmy lines, giving an inadvertent but vaguely uncomfortable hint of the digestive system.

Sunk into the beach and covered by sun is an enormous concrete clamshell of a room. Guess what? Barefoot Bar. The basic idea should be taken up by public authorities as a means of providing inconspicuous restrooms at public beaches. The policing problem in that case might have to be done by closed-circuit television. Let's be modern.

Vacation Village is only one of the hotels perking along on its 50-year lease. Even a happier bonanza for its promoter is Ocean House, hard by Highway 101, which skirts the bay. Key figure there is Del Webb, who one day may be in a position to purchase the State of California. Even as he is doing the best business at this date, he is the one most likely to put up the first skyscraper (Jack Skirball, promoter of Vacation Village will not be far behind.)

Locally owned are the Bahia and the Islandia. Bahia's Bill Evans was the first one in the water park. His daring paid off handsomely and made him impressively independent. Some of his parkmates think him too independent. He does not, for example, belong to the Convention and Tourist Bureau, as they do.

Principal owners of Islandia Hotel are John and Garrick O'Bryan, and architect Fred Liebhardt. Liebhardt is an exceptional designer who handles wood as neatly as any in California. So Islandia is the handsomest of the bay hotels. With appropriate landscaping and waterscaping it presents an atmosphere that is both modern and timeless, classic in quality. Yet the most arresting feature is a series of rooftop lattice-work projections which produce an animate moiré effect to the passing motorist—a new kind of sculpture, as it were, especially suited to an ever-moving populace. Liebhardt confirmed any suspicion that this remarkable visual treat was a happy accident.

Of course, Mission Bay entrepreneurs strain to satisfy every imaginable demand of the vacation-bent. For the boat owner these are yacht clubs, mooring and slips for every type and size of pleasure craft. Sailboats, canoes and power boats can be rented. Supplies and repair services are available at several locations. Boats can come from Los Angeles via Highway 101 direct to the bay, and the bay connects with the ocean too. A trailer park within the bay park caters to long and short-term nomads.

The 27 miles of shoreline include areas for swimmers, picnickers, boat launching, ski landing. Fishing occurs at the simple level of throwing a line from the jetties or in the more expansive, expensive form called sport-fishing. Boats from Mission Bay are forever heading to the deep sea haunts of yellowtail, sea bass and marlin.

It takes money to indulge the full scale of Mission Bay diversions, but the place is intended as a public park and so offers much for free too. Perhaps the most important thing missing in the present stage of planning is an internal public transit system. A person who did not elect to own or rent a car would have a hard time circulating in Mission Bay Park.

The really big acceleration of traffic will come to Mission Bay in 1964 when San Diego's answer to Marine-land opens in Mission Bay. Called "Marine Park," it will rely heavily on entertainment by porpoises, who, nor being unionized, will work long hours with smiles on their faces, for fish and no chips. Their "stage" will be a 42-foot square glass tank, surrounded by tiers of customers. An open-water lagoon, 90 by 260 feet, will be shared by porpoises and whales. Ingenious aquarium displays will abound. Most eye-catching, no doubt, will be the *piece de resistance*, or the resistance de pieces if you will—a glass tankful of Japanese girl divers going through the motions of harvesting oysters. That will be part of the Murata Pearl Company's contribution to education, explaining the modern method of raising cultured pearls.

The automobile could easily become the most conspicuous feature of a booming Mission Bay as it does almost everywhere that American boom develops. Already, the gas-guzzlers have distorted the park planning; entirely too much land has gone to lease-holders simply on the claim of parking needs. If the auto should someday be eliminated from the park, _____ small town.

There is talk of developing a very large island in the heart of the park on which no autos will be allowed. If that healing idea is to spread there will be need of some ingenious mass transit throughout the vast park. Here is an ideal situation for a swift and silent monorail or other elevated train system on an elegantly designed roadbed in the sky. The ride itself would be a major entertainment, affording a migratory bird's eye view down upon a dramatically stirring park. In the same sense it would be desirable

to elevate the highways that skirt the bay, particularly U.S. 101. An elevated transit plus an elevated highway affording panoramic views, built atop a more or less continuous multi-level parking structure, is the indicated design solution for Mission Bay's boom-boom future. But, alas, neither federal nor state highway engineers are geared to any such design standard.

Though the existence of two bays may have been a nuisance to Cabrillo, the fact adds immeasurably to the character of San Diego. Yet the most fascinating prospect of all has not yet been considered. What an extra dimension of boating pleasure it would be if there were a navigable canal between the two bays! Right-of-way for such a canal could have been acquired cheaply a few years ago—oh, familiar California recreational plaint—but the logical course for it now is rapidly filling in with commercial blah. A major mistake of San Diego city planning is that this area was not promoted as *the* prime shopping center of the region with a pleasure-boat canal roaming through it to stamp the center with unequalled distinction—a marriage of Venice and Fashion Square, as it were.

In any case, it will be increasingly hard to realize that we are on the same planet that Cabrillo coursed in the 16th century, so much will the hand and horseplay of man reshape the coastal geography. The magnificent recreational reshaping of San Diego is bound to be repeated all along the coast, even as were the visions of Padre Serra, who built his first in San Diego. The name chosen by modern men for Cabrillo's *Bahia Falsa* now seems more appropriate than ever.

August 1963, Los Angeles Magazine, 30+, Some concrete proposals for maintaining "The Miracle" (Wilshire Boulevard)

Fall 1963, California Review

Editor & Publisher JAMES BRITTON: Connecticut, 1915, uneducated; feature writer and illustrator, *Hartford Courant*, 1935; same, *Hartford Times*, 1936-37; artist, architectural designer, production illustrator, technical writer, 1938-48; writer, later associate editor, *San Diego* and *Point* magazines, 1949-61; writer *Los Angeles Magazine*, 1962-63 (intermittent); Second Award, National Architectural Journalism Competition, AIA, 1960; Mass Media Fellowship Fund for Adult Education, Ford Foundation, 1960-61, one year spent in travel and belated study in major universities.

JAMES BRITTON (1878-1936)

CALIFORNIA REVIEW is dedicated to the editor's father—artist and critic, who illuminated many paths.

What are we up to?

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF DOWNTOWN

THE SAN DIEGO UNION of September 19th quoted Chamber of Commerce Manager Jack Borchers, speaking good like a chamber man should: "The Centre City Project is the beginning of a renaissance of the downtown and perimeter area. The entire complex means downtown is getting out of a situation caused by the growth of shopping centers. Centre City will bring more people into the downtown area, and it will challenge all other business areas to improve if they want to compete in America."

Not being a chamber man, I can say I think the reverse is true: downtown will have to improve much more than it has if it wants to compete with other business areas. The ceaseless surge of economic activity is already threatening to take away the newly regained status of downtown San Diego as *the* center of the metropolis. Southern California's two quality department stores, Bullock's and Robinson's both have studied sites north of La Jolla. If they follow through, the future center of the metropolis will be north of La Jolla. Not just the shopping, but the office activity and even the main seat of government. The intellectual center is already shaping up there, thanks to the University of California La Jolla campus. Its library, for example, has, at this early day, more important periodical titles than the downtown public library.

When John G. Bullock and others built glamorous and convenient stores on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles several decades ago, that city's downtown started into a decline from which it has not yet recovered. It will never recover as first choice for prestige office buildings, which now go up on Wilshire increasingly. Only because of mighty efforts and certain rather good design features has downtown Los Angeles been able to assure its future as the government center of that vast metropolis.

Downtown San Diego, smug for most of those decades, suffered a similar challenge only since 1950, and its crisis was triggered by department stores too. Sears moved to Hillcrest to get parking, and May Company set up shop in Mission Valley to get still more parking. Even the ghost of Founding Father George W. Marston must ride the wind these nights to count the till; the department store which he made the chief magnet downtown and which still bears his proud name but is really a Broadway-Hale enterprise, now does business at three widely scattered spots.

So far, property owners downtown have produced the highest skyscrapers. So far, there haven't been any skyscrapers in Mission Valley, but the pressure is on. Such pressure! So far, there haven't been any skyscraper office buildings north of La Jolla, but they will surely come.

Wearing the mantle of self-appointed, self-anointed priest interpreting the entrails, I see by the pigeon liver that our world is now undergoing a marvelous, fast evolution, if not a true revolution, in architecture and city planning. The buildings that pop up all over may be full of architectural blunders, but this year's tend to correct the errors of last year's, other things (such as money) being equal. Even more rewarding is the rapid improvement in land-use ideas.

Mission Valley Shopping Center is more convenient than downtown simply because it was laid out on raw ground without all downtown's fiendish problems of adjusting to existing uses. Ah, but Bullock's Fashion Square in Santa Ana is just as convenient as MVSC and distinctly more beautiful. It follows, then, that if Bullocks settles north of La Jolla its area will be *the* prestige business location of all San Diego County. Especially if Robinsons settles nearby.

It is well worth noting by amateur trend-spotters that high-rise office buildings went up within strolling distance of Bullock's Fashion Square. The same thing is sure to happen north of La Jolla. The growing urge for architectural refinement in that area will force wise land use and superior building design. Wise land use and superior building design will, in turn, make the area more magnetic than any other.

If you consider, in addition, the strategic location of the coastal area just north of La Jolla—midway between the massive clusters of north county population and the (temporary) greater clusters of south county population, I think you have to ask; what's the County Courthouse doing down by San Diego Bay? Notice that the new County Operations Center was built many miles north of the Courthouse, if not quite "north of La Jolla." I suspect that a quite logical demand will grow to have a new main courthouse built north of La Jolla in the Bullock's-Robinson's vicinity. It is logical especially because a courthouse so located would counteract the tendency of the county to pull apart into two halves, north and south.

The present misconceived courthouse (still under construction) could be sold (at a loss) to Mr. Bekins. Warehousing and associated offices should have a big future around the bay.

I asked the County's long-range planner, Dick Huff, whether there had been any official cogitation that took account of the possibilities sketched so far in this article. He said no. The reasons, it seems are mainly two. 1) The County Planning Department allows its employees to engage in only token long-range planning. 2) The County as a bloated political body has a vested interest in its present location. The County Board of Supervisors apparently thinks it has done enough of a forward-looking thing to achieve total occupancy of the bayside Civic Center building. (The City of San Diego is moving out of the other half.)

The City as a bloated political body, also has a vested interest in ignoring the impending center-of-gravity shift to the north. Its big political idea is to salvage as much tax-base as possible in the high-assessment area of downtown. A large City Planning Department staff wrestles with long-range concepts, but the wrestlers are blindfolded and handcuffed. An elaborate citizens' advisory committee is now

studying at length the metropolitan future, but it is pre-conditioned to assuming there will always be a dominant bayside “downtown.”

Bayside San Diego is in fact the most wonderful site for a metropolitan downtown. If the area between Balboa Park and the bay fails to maintain business supremacy it will be because it is too committed to confused land use and confused building design. Only the most-inspired master-planning would be allowed to check appreciably the creep, or leap, to the north. Without such planning, much of San Diego will become a sort of North National City, and no self-respecting VIP of the business world will want his executive suite south of La Jolla twenty years hence.

Downtown planning has not been of inspired quality, though it was conducted with considerable flair for the fancy brochure, and amid gales of vapid publicity. A slick public relations job won the city an All-American award bestowed by the National Municipal League and *Look* magazine. *Look* did not really look.

In fairness it should be said that the downtown property owners, whose actions as San Diegans, Incorporated, won that award, really did a remarkable job of stirring a degree of civic action. An assortment of citizens, including even the present writer, became involved in raising money for the “Community Concourse.”

Those same property owners, not the City Planning Department, decided the replanning of the downtown core. The professional planners simply did the detail work and offered advice, the best of which was not followed. The resulting mediocre conception for downtown is a long-range disservice to the public at large, especially the coming generation, though it may, for quite a few years, work fairly well and deliver many rounds of profit.

San Diegans, Inc. definitely raised planning somewhat out of the doldrums into which it had fallen locally. The fact that they were able to achieve only mediocrity means that the function of planning has to be taken with a great deal more seriousness than the public has been willing to support. In the last analysis it is the *public* that has done a disservice to the public. San Diegans, Inc. gets credit for an earnest try in a region crippled by indifferent public spirit.

With the master-planning poorly conceived, it is the more astonishing that a number of fine buildings have got off the ground—in all sizes from one-story to skyscraper. The smaller ones do not take much of a risk, but it would be a wailing shame if such grand building enterprises as the Home Federal Tower and the U.S. National Bank tower were to spend their lives surrounded by semi-slum re-builds and, what’s worse, shoddy new neighbors or neighbors too close—spoiling the towerliness.

Has the moment of major downtown private building already been spent? Why were plans for the United California Bank tower halted? Why did Del Webb pull out of the most elaborate project of all, an office-parking-hotel complex straddling B Street at Fifth? Is it possible that investors have reasoned that San Diego’s basic downtown planning is not good enough to last?

Shortly, after the Webb withdrawal, C. Arnholt Smith announced plans for a 600-room hotel near his bank, the U.S. National. Between bank and hotel how would have a most loving embrace of the downtown convention center now going up. Did Webb know of Smith’s plans? Who out-waited whom?

Arnholt Smith considered it worthwhile to go in for superb technical standards in his U.S. National Bank tower. The same may be said for Charles Fletcher’s Home Federal Savings & Loan tower. Irwin Kahn, however, found it to his advantage as an investor to go a cheaper route in building the Electronic Capital tower. Incidentally, Mr. Kahn has been quoted as expecting the future center of the city to be *east* of La Jolla, where he is involved in much development activity.

All three towers are roughly equal in that they provide usable floor space fed by sweetly reasonable electronic elevators. They differ markedly in the qualities of human satisfaction they offer. I suppose investment wizard Charles Salik is happy to have the name of his Electronics Capital Corporation

blazoned on the Kahn tower in what must be the town's largest lighted letters. A visitor from Mars would surely think that "Electronics Capital" must be the name of this city, and the C of C could not protest. But the building design was disliked by most of the people I asked for any opinion. I myself find it impossibly disjointed in that the "gilt" grill on the lower floors fails to integrate with the black-and-white paint job above. The black-and-white smites the sky like an extra-large roll of bar-and-grill wallpaper. The street entrance seems to be an after-thought (there's plenty of parking behind that grill, with direct access to the elevators), and if you go through that entrance you are almost spit out again by the optical action of busy verticals on the entrance wall, like gnashing teeth. If you get upstairs, you find that this skyscraper has thrown away its advantage of height by glazing the west windows with small panes of wire-glass! The blame for this belongs squarely on the City Planning Commission, which should see to it that the Building Code is updated in the interest of good design. That wire-glass merely reflects archaic fire-protection regulations.

A delightful note about the Kahn tower is that some enterprising tenant has ordered the windows on his floor moved inward a few feet from the building's face, thus providing both a balcony and interior sun protection. Perhaps other alterations can improve the civility of a tower that has a most admirably safe-and-sound concrete skeleton.

The Home Tower Building is a delight in many ways. Particularly inviting is the clean, trim, free-flowing, money-changing first floor. The most telling points of decoration are the glamorous girl tellers, but distractions aside, the space is well-composed, well-accommodated. Interior lighting is superb here, and in the floors above. Indeed the lighting and air-conditioning are so adroitly combined that engineer George W. Dunn of Frank Hope & Associates, architects, has had national recognition for the installation along with Daybrite Lighting of St. Louis, the suppliers. Double-glazing of greyed glass tempers the sun and does not distemper the views. Architect James Petteway was project head.

There is a Cadillac feel about the U.S. National Bank tower, not quite solid gold but liberally indulging in the gold look. Arnholt Smith's favorite brown tones serve well throughout, but for my taste there is an over dosage of decoration. The Cuyamaca Club, atop the tower, seemed particularly stuffy to me, pretentiously upper-claws English and French. I had a specially guided (and timed) tour of a ladies' touch-up room that was so relentlessly pink I thought I was drowning in face powder, but who am I to judge? Repeatedly, I glanced at pictures on the walls and was offended to notice that they were often shallow "yard goods," perhaps painted by hand but not with much heart. If Arnholt Smith had been so advised, I'm sure he would have been glad to use carefully selected works by San Diegans instead. Replacements can still be made. Also, the public banking floor would be much improved if the rather routine commercial murals found there were replaced by better works, perhaps as a result of open competition.

The U.S. National Bank tower was designed by Denver's Raymond Harry Ervin because Mr. Smith's architectural advisor, Ralph Frank, saw an admirable building of Ervin's. San Diego's Grant King, AIA, was also involved. Mr. Frank advised following the style of the famous Pirelli Building in Milan. As things worked out, there is not much resemblance. Rather U.S. National's jaunty lid suggests an Italian straw hat. But the tower is quite carefully composed. Its greatest distinction is that it bears no lettering whatsoever but relies, instead, on its character to draw attention. Bravo for that Arnholt Smith!

All three towers wear such quantities of imitation gold on their chests as to suggest that San Diego has a gilt complex. Perhaps that's charmingly appropriate in California, the state that made so much of gold, and was made by it. But the U.S. National's tower might have had more dignity if the window mullions were "bronze" instead of "gold" anodized aluminum. The architects wanted bronze. Mr. Smith wanted gold.

Architects for the Home Tower wanted grey exterior panels, Mr. Fletcher wanted gold. The gold they got is not offensive except that it throws a powerful glare into the neighboring Bank of America Building—a misfortune of too close sitting. When the B of A is offended by gold, that's news. Even more strangely, Home Federal was offended by its own gold. The gold-anodized panels, supplied by Reynolds Aluminum, looked fine when laid out on the ground for inspection. However, when installed, they took on

an uneven look. Actually, in the opinion of many, myself included, the unintended unevenness is an improvement, not a blemish.

An even more extraordinary even happier accident occurred to the rear of the Home Tower. Half of the block was cleared and dug up for underground parking. The parking structure was designed to rise several stories above ground as well, but was stopped temporarily at ground level and finished off with enough trees and other landscaping as to *almost* take on the air of a civilized pedestrian plaza. Thus, accidentally, we have a clue to how downtown San Diego can yet achieve design sophisticated enough to be important far into the future. Let me explain.

Instead of building that parking structure high into the air, Home Federal could re-design it to go up about twenty feet above street level, finishing off the top as a real plaza and pedestrian *plaisance*. The neighboring Back of America structure could be chopped down to the same level and similarly made into plaza. Additional parking structures, rising to plaza height, could be built on the two blocks just south. All four blocks could be connected with bridges across the streets. The area would then begin to take on drama and human interest comparable to the best of the shopping centers and so downtown might begin to be in a competitive position with any other area.

While U.S. National Bank is embracing the Community Concourse, Home Federal Savings can embrace the whole of what is known as "South of Broadway," a good half of the downtown to which hardly anything of consequence has happened. Because it has lain so dead, S. of B. is almost like raw ground. A really comprehensive plan for the area would carry pedestrian plaza block after block, until the very edge of the bay was reached. Presto, a *real* bayside downtown!

What we have suggested may sound hopelessly grandiose to those who have not scaled their thinking to the demands of modern crowd-handling. In fact, however, these thoughts are quite in line with the best everyday practice of major architectural firms. The better architects realize that it is inefficient use of space to stack the cars up in high-rise garages. It's like keeping the cow in the living room. The best solutions everywhere, at the present stage of architectural evolution, are the ones that either scoop out the ground for parking space below *or* create a pedestrian mall on top of one or more layers of parking structure. There are many examples. Los Angeles Civic Center is one, though not good in all respects. Century Club, just west of Beverly Hills, is another. Mission Valley Shopping Center is the prize San Diego example.

Now, perhaps, the validity of our complaint about the basic planning of the area north of Broadway becomes evident. U.S. National Bank tower has a very-high-rise parking structure between it and the Convention Hall. Obviously, this is not as good as though parking underlay both buildings so that pedestrians could shuttle between the buildings without encountering cars. As it is, the pedestrian will encounter more cars than ever before in this particular area, and traffic generally at peak hours will be deep purple study in fumes.

The same complaint applies to the parking structure within the Community Concourse. It actually rises above an area that is supposed to be pleasant for pedestrians, but I would not like to be there when all the cars were debouching at once, creating an intense vortex of smog.

Another time, I want to analyze extensively the Community Concourse design. Here I only want to mention that one of the architects involved (not Lloyd Ruocco) told me that the master plan is not good enough to pass a first-year design course in any architectural school. It is my firm impression, confirmed for me by one of the town's senior architects most in a position to know what the others are thinking, that not one of the many architects on Community Concourse believes in his heart that the project is worthy of their profession.

Let it be understood that in spite of the flawed basic planning, efforts are being made to give the Community Concourse character. Particular hopes are held up for the Concert Hall.

The downtown asphalt jungle is a direct result of the larger bungle, the election of inferior representatives to public office. This is not to say that the individuals in office are necessarily incapable of doing more than they have. They probably did what they thought their constituents would support. They did not dare to be creative at the risk of their political scalps.

If City officials failed to lay the groundwork wisely downtown, County and state officials did nothing to help. If the Bureau of Supervisors had set out to build a monument to bureaucratic insensitivity, it could not have been done better than the concrete mass that sprawls across three blocks and does an excellent job of blocking of the bay for a large segment of the downtown. It has none of the traditional courthouse status as central ornament and pride of the community. This one is a symbol of civic poor breeding.

According to columnist Neil Morgan, the blunt San Francisco lawyer, Mel Belli, looked up at the freshly risen San Diego County Courthouse and snorted: "I thought abortions were illegal."

Two judges, one a Republican, one a Democrat told me that the place is very much disliked by their colleagues. Even the judges lounge is far less than they thought they deserved. A common employee reaction is resignation to workaday life in a tasteless beehive. No place for people.

Let me be specific about the courthouse fenestration, for example. Where the building sprawls across streets there are only small hall windows as though to discourage enjoyment of the street scene—and the bay. Where window area is more generous, it is composed of smallish panes and muntins which set up a bedizening optical conflict with the vertical exterior louvers, so that it is more pain than pleasure to sneak a pull at the view. In another area, where windows are not shielded by louvers, it was found that the untinted glass allowed intolerable glare. So, to make matters worse, in time-honored bureaucratic fashion, a green filter film was applied in such a manner that the white light creeps in around the edges, resulting in a new variety of optical torture featuring green and pink after-image. When will architects learn to avoid such optical annoyances?

The State of California did not formally swear to produce a sorrier architectural eyesore than the County, but it succeeded anyway. The gross bulk and gloomy countenance of the new State Office Building oppress the view like a bank of smog that won't go away. Is that any symbol for California? The mismatch of materials adorning the carcass—straw-colored brick, two shades of marble; grey tile sprinkled with multi-color gumdrops—suggests that the main business of state government may be to satisfy lobbyists, in this case building material pushers.

The SOB is one of the many mal-formed creations resulting from the infamous, incestuous interaction of the State Public Works Department's Division of Architecture and the Department of Finance. If California is to have a handsome future such agencies of state government must do better, much better. There has been some recent re-organization, that the results will be better has yet to be shown. California officials have been know to express the view that one should go easy on beauty in public buildings because the taxpayers are likely to interpret beauty as waste. Fortunately, there is a trend to more enlightened thinking among state leaders to the effect that good architecture is good economy, especially in California.

To me, the strongest argument against government control of the economy is the irrefutable fact that government building rarely rises to inspired heights, while private building often does. It is too late now for the federal government to give his first U.S. assignment to Frank Lloyd Wright, the man who will probably tower in history above any other American artist. The late master had only one government commission of any sort—and that was in California, the Marin County Courthouse, quite a different order of conception from that of the San Diego County Courthouse. The latter was designed by a committee—four architectural firms with no one really in charge.

The Marin County Courthouse came into being not without opposition from the public, but it does show that when government is sufficiently motivated it can perform architectural wonders. Some of our

embassies are marvels of the world. And recently President Kennedy has brought a number of the country's top architects to bear on the Washington scene, which has been architecturally dowdy for decades.

It should be clear from all this, and from other evidences throughout this first issue of CALIFORNIA REVIEW that San Diegans cannot afford to let government perform in their region on any level below the best. Government mistakes to date may prove to comprise a major disaster if, largely because of them, the new downtown turns economically sour.

A brilliant architectural friend of mine in Los Angeles, a man involved in some of the major projects there, thinks that land speculators are the real "city planners" of our time. They assemble a large area and then attract some major "traffic generator," preferably a department store so that real estate prices will begin to climb. The local government all too easily goes along with the deal because it may mean a new source of easy taxes. That, of course, is what happened in Mission Valley, in respect to which the City Planning Department had to shelve a superior plan of its own because the City Council was captured by Valley operatives.

It is pertinent to recall some words of Arthur Jessop, a merchant based downtown but who later set up a branch shop in Mission Valley Center: "What we need is a survey as to what is best for the city and not for the merchant. Now San Diego by nature offers the finest spot in the United States for tourists, and tourism is our largest non-government business. The Valley is part of the Planning Department's future plan for the tourist, and we are considering throwing it down the drain. Should a decision be made before considering these consequences, we may as well tattoo the Council walls: THUS DIED PLANNING IN SAN DIEGO. That was in 1958. The consequences were not considered. San Diego city planning is quite possibly in its death agony now. At least Valley operatives are still slipping powders into the political tea.

Certainly not all that's happened in the Valley is bad. Quite the contrary. Much of it is truly for the people, not merely for profits. It would have been much more magnificent if Bullock's had gone into Mission Valley Center. It intended to do so, but did not for the prosaic reason that it was busy at the time, building in Fashion Square in the San Fernando Valley, and could not take on two valleys at once. So Mission Valley got Montgomery Ward on the spot where Bullock's was slated to go.

If Bullock's had gone into Mission Valley it would have meant almost as much benefit for downtown as for the Valley. It would have slowed the flow of business interests northward beyond the Valley. San Diego south of La Jolla would have been assured a long-term role as the center of a metropolis.

Bullock's is definitely coming to San Diego County probably quite soon. A likely site in the eyes of Bullock's surveyors is one that you may never have imagined for the big time, just east of the fairgrounds in Del Mar. The actual land in question may or may not be within the zig-zag boundaries of San Diego. No one in official position professes to know anything about it.

Denizens of Del Mar would only snort if it were suggested that their sylvan suburb might become a metropolitan center. They have just lately furiously batted down the first intimations of "high-rise" in the area. But whether they face the fact or not, they are holding the premium acreage until its time comes for skyscrapers. Fortunately, the town is exceptionally conscious of architectural standards and landscape beauty, it has two or three architects on its planning commission. (San Diego has none.)

Conceivably, even the present moribund County Planning Commission may come to life and realize that the County Fairgrounds could be converted into the world's most amazing civic center while still retaining the fairground function—and, for that matter, the horse-racing which would be a most suitable ornament of a political arena. San Diego County's new courthouse could surpass Marin County's in wonderment.

Would it be more to the interest of the San Diego region if Bullock's could be induced to polarize *two* centers instead of one? *Should* the county divide in two, north and south? It seems to me that the private and public fortunes of the entire region depend very much on getting a strong public policy on this question soon, before Bullock's makes a move that settles things.

Dividing the County in two actually would favor the healthy development of San Diego, all the way from Del Mar to the Mexican border, and it would favor the long-term regeneration of downtown San Diego as a prime business center. San Diego politicians could determine—in the public interest—just where Bullock's should go—then, only—the politicians should assist Bullock's even with free land if necessary.

Is it possible that "South of Broadway" could be redeveloped around Bullock's? Probably not, though it might be the best thing that could happen. The next best possibility is a very good one too: the Midway-Rosecrans area. This is a vast and dreary stretch that has been allowed to degenerate into a confused miscellany of shopping and light industry. Left without direction, it will get worse. But the City Government itself holds the best cards here. It owns a great portion of the area. The City could decide that this is the best place for Bullock's and Robinson's too. The City could master-plan the area in a manner that would make it a good influence in all directions. It would then have an enhancing effect on Mission Bay, Mission Valley, on Old Town (birthplace of California), on Point Loma, and even on downtown. Consider, on the other hand, the dire prospect if Midway-Rosecrans is allowed to drift into increasingly industrial use; then the entire frontage of San Diego Bay will become an industrial belt rivaling the combined ugliness of Hoboken, Newark and Jersey City. You don't think so? Remember: 1) The pressure is now on for enormous acreage of industrial zoning in South Bay, so you would have a pincers working; 2) San Diego Gas & Electric Company has plans for vastly increased power output which will be carried northward along the bay's edge, on huge, unsightly trestles unless the public says no.

If one fully accounts for the increasing role of recreation in American life, let alone the tourist stake in recreation, it is plain that San Diego Bay should be made as safe for recreation as possible without cramping necessary industrial uses. The City Council could set the proper waves in motion by decreeing that a pleasure boat canal could be dug between Mission Bay and San Diego Bay. This would follow roughly the original connection between the two, carved over a period of eons by the San Diego River, which once flowed with visible water. The canal would thus be relatively inexpensive, especially in view of its public benefit extending far beyond the benefit of a new dimension of adventure for boaters. Ideally, the canal should be a picturesque spine around which the Bullock's-Robinson's Center could be developed. Here, too, because of the low elevation, the ground level could be given mostly to parking with a pedestrian deck over all, with handsome architecture sprouting from the deck. In such a situation there might even be room for a great sports palace, in the same sense that racing and fairgrounds could be incorporated into a Del Mar center.

The important thing to bear in mind is that the concept of centers is evolving fast. Only if San Diego is out in front with original planning will it fulfill its destiny. That applies to downtown, it applies to the city, and it applies to the region. Heaven or Hell? You name it.

The mysterious figure of Marj Hyde
The black heart of San Diego
Two on the Isle

Balboa Park in transition: THE BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS (incomplete)

For half a century the most memory-catching sight in San Diego was El Prado in Balboa Park. El Prado, the promenade, was a street full of Spanish-Colonial architecture or whimsical American variations, thereof; most of them left over from the Panama-California Exposition of 1915. Some sections did not amount to much as individual designs, but the whole was so well organized that it gave millions the most unforgettable artistic experience.

If architecture is frozen music, El Prado was a romantic symphony with an intricate classical plan and flamboyant flights of rhetoric. Despite its flimsy construction, not intended to last, it was the grandest vision ever given form on San Diego soil. Also, at 48 years of age, it was a genuine antiquity in local terms. However, like so many mementoes of the past, it occupied valuable real estate. In the summer of 1963

bulldozers moved in and wrecked the whole thing. Appropriately the flimsy structure collapsed almost as fast as a dream vanishes.

The people who ordered the wrecking will accuse CALIFORNIA REVIEW of exaggerating. They will say that only part of El Prado is being altered. If we object that you can't alter part of a symphony without destroying the wholeness of it, they will point out that the exposition's master architect, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, expected most of the structures to be taken down.

True, ironically true. We have the paradox of an architect doing his most captivating work almost in stage-set materials. Because chicken wire and stucco construction didn't cost much, Goodhue could give free reign to design. Besides, his clients, the civic leaders of 1915 who conceived the exposition, were determined to attract the world with an artistic creation. What they got was a skeletal re-creation along lines laid down in the Renaissance. It was none the less, perhaps more, a work of art.

Goodhue did not anticipate that public affection would preserve his dream palaces for decades. Yet, if—before the bulldozing—a vote had been taken on whether to preserve El Prado for the next 500 years or to break it up with new construction of incompatible design, preservations would surely have won. The structures could have been converted gradually into more lasting materials, and probably improved in detail, without appreciably disturbing the rich web of vintage landscaping they did so much to enhance the memorable effect. As it is, the landscaping too is slated for drastic change. Many of the giant eucalyptus trees in the area are marked for the axe.

However, a public vote is no reliable way to foster the art of a community. The art leaders should do the fostering. In this case the art leadership found itself fostering the destruction of San Diego's chief work of art along with the patina of local history. New buildings were needed for the exhibition of art and for related museum activities. There will be two such buildings, one a wing for the existing Fine Arts Gallery, the other a quite separate development under private management, the Timken Gallery. The two are only fair products of the architectural mind. They are not well related to each other, and neither is equal to the spirit of El Prado, though each of the architects claims his is!

The Fine Arts Gallery is a somewhat tired building now, so it may be called FAG. But it is the centerpiece of El Prado. It was planned in the '20s by architect William Templeton Johnson, who adapted the design from the library of the University of Salamanca, carefully relating it to the El Prado complex. It was built by Mr. and Mrs. Appleton Bridges (she was a Timken) and given to the city.

A year ago CALIFORNIA REVIEW'S editor reasoned that the Timken money about to be spent on a new and quite separate gallery might more logically go to the refurbishing and air-conditioning the tired FAG which is perfectly suited to the display of valuable old paintings planned by Timken trustees. The FAG was occupied, however, by a group called the Fine Arts Society, which has been there since the beginning, except for a period during World War II when all park buildings were occupied by the Navy. FAG does not own the FAG, but is there at the pleasure of the City, which offers it rent-free and also contributes substantially to costs of operation.

The editor asked Timken trustee Walter Ames last year if a revitalized FAG would be acceptable instead of a new Timken Gallery. Mr. Ames replied that it might indeed be a good solution, but he was in no position to propose it. The editor then suggested to the Fine Arts Society that it might vacate the FAG and move downtown, where it could do a great deal to enrich a center which was struggling to begin to function with dynamism worthy of a major city. The Society's answer was in effect: we decline.

The Timken Gallery (now under construction) will be quite a bit smaller than originally scaled because its \$1 million budget will go only so far. With sufficient landscaping it may achieve a considerable measure of grace in its park setting. But do you suppose the donor, the late Mrs. Lillian Timken, would be pleased? She once lived in a proud mansion (still standing) at the northwest corner of First and Laurel Streets. It's a fair presumption that El Prado was her favorite San Diego memory-picture while she lived out her later years on New York's Fifth Avenue.

The other building due along El Prado, and requiring the removal of more dream plaster and many eucalypti, is that west wing for expansion of the FAG. The Fine Arts Society has had a hard time raising enough money, largely because there is so much feeling against disrupting El Prado. The resistible force of a fund campaign and the movable object of dreams met head-on.

Some sincere modernists consider El Prado merely a preposterous fake. Perhaps it is—in the same sense that Disneyland is a preposterous fake. This writer happens to believe that a portion of Disneyland, the synthetic Main Street, is the best piece of recent city planning in Southern California, just as El Prado was in 1915. And both are works of art because they synthesize a complex of values into a comprehensive whole. More to the point, perhaps, both have appealed to millions. It's a point worth pondering by San Diego businessmen who want to firm up the city's economic base. They should consider the fullest possible reconstruction—and improvement—of El Prado, the boulevard of broken dreams.

Just as surely as rhythm holds music together, the repetition of arches, arches in varied groupings, which in turn had their own splendid design relationships, is what made El Prado in Balboa Park a moving architectural experience, though most of it was hardly more substantially constructed than Hollywood sets. Incidentally, Orson Welles filmed *Citizen Kane* here because of the Hearstian grandiosity. The destruction shown in several of Dick Snyder's photos makes room for the semi-modern Timken Gallery. When the baroque was broken, swarms of bees assaulted the bulldozers. The middle picture (left) swarms with 'em.

A delayed valentine for Connie

Winter 1963, California Review

OLD TOWN VARIETY

OLD SAN DIEGO is where the Russians invented California. Our simplified version will give the twitch to San Diego's leading history buffs, particularly Jerry MacMullen and Dick Pourade, two eminently cautious former *Union* staffers, but it was the Russians who inspired Spanish soldiers and soul-savers to hot-foot it north from Mexico in 1769 and set up the beginnings of California history, or sub-division, on and in the base of the hill that is a natural watchtower south of the mouth of Mission Valley.

Watching our for Russians was a San Diego specialty then as it is today. If you don't believe it, take this from Pourade's own book, *Time of the Bells* (Union-Tribune Publishing Co., 1961): "To the King of Spain and his commanders, California was to be a shield against the aggression of foreign powers, in particular the Russians, who were creeping down from Alaska, and the English who were . . ." Or this from the Federal Writers' Project's *San Diego* (S. D. Historical Society, 1937): "Russia began an intensive exploration of the Alaskan country. Russian explorers and hunters moved slowly, but steadily down the west coast. Spain awakened suddenly . . ." Then read on in the engrossing operatic history of this special place.

The place is familiarly known as Old Town, but those who would dignify it prefer "Old San Diego." Even better to the ear is "San Diego Antigua," but that perhaps puts too much emphasis on the Spanish because the area is really a compendium of all San Diego history, not only the Spanish. It was the first "downtown" of San Diego, and the first settlement in California, save for the Indian.

While downtown San Diego strains to build itself a worthy character, Old Town already has an endearing personality, pretty much in spite of itself. If it merely stayed the way it is today, for all its jumble and confusion, it would still deepen its charm just because so much of the metropolis growing up around it is dulled by uniformity. What a jumble! Only the merest traces of the original settlement remain. Nothing there is as much as 200 years old and very little is over 100, but the erratic efforts of recent decades to recollect the past have produced a delectable smorgasbord of American variations on an historical theme, sung in falsetto, out-of-tune, off-beat but adding up to a sort of outdoor museum of pop culture, some of it

touched with nobility, much of it with pathos, all of it a breathing evidence of man's stumbling course onward and upward. Just thinking of it mixes our metaphors.

CALIFORNIA REVIEW takes especial pleasure in presenting what is probably the most authentic historical monument in Old San Diego, completely stocked with exactly the right accessories to reflect the life of its time and, in fact, still doing business as usual. The Old Town Variety Store is not self-consciously period-piece. It just got that way by the passage of time and the advent of new shopping habits. It remains a pure example of the village store, Late Middle Twentieth Century. If it could be deep-frozen as is, it would be an object of surprising wonder a century hence. It should, however, yield its site for a reconstruction more in keeping with the spot's past. It is supported today by a genuine village population living for the most part in quite modest homes, though they find themselves now surrounded by booming city. An objective observer could not say that most of the homes deserve to stay, but the homeowners could say so—and probably would unless sufficient money talked a different future for the area.

Money could talk very big in Old San Diego if it were smart. The village-within-the-city is just the right size to develop for the greater glory of San Diego's economy, a visitor-attraction combining the wallop of Williamsburg and the popularity of Disneyland. This comes clear to anyone who takes the trouble to survey the scene. Less clear is whether forces can be gathered to do the thing right.

The first big effort to build in a manner that showed appreciation of the historical background was a massive failure. The Roman Catholic Church on San Diego Avenue at Twiggs Street was designed by a priest, the very one who performed marriage rites for the girl who became the prototype of Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona*—if our history is on straight. The bearded and beloved Father Antonio Ubach meant well indeed. He wanted the church to say something intelligent in Spanish. He studied the graceful features of the California missions before compiling his design in 1868. The church was a half-century getting built, and somewhere along the line the spirit fled so that it is a decidedly ugly example today, presiding over San Diego Antigua by bulk merely, not by grace—and proving that architectural design requires control by architectural mind. Uglier by far is the neighboring convent, which really ought to be torn down when conditions permit. The venerated church itself needs thorough re-design.

More effectively in scale with Old San Diego is the Machado Chapel or Community Church, which gains in beauty because of the heedless way that it stands in the middle of traffic, causing its own private jog in the road. If one is walking, like the two dignified people in our photo (*opposite*), the chapel can be appreciated as a true village property, but too many cars rip through and erase the walkers or at least dissipate the mood. The writer cannot honestly recommend a visit inside the chapel because it is dominated by an atrocity—a trick figure of Christ that seems to turn its head and follow you as you pass. That's not religion. That's sideshow hokum. Christ should not be presented as the village idiot. But the chapel is one of the real adobes built around a dusty plaza in the early days.

If the pictured lady and gentleman got safely across busy San Diego Avenue, they may have sat down for rest and reminiscence in that plaza, now a framed masterpiece of the landscape art, tall with trees. The plaza is called Washington Square, reflecting the arrival of the Yankees against whom the Spanish-derived population was not sufficiently watchful. Justly enough, the plaza is essentially English in landscape though based on an old Spanish custom.

The City of San Diego maintains the Square-Plaza decently, but the same city perpetrated another plaza nearby that is marvelously meaningless. See the sad expanse of pink concrete at the corner of Mason and Calhoun Streets, then ask your mayor, Why?

As in downtown, so in Old Town, the State of California has achieved a more misfit monument to bureaucracy than anything the city government has done. The State Division of Highways building facing on Taylor Street is neither Spanish nor modern in an architectural sense. It is rather, architecturally senseless. The pink and pistachio intrusion is distinguished by a surround of rich landscaping, though not enough to hide the blunder. It should never have been built where it is. It takes the place of an old olive factory that should have been retained for color and flavor. It would have made an appealing craft center.

Even now an addition is going up, making the State building even more intrusive upon the precious acres of California's "birthplace." Also, as befits an auto-intoxicated agency, the Highway Division has just bought up a whole adjacent block and converted it into a parking lot, surrounded by that very tissue of ugliness, chain-link fence. The property happened to have a profusion of well-grown trees, but they only manage to look silly rising out of a sea of parked cars. (*Please see photo, page 20.*)

The Division of Highways could have given a choice piece of that lot facing on Washington Square to the City, which in turn could have reconstructed there one of the old adobes. The City was prepared to give the State an equal piece of ground also adjacent to the lot, but the State was too cumbersome to move on the matter.

The Division of Highways has plans that will further cripple Old Town by belting it with yet another freeway. Their new route for U.S. 101 will cut off the western edge of the "village." A better plan would be to double-deck the present 101, which is several hundred feet further west. Such a plan would probably cost no more, because there would be no land-acquisition cost, but it would be a little more trouble for the clumsy State machinery. It could mean a vast economic bonus to San Diego.

Lying between present 101 and the railroad tracks that are the logical west boundary of Old Town is disused Convair Plant Two, which could be replaced by several decks of parking to accommodate the crowds which will be attracted if a new Old Town is adequately conceived. Bridges would sweep the crowds over the rails and there below, on side trackage, might be a permanent exhibit embracing the story of the iron horse as it applied to the growth of California, dramatizing, for example, the high hope days when San Diego almost became the major port south of San Francisco, complete with rail lines to the east.

Does that paragraph offer too much to aim for? It may be argued that nothing less will work. Old San Diego will have no important future unless some way is found to keep all motor traffic out of the village streets. Old Town must become a happy place for pedestrians, with perhaps a fleet of silent "electrics" for the hard-of-walking. The lesson of Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm is that the American car-borne will do a healthy amount of foot-work if there is enough of interest to draw them on.

The point is that Old San Diego can be a much higher-grade crowd-gatherer than either D-land or the Farm, because it can offer the genuine along with the synthetic. The mixture can be quite a rich entertainment. One of the chief satisfactions is sorting out the real from the fake. That process is in itself an education.

Perhaps we have already made clear, in our pictures if not in our words, that Old San Diego, with not nearly enough investment help, has been trying for years to shape itself as an attraction. Each owner of an historical property tends to go his own way, which in itself adds to the richness of American folkways represented. This writer finds it quite American that a tycoon named Spreckels, yes, the sugar daddy, rebuilt the Estudillo House in 1910 to attract customers for his trolley line that ran there from *new* San Diego. Of course, the Ramona legend was twisted to fit the action, so that to this day the building bears the profitable false witness on its façade in foot-high letters "Ramona's Marriage Place."

The Bandini House, like the neighboring Estudillo, built of adobe in the 1820's, has been through several changes of life and is presently richly grained with stucco-Spanish. Down the street is Casa de Pico, same ownership, same stucco, a lovely motel for the quiet-minded. Down the street again, same stucco, same ownership, is El Nopal, a restaurant lately closed. The three border the plaza and comprise a certain effort to form a Spanish village, a Spanish comeback on Washington Square.

From the square-plaza south on San Diego Avenue are, in turn, the Pedrorena, the Altamirano, and the Whaley houses. The Pedrorena is well-known as Manuel's, easily spotted in the night by its flamboyant flambeaux. The Mexican food served in the patio is a joy at modest prices. The above of 1838 is still there, though considerably obscured by a mixture of embellishments. The Altamirano was built of wood by Pedrorena for his daughter when she married. She did not get far from home: the two homes are not five feet apart, though built at a time when land was no problem. Possibly their closeness reflects war apprehensions. The two certainly reflect the changeover from a Mexican to an American town. Pedrorena

himself shifted from the Mexican to the American side during the war. The Altamirano has additional distinction as the first office of *The San Diego Union*, yet it is on the verge of obliteration by termites. Mrs. Thelma Fields Bull owns both. It would be ideal if she would work out the dignified restoration of both with the help of *Union* publisher James Copley.

On the west side of town, and in need of moving if Freeway 101 comes as now planned, is another aged adobe doing a glowing business as the Candle Shop. It is an example of appropriate business for Old San Diego. Like that other Old Town original, Flea Market West, it has helped colonize Mission Valley Center, setting up related activities there, following oddly enough the same course as the early padres who first settled Old Town and then moved into the valley.

Mrs. Joe Flynn owns the candle shop business, but the adobe is now owned by banker, Arnholt Smith, who has bought additional property nearby and indicated an interest in developing a "Little Olvera Street" activity of antique village shops. This would mean a new round of fakery or it could mean something much better than the popular Olvera Street in Los Angeles. Every encouragement should be given to maximum authenticity, either in restoration of existing remnants or in new construction following old records of what was in the distinguished area.

An exemplary job of loving reconstruction was done in the Pendleton House by wealthy Ned Guymon, who whisked the remnants of his tennis court in Mission Valley, where he salvaged every possible board and supplied the missing ones carefully cut in the same manner. It is said that the Pendleton was something of a "pre-fab," having been partially constructed in Maine and shipped piecemeal around Cape Horn. It is also an early example of the California picture window looking out on the wrong view, for smack in the window comes a porch column.

In good humor we offered Old Town Variety Store as the most authentic slab of history in Old San Diego, but, seriously, the honor belongs to Whaley House, built in 1857 of hand-made bricks and rebuilt a century later with funds supplied by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. This one, like the Pendleton just behind it, is totally un-Spanish in design and contents. Whaley, born in New York City, rushed California in '49 along with a few others. It took him 204 days around the Horn, but that was typical of the San Diego tie to the east coast then. Furnishings of the house also came the long route—to various families whose heirs donated them to this historical "shrine."

We have touched on only a few of the historical landmarks in this area. To get the fuller picture, take the salubrious walking tour of Old Town which can be arranged through the Whaley's amiable supervisors, June and James Reading. It's something of a psychic compensation for Jim Reading to conduct walking tours, for his career was spent wrestling autos as city traffic engineer. The Readings are the best-informed best-available question-answerers about Old San Diego, though they will refer you to other experts.

It should be clear that Old San Diego's only proper future is as a medley of quite dissimilar elements. The one cement that can hold them together is that they all be required to speak lines from the America past. The only "modern" architecture should be such as the remarkable office building designed by Homer Delawie, which, because of its simplicity, its glassiness and its landscape compliment, is unobtrusive, even seems to belong to centuries.

The whole area of Old San Diego should be declared an historical shrine without further delay, and all changes should be required to comply with a master plan. Before the collective back of Old Town stiffens, let us add that the plan must be broad enough to allow real freedom for enterprising landowners in the shrine acres, so long as they do not further diminish our heritage.

A master plan was made in 1946 by Charles Eliot, who for all his Boston blue blood, went heavily for the Spanish idiom. But property owners would have none of it. Stagnation was in the saddle, posing but not budging, when Eliot cried: "Today [1940's] Old Town is awake; change and development is in the air."

In 1963, the Junior League of San Diego found itself making a major project of saving Old San Diego. Between running chores for their children, the smart matrons are building a model of the pre-Whaley town to be placed in Presidio Park's Serra Museum. The model will be ready in March when the League brings the National Trust to town for an important conference that may be the beginning of a worthy approach to a master plan.

Our suggestion is that the master plan encourage the moving into Old Town of selected period-pieces of architecture from any part of San Diego County where such pieces are faced with destruction. Also, we suggest that new residential construction in this area, as well as remodeling, be such as to attract a great variety of artists, giving the place a touch of Greenwich Village or Provincetown to further enrich the mix.

The master plan will work best, of course, if activated by the right kind of investment money. Urban renewal doesn't have a chance, and it is likely to be stuffy anyway. San Diego financial institutions surely could set up a special loan operation for worthy projects in the area. They might even invest heavily themselves or attract investment by insurance companies. New England Mutual, for example, already distinguished for its investment in Baldwin Hills Village (Los Angeles) could be approached to invest in the California town that was so much a New England settlement. Whatever the money procedures, property owners in Old Town should be given every opportunity to become shareholders in the immensely promising future of Old San Diego.

Meanwhile, it remains a struggle for those who care. A committee of Citizens Coordinate is trying to buy up a junky patch on Taylor Street and convert it to a handsome entrance for Presidio Park. If they can't raise the needed \$69,000, Shell Oil may grab it for a service station. Now, Shell has shown a degree of interest in designing stations that look well in the community. Let the well-endowed company show its spirit further by buying the site and giving it to the City of San Diego. If, then, there is room for unobtrusive gassing of facilities, let Shell hold the nozzle, and pay rent in lieu of taxes.

It cannot be emphasized too much that the immense corporate wealth of this country has a responsibility to protect the important evidence of the country's course through the centuries. Old San Diego is such a piece of evidence—uniquely.

I give you Presidio

George Marston (*left*) did not say, "I give you" when he in deed gave Presidio Park (*above*) to San Diego in 1929. He did say of it: "About 1850 all the land was subdivided into square blocks and straight streets, in the best American style, without regard to hills or canyons. For another 60 years it was in the hands of various owners. In the last 20 years all these separate pieces of property have been acquired by one person for the purpose of preserving the historic ground, Plymouth Rock of the Pacific."

Our photo shows the straight-line streets of Old Town (*lower left*) and a section of straight-line streets in Mission Hills (*right*), Marston had all the straight lines in between erased in favor of contour roads. The winding residential streets to the right of the park were developed by Marston, supported by many owners.

Marston described the park, which was the proudest work of his life and his most important public gift, "Presidio is a unique park ground . . . In its natural state the whole area was picturesque, its hills and little valleys having been molded by time and the elements into forms and contours of natural beauty . . . The builders have sought to preserve its inherent forms . . . Presidio marks the Spanish Catholic settlement of the West in contrast to the mainly Protestant settlements of the East . . . Let me mention the main features that illustrate the park's historical character: the cross near the site of the first mission church; the Mounds that mark the presidio [garrison] boundary; the Franciscan garden burial place; the oldest tree [palm] in California planted by white men [since felled]; Fort Stockton Hill, a landmark of the Mexican War." The following photos show only a few of the ever-changing yet grandly unified views within the park. Explore! Explore!

Most of the development work in Presidio Park was done by Marston at his own expense. Included was the construction of the Junipero Serra Museum, which looms so often in our photo studies of the noble place. Planner John Nolen, architect William Templeton Johnson and landscape wizard Roland Hoyt were much involved in the conception, but the guiding designer and spiritual adviser was George Marston. It is to be especially noted that he, a zealous Protestant layman, produced a major monument to early Catholic action. (*The Indian*, page 31, and *The Padre*, page 33, are bronzes by Arthur Putnam, provided by Robert P. Scripps.)

Astoundingly, the donor had a hard time getting the City to accept the park! For eleven years after '29 he was still pouring his own money into it. The city today is still laggard about such things, disastrously so. City planners have nursed the idea of giving the park to the state with the thought that the state might declare Old Town an historic preserve, too, and thus save it from further decay.

Marston was not smug about his great gift. He said: "It is only the beginning of what ought to be done. At the foot of the hill there are a score of historic houses and places. The Old Camino Real begins here and runs of the valley to the ruins of the San Diego Mission and the oldest olive orchard in California. The shores of the bay along Point Loma are rich in traditions of discovery and adventure. Just north of us the beautiful Mission Bay awaits its transformation into an aquatic park. Is it not possible to develop all these several parts into an harmonious whole that will picture to every visitor and to ourselves the wonderful story of our discoverers and our pioneers?"

That was in 1929. What has been done since 1946, when George Marston died and the postwar boom overpowered the cities? Cows don't stand in Camino Real anymore as they did in '29 (*see below*). Padre Serra would be arrested now if he tried to cross the freeway-ridden valley on foot. Mission Bay has been handled effectively, but Point Loma, Old Town and the old mission still need much attention. Would that more San Diegans had a bit of the old Marston in them.

View from Presidio
The late George Marston
The Art Center of Controversy

Spring 1964, California Review, Vol. 2, No. 2.

The Pre-Incarnation of Burt Lancaster 4
Ed Fletcher's Masterpiece 5

Gangling handsomely and only lightly brushed by schooling, Ed Fletcher of Massachusetts came to San Diego at the age of 15 in 1888. Immediately he embraced the entire county as his heaven-sent province, casing it on foot, by cycle, at the reins and, in due season, behind the wheels of the county's hardest-driven autos. Great quantities of land went through his business hands over the years which he crowned with election as a state senator.

More than most operators of the land, Ed Fletcher concerned himself with the ever-increasing demand for water. "Blood of the soil," he called it. "Soil of the blood," one might say in accounting for the emotional wars fought over the stuff. Fletcher's activity in channeling mountain streams to the centers of growing population as a private enterprise roused the municipality of San Diego to claim the waters in a prolonged suit during which it became clear that conservative San Diego actually started life as a socialist community! This and other struggles of the water wars are explained in our Subscriber's Supplement. *Please see page 32.*

Ebullient Ed Fletcher produced an extraordinary family which easily ranks as the most interesting in San Diego history. Seven sons (above) and three daughters each in turn produced an average of three children and so on and on, with most of the family settling substantially into the life of the county, smiling and graceful like the eucalyptus which Ed also nurtured.

Surprisingly, the man of action produced too an insufficiently noticed masterpiece of American literature, *Ed Fletcher's Memoirs* is as personal and heartfelt as the Watts Towers of Simon Rodia. It is as packed with epigrams of Americanism as the canvases of Grandma Moses. It compares with *The Education of Henry Adams* by being its exact opposite, the action pole as against the thought pool. It is a rougher, insufficiently edited *Huckleberry Finn* written by Huck himself. It is Attic or Homeric in its sweep, presenting the Salesman as Hero, a mixture of Jason and Odysseus adventuring among the snake-headed and the one-eyed, a man to match mountains—probably a seeker and finder of the Golden Fleece.

“Salesman” is the key word. Ed Fletcher rose to be a business triumph in the American scene because he was better at the devices of salesmanship than most around him. Olympian good looks was no disadvantage. Above all, his embracing personality jacked him high among the well-liked, and he returned the favor to a fare-well. The word “friend” appears often in *Ed Fletcher's Memoirs*, but the very excess proves Colonel Ed's command of a time and place in which moderation could not possibly prevail. Of course he made mistakes—and enemies. The people who today recall him as “controversial” are thinking blue, not by any means pink. His historical importance is as San Diego's prime example of Activisticus Americanus, and that's what makes his book important too. A vital force, Ed Fletcher.

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THE CROWN OF FIFTH AVENUE (above and below) Hillcrest North Medical Center in San Diego is a remarkably successful building in many respects though short-falling in important ways. Its site is an architect's dream, directly centered at the end of Fifth Avenue, which is now being thought of as the Wilshire Boulevard, or prestige parade ground of San Diego. Designer William Lewis picked up the great idea of LeCorbusier that a big building should be raised on stilts so that it doesn't stop the eye from enjoying the low of landscape. Further analysis of this imposing addition to the urban scene is in the Subscriber's Supplement. *Please see page 32.*)

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January 10, 1964, San Diego Union, B-2:7. James Britton deplores loss of “forest” near Old Globe Theatre.

January 21, 1964, San Diego Union, B-2:8. James Britton again protests removal of 50 park trees.

1964—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** no entry for James Britton

Timeline: March 21, 1964—Sea World opens on 22 acres of Mission Bay Park land

1965, California Review, Britton, James N. The art of living in La Jolla / Designed and written by James Britton; with photos (except as noted) by John Waggaman.

1966—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas. (Eliz.), h. 1154 12th Ave.

1967—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** James (Eliz.), h. 1154 12th Ave.

1967. [San Diego] Old Town State Historic Park established

1968—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** James (Eliz.), h. 1154 12th Ave.

1968. A modified General Plan as a guide for the growth of San Diego approved after it had been defeated two years before.

SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE, March 1968, V. 20-5 to _____

May 1968 to September 1968—no articles under byline of James Britton

October 1968, San Diego Magazine, New Heights for Logan Heights, by James Britton.

(Mr. James Britton, a former Associate Editor of San Diego Magazine, is presently working for the American Institute of Architects as a special architectural journalist in Washington, D.C. “This ghetto of San Diego,” he says, “cries out to be discovered again as the best part of town.”)

You, Mr. and Mrs. Federal Taxpayer, have just put through Congress \$5 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development to spend, and HUD Secretary Robert Weaver said thank you. He called it “a giant step toward making life better.”

Well, that depends. The U.S. government has spent billions in the past on housing, and obtained results which, for the most part, are regarded as disastrous by experts and by people who live in the housing. There are exceptions, but U.S. policy toward city-building has been a very large failure. Look at the cities.

HUD means to do better, and one of its more hopeful programs is called Model Cities. The term itself is misleading though not intentionally so (despite what some darksters think of the federal government). The intention of the program is to come to grips with the most decaying area of each selected city where dwell the poorest—usually Negroes, usually about 10 percent of the population but sometimes much more—and elevate the standard of living and the character of the environment to a state of general satisfaction. All varieties of social necessities are to be harmoniously interwoven, and the plans are to provide “new and imaginative” solutions.

There are a number of reasons why this federal program may not have the hoped-for success, and the main reason is that as a nation we are too loose-witted, and our built-in divisiveness is so well reflected by Congress. The original thought back of Model Cities was to make a truly great model of *one* city as proposed by architect Oscar Stonorov. But it was inconceivable that Congressmen would pass appropriations to perfume one city while their own hometowns continued to give off vapors of decay. So the program evolved to distribute funds to seventy-five cities (including hometowns of especially strategic Congressmen) in the first year of grants, 1967, with a similar number of prospectuses this year.

The San Diego City Planning Department and the city has just received an appropriation of \$242,000 for a starter. The area covered in the study includes a large segment of Logan Heights, a part of Golden Hill and (down toward the Bay) a rugged strip called Harbor 101. It is a triangular or even heart-shaped area of 1360 acres (only 813 acres is covered by the grant) more or less bounded by State Highway 94, Interstate Highway 5 and Wabash Boulevard. Because its mostly Logan Heights, let’s call it that.

The San Diego application states, or understates, about the area: “Many influential families once lived there.” Indeed, it was the best part of town. It still is! Disregard for a moment its clutter of worn-out houses, and regard it as a piece of geography. What a piece of ground is this! Handsomely rolling terrain with a number of high points offering spectacular views of San Diego’s vivid Bay, with its dynamic mix of maritime and naval heavies lightly interlaced by darling pleasure craft. In truth it is a most interesting site for a community than treasured La Jolla.

This ghetto of San Diego cries out to be discovered again as the best part of town. It could happen only if, somehow, the program of development for the area were lifted far above the level of present thinking. The Model Cities application offers a good base, but it is only that. It is too practical to be sound,

too realistic to make sense for the kind of future America needs. I submit: What is needed is a deliberate intention on the part of darling people to see that the so-called ghetto of San Diego be invested with the money and brains and spirit (and yes, soul) to create the best in-city living available anywhere across America. In order to compensate—overcompensate if you will—for our despicable history of flushing the Negro into the worn-out slums of ill-conceived cities, it would be good for our social psyches to make a complete change-about and guarantee the black the absolute best of transformations.

This means bringing to bear on Logan Heights a much better grade of urban development than exists anywhere in the San Diego metropolis, and hardly exists anywhere else in the world. One might think it could be done only by reaching out for some famous star of an architect, but I am sure the genius to do it could be assembled in San Diego from among the architects and other design talents presently working here. The most qualified agency to organize and oversee the project is the San Diego Chapter, American Institute of Architects. If that group has the *will* it can rescue San Diego from its current drift into the blahishness that afflicts so many cities. AIA's job is to bring forward the town's design talent at its utmost potential, regardless of age, belongingness or bank balance. Anything less will be a betrayal of architecture's opportunity. The challenge really is to, by and act of strenuous will, by-pass the remainder of the Twentieth Century and plan for the Twenty-first, when, of course, the world will have come of age.

For purposes of coherent design, the land in question must be regarded as one unit. It will be necessary to convince many homeowners in Logan Heights that upgrading the area *in toto* will do *them* more good than the mean little habit of holding on to a chunk in the hope of making some kind of killing. People with that habit already have had their killing. They've killed every city in America. Now their only reasonable prospect of cleaning up is that their cities, properly designed for once, will develop sound bases of prosperity.

If Black Power is to be constructive, the ghetto residents can demand a share in the ownership of the site on which the ghetto exists. Pressure of this kind actually is occurring in many places. A *fair* co-operative could be devised giving proportionate ownership shares to everyone, black or white, who has paid either taxes or rent in Logan Heights up to the present.

Assuming that we are over the hurdle, what is the design possibility of Logan Heights? Architects of San Diego recognize the virtues of the site. Several to whom I have talked lit up like Christmas trees as they responded to the potential. The first consideration is to develop a formula whereby vehicles and pedestrians will be separated as much as possible, and cars will be kept out of sight. The hill-and-dale terrain of Logan Heights would permit extensive parking structures in the hollows, covered by platforms from which all manner of city building could rise. Hilly parts also could have buildings, but they should be particularly rich in park-like development with plenty of trees. These park stretches could accommodate a number of choice Victorian structures now in the area which are deserving of preservation as an echo of San Diego history.

At present, Logan Heights is brutally cut off from its priceless asset, the Bay, by one of the most relentless of freeways, Interstate 5, whose special distinction is that it zips vast hordes of lemmings all the way from Los Angeles to Tijuana, where they take a bath and return by the same route. In this day when the space above freeways is being discovered for building sites, it will be no problem to bridge the freeway so that tomorrow's zestful pedestrian may walk from the center of the Heights to the water's edge. Some of the industrial usages and naval holdings there can make room for recreational enjoyment by the community. One of the enjoyments presently available, and truly rewarding, is simply to stroll or sit and contemplate the majestic industrial structures which exert their presence along the water, or in the water. One way to enlarge recreation space would be simply to deck over the lesser low-lying warehouse structures which naturally accumulate bayside. A particularly heady challenge for designers of the new Logan Heights is to lasso the smell from the area's tuna-packing plants, which itself is enough to turn an area into a slum. Only when that cat-calling smell no longer wafts over the ghetto will the ghetto have been transformed into a Model Community that can set San Diego on a course worthy of its natural promise.

Housing must be the main type of building in the Model Community, and it doesn't really matter whether this is high-rise or sprawling so long as it is subtly human in appeal, not all barracks-like. The

objective must be to produce multiple housing of such character that people will prefer it to private boxes set in private patches of weeds. It must be so good that *anyone* would desire to live there. But, because of its origin in a ghetto, the number of its non-black residents should be limited to forty percent—for a very good reason which will be explained later in this article.

It may well appear that in dreaming of new heights for Logan Heights I am merely munching away on pie-in-the-sky. What's the economic base for all this? What justification? In answer, please consider the new-found voice of the Negro saying: "We aren't going to let the white man give us any more handouts. We're *taking* power." Well, the Negro *has* taken power in America. He has taken control over the future of cities. He occupies the choicest real estate of the old cities, which *must* be renewed. He is not going to leave, and he should not be trapped into accepting any half-baked plans or the tensions never will resolve.

In many of the old city ghettos select—Harlem, for instance—citizens actually favor rehabilitation of the soggy, ill-conceived tenements rather than new buildings, because they have had so much bad experience with new buildings. That is an extremely hard-knot to unravel. In San Diego's ghetto-select, there is so little rehab possible that receptivity to new building on a really worthy design standard should be easily obtained. And if the new building is of high conceptual quality, but only then, it will not be a handout but a smiling victory of Black Power with benefits for all.

Needless to say, Logan Heights cannot by itself generate the flow of money to do the big thing. But it should not be hard to convince investment bankers, like Goodbody and Company (which is pushing a "Capital market plan" for the ghetto) that Logan Heights, so closely set in the California boom, is an especially good risk. Furthermore, there is a new and very important source of economic help shaping up just over the horizon in Los Angeles. I refer to the singular work of Professor Morris Asimow of UCLA faculty in economics. Professor Asimow is almost like Edison discovering the light bulb, as he illuminates the air with descriptions of this inventive approaches to solving the problems of the poor. To start with, he is already world-famous as the originator of Meals for Millions, which is essentially a matter of spiking common foodstuffs with powerful proteins, like the muscle in Popeye's spinach. What an economist! A genius for our time of travail.

Professor Asimow's nutritional innovations can benefit major segments of the world population, but he has another set of ideas that could be equally revolutionary in the care and feeding of urban futures. His basic motivation is to make free enterprise work better than ever. Professor Asimow told me: "We have to give people options. That's really a definition of freedom. People who live in ghettos should have the option of rebuilding the ghetto or building a complete new environment. Wealthy people have that option, of course, and so we see new towns springing up. We have to think of new cities that provide opportunities for low-income people to rise on the socio-economic scale. If we accept that premise, and we start expanding the statement of need, we quickly discover that how people earn a living is a very important central consideration. This must become one of the major premises for design of the new city. The kinds of jobs possible have to be designed into the system.

"You find that the seemingly easy answer, branch plants of large corporations is almost impossible because big industry can't generate enough branch plants to satisfy the thousands of communities competing for them. Besides, big business tends to inhibit enterprise—educational or otherwise. Channels should be opened for *small* business enterprise, while maintaining the lower unit costs of big business. This can be achieved, surprisingly, in doing something which resembles what you do with computers. Computers can be shared. A number of medium-sized companies can share a computer. They don't need it sufficiently to warrant owning one.

"It's possible to set up a middle-man-agreement that can be shared by a number of small companies. It's a concept I've been trying to develop with the help of some of my students, giving it a name, *shared middle-management*. It seems to me that if you are able—and that's a big if—to assemble 100 to 200 small companies, companies that employ 50, 100, 150 people, these can afford a magnificent middle-management organization jointly.

“Now to create a new community, a new kind of community, we’d build it around industry, enterprise. Suppose we go down a typical ghetto street. Perhaps we’d find a little decrepit-looking store in which upholstery is repaired, tables are mended, and so on. Maybe on another ghetto street we’d find another little shop like that. Maybe there are ten of them. Suppose three or four or five of them became interested when you approach them with the concept of pooling together their artisanship and at least their primitive entrepreneur skill. It might be possible to start a furniture manufacturing plant. The skeleton is there. But they’re going to need guidance. More important than anything else if that new company is to be started, it will need backup of the kind of middle-management organization I talked about. Much small manufacturing could be generated this way, and the same principles could be applied to commercial enterprises—food stores, clothing stores and so on.

“Out of these little business people in the ghetto it is possible to form the kind of enterprise I am talking about. And it’s this kind of enterprise that can make the heart of the new community that provides opportunity for low-income people to rise on the socio-economic scale, to live better, to belong. Starting with that as a nucleus, you can design the rest of the city. The opportunities for imagination and ingenuity are unlimited.”

Professor Asimov had equally got germinal thoughts on where the money might come from to get such enterprises started, and to build anew. Said he: “You know there are so many investment clubs that toy around buying stocks here and there. Now, among people of good will, and I believe a very large fraction of our population are people of good will—I think it’s possible to develop investment clubs whose investments are made in the kind of socially elevating enterprise I have been talking about, and they could turn out to be very profitable. Then, of course, universities which show signs of taking up these matters in a big way could make very big moves. Universities can attract enough donors to make possible, for example, the purchase of enough land—say 3000 or 4000 acres at a cost of perhaps \$6,000,000—to provide a site for the complete community we have been considering. The university could lease the land to the community and realize in perpetuity an income which could be committed to an institute devoted to the cultivation and protection of urban quality.

“One more thing,” said Professor Asimov, in capping his several climaxes: “the ghetto community in my opinion should not remain all black, but I was doubtful as to the reception that idea might be, so I checked with Black Power leaders among the students at UCLA. Their attitude was that the black community must be assured in any neighborhoods they predominantly build and that with such an understanding, others would be welcome.”

In the light of Professor Asimov’s thought, perhaps we can see pieces assembling in Logan Heights. Non-black residency should not exceed forty percent. Industry should be built in, doing away with unemployment in the community (but immigration would have to be controlled by community agreement as to the desirable number of dwelling units). Educational forces of the San Diego region must be very much involved as a sort of consortium of UCSD, San Diego State, California Western and the University of San Diego, even the San Diego City Schools could form the institution of which Professor Asimov spoke. If necessary, the consortium could buy the land, allot shares of ownership with community agreement, and guarantee the continuity. And the assembled educators could infiltrate the community with educational facilities affording every possible opportunity for personal escalation of all residents. They even could sparkplug the action in the first place by providing funds for the design studies under AIA direction, which is so fundamental.

Government, of course, would play what role it could within its limitations. Bureaucracy will have to give way to imaginative flexibility. HUD should be extremely interested in helping a project that was really fulfilling what all good HUD’s men profess. HEW, OEO, and all welfare agencies should recognize and bless a creative effort, even one which eventually would wipe out the agencies’ need for existence. Rent supplements would be needed for a period, but not forever.

Preparedness will pay off. A ripe plan will have many prospects of attracting massive investment money at the moment when war business suddenly dries up. Then many of the giant war-contract industries will be shifting to production of super components for city building, offering prefabrication on a hitherto

unheard of scale, the planning for Logan Heights should take this into account. General Dynamics, Rohr, Ryan and other San Diego industrial majors should come forward easily to accelerate the progress of Logan Heights.

Before long you may expect to see much publicity about a new power-packed agency called the Urban Institute, sprung from a marriage of government and private business, fathered by HUD with a \$3,000,000 allotment just for its silver spoon and swaddling clothes. The Urban Institute is expected to be a prodigy capable of outthinking everybody else and coming up with those elusive “new and imaginative” solutions for urban problems. Its endorsement of a project may be expected to channel floods of investment money. The board of trustees includes intimate with the big movers of big money: Arjay Miller, Robert McNamara, Edgar Kaiser, Erwin Miller, Eugene Fubini (of IBM). Executive director is William Gorham, formerly of Rand Corporation. If it succeeds in hiring sufficient talent, the Urban Institute will usher in a new excellence for America. At any rate, it will not be playing with marbles. It will be extremely interesting if any city breaks through the miasma of mediocrity, and exhibits a really workable plan for a better future. Also, not to be overlooked is the emerging pattern of investment and initiative by national black leadership reinforced by new proposals in the Senate to foster black ownership and enterprise.

Anyone for Logan Heights? Or is this article merely fantasy? Is it absurd to think of San Diegans stirring from their infatuation with the gently kissing climate, determined to assure the future of the haves by vanquishing the problem of the have-nots? Anyone for Logan Heights?

1969-70—**POLK’S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.) RETD., h. 1154 12th Ave.

August 1969, San Diego Magazine, **Harold Keen Sails into Mission Bay** (This article introduced in this collection go give an additional slant to the problems of Mission Bay, other than those addressed by critic James Britton.)

CAPTION: Above, green, attractively landscaped, new swimming playground and boating coves were opened this Summer along U.S. 5. Futuristic building in left center is the new Information Center. Pereira Report suggests new high-rise tower to be confined to southeastern section of the park, along “5”, adjoining the Hilton’s new tower (extreme left). Below. Islandia Hotel, considered by many to be the bay’s most successful architectural achievement, may soon sprout what many fear to be an aesthetically incompatible high rise.

The Pereira Plan is in and battle lines are forming

Should Mission Beach be a string of high rise? . . . or of low rise?

Should automobiles be kept out of “Pereira’s Spine”?

Should more hotels be built in the aquatic park?

Should Ventura Bridge be scrapped, and a big multi-million-dollar bridge built over the Bay entrance?

The miraculous transformation of Mission Bay’s tidal marshes, swamps and sand dunes into a 4,250 acre aquatic playground—largest of its kind in the world and one of the most aesthetically pleasing—has been accomplished with inevitable growing pains, none of which may have been as acute as those about to be generated by the \$55,680 Master Plan recommendations of William L. Pereira and Associates.

A sounding of the Park and Recreation Board Facilities Committee, which has been conducting emergency meetings to scrutinize the Plan, indicates that its critique, when submitted to the parent body this month en route to the City Council for final action, will be somewhat short of ratification.

Other qualified observers, ranging from Citizens Coordinate style conservationists to pragmatic, cost-conscious professionals, are gearing up for what could become a contentious review of the concepts proposed by the prestigious Los Angeles consultant firm.

The debate will revolve around such features as traffic, parking, financing, high rise, proportion of public to private use, architectural controls, and the balance in benefits as between tourists and local residents, and between low-income and moderate-to-high income families. Discussions already underway have centered on perhaps the most dramatic feature endorsed by Pereira—Paseo del Pacifico, a three-mile long “spine” slashing across the southern, most-utilized portion of the park.

Pereira’s long spine

From a Transportation Center at the Aquatic Park’s southeast corner, to the ocean in the present Belmont Park amusement-center area, this roadway would be free of automobile traffic; it would be available for pedestrians, bicycles, small trams and “similar slower-moving and picturesque modes of transportation.” A half-dozen new tourist attractions could be located along the “spine,” not far from Sea World, the present major magnet for visitors to Mission Bay Park. As envisioned by Pereira, these might include:

A “Winter Gardens” group of four small, pedestrian-bridge-connected and free-form lakes, carefully landscaped with small restaurants and cafes at the lakes’ edges.

A Children’s Recreation Area with one portion a flat, grassy open space for general recreation uses such as non-team ball games and picnic games, kite flying, and another portion equipped with sculptured playground equipment such as swings, Maypole and slides.

A Bazaar Mercado, comprising small kiosks or boutiques in a miniature-village-like setting where visitors could purchase souvenirs, beach and sailing gear, game equipment and photographic supplies.

An Amphitheatre with a bandstand, or more-ambitious major outdoor structure on the scale of Hollywood Bowl or the Greek Theatre at Griffith Park, Los Angeles. Such a shell-shaped structure with a seating capacity for thousands would look down on an orchestra platform floating on a circular pool. The pool also could be used for water-ballet and aquatic shows.

A Seafood Market (Feria del Mar) with kiosks and cafes serving seafood, and markets selling fresh fish in a “village” near the Transportation Center.

A Model Boat Basin.

The Paseo del Pacifico is a device to implement the planners’ concept of reducing automobile through traffic in the Park. It would replace the present Mission Bay Drive route as it curved west past Sea World and Ingraham Street, and continued across Ventura Bridge toward the western terminus at Belmont Park. Thus, the principal east-west transportation within the southern, and most intensively developed area of Mission Bay Park, would be by foot, bicycle or tram, starting from a massive parking complex at the southwestern corner. There probably would have to be a charge for parking in some type of facilities to be provided in the Transportation Center, and another charge for tram transportation along the spine to whatever recreation feature the visitor is seeking.

Laden down with beach paraphernalia or infants, comparative few are expected to walk any distance on the spine, certainly not the six-mile round trip to Belmont Park and back. How does this, then, jibe with the original intent to create in Mission Bay Park an aquatic recreation park for the enjoyment of all the citizens of San Diego “without unnecessary restrictions”? Does the spine create an unnecessary restriction in the form of a financial requirement to gain access to the most popular portions of the Park?

Joseph T. Bill, Pereira's Director of Planning, who served as Project Manager on the Mission Bay Master Plan Recommendation, does not look on this infringement of free access to the Park as a serious deterrent to the Paseo del Pacifico concept. "We researched public buildings in various parts of the country where admission is by nominal charge, and people didn't seem to mind," he said. "A dime or a quarter won't stop a person from visiting such a facility. Actually, this charge for parking and tram use could be absorbed by the major concessionaires (Sea World and the new attractions along the spine) in a version of the downtown park-and-shop plans." Bill acknowledged that the spine would limit direct accessibility by auto to some destinations in the Park, thus causing inconvenience to those burdened with beach or picnic gear. "A tram with storage space would have to be designed," he observed.

In The Transportation Center, Bill envisions parking in the cement bottom of the flood-control channel, which is dry most of the year. As the need increases the channel could be spanned with multiple-decked structures financed by revenue bonds guaranteed by parking income.

Richard Lustig, chairman of the Park and Recreation Board's Facilities Committee, frankly acknowledges a split in opinion within this group regarding the spine. "It's a delightful concept," he says, "but we are concerned it may become the base for over-commercialization, and also concerned about the pay feature. The original idea was that this was to be a free park, and on that basis San Diego citizens voted bonds to help finance the improvements. The average San Diegan may feel that he's entitled to enjoy Mission Bay Park without being charged for parking and transportation."

Of more immediate concern is the feasibility of replacing at a cost of \$2,040,000, the present substandard Ventura Bridge for vehicular traffic if it will eventually wind up as a span only used by pedestrians, cyclists and mini-buses, in the elimination of West Mission Bay Drive from the Park's throughway pattern. Planning of the 1,200-foot long structure is due for completion by January 1, and construction is scheduled to begin next March. It will have a forty-two foot clearance, high enough for any kind of pleasure craft in Mission Bay, compared with the thirty-five-and-a-half clearance of the present twenty-year-old timber bridge, which, as a temporary structure, was built at a cost of only \$205,000. (The old bridge, which will be torn down, has a dangerous jog that has resulted in numerous accidents.)

A rivederci e bona ventura, Ventura Bridge.

The Pereira Report places considerable emphasis on "protection of the Park from unneeded and unwanted automobile traffic." Thus, it recommends ultimate phasing-out for automobile traffic of the Ventura Bridge, which was built because the span connecting Ocean Beach and Mission Beach from the south end of Mission Boulevard was removed when the Mission Bay entrance channel was dredged. With the disappearance of the bridge across the flood control and Mission Bay entrance channels, Ventura Boulevard (now West Mission Bay Drive) became the principal access road to Mission Beach from the south and east. The Pereira Report urges construction of a new bridge across the two channels to reconstitute a direct link with Mission Boulevard, thus providing a peripheral route for the north-bound traffic that will bypass the Park. Meanwhile, the report contends it is too late to do anything about Ingraham Street, the present north-south artery through Mission Bay Park between Pacific Beach and Point Loma/downtown San Diego. The only improvement proposed here is a redesign so that Ingraham Street "performs its traffic-service function within the planned environment of Park activities."

Possibly to the surprise of those who applaud efforts to keep automobiles out of parks, the man who was the most responsible for the earliest planning of Mission Bay Park sees no evil in such through traffic. Glenn Rick now seventy, San Diego's first planning director (he began his service with the city forty-two years ago) and author or co-author of five Mission Bay plans since 1930, doubts the wisdom of keeping people out of the Park by circumferential roads. "That wasn't the original idea, which was to let people drive through, look at the landscaped areas and water development, relax and enjoy the scenery generally," he remarks. "I don't think it would add anything to public enjoyment to separate traffic from the Park, and create a big parking lot in the southeast corner, and then get around by shuttle buses or trams or ferries. This is contradictory to what Mission Bay Park originally was designed to be, a place

where you could drive your car to any spot where you could enjoy a picnic, go swimming, or launch a boat. Roads were to make the park more usable by people.”

Father Rick's nix

Rick is skeptical of the feasibility of a new bridge across the entrance and flood control channels, as recommended by Pereira. “The Army Engineers advise an eighty-foot clearance, and the long approach ramps will wipe out a lot of land at both ends, causing the removal of many structures,” he said. “The tremendous cost of such a bridge (some estimates run as high as \$15 million – Ed.), plus the cost of widening Mission Boulevard to carry through traffic around the park, would be prohibitive.” These factors cited by Rick were among those that led to the decision not to build a channel bridge two decades ago, when the estimated cost was \$3 million. “There was quite a fight over that decision then,” Rick recalled, “particularly with the Ocean Beach people, who felt they were being isolated. But the Army Engineers agreed to cancel the channel bridge and substitute the Ventura Bridge for access to Mission Beach.” Opposition to a channel bridge, as proposed by Pereira, is certain to come from South Mission Beach, which would lose considerable developable land to the ramp, and would experience sharply increased traffic flow, aggravating congestion. Pacific Beach now more accessible to shoppers than Ocean Beach, also would probably look unfavorably on such a bridge.

Rick believes that correction of the “Mystic Maze”—that confusing, accident-plagued intertwining of Sunset Cliffs Boulevard, Midway Drive, Sea World Drive, Ingraham Street and West Mission Bay Boulevard—by means of separation structures and an improved interior road-system connecting existing facilities and leases, would eliminate much of the present congestion “so that people can enjoy a breath of fresh air and a view of the sunset over Mission Bay as they drive through the Park.” As a matter of fact, the city already has budgeted \$1.5 million for its portion of financing a \$2.6 million project to get rid of the “Mystic Maze,” and aid from the state is being sought for the remainder. City Engineer Ed Gabrielson reports that state funds won't be available until July, 1970, at the earliest. Meanwhile, design studies have been made, and are being considered by the Mission Bay subcommittee of the Park and Recreation Board. A principal feature will be overpasses to carry Sea World Drive and West Mission Bay Drive above heavily traveled Ingraham Street.

The interior-road system, now being formulated by Gabrielson, would be financed, according to tentative current plans by a bond issue of an estimated \$10 to \$15 million. Meanwhile, construction of a new Sea World Drive, due to begin about September 15, not only will improve east-west peripheral transportation around Mission Bay Park, but will connect with Friars Road as it comes out of Mission Valley, providing a direct route all the way from Lakeside to the Park. The two-mile long, four-lane road with a twenty-five foot wide landscaped-center parkway, will parallel the present two-lane Sea World Drive, which will be converted into a local access road and a parking area for those interested in activities occurring in the San Diego river bed (now a bird refuge), proposed as the eventual site of aquatic events.

Rick points to a possible hazard that may have been overlooked in the Pereira Report: “In designing the flood-control channel, the Army Engineers estimated it would carry 115,000 cubic feet per second of flood waters,” he said. “But because of the need to protect the Marine Corps Recruit Depot and the Naval Training Center, the south levee was built two feet higher than the north levee. If flood waters exceed 115,000 cubic feet per second or an obstruction occurs in the river channel, an overflow could occur on the north side where the Pereira Report proposes new tourist attractions along the spine. Was that taken into consideration?”

The spine may provoke endless philosophical discussion on the introduction of paying features into a public park. Mrs. Dorothea Edmiston, doughty executive director of Citizens Coordinate, expresses concern over the “amount of commercial development in Mission Bay Park and the lack of sufficient open-park space for families to enjoy free of charge. Everything going in, from the hotels to Sea World, costs money. I am distressed if we continue to concentrate of the Park making money. We should remember what a park is—for pure enjoyment of the out-of-doors, for watching water sports, for picnicking, for children playing in the sand and water.

Do we need more hotels?

“The original concept was that there must be some hotels because Mission Bay was isolated, and in order to fully enjoy the Park, people needed places where they could stay overnight. But the need for hotels in the Park is no longer as great as it once was. We should determine whether we need more hotels there. In the early development of the Park, all we heard was the need for developing marinas and hotels. When I complained years ago to Harry Haelsig, then Planning Director, he said this was necessary to promote income to provide the public features.”

Mrs. Edmiston represents the viewpoint of those who fear Mission Bay is being oriented more to the enjoyment of visitors than for the local citizens who are paying for it through amortization of bond issues that helped develop the area. On the other hand, there are some planners who see in private enterprise the principal means of generating the income to provide free public facilities. One such is Whitney Smith, noted Pasadena architect who collaborated in the 1959 Community Facilities Planners study that produced an almost poetic vision of Mission Bay Park as “a beautiful and exciting place, as wonderful to look at as it is to play in.” Given the current mood of taxpayers a bond issue to finance such a structure as the huge amphitheatre proposed in the Pereira Report would have rough sledding, in his opinion. He not only has no aversion to architecturally controlled development in Mission Bay Park but suggests housing for permanent residents, such as apartments and condominiums. “Not only would you bring people to Mission Bay Park who would be able to live there and enjoy it, but you would provide the income needed to help pay for the areas that have to be publicly financed,” Smith says. He believes the long-established ratio of seventy-five percent of the land for public development and the other twenty-five for commercial leases is unrealistic and not in line with latest recreation thinking as far as optimum use of area and facilities is concerned. (Pereira advocates retention of this policy.)

“Use it or lose it” is a maxim that some planners employ to illustrate that no matter how much public space is available, it is no good if it isn’t used. And in Mission Bay Park, Smith points out that profit-making enterprises such as Sea World are providing public entertainment, education and recreation not previously available when the area was free but barren. In this view, Mission Bay should offer excitement, color and fun, as well as quiet, passive, contemplative resources for the Nature lover.

High needles or low pueblos?

High rise will undoubtedly become a major issue as implementation of the Pereira Report proceeds during the next few years. Pereira prefers the low-silhouette and “pueblo-type” form for hotels (as exemplified in the future use of Belmont Park where William Evans has just acquired the amusement-park lease for its remaining four and-a-half years, after which he may seek a renewal for construction of what anti-high rise groups fear will be a multiple-story hotel.) Evans’ Bahia—he also operates the Catamaran on private property at Mission Bay—was the first tourist hotel in the park. Although both the Bahia and the Catamaran have high-rise structures, Evans contends he is not yet committed to any particular architecture if and when he builds at Belmont Park. The pueblo style features a cascade effect of not more than five to seven stories, in which each terrace is the roof of the apartment below. The horizontal spread requires more ground space, but the amenities—such as patios and rest areas—are provided within the structure itself.

“We feel that pueblo style is a better way of accomplishing high density than putting people up in the air in high-rise cubicles, in which they may have a cooped-up feeling,” says Joseph Bill. “In addition high rise near the western shore creates problems peculiar to Mission Bay Park. They would cause shadows to fall earlier in the afternoon, affecting enjoyment of the Park, and they would affect winds for sailing in the west bay, with blockages in some places, gusts in others. And a tower needs much more ground space than a pueblo style for light, air and view.”

Bill points out that attractive towers are not precluded from Pereira’s projections. “We recommend that any new hotels be kept to the periphery of the Park, such as along Interstate 5 Freeway south of the present Hilton inn,” he said. “This area could accommodate two more, with plenty of open green space

between them. The pattern has already been established by the Hilton Inn. They would be easily accessible to automobile traffic that wouldn't have to penetrate into the Park, and they wouldn't cast afternoon shadows or block winds on the bay."

Despite this recommendation it appears that at least one more high-rise is planned for deep within the Park. Pacific Southwest Airlines, which recently purchased the 110-room Islandia Hotel plans a sixteen-story, 298-room tower that already has failed to pass its first test—before the Park and Recreation Board's Mission Bay subcommittee. PSA asked the advisory group to recommend additions to both the land and water leases (the former to provide parking needed for the increased tenancy and the latter to add 112 boat slips to the present 102. PSA contends that Islandia cannot be made profitable at its present size.) Approval was denied because PSA had readied no high-rise plans to show to the subcommittee, the majority of whom were unmoved by the airline representative's pleas that thousands of dollars must be spent on even preliminary designs—and how can these be authorized until the company is assured of the parking space to accommodate the tower? He was told to come back when he had the plans.

The vote tally on this first major dispute over high-rise in Mission Bay Park was ten-to-six against approval, and reflected what may be a pattern in the future controversy over high-rise, particularly in Mission Beach. Representatives of such organizations as the Mission Bay Yacht Club, Mission Bay Town Council, Ocean Beach Town Council, Clairemont Town Council, Sierra Club and League of Women Voters blocked PSA's application, while the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, Pacific Beach Town Council, and San Diego Chamber of Commerce favored it. During the discussion it was reported that the Ocean Beach Town Council board of directors unanimously had voted against any additional high-rise buildings in Mission Bay Park. "It is our feeling," said Ned A. Titlow, president, "that we must protect the open space and unique beauty of Mission Bay Park, rather than mar it with tall buildings which distract from the pleasant vistas of sea and shore."

Not long after the Mission Bay subcommittee's rebuff, the Facilities Committee approved the requested water-lease addition, but, based on tower plans that finally were provided, demanded that "invasion" of landscaped areas by asphalt parking be minimized, and that the high-rise have a "floating effect" to permit seeing through to the bay.

Glen Rick says he prefers towers with requirements for substantial open space between the structures, to low-rise (four to five stories) alongside each other cluttering up a shoreline "like a Chinese wall." "Years ago I predicted that Mission Beach, from Pacific Beach to the San Diego River channel would become high-rise in a Miami Beach-style development," he said. "But the city's willingness to allow high rise on Mission Bay had made this a less costly investment than to try to combine the small lots (most frontage about twenty-five feet) with many ownerships. Eventually this will come when developers can consolidate several blocks, and streets in the area are widened."

The Park-and-Rec. Facilities Committee is open-minded about high rise. Chairman Lustig comments: "Our committee feels that high rise can prevent sprawling of buildings over a lot of land. When properly planned, towers can offer a lot of see-through. Shelter Island is an example of low rise creating almost a wall of buildings. In contrast, Harbor Island, which will utilize high rise, will maintain open-space features."

The 200-room Dana Inn, Mission Bay Park's newest hotel, is an example of the horizontal sprawl that has disappointed some city officials and other observers. "We had expected better open-space continuity, but we knew all along that this would be marginal because of its comparative low cost," Lustig said. Until Dana Inn was completed recently, Mission Bay Park had no low-priced hotel accommodations. Its lease limits room rates to a range of from eight to twelve dollars a night, considerably below the average level of the plushier hotels in the Park. (A four-dollar across-the-board increase has been requested by the local syndicate that owns Dana Inn, and is being studied by city officials.) Meanwhile, the Park and Recreation Board has overruled insistence by its Facilities Committee that the restaurant, which will be operated by the Hyatt House hotel chain, not be located immediately adjacent to the motel, because of site overcrowding. The architectural design also did not meet the approval of a majority of the committee.

The 1959 report by the Community Facilities Planners' consultant group, "What We See," advocated tall structures to overcome the flatness of water and terrain, "creating landmarks visible from afar. Careful location of multi-level buildings will avoid congestion and sprawl." And if through-traffic cannot be eliminated from the Park, such speedways should be elevated according to the planners of ten years ago, thus permitting Park roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and indeed the Park itself to flow uninterrupted underneath; furthermore an elevated highway would allow the panorama of the entire bay and bay shore to unfold."

The 1959 report paid considerably more attention to the interrelations of Mission Beach to Mission Bay than does the Pereira Report. The cluttered, overcrowded beach community, described as an example of "urban anarchy," must be considered as part of the Park's setting. The Community Facilities Planner declared: "The Park and community are important to each other," the CFP report pointed out: "This narrow strip of land (Mission Beach) represents Mission Bay Park's opportunity for a link with an ocean beach. This report recommends development of broad, beautifully landscaped pedestrian ways to join bay beach and ocean beach. At present little or no open land exists. These walkways would enhance Mission Beach properties and enrich the Park."

Mission Beach: a new deal for this spit in the ocean?

Unfortunately, Mission Beach remains congested today as it did when the report was written. Urban-renewal programs through which long-term loans were available in 1959 were recommended as a means of owner-participation property improvement. Discussing this proposal, James Britton, the SAN DIEGO MAGAZINE'S urban environment expert, prophetically wrote: "Creeps who prefer their own pace may keep this plan from being realized. Particularly, the urban-renewal device will be fought by men of little vision even though it could mean maximum profits to them and great public benefit."

Britton agreed with the vision of Glenn Rick that Mission Beach was the logical location for a string of skyscraper hotels and apartment houses such as those in Miami Beach, Rio de Janeiro and other ocean-resort cities. "It is not enough that the property owners should wait for investors to come alone piecemeal and gobble up the strip, if the skyscrapers are carefully interrelated according to an advanced master plan, our casual cliff dwellers should gain an environment far superior to any other city's."

This view is at the root of the controversy within the Mission Beach-Pacific Beach Community Planning Committee, which is preparing a master plan for the area. One of the most ardent opponents of high-rise is Kendrick Kellogg, a South Mission Beach architect whose unique home is described in this issue (see page 58). As recorded by Marilyn Hagberg, Kellogg fears that if the high-density proponents on the committee prevail, spot zoning of beach property could result to the benefit only of exploitive land developers, and to the detriment of the small home owner who prefers the present cozy atmosphere, and detests high-rise apartment living. Although opposing towers along the beach, Kellogg favors them in the Park, "as long as good architectural standards are maintained and sufficient open space is preserved."

Joseph Bill, Pereira's chief planner, believes that the weight of economics eventually will help transform Mission Beach. "Land values are so high there that many present owners in moderate circumstances will want to sell their increasingly valuable property," he says. "A new generation of users could probably be accomplished by private enterprise, through the sheer weight of economic common sense." Bill envisions a mixture of towers, "pueblo" structures and multiple units on small lots. If and when this takes place, the need for a direct access to Mission Boulevard by means of a bridge across the channel (anticipated as a controversial point of the Pereira Report) will become more serious, Bill believes.

Homer Delawie, AIA, San Diego architect and a member of the Park-and-Rec. Facilities Committee, advocates use of the Planned Unit Development concept for redevelopment of Mission Beach. This provides the flexibility required in putting together numerous parcels of small-frontage property for arrangement of new structural complexes. Delawie would like to see large numbers of property owners themselves form a corporation to renew Mission Beach, rather than through an urban-renewal project, profits would be earned in proportion to their holdings.

Isolated, enchanted isles

Another imaginative feature of the Pereira Report is the proposal to divide Fiesta Island (the largest undeveloped land mass in Mission Bay) into two smaller portions. In South Fiesta Island, the Report recommends creation of interior canals, coves and lagoons for boating, leaving the exterior outline to beaches. Cultural and educational displays in the marine sciences—including live exhibits and projections into the future—and a museum and specialized library would be established. A lighthouse that could serve as a symbol for Mission Bay is suggested. North Fiesta Island would be separated from South Fiesta Island by an “Enchanted Passage.” On the island, supervised youth activities such as camping and hiking would be conducted in a naturally preserved environment. From the mainland, access to both islands would be by boat only.

Some critics of this concept describe the isolation of an outstanding educational facility, such as is proposed for South Fiesta Island, as “poor show planning.” Other skeptics question how the high development and maintenance costs of this totally non-income producing island could be met. Pereira advises exploring the possibility of subscriptions, donations and grants from nonprofit foundations.

Considering the fact that Pereira counsels snatching away Sea World’s commodious parking area and fostering possible competitive enterprises, along the spine, it may be unexpected to hear George Millay, Sea World president, rhapsodize:

“This is the most far-sighted, aggressive, intelligent, well-thought-out report of its kind ever developed,” he says. “The city is to be complimented for hiring someone with vision, reputation and know-how. We’re out of our minds if we throw this away or if we start tearing it to pieces because of details. Remember, this is a general plan and a guide aimed at a horizon year at the end of this century.”

Having sparked up Mission Bay Park with his own fabulous entertainment center, Millay likes the idea of the spine, with its accompanying commercial attractions. “The bay now has thousands of acres of just dirt and sand—nobody uses them. Since it would be impossible for the city to develop these areas without raising taxes, wholesome, intelligent, well-planned commercial development is good for the Park.” Millay declares: “But we must make sure the commercial features are first-class.” To ensure this, Millay disclosed that Sea World itself might elect to sponsor some enterprises along the spine. He is withholding details because he expects to present them to city officials soon.

Sea World would be willing to surrender its parking lot if suitable parking is provided elsewhere, says Millay, and he’s not opposed to the general idea of a Transportation Center and transportation into the park in “entertaining vehicles.” He thinks the splitting of Fiesta Island is a “brilliant” proposal that would generate more shoreline and beaches and would “unplug” the east bay, which is under-utilized now. He is somewhat reserved over the “educational” displays suggested for south island. (The public doesn’t want static exhibits anymore—these are a thing of the past. In a water-oriented park they want action—aquacades, water shows, speed races, food fairs, night concerts, etc.™) Neither does Millay believe that slicing a network of canals into the south island is practical, nor that it should be cut off from land access to the mainland. He does approve use of the north island for camping.

Obviously some thought should be given to shorter-term leases in the Park, in light of the rigid sociological and technological changes that hasten obsolescence of concepts and structures. A decision on the best and highest uses of land or water for which a fifty-year lease is granted (the usual current policy) may be completely out of date in ten years. This is illustrated by the Pereira Report, which urges that the area occupied by DeAnza Mobile Home Park at the north shore of the bay be reshaped and assigned to public park use. But this can’t be done before 1999, when the fifty year lease granted in 1949 expires. “Over my objections, the Council gave a longer-term lease than it should have,” recalls Glenn Rick.

By the horizon year 2000, target of the Pereira Report recommendations, some \$100 million will have been expended on Mission Bay Park about one half each in public funds and in private investments. To date, in a remarkable pooling of city, state and federal funds and private capital more than \$65 million

has been poured into this development, which has won international recognition for the emergence of a marine park wonderland from a slough. Adherence to the highest standards of design is essential while development continues. Always in mind must be the initial goal of creating a water-oriented park for maximum public usage and enjoyment.

June 1970, San Diego Magazine, The Contest for San Diego and the World . . . 34

June 1970, San Diego Magazine, The raw land east of UCSD may become the future super-center of the San Diego Metropolitan Region

1971—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.), author, h. 1154 12th Ave.

No articles in San Diego Magazine by James Britton in 1971

1972—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.), author, h. 1154 12th Ave.

No articles in San Diego Magazine by James Britton in 1972

1973—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.), author, h. 1154 12th Ave.

November 1973, San Diego Magazine, Don't kiss the valley goodbye . . . 104

1974—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.), author, h. 1154 12th Ave.

September 1974, San Diego Magazine, Is San Diego "America's Finest City" a Myth?, an urban anthropologist digs into our reality.

CAPTION: The home-owners on the rim of this Mission Hills canyon are pioneers who achieved the city's first open space assessment, primarily to protect views like this splendid panorama of Lindbergh Field, Harbor Island and the distinctive Point Loma Headland.

Despite the shrill protestations of Lou Conde, the Comprehensive Planning Organization should be the first level of city government. The supervisors should be abolished.

Such happy facts emerged from the community profile as these: Clairemont has high vandalism; "Mexican-Americans" are being elbowed out of Old Town to make it more "American"

Mayor Pete Wilson, the son of an ad man, won office in 1971 partly because he broadcast the catchy notion that "San Diego at this time can become America's finest city." Since then the city's PR machinery has condensed his words, as a matter of chants, to read: "San Diego—America's Finest City." Is it a misconception?

When the mayor uses the four-letter word "city" he is really thinking "metropolis." He knows that the incorporated area of the City of San Diego, big as it is, cannot amount to much unless it has satisfactory working relations with all the surrounding territory which traffics with the central city. So his heart belongs to CPO—the Comprehensive Planning Organization of San Diego County, the one governmental agency which may be able to pull all the parts together. And his most dangerous enemy is the County Board of Supervisors, an obsolescent body which appear to be activated these days mainly by fits of jealousy against CPO. For example, in July the "supes" tried to gain a hammerlock on the city and all the sub-cities of the county by claiming the right to review all major projects which might affect air quality. The city promptly got CPO's help in resisting the county, and seemed likely to prevail because the National Protection Agency was inclined toward CPO as the better able to monitor air quality.

The shrillest supervisor, Lou Conde, has sought to set the public against CPO by calling it a "third level of government." A more forward look might see CPO as developing as the *first* level of metropolitan

government, the city and the sub-cities subordinated thereto, and the County Supervisors abolished altogether as unnecessary. The county's workforce of 10,500 would transfer smoothly to the service of the metropolis, which may be considered the same in extent as the county. Then the mayor's grand idea of quality for San Diego would have a fair prospect.

To give the devils their due, the supervisors deserve credit for creating the county's Environmental Development Agency, fueled by a \$750,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to study ways and means, or mays and weans, of interrelating the 100-plus governmental agencies operating in the county. The EDA then attracted a grant from the National Science Foundation to lure the four local universities into turning their research lights on the region's problems.

You might think that knowledgeable professors would be just waiting to be asked for their experience, but it turned out, in this case, that they were as touchy as a bunch of inventors nursing dreams of 100-gallons-per-mile-carburetors. First thing they did was to protest, and overturn, the supervisors routine requirement that the research results be kept confidential. Seems the profs wanted the freedom to publish the results in professional journals of their own choice. NSF money held the project together, and at the end the county's own review committee (of three professors and two bureaucrats) wrote:

"Local governments and university researchers are uneasy bedfellows at best . . . often suspicious and cynical of each other's motives. Local agencies require applied rather than basic research . . . while basic research which is of interest to academicians does not ordinarily answer the questions which local governments are asking. In most cases contacts are short-lived, especially if the faculty member is placed in an advocacy position against developers, utility companies and the like [yet] local governments themselves provide disincentives by avoiding, rebuffing and at times insulting the very people whose help they can use."

Obviously, such games of cowboys and Indians are little help in creating Mayor Wilson's finest city. Fortunately the county's critiquers could say: "We see a great deal of promise that the system will right itself." To make sure of that, they suggested forming a Regional Research Consortium or Institute, as an adjunct to CPO, funded by the National Science Foundation. The Consortium would be led by miraculous people who can talk the languages of both politicians and academicians, drawing of a pool of newly eager professors and translating their findings so the politicians can understand and act more wisely.

In spite of the volcanic rumblings, the mountain of words resulting from the county's venture into university research contains a good-many nuggets for anyone willing to explore its dry and crumbly passages. One section of the research project will get particular attention here because its principal author, Dr. Richard D. Jones, has gone about like Johnny Appleseed dropping copies of his report wherever he thought its ideas might grow. He is an urban anthropologist who spent four years at San Diego State (and finally was not granted tenure.)

Jones and several colleagues investigated 34 communities in and around San Diego, checking on what special amenities they have and what signs of deterioration they exhibit. In their report, titled *Community Organization and Environmental Control*, such joyous facts as these emerged. 1) Clairemont has more vandalism than any other part of town. 2) Residents of Mexican background are being elbowed out of Old Town today in order to make it more "American" (as a state park project)—just as in mid 19th century.

If one were looking for a "top ten" list of desirable neighborhoods, the Jones report has it (leaving one space blank for the reader to fill in): Mission Hills, La Jolla, Kensington, Normal Heights, Point Loma, Ocean Beach, Rancho Santa Fe, Rancho Bernardo, Poway, Solana Beach. He lists only five undesirable neighborhoods (Linda Vista, Kearny Mesa, East San Diego, Lemon Grove, Lakeside, Golden Hill) but one should remember that his crew did not look at every aching acre in the region.

Community profiles were drawn on a standardized form—outlines only, hardly suggesting the flesh and blood. The one for Logan Heights noted that a 1970 population of 14,300 consisted mainly of "lower class" blacks and Mexican-Americans and reported: "In the 1940s there was a street gang which

was part of the Pachuco Movement . . . Construction of Interstate 5 freeway through the middle of the community has disrupted traditional activities and informal lines of communication among the residents.”

Only one amenity was listed for Logan Heights, namely that it is a Model Cities target area, which means some action on jobs, education and planning. Among the 34 communities studied, Logan Heights ranked third in welfare cases, 33rd in income level, fourth in unemployment, 32nd in education. So, not surprisingly, “Streets are in poor condition, houses need repair, new housing is a lack but rodents and roaches are plentiful.”

The already dated profile says that there is “no public meeting place and a lack of neighborhood parks.” But note that dynamic pressure from within the community is forcing a change in the pattern of blight, beginning notably with the Chicano park and murals under the approaches to the Coronado Bridge.

The profile (or caricature) for La Jolla shows a more aquiline nose surmounting a set of well-padded double chins. The population (1940) was 25,290, consisting mainly—if you believe the report—of a “wealthy (white) sporty tennis set,” second in income and education (Rancho Santa Fe was first), 33rd in welfare cases (University City was 34th), and 21st in unemployment (Tierra Santa had hardly any). The profile judged that “La Jolla carries a reputation as one of the outstanding residential and resort areas on the West coast. Residents seem to believe it and express it.” Amenities cited by residents include: Spanish and other types of architecture, tennis, golf, swimming, surfing, volley ball (!), climate, schools, museums, coastline, beaches, beautiful views, consistent R-1 zoning, no signs on roofs or vacant lots, monitoring of home appearance, exclusive shops, well-maintained streets and parks. The only threats of deterioration listed by La Jollans were: high-rise apartments, crowding, high density, heavy traffic, inadequate parking, dogs on the beach and—snobbery.

La Jolla and Logan Heights are polar extremes with which a metropolitan government has to deal in a balanced way or the whole urban scheme will surely explode one day. Just as La Jolla once had a substantial black colony (in the day when the poor readily served the rich), so Logan Heights in the future might deserve a white colony (the rich serving the poor) or—better—a sufficient mixing of colors to dissolve the ghetto stain, but it is predictable that the two areas will go on too much as before unless government becomes vastly more sophisticated than it has been. The aim must be to develop distinct quality in each neighborhood, and delete the threats of deterioration, in order to promote the fineness of the metropolis as a whole—if I may thus paraphrase the thrust of the Jones paper.

An intriguing comparison is Mission Hills and Kensington, two communities separated by three miles but roughly similar in their origin and upbringing as genteel trolley-car suburbs at the time when the city of San Diego was all downtown. Today they are, respectively, about 10,000 and 4,000 in population, 12th and 6th in income, 10th and 13th in education, 24th and 23rd in unemployment. A fairly sharp difference is that Kensington (though built mostly before 1930) is second of all communities studied in percentage of homes residents owner-occupied, while Mission Hills is 18th.

The last item reflects the fact that Kensington is a tight little peninsula prevented from sprawl by deep canyons on three sides. Its Spanish tile and stucco mode was so well established by 1926 that all electric wires were sent underground in that year, and apparently family roots went deep too. Mission Hills, on the other hand, has only lately filled up its available acres, and many of its older houses have seen multiple tenants. Still it is Mission Hills that was able to achieve the first canyon park dedication, a model for the region, while Kensington had to stand by with stucco on their faces while the peaceful life was bulldozed out of one of the boundary’s canyons by a developer who got the courts to say he had the right. It’s one of San Diego’s sadder stories—but may yet have a surprise ending better than heretofore contemplated.

Dr. Jones, who lives in Kensington, wrote: “The community has been successful on many occasions in resisting canyon scraping and development and creation of through streets. Success was due largely to the specialists (engineers, lawyers and a city councilman, Henry Landt) who lived there. (In the 1960s one alert resident raised \$2,000 for attorneys to stop the State Division of Highways from scraping away a canyon wall to supply gravel for its road constructions.) But the aging home-owners were faced

with canyon development of a 155-unit condominium project which the Planning Commission granted a conditional-use permit in 1968. Later the Planning Department recommended denial of a permit, noting that the canyon was designated as open space in the city's General Plan. In 1970 the City Council voted to void the permit, but . . . “

The big “but,” of course, is that the owner of the canyon land, Harold La Fleur, pursued and won court approval to proceed. As of today an immense amount of cut-and-fill bulldozing has taken place. In most cases a community's hope of saving a canyon from heavy residential in-fill would be crushed by that machinery. But Kensington tugs incessantly at the heartstrings of two councilmen—Lee Hubbard, who lives there, and James Ellis, who lives not far away. (Both were elected because they are friends of the building business!). Also among Kensington's more strategic residents is attorney James Milch, partner of Planning Commission president Louis Wolfsheimer and himself chairman of the Park and Recreation Board.

Milch offers a rather irresistible argument. “Mission Hills has its Presidio Park,” he told me, “and Kensington now has a chance to get something similar that will serve not only Kensingtonians but people from Normal Heights and the college area as well as the San Diego public generally. Now that all that grading has been done, the canyon can be saved as a natural park but the grading is actually an asset if we make it a cultivated park. Some Kensingtonians may think the owner should have continued to pay taxes and left the land undeveloped for their benefit as rim-owners, but we think our proper public business is to find the money to compensate him for it and take possession of it in the name of the public, as a public park.”

As this is written, events are breaking fast to give Kensington its Middlesex Canyon Park. Now that the momentum is gathering, similar canyon-saving projects surely will be justified in relation to many of the several dozen communities which make up the metropolitan mix. In late July, the largest of the communities—Clairemont—gained the most sought after of the parks—Tecolote Canyon—by unanimous consent of the City Council and over the livid bodies of developers who wanted to fill in much of the canyon with housing, preferably profitable condominiums.

One little-noted possibility in connection with these canyons is that the sewage from each community could be drained into that community's canyons and converted to landscaping, complete with recreational ponds in the manner pioneered at Santee. One doesn't have to be a sewer rat to realize that the Council's rising determination to keep the city from plugging up solid with development is related to the danger that the region's entire network of sewers would be overloaded and need constant remodeling at insufferable expense.

When urban design experts Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard were preparing their “overview” of San Diego's future (to be made public this month) they stressed the importance of reclaiming waste and waste water. Of course they saw this as involving a much larger area than just the incorporated city of San Diego. The clear implication is that any “urban design plan” which Mayor Wilson may wish to sponsor as a follow-up to the Lynch-Appleyard visitation should be done not by the City Planning Department (though it has much good talent) but by CPO—utilizing borrowed talents from both the city and county.

Lynch and Appleyard went up in a helicopter and got the shock of their lives—not from the skittishness of the machine but from the view they had of the Mexican border; a relentlessly straight line at which green U.S. vegetation ceases and parched Mexican dust begins. They immediately sensed that San Diego must work out a more humane interrelation with Tijuana. For starters, I suggest that the U.S. give to Mexico our portion of the Tijuana River delta (to be developed as a border park but owned by Mexico) in exchange for the Tijuana airport (to be developed as an international airport but owned by the United States).

Business as usual and government as usual, cannot produce a workable future. Giant leaps for mankind have to be the order of the day now. The National Science Foundation is accustomed to making such leaps, and the big idea imbedded in the NSF report discussed above—namely that there should be a Regional Consortium attached to CPO—deserves to be taken very seriously here. “San Diego—America's

Finest Metropolis: will fail to emerge as a reality unless the country's finest intelligence is applied as a matter of chorus—highly professional chorus with voices of clarity and true pitch.

MAYOR PETE WILSON (1971-1983)

February 1974, San Diego Magazine, The Copley Complex: Its Display of Mirrors; New \$25 million Union-Tribune Building in Mission Valley . . . 84, 128, 129.

CAPTION: The Copley complex in Mission Valley, Frank Hope & Associates, AIA, Howard Shaw designer. The complex has seven American flags as though to proclaim that American patriotism was invented here rather than Boston.

Have you been dazzled by the new Copley Press headquarters? You can't miss it if you're still on wheels and find yourself at the crossing of freeways 5 and 395. It's eye-catching enough to cause accidents,

In the daytime you can't see into it because the gold-tinted mirror glass reflects the landscape and the light of the sky back at you. At night you can see in, but the scribes can't see out because at that time *they* are getting the golden reflections. It all depends on whether there is more light inside or out, artificial or otherwise. That's journalism for you. Lewis Carroll would have loved the situation.

When Carroll's Alice made her trip *Through the Looking Glass* in 1872 she found the place a shambles, with animated chess pieces trying to figure out what had happened to their world. That's journalism for you. Alice heard the White King say: "The horror of that moment . . . I shall never forget." "You will, though," the Queen said, "if you don't make a memorandum of it." The King took an enormous memorandum book out of his pocket, and began writing. A sudden thought struck Alice and she took hold of the end of the pencil, which came somehow over his shoulder, and began writing for him. The poor King looked puzzled and unhappy, and struggled for the pencil for sometime without saying anything, but Alice was too strong for him, and at last he panted out to the Queen: "My dear, I really *must* get a thinner pencil. I can't manage this one a bit. It writes all manner of things I don't intend . . . "

That's journalism for you—in all too many cases. But it must be said the Copley Press has a firm grip on its pencil and is fully in control of what it writes. The expenditure of \$25 million on a headquarters and plant housing the latest in technology suggests that San Diego now has at its main crossroads a formidable force that will influence the character of the region for the foreseeable future, though there is no guarantee that other forms of journalism won't become more important. Also, there is no guarantee that the Copley Press won't eventually improve under competition, so that intelligent readers will be able to rely on it for what's what. The *Union* today has not yet made the switch from benighted mediocrity to light-shedding brightness that the *Los Angeles Times* achieved in the '60s, but no publisher is lightless who runs Art Buchwald. Other than Art, the *Union's* chief improvement lately is a series of pro-and-con discussions of topical questions. The *Times*, for example, has two art critics and a separate architecture critic, all fully professional, while the *Union* has none—as a matter of poor policy. *Our* paper seems to be afraid of those vital investment subjects, not daring to deliver adult criticism of the arts except in music and theater which can be shrugged off by the timid as mere entertainment.

Still—happily—I think the new Copley building complex is the life of public life. It is remarkably good architecture, one of the best things to come from the booming design firm of Frank Hope & Associates. Several of the firm's experts were involved but main credit for the visual characteristics of the Copley complex goes to a Hope employee who is not even a registered architect, an unassertive senior who never attended architectural school: Howard Shaw simply went to work for Frank Hope, Sr., many years ago and, showing an aptitude for putting it altogether, was given a hand in most of the firm's designs. On the verge of retirement now, he has come up with a work of art that many a young sophisticate would be proud to have done.

Fifteen years ago, I should have said, Mr. Copley ought to stay downtown, and help promote Mission Valley primarily for recreation. But with the valley long since surrendered to commerce, and downtown bogged down in poor traffic arrangements, the huge fleet of delivery trucks that are so basic to a

newspaper's performance are better based at the crossing of major freeways. Besides, the high visibility of the Copley complex must cause people and publishers to ponder just what they mean to each other.

Have you noticed the American flag being exploited by some businessmen who display not one but several? The Copley complex has seven, as though to proclaim that American patriotism was invented here rather than in Boston. That takes a lot of brass, but, then, the Copley management is largely ex-military. This is not to say that Jim Copley was not sincerely patriotic. He loved his American history, the earlier the better, and even owned a portrait painted from life of John Hancock. The painter happened to be John Singleton Copley, one of our very greatest—no kin to James of James' foster-father Ira Copley. (John was the son of Irish immigrants.)

The painter Copley was honored in Boston by having a public square named after him. Copley Square has been famous for almost a century because of two architectural masterworks facing on it, Henry Hobson Richardson's Trinity Church and Charles Follen McKim's Public Library. I have to say, however, that I enjoy the Copley complex in San Diego much more than I ever did Boston's Copley Square as an architectural expression. I know the reason: those splendid buildings in Boston so heavily based on European antecedents, were *imposed* on the American scene whereas the Copley design grew out of the American experience.

The Copley headquarters is essentially a five-story box, but there is nothing boxy about it. Horizontal bands of glass are interrupted by balconies faced with pebble-surfaced concrete panels and intersected by utterly simple brick towers. The top story, housing executive offices and a cafeteria, overhangs the balconies enough to give a classic sense of finish against the sky. The roofline is further enhanced by the use of concrete lattices which soften the connection with the sky, this connection being the most important, and most often neglected, in architectural design. The massive bulk achieves lightness because it rises above an open-sided hall basement set aside for parking (and to accommodate the waters in case flood control should ever fail).

Undoubtedly, it is the mystifying mirror-glass which raises this simplified design to the realm of magic, yet it was chosen mainly because it deflects the heat of the sun and thus lightens the energy demand for air-conditioning. It is a glass growing in popularity for that reason and because it adds vitality to any design by reflecting the life around it, but it is seldom used with as much design finesse as here. Partly the secret is in not using too much of it, and in shading it with overhangs.

With ordinary plate glass the effect would have been less magical but one would still admire the excellent proportions and the glowing colors of the materials. The red brick is quite ordinary but the combination with deep tan pebble-surfaced panels makes all the difference. The combination echoes faintly the Colonial American style which featured red brick and white trim, but the white would have been a disaster here. The color scale is such that the structure appears to have grown out of the California earth.

My remarks apply to the headquarters building. Adjacent to it is the production plant, very discreetly designed as a blind box of brick and pebble-facings—related but properly subordinate to the headquarters, as the body to the brain. Two weak points of the design are the space between the structures (an alley for trucks) and the north parking lot. The alley should be re-studied, perhaps treated to some of those concrete lattices used on the roof. The parking lot should be covered with a platform-plaza, which would be a fine place for public gatherings—to salute the flags if not to protest the editorial policy.

The play of colors, textures, shapes—and light and shade and reflections—is gladdening to the observer. It would be less satisfying if San Diego's wizardly landscape architect Joe Yamada had not come along and installed an instantly mature park featuring giant sycamores and Torrey pines. No small part of the effect is the interrelationship of this artfully contoured landscape with that of the neighboring M. H. Golden Construction Company. Also, part of the pleasure to be derived from this special place is the vista of Fashion Valley shopping center through a scattering of giant eucalyptus trees left over from the days—little more than a decade lost—when this was saddle-horse and cow country. One sees that when the freeways shrivel from being too long left in the sun, and rapid transit is a Rohring success, a major “grant

central station” will belong at this point. Will the present quality of the environment be retained then? The rich people who control it will answer that.

Curiously, while San Diego’s Copley complex hums with success and promise, Boston’s Copley Square has gone ghostly, if not ghastly—the Library outgrown except for worms, the church owned by the mice, and the new John Hancock building muscling into the bastion of battered gentility at one corner. The Hancock, everything that money could buy, was designed by a wonderfully humane and gentle architect of impeccable early New England ancestry, Henry Cobb (of the I. M. Pei office), but it defied its designer and popped its panes into the street due to some waywardness in the forces of nature. They were pops heard around the world, Boston pops. Currently, the Hancock is being re-glazed with about \$5 million of the same type of glass as used in San Diego’s Copley complex. I am predicting that it will be too much of a good thing and that San Diego will still have the design edge over Boston in the name of Copley. Meanwhile, the superbly painted visage of John Hancock looks down from a lonely San Diego wall with measured smile as though to say, “Well done, James Copley.”

SUNUVABEE GLASS

“How do you clean the suuvabee?” wailed on maintenance man at the new Copley headquarters. He was referring to the mirror-glass (trade-named Vari-Tran) which has a metallic oxide coating thin enough to see through yet thick enough to reflect the sun’s heat and thus cut air-conditioning bills. “If you wave a chamois within two feet of it, it scratches. A scratch on this stuff is worse than a scratch on a mirror because it lets in a streak of light. That’s all right in my office but you can imagine how an executive editor would like it.” The gold standard does have drawbacks.

THE YAMADA ROLL

“The Yamada roll was one of our big expenses,” said Jack Schneider who was “Clerk of the Works” during construction of the Copley complex. He was referring to landscape architect Joe Yamada’s yen for contoured earth as opposed to flat. “Why I remember working with Joe on Revelle College up at UCSD,” said Jack. “When it came time to lay out the athletic field he tried to bargain for a little roll, even there . . . Come to think of it, maybe that would help the Chargers . . . However, I must say for Joe he did not try to roll the tennis courts.”

May 1974, San Diego Magazine, San Diego . . . A City of Ten Million . . . an capital of the New World, 88-91, 106-107.

CAPTION: This is not how San Diego will look when she has 10 million people. It is a photo of the sorely degenerate island of Manhattan, the damaged heart of New York City. In the foreground is superimposed a model of architect Paul Rudolph’s conception of how to renew the life of the island. One strong union (the lithographers) was ready to build this complex of offices, shops and 4,050 homes, but other unions (building trades) killed it because it wasn’t to be built by their old methods. “It will be built elsewhere,” says Rudolph. Is there anything in it for San Diego?

CAPTION: The womb with a view is the sensation of San Francisco, it is architect John Portman’s super-lobby for the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Portman has livened up several cities with similar public interiors and currently is transforming Manhattan’s Time Square, building a hotel designed to embrace that Dantean street scene and still keep the doormat clean. Architectural innovation of this caliber belongs in San Diego’s “new towns.”

Ray Bradbury, the far-out futuremonger, suggested to a Grossmont College last November that *all* persons in the rougher climates of Earth are going to get a craving to follow us pie-eyed pipers into benign places like San Diego. Having lately discovered that the Earth is flat—flat broke and unable to meet energy expectations without limit—all movable souls will seek a place in the sun like so many birds driven by instinct, if not in the water like lemmings.

Of course we favored few who are calculating the destiny of San Diego have to set a limit. I go along with those who say, "Shut the gate—I'm in," but I suggest there's room for quite a few stragglers yet. I believe San Diego should be designed for an absolute limit of something like 10 million residents. Only a half dozen metropolises are near or beyond that figure now, but one of them was designed except in part. They just happened. As we watch daily on TV, the world of happenings is collapsing around us now like one huge Tinguely self-destruct machine. The new world—if there is to be one, short of the coming of Zardoz—has to depend on design wisdom. *Survival through Design*, indeed, is the title of a prophetic 1954 book by San Diego's late lover, the universally acclaimed architect Richard Neutra.

San Diego Mayor Peter Wilson, who has a sense of the future, found time to cite Neutra's warning in his brief "inaugural address" of 1952. In his 1975 "state of the city address" Wilson emphasized the most pressing item of city business is to decide the ideal population for San Diego and plan accordingly. The Mayor (who broke into politics as a Nixon campaign worker and was steered to San Diego by Herb Klein) is an excellent parliamentarian. He is hardly the radical enemy of business that some hardhats have feared because of his opposition to ill-planned growth, but he is something like an artist in jaycee clothing, having written a novel (unpublished)—which means at least that he tries to see things in their relationships.

As a state assemblyman, Wilson helped create the San Diego County Comprehensive Planning Organization which maintains a round table where the 12 bantam cities of the region sit down—guardedly—with the expansive city of San Diego and the flighty Board of Supervisors to plan and interrelate the future of a county nearly as large as the State of Connecticut. CPO is one of some 600 governing boards forced into existence around the country by your friendly federal government, which simply decreed—particularly in the Demonstration Cities Act of 1966—that certain federal monies would flow only into regions that showed adequate cooperation among their Balkan pseudo-sovereignties. The next necessary step is the formation of a regional *government*, full of teeth and taxes, better in quality and scope than any now existing in these parts. The San Diego city and county Leagues of Women Voters are studying hard to come up with workable proposals on this. Let all men praise Women's Lip.

San Diego may yet turn out to be a world leader in these matters but she can hardly claim to be a pioneer. This magazine pressed the case for metropolitan government in 1956, but thereafter San Diego watched her "competitors: move while she merely milled. Miami converted her Dade County into "Metro," a governing body to which even the city of Miami takes second place. And Atlanta, our closer rival in potential, and perhaps our superior in ambition (she offers herself as "The World's Next Great City" while we preen as "American's Finest") has begun clawing the ground as any mettlesome metropolis must to create a rapid-transit system. And San Francisco has a more or less going system—with equipment more or less assembled in San Diego.

Mayor Wilson will call upon a variety of professional planners and architects to help him design at least that portion of the metropolis which he governs. Presently a work is a team of urban design specialists, Kevin Lynch of MIT and Donald Appleyard of UC Berkeley, hired with funds from the heirs of San Diego's father-figure George Marston to deliver an "overview" of the city's future. Late this year their report will emerge, after which the City Planning Department hopes to generate an "urban design plan: (with funds, maybe, from the National Endowment of the Arts). Will they be able to take a big enough leap into the future, or will they be limited by political caution? In any event they bear no responsibility for the following free-lance design sketch of a Greater San Diego, a modest sketch which might be regarded as an imaginary yardstick against which to measure what actually happens as tax dollars and investment dollars meet in the grass to decide our fate. If you really want to swing on the higher trapezes of the future, look up the work of architect Paolo Soleri who is practicing miracles in the desert near Scottsdale, Arizona.

The design implication of "Comprehensive Planning Organization," with "Comprehensive" emphasized is that the metropolis of Greater San Diego extends far beyond the crazy boundaries of the incorporated city of San Diego (even though those boundaries encompass 319.5 square miles, currently the seventh largest U.S. city area). The area which falls under CPO's planning hand is 4,260 square miles, all of San Diego County. It is an area rather well isolated from any other major clot of population, so it makes sense to consider the whole county as one metropolis. Of course there is no sense in scattering our 10 million over all that turf. All the buildings required by that crowd need occupy no more than 3 percent of

the land. The real challenge is to design and distribute buildings in such a manner as to leave most of the land free for the uses which gratify and nourish the spirit or stomach: wilderness, wild animal preservation, recreation, agriculture.

Architect Paul Rudolph points the way, in the illustration at the head of this article. Does his Graphic Arts Center proposal suggest a man-made magic mountain? It certainly sounds like magic when he talks about it. He says: "This is one way of humanizing apartment buildings—of giving residents something they must have, not just a balcony but a full yard, even if it's a yard in the sky . . . Also I propose movable walls and ceilings and floors to give a fantastic variety of spaces, limited only by the human imagination."

What if such an apartment house were built and its residences discovered with enthusiasm that they preferred it to the old idea of a single-family house on its own piece of ground? (The most popular address in Montreal now is the avant-garde apartment complex called Habitat, designed by Moshe Safdie for Expo '67.) People everywhere would then be clamoring for similar digs—and housing money that is now scattered all over the landscape would go into these more secure investments in huge amounts. Design innovations would then multiply to satisfy the market, which would be accelerated by tax breaks and, as now, subsidies for non-earners. The idea would snowball until it produced whole new towns to replace the tired suburbs with which the land had become saddled.

It is easy, for example, to imagine a magic mountain new town about one mile wide, one mile long and 1,000 feet high that would contain so many features of work and play that the 100,000 residents would feel little need to leave this home town except for extra enjoyment and adventure. Residentially, every "head of family" in town would buy or rent a modern mammoth "cave," open to the sun and view at one end, alive at the other with all the ingenuities of electronic entertainment and education plus a full complement of plumbing. It would be as big as a tennis court (60 by 120 feet) and could even be reserved for that purpose by persons gone ga-ga over the game, provided they were temperate lobbors. Ceilings would be 20 feet high. The point is it would be spacious enough so self-expression in room arrangements could take a thousand forms, whether housing one hermit of a yeasty family of 22. Its separation from neighbors would be such that pets in moderation could be tolerated. And children. And chickens. Urbanistically, the magic mountain would contain its richest rewards in its womb, with a Shangri-la of a town center, open to the sky and filled with the attractions that make a town come alive. One of its most compelling benefits would be that its configuration and management afforded no opportunities for rattlesnakes, guerillas or other unwelcome guests.

It is easy to imagine 100 duplicate mile-square magic mountains studded above the huge metropolis of Greater San Diego (four miles distant from each other), thus accounting for 10 million population on only 100 square miles of land. Of course no such regimentation is to be entertained, but any urban design for Greater San Diego should move in the general conservative direction suggested by this fantasy. I mean conservative literally. It would conserve land. It would conserve building materials. It would conserve energy. It would conserve families—and souls, even, as noted below.

Conservation, indeed, is the main reason to consider the magic-mountain new towns. No matter what forms of energy are operative in the future (Buckminster Fuller says sun and wind and water power should replace poisonous petrochemicals and poisonous atomic fishing), the world will wake up to the fact that power can only be used to the extent that we have materials to collect and distribute it. The magic mountains will require less piping and less wiring than we now use, and they will recycle water, sewage and garbage to best effect (not least for patio vegetables). The souls they will conserve are the souls of the unborn—because the maximum tolerable population for the planet depends on the efficient use of resources. If we are really serious about life, liberty and the attainment of happiness, we are going to meter newcomers at the spigot to match the life-support capabilities of our spaceship.

If we assume, for the purposes of fantasy, that CPO has been transformed into a fully functioning government for the new metropolis of Greater San Diego, we can—in the time-scarred tradition of democracy—tell the government what to do. But a worthy government shouldn't need telling. CPO should

know enough to sponsor a pilot project along the lines of architect Rudolph's concept, extending it to embrace all the features of a self-sufficient new town.

When CPO outlines the magic-mountain design scheme convincingly there should be no trouble attracting investors. Imagine, for example, that the old-fashioned sprawl of Mira Mesa had never happened but that its developers were coming into town for the first time with all their money hanging out. CPO tells them: "We will allow you to reap great profits here, but you will have to build according to our conception of how to assure a sound future . . . That is the law, approved by the citizens."

The developers, through their lawyers, might kick and scream but they would settle down and build in the public interest because of the prime profit potential of San Diego (which was growing at four times the national rate when the statistics were last heard from). And there is plenty of precedent for CPO's firm stand. After all, as the 1970s wore on it was common practice for the San Diego City Council to require a "planned residential development" or a "planned commercial development" instead of just letting a developer run loose on the land. There was even a chance (remote) that the Congress might pass some legislation as the land-use planning bill introduced by Arizona's Representative Udall in 1974, aimed at upgrading environmental design throughout the country in behalf of conservation.

CPO's opportunity is to give a new meaning to urban renewal by seeding the financing of the first magic-mountain new town with federal monies, available through the Model Cities program—thus rescuing that program from the abuses which have befallen it. The challenge here is to let the disadvantaged, especially among the minorities, have a large part in the construction and occupation of the prototype new town while designing it so artfully that delinquents and bitter-enders and profiteers will not be able to sabotage it. Long forgotten is the fact that the Model Cities program is a corrupted form of a sterling idea given to President Johnson by Philadelphia architect Oskar Stonorov, namely, to build one new environment wisely as a model for the country. Congress, in its collective unwisdom, converted the idea into the present mess.

But CPO has a design priority, on which its experts have been hard at work—the laying out of a rapid-transit network for the metropolis. A weakness of their position at present is that the lines have been made to go where they will gather the most riders from existing communities. A really first-class system, however, would be designed as though the entire county were virgin territory, uninhabited, so that crossings of rail lines would occur at logical points where population had best be concentrated if it were not hung up on settlement patterns dictated by considerations of an earlier day. We may content ourselves that old sprawls like El Cajon, Chula Vista, Escondido, North Park and Clairemont will reform themselves into magic mountains when the idea has proved itself popular. But we should keep in mind that the rapid transit should extend even to the reservations in the back country if only because Indians by reason of their heritage, must vibrate to the nature-saving virtue of the magic mountains, and they deserve to share in the benefits—even if they enter the picture with an Arab backing.

Rapid transit in the fine tomorrow is not to be chiefly for daily commuting over long distances, because most jobs are on or near the new towns and many former desk-sitters merely communicate electronically with their offices. Rather, the trains are largely for missions of personal gratification among the wonders of the region. The clutter of miscellaneous dingbat houses have been cleared away mostly, leaving only the trees with which mortgagees tried to make up for the feeble architecture. Commercial clutter has been removed too because shopping and services are contained within the new towns. A trip anywhere in the region has much of the delightful character of the silent train ride one took in the '70s among the beasties of the Wild Animal Park. There are fast trains running often parallel to the slow, and there are vacuum tubes buried to move goods so that the menace of trucks is something your children only see in cartoons, like dinosaurs and grinches. Walking in the healthy tomorrow is very popular because it is worthwhile, and there are "golf carts" galore for the unmuscled and the lazy, but large personal cars are rarities best seen in museums.

The vast landscape, which is the main force of our innovative metropolis, is enough of a fruitful enchantment in itself but there will be a multiplicity of architectural "events"—some old, but mostly new—along the routes of travel. The grown-up CPO is staffed by a new breed of environmental school grads,

well grounded in social studies, as well as engineering and aesthetics. Their job is to grant building permits only to designs which meet the high standards of which architectural art is capable. No more designs dictated by clients who are merely rich men trying to get richer. Such despoilers will have become an endangered species, with every prospect of extinction. “Free” enterprise (protected by government) remains, but enterprisers know they have to answer for quality. As for the new architects capable of meeting the complex new standards, they are chaps and chicks as least as bright as those who go into simpler fields like physics. The new design discipline involves nothing less than the taming of technology to serve not the milking but the fulfillment of humans.

In the tomorrow of our spaced-out trip, the beaches and waters of the Pacific remain major magnets, and San Diego Bay is the most intriguing of all our natural wonders as it continues to support dramatic maritime and industrial activities. All land close to the water, and inward to the first hills calls for urban design planning quite different from the hinterland’s. No high and broad magic mountains here. Instead, residences and offices and hotel rooms are intermixed in very high but thin skyscrapers widely spaced in order to frame the water view for the inland millions. Long stretches of ground are taken up by industry, warehousing, transit lines and other practical uses which generally seek the ground floor, but all structures have roofs strong enough to support landscaping of that the net effect is of a waterside park. It is now possible to walk, or cycle, or canter from Imperial Beach all the way along the bay front to Point Loma, traveling alternately in ground-level park and rooftop park, with contoured transitions between the levels. Experience with Mission Bay Park in the ‘70s proved that San Diego never could have too much water-connected recreation for its population—and for visitors attracted by the echoes of Paradise.

North of Lindbergh Field all the way to Camp Pendleton, the waterside called for a variety of treatments improving on what was there in the ‘70s, and these were duly reported in *San Diego Magazine*. In a May, 1974, article, the magazine merely noted that old La Jolla must undo many architectural mistakes and reclaim its village aspect, while north La Jolla must realize the destiny of its site (and build up to the design standard set by architect Louis Kahn for Salk Institute), paced by the University of California whose La Jolla campus was destined to become the most significant of the chain. One way UCSD arrives at its predestination was to make a land exchange with owners of the neighboring Los Penasquitos ranch whereby the ranch remained pastoral while the owners got a “piece of the action” in developing, on campus, the most exquisitely designed new town of the metropolis, low in profile, high in humanistic purpose. UCSD’s ripening as a dream-environment was financed by professional enterprisers taming the sea and sky. For example, followers of Professor John Isaacs got patents on their ladder to the Moon, and assigned their royalties to alma mater. (The ladder doesn’t quite reach the moon but bus stops at a space station orbiting in sync with the Earth, 22,000 miles up, as foretold in *Science* in 1966.)

Lindbergh Field itself wants to be phased out altogether as an airport and carved into an extension of the facilities of Mission Bay Park, with roughly half of it dredged for waterways where pleasure-boating can multiply, connected by channels to San Diego Bay and Mission Bay.

Where’s the airport going? Why, Brown Field, naturally. Or, I should say, designedly. Being close to the Mexican border and operating in conjunction with Tijuana Airport, it must become the busiest of all international swing-gates. To get comprehensive planning for the new airport and environs, CPO has to have enough weight to correct a careless piece of state planning—supported surprisingly by our good Senator Mills, who should know better—which called in 1974 for a state prison to be built on the land between the two airports. “Astounding!” huffed Dick Huff, COP executive director. “Incredible!” bayed Jim Bates, San Diego City Councilman in whose district the miscarriage occurred. The schism showed that the “state of the art: of comprehensive planning in 1974 was far less advanced than the San Diego region deserved—speaking of the geography’s desserts, not necessarily the citizenry’s.

Persisting with our fantasy, we see that enough intelligence is exerted to move the prison site a few miles and thus permit the emergence of the airport which is the key to greatness for Greater San Diego. Even so, there will be few planes flying in and out of the International Airport, and none at all will be allowed over most of the Greater San Diego metropolis. Even Naval planes will disappear from the skies, as we shall see.

Beginning in 1974, when death's door opened for 346 innocents on a flight over Paris, people everywhere began to feel in their bones that the airplane was inherently unsafe and otherwise unacceptable for widespread use. In the same year it was announced that NASA was readying new versions of the lighter-than-air ship, the dirigible, which had made brief and sensational appearances in early century only to be driven from the skies because airplanes were becoming profitable. The returning dirigible—safe, quiet, elegant—will have many uses. Of particular interest to San Diegans is its potential for transferring fish from tuna boats far at sea to canneries on the San Diego Bay front.

The largest dirigibles will be capable of carrying 500 tons or 5,300 passengers halfway across the Earth on a discreet expenditure of fuel (as discussed in Leon Ambers 1970 book, *The Dirigible and the Future*). Smaller versions will be the ultimate in excursion vessels of the air, and will be much in demand by San Diegans who will thus maintain a bird's eye perspective on the prodigious growth of their metropolis (an on its sunbathers). Dirigibles will also supplement the rapid-transit lines to move people between the magic mountains and the central city or the waterfront or the airport.

The dirigible will make it easy for CPO—with federal and state blessing—;to cultivate magic mountains at the farther reaches of Greater San Diego—in the Cleveland National Forest and in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, fascinating areas which account for almost half of the county acreage and should be preserved for the most part by limiting development to new towns.

The resourceful geniuses of San Diego industry will come to the fore in dirigible fabrication. Plants for that purpose will abut the international border to facilitate the hiring of Mexicans in large numbers, not to gain cheap labor but to share with a neighbor the benefits of American enterprise. As Greater San Diego continues to capitalize on its status as a most favored metropolis, easy rail lines will come in from the east to help create, finally, the major seaport which was denied to San Diego when the trains of an earlier day were railroaded to Los Angeles Harbor instead. (Here Mexico helps *us* by extending her historic grant of railroad rights-of-way.)

In 1974 Rohr Industries was already into train manufacture, and this industry will grow here, as will the Gargantuan shipbuilding in which we currently are awash. The boom in port-related activity means that downtown San Diego must become primarily a maritime service area. But downtown is also, by the nature of her terrain, one vast amphitheater focused on the ever-changing stage show of water events in the bay. So the ground-level push-and-shove ferment must be surmounted by a series of wide, stepped terraces from which pedestrians will always have a commanding view of that stage extravaganza. As time goes on, all poorly designed business buildings—including most of the high-rise shoeboxes—will be superseded by splendid skyscrapers, the region's highest, spaced so as not to blot out the aquatic pageant. The terraces will sprout an infinite variety of entertainment fancies in the tradition of the old Disneyland, for "downtown" is no longer the center of centers for the region but decidedly is the center of the tourist industry.

In 1984, proving that creative people can save us from the nightmares projected for that year by George Orwell, Pete Wilson will be elected as the first Archmayor of Greater San Diego, having firmly rejected the temptation to run for national office because he still had some ideas for his home-grown metropolis. A few months later, John Gardner, the Uncommon Causer, takes office as President of the United States and calls for help to clean up the mess in Washington, so Archmayor Wilson takes him a new broom. The conversation goes something like this:

Wilson: "Mr. President: why not write off the city of Washington as a tax loss, and create a new District of Columbia out on the west coast on the rim of the Pacific Basin? After all, the Atlantic Basin is washed up as the main scene of action."

President: "A capital idea, Mr. Archmayor . . . Do you have a site in mind?"

Wilson: "Something has to be done about Naval Air Station Miramar, which operates so dangerously in the very heart of our metropolis, menacing the urban life on all sides . . . Do you realize it occupies a site as large as the entire island of Manhattan?"

President: “Your reputation for perception is well deserved . . . Naval aviation doesn’t have too much future, thank Heaven, so we could quite sensibly pack the fly boys off to Camp Pendleton and give that land to Greater San Diego . . . You could then lease it back to the federal government for a capital gain, ha, ha—and we in turn could put your CPO in charge of its design. I’m sure they’ll do it right . . . As you know, one reason Washington turned into such an urban mess is that Congress had charge of it . . . But the new batch of congressmen want to live down history and rebuild the country . . . They’ll support our project.”

Wilson: “I hasten to agree . . . Our assembly of architects who did so famously with the magic-mountain new town is ready now to take on the heroic project of building a cosmopolitan central city for the metropolis . . . They talk of a complex megastructure concentrating all the business and cultural demands of the world’s most sophisticated people—not too many, only about two million in fact, but the U.S. government would fit in there nicely . . . Our designers promise to avoid all the mistakes of past cities while bringing in one place all the good experiences that other cities offered . . . Especially they talk about outwitting the criminal minds and the exploiting minds that strangled Manhattan—while surpassing the mystique and magnetism that Manhattan once had.”

President: “You have a bee in your bonnet about Manhattan.”

Wilson: “Well, you know, most of the blue-ribbon corporations have left there and it isn’t good to have them scattered.”

President: “True . . . Do you suppose you could plan the new capital city so it would also be the new capital of money?”

Wilson: “Now you’re reading me, Mr. President . . . Instead of merely selling municipal bonds we’ll sell shares in the urban enterprise to the corporations while retaining design control for our whizzes of CPO . . . The moneymen in turn will get suitable amounts of space which they can lease to the feds, to the dear lobbyists and to anyone else needing an address in the nation’s capital . . . San Diego’s taxpayers, of course, will get a percentage of all profits, as in their successful formula for Mission Bay Park.”

President: “It follows, as the night the day that the U.N. will go where all that money is.”

Wilson: “Mr. President, you are miraculous . . . With a stroke of your pen you are converting an outmoded air station into the capital of the New World.”

MISSION BEACH—GOING UP?

Who knows better how to usher in the future, the city’s environmental quality chief or her planning director? San Diego’s EQ Director James Gleason threw Planning Director James Goff into a tizzy in April when he proposed that Mission Beach be zoned for up to 48 15-story towers replacing the beach cottage mix that prevails there now. “Up to 75 percent of the site could be landscaped open space for public use,” said Gleason. “An irresponsible proposal totally without supporting justification,” scoffed Goff.

Their difference arose because Goff has to answer to the people now living in Mission Beach while Gleason listens to the imprisoned grains of sand crying for the sun. But the sands tell me they’d rather support no more than 12 well-spaced towers, leaving 95 percent of the ground unencumbered except for boardwalks and bagnios and bazaars.

June 1974, San Diego Magazine, Kahn Quest . . . Architect Louis I. Kahn was the most advanced artist ever to leave his mark on the San Diego land, 86-88, 124-128.

How ironic that Lou Kahn should die (of a heart attack last March) in the phantom ruins of Manhattan's Pennsylvania Station. The architectural wizard was on the last leg of an arduous return from India, at age 73, to Philadelphia where he still taught at the University of Pennsylvania and where he elaborated unique designs celebrated worldwide. Those designs often had a classical massiveness kindred in their "spirit of the forms" to the imperial Roman gigantism of the Penn Station which was reared by confident empire builders in 1906, that station which told countless newcomers that they were now at the center of worldly power. When I speak of its phantom ruins I mean that it was torn down in 1963 and replaced by a moneymaker Madison Square Garden—not a garden at all but an office tower and sports facility with landscaped plazas to handle crowds. The railroad, reduced to a phantom itself, was allowed to continue operating out of the basement.

Even more ironic is the fact that the "Garden" in which Kahn died was designed by the conglomerate big-busy firm of Charles Luckman, super soap salesman turned design salesman. The lucky-starred Luckman is a graduate architect, but in the spectrum of talents operating large in architecture lately there were no two more widely different than Kahn and Luckman—the one a Beethoven-like artist, the other an accommodator of corporate interests more comparable to a Hollywood music arranger.

A third irony, the police of New York and the police of Philadelphia routinely processed Kahn's death but—according to *The New York Times*—failed to notify Mrs. Kahn until she made desperate inquiries, though they had her address. True, this Titan of our times could have been mistaken for an aged derelict. His greatness was an inward thing. He never pursued money or personal show. He usually paid himself \$70 a week, and ended in debt, bequeathing mainly the inestimable effects of his genius. But how were the police, the public's conscience, to know this? Of course, civilization has grown since Mozart went to a pauper's grave. Hasn't it?

Kahn was described as a phoenix by his fellow teacher at Yale, Vincent Scully, not just because he survived a terrible fire in his youth but because he rose from the "ashes" of his own meager early career and discovered his strength as a designer at age 50. At 73, he was only in the middle, really of his nature's trajectory—with many visions of new designs, and many commissions that now can't be done because, thankfully, there will be no attempt by his staff to fake the master's touch. Lou Kahn's worth as a teacher was not to spawn imitators but to get students to search themselves.

In 1959 Kahn began designing the Salk Institute in La Jolla conceiving a spread of related buildings to propitiate the gods of science even as the ancient Athenians built the Acropolis to keep their gods happy. There was money to complete only one laboratory complex, but this itself is a monument wrought with almost as much care for aesthetic effects as the Parthenon, the building on the Acropolis which more than any other single piece of evidence gave proof of the Golden Age of Greece. The classically sensitive Kahn would have preferred a comparison to the archaic Greek architecture of Paestium. He felt that "one should not be surprised to find an archaic quality because real architecture is just beginning to come to grips with a whole new order of artistic expression, growing, in turn, from the new tasks society has set for the architect." (But there are more reasons than one to make comparison with the Parthenon. When Pericles built it with public money, he encountered much opposition.)

Time judged that the Salk lab complex is the best known of Kahn's works. Because of its intriguing design qualities it almost invariably makes an appearance in the history books on recent architecture. It was Kahn's own favorite offspring, seconded closely by the Kimball Art Museum in Fort Worth. The reason: Both had superbly creative clients—Jonas Salk and Richard Brown, respectively. Salk being the mythopoetic conqueror of polio and Brown one of the country's keener museum directors (formerly at Los Angeles County Museum).

When the Institute had been operating for eight years I asked Dr. Salk what was his relationship with his eight-year old: Love? Hate? Love-hate? He answered: "Love . . . The building is beautifully responsive and at least equal to my expectations . . . It continues to attract thousands of visitors a year and evokes works of high praise."

Though many of the visitors are schoolchildren on tour, there's no doubt about the buildings' charisma, and there's also no doubt that many visitors dislike it because its aloof austerity is not at all familiar. One sees around the Institute so many clicksters with cameras as to recall the *paparazzi* who chase Jackie or Liz. Like those stars, the structure implies a world larger than routine life. Indeed, its powerful geometric force suggests the Pyramids on the edge of the Egyptian desert as readily as it does its Greek antecedents. Like the Pyramids, the Salkamid on the edge of the Pacific Ocean houses a folk hero trying his damndest to beat the rap of mortality.

Fatefully for Kahn, Salk came to him as a lover of art who wanted his laboratory to be a working work of art. He soberly chose the difficult course of taking on Kahn rather than a "practical" architect who could give him all the space he needed for far less cost. When the storm of creation was over, and some \$25 million spent (\$20 million on structure, \$5 million on appurtenances), Kahn could say: "In my talks around the world I never fail to mention the importance of Dr. Salk's constructive criticism. Ideally, the client should know the nature of the building he proposes—so much so that he inspires the designer to reveal in himself new realizations motivated by the strength of his conviction. It is singularity to singularity, the path to the intuitive, the seat of commonality, evoking the creative."

In a *Fortune* article Salk was quoted: "I should like to be able to invite Picasso to the laboratory." As the world turned, he married the painting mother of two Picasso children, Françoise Gilot, and set her up with a studio in the lab, but Picasso himself never made it. Or did he? There's a remarkable correspondence of the lab's patterns with some of the patterns in Picasso's paintings, an example being the *Three Musicians*, an easier example being his *Project for a Monument*.

Human or beastly presences almost always make themselves felt through even the wryest of Picasso's canvases, and so he is the logical "court painter" for an institute whose purpose is to probe the mysteries of human-animal nature. The Salk Institute should have a permanent collection of Picasso's paintings on its walls—and Picasso sculptures in its plaza, even if the "beauty" of his antic imagery appeals only to those who enjoy distortion as a truer evidence of man's condition than straight reporting.

The imposing bulk of the Salkamid can suggest an eerie presence too, if you are susceptible. Is it Victor Frankenstein's monster, born of too much study? I don't think so. Is it the messenger of the gods, the sphinx, gone to work for science? More likely. (The Parthenon wowed its people by crowding a 38-foot gold-and-ivory-clad statue of Athena into its inner sanctum, and leaving the door open to flash the gold, of which there were 2,545 pounds—worth how many millions in today's inflation?)

Whether or not you detect any overwhelming presence in the Salk forms, I can report that one bright young lab worker told me: "I don't like to stay very long in the plaza [which separates two tiers of labs] because I feel I am being watched, not so much by the people inside as by the building itself." How can this be? Is it because Kahn deliberately designed the complex as a servant of science? He liked to speak of the "served spaces" (the labs) and the "servant spaces" (attics above each lab). And we all know how servants run the world. So, the servant-spaces are keeping an eye on the lab workers. (The very name "Parthenon" was derived from the term for the servants of Athens.)

Then, too, a person in the Salk plaza is surrounded by a small army of purposeful-looking towers of concrete and teak and glass—ivory towers, really, because their main function is to provide study-cells for the stellar Fellows who guide the research processes of the Institute. These study-cells have windows angled so that, between flashes of genius, a Fellow can keep an eye on pretty girls crossing the plaza—or on the inspirational horizon of the Pacific beyond Black's Beach. If an impressionable visitor looked up at the towers from the plaza he would not see the "brains" within but he might notice the towers themselves glaring back like a phalanx of stiffly-armored warriors.

One role of the servant-spaces at Salk is to hold up the ceilings of the labs. Their beach-boy muscles, which do this, are called Vierendeel trusses, and they account for a fat portion of the construction cost. They allow the labs to be 65 feet wide by 245 feet long, with no supporting columns visible. Though it is hard to imagine an lab activity that could not put up with a few columns—especially when the ceiling is only 11 feet high and can't be raised—there is justification in that Kahn's expensive design of these "free"

spaces is mainly what lifted this structure far beyond the normal into the realm of high art. (Money was wasted, too, on the Parthenon, to produce the subtle optical refinements which left the design in a class by itself forever.)

The other role of the servant-spaces at Salk is to carry an array of pipes, ducts and wires which can be poked down through the ceiling at a moment's notice to supply the labs. Human technicians are forever crawling about—as hidden servants of the servant-spaces—to maintain the complicated innards of this animistic architecture.

For all its exalted “soul,” the monument has a share of the weaknesses that tend to creep up on architecture, no matter how careful the architects. Kahn, or his engineers, got trapped in a venting situation requiring the addition of a “tin hat” which is all that appears above the flat roof line—just enough to mock it. Other mockeries include the tendency of rain to run into rather than away from the labs because of too much relaxation of the trusses, and the tendency of the thin travertine paving in the plaza to crack under heavy usage—letting weeds grow to warn that nature is still stronger than science, and ready to take over if we don't show her every respect.

Lou Kahn may have been as proudly original and mystical as Beethoven, but he differed from the immortal Bee in that he was extremely absorptive of the opinions of others. He took much advice from the late San Diego landscape architect Roland Hoyt, who knew Southern California's growing conditions. Hoyt felt that the packing of our soil with salts from the hard water supply was bound to catch up with us, and Kahn's response was to plan an irrigation system designed to trap every drop of sweet rainwater from the roofs of the Salk labs and breastfeed it to the plants in the exquisite garden he intended to cultivate in the wide space between the two halves of the lab complex. Then, for years, Kahn and his chief assistant Jack Mac Allister—who now conducts a nationwide architectural practice from an office in Rancho Santa Fe, with partners Dave Rinehart and Stanley Ring—put countless hours into designing the garden but could never arrive at a scheme. Trees they thought appropriate would not survive the ocean winds. Plants that would survive didn't seem to belong with the bold architecture.

With that problem still unresolved, Khan visited an exhibition devoted to the richly talented Mexican architect Luis Barragan at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Barragan at that time—the mid '60s—was famous for having transformed a lava bed south of Mexico City into a profusely landscaped residential heaven, and he was widely regarded as an originator in the art of landscape. On that basis Kahn called him to come and advise about the Salk garden. Kahn himself willingly told what happened: “When Barragan arrived he swept his hand across the spaces and said: ‘I would not put a single tree in this area. I would make a plaza. Then you will have a façade to the sky.’ . . . Both Jonas and I felt the undeniable appropriateness.”

What a great phrase, “a façade to the sky!” It implies that Someone Up There is waiting to give approval! Not very scientific, perhaps, but surely the stuff of which high art is made. (Phidias, chief sculptor of the Parthenon, explained that he placed many of his best bas-reliefs too high for human eyes because they really were intended for the gods.)

Barragan's spell-casting words completely changed the ambience of the Salk architecture, yet Louis Kahn was resilient enough, in his '60s, to gladly make the most of it. He believed strongly in the power of words and toiled to shape them as though of concrete. Sometimes his prose was as dense as Gertrude Stein's and sometimes he as poetic as she, on the same wave length. A Socratic teacher, he liked to say: “A good question is greater than the most brilliant answer.” Stein, when dying of cancer, asked; “What is the answer? Getting none, she asked: “Then what is the question ?” Her overly familiar discovery: “A rose is a rose is a rose, was matched, consciously or not, by Kahn's “I think a rose wants to be a rose. This was a variation on his main theme: “Let the building be what it wants to be.”

Brown University's architectural scholar William H. Jordy did a chapter on Kahn heading it: “What the Building Wants to Be” (in volume four of *American Buildings and Their Architects*, Doubleday, 1972). Jordy wrote: “In the new climate of opinion, some critics are somewhat suspicious of the sybaritic monumentality of the Salk center set off in its privileged setting. Not that they would banish this

magnificent complex—especially magnificent if eventually completed as contemplated. On the contrary, most are thoroughly in favor of its completion. They merely question whether monuments of this sort will really chart what is likely to be most relevant in architecture of the future.”

But Professor Jordy adds: “The implications of Kahn’s philosophy range beyond the single building and ‘what it wants to be’. It may be a city, for example.”

When Thomas Jefferson founded, and *designed*, the University of Virginia, he intended its program and its architecture to stir youngbloods to thoughts of greatness for the country. Salk has an ever broader intent for his program, funds permitting, and he with Kahn equaled Jefferson in their architectural conception. Jefferson’s architecture has stood reasonably steady, delivering its lectures on classical excellence for 15 decades, and Kahn’s will do the same at least, though his contemplated completion cannot occur now. Because he can’t be present to preside, any new buildings at Salk Institute had best be buried unobtrusively in landscape, thus heightening by contrast the wonderment of Lou Kahn’s monument. The Kahn quest was the conquest of mediocrity. He succeeded here.

September 15, 1974. Temporary Paradise? by Kevin Lynch & Donald Appleyard published

September 1974, San Diego Magazine, Is San Diego “America’s Finest City” A MYTH? . . . An urban anthropologist digs into our reality, 130-133.

Mayor Peter Wilson, the son of an adman, won office in 1971 partly because he broadcast the catchy notion that “San Diego at this time can become America’s finest city.” Since then the city’s PR machinery has condensed his words, as a matter of chants, to read: “San Diego—America’s Finest City.” Is it a mythconception?

When the mayor uses the four-letter word “city” he is really thinking “metropolis.” He knows that the incorporated area of the city of San Diego, big as it is, cannot amount to much unless it has satisfactory working relations with all the surrounding territory which traffics with the central city. So his heart belongs to CPO—the Comprehensive Planning Organization of San Diego County, the one government agency which may be able to put all the parts together. And his most dangerous enemy is the County Board of Supervisors, an obsolescent body which appears to be activated these days mainly by jealousy against CPO. For example, in July the “supes” tried to gain a hammerlock on the city and all the sub-cities of the county by claiming the right to review all major projects which might affect air quality. The city promptly got CPO’s help in resisting the county, and seemed likely to prevail because the national Environmental Protection Agency was inclined toward CPO as the better able to monitor air quality.

The shrillest supervisor, Lou Conde, has sought to set the public against CPO by calling it s “third level of government.” A more forward look might see CPO developing as the *first* level of metropolitan government, the city and the sub-cities subordinated thereto, and the County Supervisors abolished altogether as unnecessary. The county’s work force of 10,500 would transfer smoothly to the service of the metropolis, which may be considered the same in extent as the county. Then the mayor’s grand idea of quality for San Diego would have a fair prospect.

To give the devils their due, the supervisors deserve credit for creating the county’s Environmental Development Agency, fueled by a \$750,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to study ways and means, or mays and weans, of interrelating the 100-plus governmental agencies operating in the county. This EDA then attracted a grant from the National Science Foundation to lure the four local universities into turning their research lights on the region’s problems.

You might think that knowledgeable professors would be just waiting to be asked for their expertise, but it turned out in this case that they were as touch as a bunch of inventors nurturing dreams of 100-mile-per-hour carburetors. First thing they did was to protest, and overturn the supervisor’s routine requirement that the research results be kept confidential. Seems the profs wanted the freedom to publish the results in professional journals of their own choice. NSF money held the project together, and at the end the county’s own review committee (of three professors and two bureaucrats) wrote:

“Local governments and university researchers are uneasy bedfellows at best . . . often suspicious and cynical of each other’s motives. Local agencies require applied rather than basic research . . . while basic research which is of interest to academicians does not ordinarily answer the questions which local governments are asking. In most cases contacts are short-lived, especially in the faculty member is placed in an advocacy position against developers, utility companies and the like [yet] local governments themselves provide dis-incentives by avoiding, rebuffing and at times insulting the very people whose help they can use.”

Obviously, such games of cowboys and Indians are little help in creating Mayor Wilson’s finest city. Fortunately the county’s critiquers could say: “We see a great deal of promise that the system will right itself.” To make sure of that, they suggested forming a Regional Research Consortium or Institute as an adjunct to CPO, perhaps funded by the National Science Foundation. The Consortium would be led by miraculous people who can talk the languages of both politicians and academicians, drawing on a pool of newly eager professors and translating their findings so the politicians can understand and act more wisely.

In spite of the volcanic rumblings, the mountain of words resulting from the county’s venture in university research contains a good many nuggets for anyone willing to explore its day and crumbly passages. One section of the research project will get particular attention here because its principal author, Dr. Richard D. Jones, has gone about like Johnny Appleseed dropping copies of his report wherever the thought the idea might grow. He is an urban anthropologist who spend four years at San Diego State (and finally was not granted tenure.)

Jones and several colleagues investigated 34 communities in and around San Diego, checking on what special amenities they have and what signs of deterioration they exhibit. In their report, titled *Community Organization and Environmental Control*, such joyous facts as these emerged: 1) Clairemont has more vandalism than any other part of town; 2) Residents of Mexican background are being elbowed out of Old Town today in order to make it more “American” (as a state park project)—just as in mid 19th century.

If one were looking for a “top ten” list of desirable neighborhoods, the Jones report has it (leaving one space blank for the reader to fill in): Mission Hills, La Jolla, Kensington-Normal Heights, Point Loma, Ocean Beach, Rancho Santa Fe, Rancho Bernardo, Poway, Solana Beach. He lists only five undesirable neighborhoods (Linda Vista-Kearny Mesa, East San Diego, Lemon Grove, Lakeside, Golden Hill) but one should remember that his crew did not look at every aching acre in the region.

Community profiles were drawn on a standardized form—outlines only, hardly suggesting the flesh and blood. The one for Logan Heights noted that a 1970 population of 14,300 consisted mainly of “lower class” blacks and Mexican-Americans, and reported: “In the 1940s there was a street gang which was part of the Pachuco Movement . . . Construction of Interstate 5 freeway through the middle (of the community) has disrupted traditional activities and informal lines of communication among the residents.”

Only one amenity was listed for Logan Heights, namely that it is a Model Cities target area, which means some action on jobs, education and planning. Among the 34 communities studied, Logan Heights ranked third in welfare cases, 33rd in income level, fourth in unemployment, 32nd in education. So, not surprisingly, “Streets are in poor condition, houses need repair, new housing is a lack but rodents and roaches are plentiful.”

The already date profile says that there is “no public meeting place and a lack of neighborhood parks.” But note that dynamic pressure from within the community is forcing a change in this pattern of blight, beginning notably with the Chicano park and murals under the approaches to the Coronado Bridge.

The profile (or caricature) for La Jolla shows a more aquiline nose surmounting a set of well-padded double chins. The population (1970) was 25,290, consisting mainly—if you believe the report—of a “wealthy (white) sporty tennis set,” second in income and education (Rancho Santa Fe was the first), 33rd in welfare cases, and 21st in unemployment (Tierra Santa had hardly any). The profile judged that La Jolla

“carries a reputation as one of the outstanding residential and resort areas on the West Coast. Residents seem to believe it and express it.” Amenities cited by residents include: Spanish and other types of architecture; tennis, golf, swimming, surfing, volley ball (!); climate; schools, museums; coastline, beaches; beautiful views, consistent R-1 zoning, no signs on roofs or vacant lots, monitoring of home appearance; exclusive shops, well-maintained streets and parks. The only threats of deterioration listed were high-rise apartments, crowding, high density, heavy traffic, inadequate parking, dogs on the beach and—snobbery.

La Jolla and Logan Heights are polar extremes, with which a metropolitan government has to deal in a balanced way or the whole urban scene will surely explode one day. Just as La Jolla once had a substantial black colony (in the day when the poor really served the rich), so Logan Heights in the future might deserve a white colony (the rich serving the poor) or—better—a sufficient mixing of colors to dissolve the ghetto stain; but it is predictable that the two areas will go on too much as before unless government becomes vastly more sophisticated than it has been. The aim must be to develop distinctive quality in each neighborhood, and delete the threats of deterioration in order to promote the fineness of the metropolis as a whole—if I may thus paraphrase the thrust of the Jones paper.

An intriguing comparison is Mission Hills and Kensington, two communities separated by three miles but roughly similar in their origin and upbringing as genteel trolley-car suburbs at a time when the city of San Diego was all downtown. Today they are, respectively, about 10,000 and 4,000 in population, 12th and sixth in income, 10th and 13th in education, 24th and 23rd in unemployment. A fairly sharp difference is that Kensington (though built mostly before 1930) is second of all communities studied in percentage of residences owner-occupied while Mission Hills is 18th.

That last item reflects the fact that Kensington is a tight little peninsula prevented from sprawl by deep canyons on three sides. Its Spanish tile and stucco mode was so well-established by 1926 that all electric wires were sent underground in that year, and apparently family roots were deep too. Mission Hills, on the other hand, has only lately filled up its available acres, and many of its older houses have seen multiple tenants. Still, it is Mission Hills that was able to achieve the first canyon-park designation, a model for the region, while Kensingtonians had to stand by with stucco on their faces while the peaceful life was bulldozed out of one of the boundary canyons by a developer who got the courts to say he had the right. It's one of San Diego's sadder stories—but may yet have a surprise ending better than heretofore contemplated.

Dr. Jones, who lives in Kensington, wrote: “The community has been successful on many occasions in resisting canyon scraping and development and creation of through-streets. Success was due largely to the specialists, engineers, lawyers and a city councilman (Henry Landt) who lived there. (In the 1960s one alert resident raised \$2,000 for attorneys to stop the State Division of Highways from scraping away a canyon wall to support gravel for road constructions.) But the aging home-owners were faced with canyon development of a 155-unit condominium project when the Planning Commission granted a conditional-use permit in 1968. Later the Planning Department recommended denial of a permit, noting that the canyon was designated as open space in the city's General Plan. In 1970 the City Council voted to void the permit, but . . .

The big “but,” of course, is that the owner of the canyon land, Harold La Fleur, pursued and won court approval to proceed. As of today an immense amount of cut-and-fill bulldozing has taken place. In most cases a community's hope of saving a canyon from heavy residential in-fill would be crushed by that machinery. But Kensington tugs insistently at the heartstrings of two councilmen—Lee Hubbard, who lives there, and James Ellis, who lives not far away. (Both were elected because they are friends of the building business!) Also, among Kensington's more strategic residents is attorney James Milch, partner of Planning Commission president Louis Wolfsheimer and himself chairman of the Park and Recreation Board.

Milch offers a rather irresistible argument: “Mission Hills has its Presidio Park,” he told me, “and Kensington now has a chance to get something similar that will serve not only Kensingtonians but people from Normal Heights and the college area as well as the San Diego public generally. Now that all the grading has been done, the canyon can't be saved as a natural park but the grading is actually an asset if we make it a cultivated park. Some Kensingtonians may think the owner should have continued to pay taxes and left the land undeveloped for their benefit as rim-owners, but we think our proper public business is to

find the money to compensate him for it and take possession of it in the name of the public as a public park.”

As this is written, events are breaking fast to give Kensington its Middlesex Canyon Park. Now that the momentum is gathering similar canyon-saving projects surely will be justified in relation to many of the several dozen communities which make up the metropolitan mix. In late July the largest of the communities—Clairemont—gained the most sought after of the parks—Tecolote Canyon—by unanimous consent of the City Council and over the livid bodies of developers who wanted to fill in much of the canyon with housing, preferably profitable condominiums.

One little-noted possibility in connection with these canyons is that the sewage from each community could be drained into that community’s canyons and converted to landscaping, complete with recreational ponds in the manner pioneered by Santee. One doesn’t have to be a sewer rat to realize that the Council’s rising determination to keep the city from plugging up solid with development is related to the danger that the region’s entire network of sewers would be overloaded and need constant remodeling at insufferable expense.

When urban experts Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard were preparing their “overview” of San Diego’s future (to be made public this month) they stressed the importance of reclaiming waste and waste water. Of course they saw this involving a much larger area than just the incorporated city of San Diego. The clear implication is that any “urban design plan” which Mayor Wilson may wish to sponsor as a follow-up to the Lynch-Appleyard visitation should be done not by the City Planning Department (though it has much good talent) but by CPO—utilizing borrowed talents from both the city and the county.

Lynch and Appleyard went up in a helicopter and shot the shock of their lives—not from the skittishness of the machine but from the view they had of the Mexican border, a relentlessly straight line at which green U.S. vegetation ceases and parched Mexican dust begins. They immediately sensed that San Diego must work out a more human interrelation with Tijuana. For starters, I suggest that the U.S. give to Mexico a portion of the Tijuana River delta (to be developed as a border park but owned by Mexico) in exchange for Tijuana Airport but owned by the United States.)

Business as usual and government as usual cannot produce a workable future. Giant leaps for mankind have to be the order of the day now. The National Science Foundation is accustomed to making such leaps, and the big idea imbedded in the NSF report discussed above—namely that there should be a Regional Research Consortium attached to CPO—deserves to be taken very seriously here. “San Diego—America’s Finest Metropolis” will fail to emerge as a reality unless the country’s finest intelligence is applied as a matter of chorus—highly professional chorus with voices of clarity and true pitch.

October 1974, San Diego Magazine, Around La Jolla: A Conversation with Jules Verne . . . 58+.

December 1974, San Diego Magazine, The Visions of Lloyd Ruocco . . . 58, 139.

CAPTION: Giovanni Bellini (c. 1430-1516) *St. Francis in Ecstasy*. Bellini’s painting in effect represents the figure and spirit of San Diego’s Lloyd Ruocco in his devotion to nature. The handsome town in the left background may be said to stand symbolically for Ruocco’s vision of new cities well designed.

When I wrote about architect Lloyd Ruocco any pretensions I may have as a critic must be discounted because he has been my kind and forbearant friend for 25 years. I first saw him, naturally enough, amidst a fine stand of eucalyptus trees on the property (Fifth Avenue near Brookes Street in San Diego) which was about to receive one of his handsomest architectural creations, to be known as the Design Center Building. He was not exactly in the trees—which would have been appropriate because he loved them so—but was in a construction shack working over his drafting table.

It was Lloyd’s lead-kindly-light-blue eye that told me he was a rarity. As I watched that eye over the years it seemed always to be searching a far distance and yet was always warmly involved with the person he was engaging. Engaging is the right word. Lloyd was invariably engaging conversationally.

My quarter-century experience of Ruocco's uniqueness makes it easy for me to identify him now with that fascinating figure of religious tradition known as "Saint" Francis of Assisi. (Those who believe in saints will please forgive a non-believer for putting the word in quotes.) I doubt that the church-free-as-a-bird Ruocco ever preached to a flock of birds (as Francis was said to do) but he certainly has preached to a wide variety of audiences in San Diego and elsewhere through the decades. He wouldn't call it preaching, of course, but if preaching can be said to be inspiring, he definitely was doing that. Many a San Diego listener surely formed the idea that an architect must be an artist if he's anything like Ruocco—an artist and a visionary. Lloyd never spoke without erupting into magnificent Roman-candle bursts of sudden enlightenment in phrases of colorful originality, obviously spontaneous. I like to think he had in his make-up the poetry shown by such artists as Cellini and Michelangelo (his father was an Italian vintner) plus the word-power so common among the English (his mother being English).

Even as Francis founded the Franciscan order of friars with the hope that they would follow his example of how to improve the world, so in the 1960s Ruocco was to found Citizens Coordinate for Century 3—which functions as a missionary brotherhood, or siblinehood, to inspire San Diegans to see the light about their future.

The comparison of Lloyd with Francis has to be done with reservations because Francis in the full flurry of his obsessions was truly a madman—by his own admission, for whatever that may be worth—and an object of constant bafflement to the more orderly religious professionals of his day (the 13th century). Son of a rich merchant, his youth was spent in the self-indulgences common among his peers. (Lloyd's youth was shy and poverty-ridden.) A Freudian might well interpret Francis' singular brand of religious conversion as a transfer of sex drives to novel channels, with the following as at least a scrap of evidence. It is recorded that Francis personally sheared of the long golden tresses of rich maidens whom his fanaticism seduced to join his flock.

The sky Lloyd attracted a beautiful blonde too, and eventually married her. Mrs. Ilse Ruocco, professor of art at San Diego State, did not lose her locks and fall at the feet of her master. Rather, she was the most stabilizing and happy-making force in his life. As Lloyd reminisces: "It took me a long time to realize that I should be married to Ilse, but once it happened I no longer had only my singular strength, but a multiple strength."

Together, Ilse and Lloyd planned numerous projects to capture the interests of children and college youth in architecture and city planning futures. Also Ilse was skillful in interior design so that many of the houses Lloyd conceived benefited from her complementary choice of what was to go in them.

A more significant consideration of Francis vis-à-vis Lloyd is documented in The Frisk Collections' famous Bellini painting (reproduced) which, besides showing a striking resemblance between the two, shows a man's arms open to all of nature, like Lloyd's. But Francis would have shocked the AIA by the testament he left that . . . "the houses of the friars should be built of sticks and mud and even the churches should look poor." He would not have approved of the relatively expensive missions built throughout California by the Franciscans whose organization grew and grew to the dismay of the simplicity-haunted Francis who started it. Francis himself lived for a time in a grotto or cave. The Ruocco's first house was called "el cavo" or the cave, and featured shelves cut in the tough earth of La Mesa, the shelves separated by a rock wall of the roughest construction.

Already in "el cavo" Ilse introduced the contemporary furniture that was to mark all of Lloyd's work whenever the team had control of the furnishings.

Even when he was at the School of Architecture of UC Berkeley in the 1920s Ruocco was haunted by the idea that no man in his buildings can equal the beauty of a tree. His teachers for the most part were still trying to propagate faith in the French-centered Beaux Arts tradition, but Lloyd was one of a very few students who had caught the fresh breezes blowing from, of all places, the bitter pre-Hitler Germany. So Lloyd was arguing for minimum architecture, letting nature show through, while his professors (self-doubting in all probability) were still promoting monuments that largely left nature at a respectful distance.

But the professors had enough acumen to give Lloyd honors for the sincerity and passion of his waywardness.

Back in San Diego Lloyd paid something of a penance as well as an apprenticeship by working for old-time architects—chiefly Requa and Jackson, and Templeton Johnson, with Sam Hamill as his friendliest guide into the hard realities of the business end. The building boom following World War II gave Lloyd—and thousands of other American architects—the chance to set themselves up in private practice.

Design Center was the early fulfillment of Lloyd's personal bent—and it remains one of his best works. Like "el cavo" in a sense, it tucked itself into a natural configuration of landscape, a handsome remnant of canyon. Some of the giant eucalyptus trees poked through the roof overhangs, always threatening, as is their wont, to crack off huge limbs and challenge the inhabitants for their lives (but the threat is controlled by judicious trimming). Other eukes seemed to lean against the structure as though trying to take part in holding it up. Nature on the make. The Design Center design comprised two separate buildings set a right angles—both essentially glass boxes—but a connecting linkage of soaring walkways, literally through the trees, married the complex to the site with such intimacy that the whole deserves to be preserved as a major achievement of San Diego architecture. Yet the construction is basically barn-like (that Franciscan frugality again) and thus especially vulnerable to "progress" which undoubtedly will press for some "higher" use of this site before too many years. Design Center's merit as a special place is attested by its appeal to other designers, many of whom have been tenants: architects, landscape architects, interior designers, photographers, graphic designers, even a lovely (female) men's hair stylist.

Lloyd and Ilse—or was it Harriett Wimmer and Joe Yamada, the landscape architects who became early tenants of Design Center—planted a dozen or so jacaranda trees along the Fifth Avenue front of the property. The grace-laden jacaranda has been used frequently in San Diego with distinguished effect, but this was perhaps the city's first planting on such a scale. There is no more distinctive sight in town than the stretch of otherwise mostly dull Fifth Avenue when the jacarandas are in lavender flower.

One of architect Ruocco's creative conceptions—which proved not to catch on with a building industry that was, and is, notoriously hammerlocked into crippling postures in which it barely acts at all in proportion to the world's needs—was a handsomely scaled, glass-sided house which could be dismantled easily in sections and reconstructed on any chosen site with minimum cost of time and labor. (The key to the industry's backwardness is that it loves to waste labor—at high rates.) Lloyd built his prototype of this innovation in Balboa Park as part of a home show. Again, the setting was an enchanting eucalyptus grove. When the industry showed its default of character by failing to pick up the idea, Lloyd himself simply transferred the house and rebuilt it as his own residence out near San Diego State in a development called Alvarado Estates. Most of his neighbors there built showy super-ranch type spreads, but Lloyd the Shelf-cutter opted again for a ledge cut well below the street level, with a miniature forest grown between the house and the street.

To enter that house is an exhilarating experience. I find it so today as I did 20 years ago. It hasn't changed essentially in that period, not aged not "dated." It communes with nature on all sides, but the magnetic force of the place, almost literally magnetic, is a stainless steel cylinder (gently comical in fact) of generous dimensions which captures and distributes the heat from a fire pit which is itself the center of a conversation pit. On the sunny side of the house is a patio, the sun being modified by a roof of movable canvas in glowing colors. The ensemble is so chaste in its appreciation of the nature of materials that I can easily imagine such an odd self-abnegator as "Saint" Francis taking to it in spite of himself.

One work of Ruocco's that Francis surely would have had to find a good word was a church in Clairemont (non-Roman to be sure) in which Lloyd had the parishioners personally do a large part of the brick work—with happily haphazard effect. Francis himself did a few turns as an amateur mason, at one time he went around collecting stray bricks and personally patching drafty places in old churches.

Ruocco denies that he has any business sense and Francis would probably nod in recognition of a natural brother. Ruocco is an artist—which, almost by definition, with a fair share of exceptions, is the

opposite of a businessman. So his forays into larger building projects, involving hard-nosed clients, were not generally happy conjunctions. He did one school, which Sam Hamill evaluates as quite a good one, but the experience was probably unsettling to the administrative types whose dreams of job escalation might go glimmering if they played around with architects.

One great exception to Lloyd's talent of turning off administrators was his assignment to design the Geophysics Laboratory for UCSD. But the secret there was this his go-betweens were two of the most remarkable people in town—Dr. Walter Munk, head of the UCSD Geophysics Department, who—Austrian born—radiates what is best-loved of the Viennese heritage, and Judy Morton Munk, native San Diegan of the long-stemmed American Beauty variety who has never been seen without a smile that would warm even a university regent's ponderous proclivities.

To put the case simply, the Munks outwitted the regents and got a building that was essentially a (Franciscan) barn of great dimensions, violating many of the rigid preconceptions whereby the regents preferred to build rock-of-ages type structures as a matter of "sound" business practice—which mainly means satisfying their insurance writers. It was an art of magic, performed by three magicians, and if you go there you may well agree with me that it is the most lovable of the bigger buildings on campus. The entrance alone is entrancing. In the dense shrubbery that cushions the scene waits a crouching Indian of basalt or diorite or some such ageless material—chosen, I suspect, by sculptor Donal Hord not only so that his work will be long remembered but so as to help that the Indian be not forgotten. Hord's Indian doesn't smile, of course. Indeed his eyes are closed, but Hord's title seems to contain a coiled warning. It is "Spring Stirring."

The building is clad inside and out with redwood. Notice especially the nice use of re-sawn redwood plywood on the interior. And don't fail to walk the balcony which—again like the daring walkway through the trees at Design Center—seems to be flinging you back to nature. This time it is the sea, and you appear to be walking right into it (or on it, Francis?) while actually you are suspended 100 feet or so above the water.

A large share of Ruocco's attention over the years has been lavished on the idea of a civic theatre. He visited European theatres of exceptional merit and came back rhapsodizing that San Diego could have a theatre equal to any in the world. As he saw it, there was no reason ours shouldn't be a triumph of artistic sensibility where all the Muses would feel at home and would dispense miracles in the performing arts. Similar ideal hopes were expressed about the same time in cities all over the country, most notably New York, but when hard-hat push came to shove in the actual construction too many of the halls failed to achieve the acoustical aura that tilts a performance into the realm of the ineffable. If New York couldn't do it with hundreds of millions, how could San Diego with a mere \$4 million budget? (The problem mainly arose from making halls too large in order to satisfy modern economics, and the Muses simply scorned that issue.)

Lloyd was one of three architects engaged to design San Diego's Civic Theatre—but Ruocco-ism divided by three equals zero artistically, so today when asked for a list of his important works he tends to skip the theatre altogether. With typical deference he says he doesn't want to take credit when other architects were involved, but the fact is the theatre bears no resemblance to the dreams he had nurtured so long.

When it comes to nurturing dreams there are few examples since the days of "Saint" Francis to compare with the irresistible impulse that now rules Ruocco day and night. He is retired from architectural practice and could simply bask in the glow of his recent election to the College of Fellows of the AIA, but—as though to atone for all the mistakes made by society in the concoction of today's messy cities—he is taken up completely with the vision of new cities that shall be devoid of all the old blunders and filled with the delights and soul-satisfactions of which the architectural art is capable (when stretched). In gathering material for publications, which he plans on the subject, he seeks out and talks with people of every variety because one of his strong feelings is that the people as a whole have to be imbued with an eagerness to participate in creating the new urban environment.

Ruocco was especially impressed by a report prepared lately under a grant from Laurence Rockefeller which indicated that wholly new cities are the really sound investment answer to the present urban dilemma. In these days of ignorant investment there is little action on the scale the report suggested—and, besides, officials of every existing city are seeking available dollars for their patchwork efforts. Ruocco throws down the specific challenge that investment forces in San Diego and Los Angeles join in creating a truly innovative city somewhere between the two metropolises. One benefit for the investors would be to keep the two giants at a decent distance from each other by rich greenbelting of the new city—which, as an essential proof of its newness, would live entirely within its own preserve and not bleed out into the countryside because people felt they had to run away.

One's first reaction might be that the activity on the Irvine Ranch preempts the Ruocco proposal, but Ruocco insists that the best conceptions of architecture have not been tried anywhere yet in the degree of devotion to principle required to meet his vision. As a clue, a clue only, of the *kindliness* which would be the essence of a Ruocco city, I need only cite that his notion of the proper relation between a child's home and his school is a "Kinderpath" consisting not of sidewalks and street crossings but of rambling lanes through tree-tall settings complete with the nature of nature.

Perhaps the most mysterious and even miraculous thing Ruocco ever did was to create a monument of an aviator (Montgomery) consisting only of a wing sticking straight up in the air. As monuments have a way of speaking more than was intended, we must ask what does this one mean? Does it mean that the rest of the plane is buried in the ground as an underground statement that planes *do* fall from the sky? Does it pre-figure the day when heavier-than-air craft will have largely disappeared as no longer environmentally or humanly acceptable? Or is it the Finger that writes our future by enjoining us to look up?

The Christian Cross is a monument which spoke so keenly to "Saint" Francis that he allegedly developed sores in the hands, feet and torso at the points where spikes were driven to nail his Christ to his Cross. If such a possessed and sensitized Francis were alive today he surely would recognize that the imagination of Lloyd Ruocco—even if unconsciously—had produced a modern equivalent of the Cross, a singular image summing up the new technological brutalities but also giving rise to new hopes for a better lot of humans.

December 1974, San Diego Magazine, The Misbegotten Post Office . . . 86+.

1975—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.), author, 1154 12th Ave.

February 1975, San Diego Magazine, 76-81, San Diego: Temporary Paradise? Ham Marston and the Mexican Connection.

Hamilton Marston has been communing with the ghost of his grandfather. Grandfather George Marston (1850-1946) did more than any one man to see that San Diego got set on a course of growth that would make it—in the hope-laden phrase of his day—a "City Beautiful" forever. But, as with other cities of the 1970s, there is not just a little rotten in the state of San Diego, so the ghost was restless.

After making a success of what may have been Southern California's oldest department store and certainly was one of the most beloved of generations here, George Marston built an exceptional residence with spacious grounds adjacent to the north edge of Balboa Park, on Seventh Avenue, employing for the purpose San Diego's most prized and surprising architect, Irving Gill. In 1974 Marston's daughter Mary (Hamilton's aunt) decided to give the house to the city rather than see it go the way of high-rising condominiums. A number of people reacted that it would make a fine mayor's residence, or a fine residence for mayors—after the example of New York City's Gracie Mansion—but the present mayor disassociated himself from that idea, and its use has not yet been determined.

Naturally, Hamilton went through the grand old manse to assess its condition and to savor once again the memories of his upbringing in which this house figured large. (His own home was nearby on the beautifully maintained short stretch of street which, despite its plain numerical name, is so notable in

character that true history buffs like to see the entire cul-de-sac preserved—while Hamilton, as trustee of his father's estate, feels obliged to demolish his boyhood home in favor of high-rise usage of the valuable land.) By the time he reached the attic the past was reverberating so in his psyche that when he uncovered a faded but life-size photo of Grandfather, he seemed to hear him speak. Perhaps it was only the hypnotic hum of the freeway which now ran too close to the grounds. Perhaps it was rather that Hamilton had imbibed once too often of Hamlet performances at The Old Globe Theatre, located just across the canyon. But this is what he heard, or fancied.

"I am they grandfather's spirit . . . If thou didst every thy grandfather love; Hamilton, revenge the foul and most unnatural murder of the city . . . I find the apt, and duller should'st thou be than the fat weed that roots himself in ease, wouldst thou not sire in this . . . Now, Hamilton, hear how the whole ear of San Diego is by a forged process of misinformation rankly abused . . . But, know, Hamilton, that the serpent that did sting the city's life is the profiteer—that incestuous, that adulterate beast, with witchcraft in his wit, with traitorous gifts—O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power so to seduce!"

Of course the above is laced with fictional phantasmagoria. George Marston hardly spoke so bluntly of his contemporaries or their progeny (though he could be poetic) and Hamilton Marston never went through the attic in that mode. But the fact is that "young" Hamilton (in his 60s now but appropriately vigorous) has rather suddenly sprung into action worthy of his grandfather. "Ham's" early years had been quite Hamlet-like—gentlemanly, appreciative of the world's good works but cautious and unassuming of leadership (except of the commercial kind). He was busy minding the elegant store until he sold it in the late '50s to the mighty Broadway chain of middle-merchandisers (much to the vexation of local affluent hostesses who twittered that he might at least have arranged to be bought out by Bullock's or Robinson's in order to save the style to which they had become accustomed.)

However, Hamilton showed philosophical signs of being his grandfather's spiritual continuator. Grandfather had often been mistaken for a Republican but he was in fact a creative independent who strayed so far from the businessman stereotype as to vote for Socialist Norman Thomas in 1932 and for Franklin Delano Roosevelt thereafter. Hamilton works hard in the Chamber of Commerce spirit, but in politics he is a Democrat. He probably would not agree with Shakespeare's still-ringing 17th century words (which avid environmentalists would hear as very much applying to our time): "This world is an unweeded garden that grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely," Nor would he identify himself with the Prince Hamlet who, in Shakespeare's terms, "was born to set it right." Still, in 1974 Hamilton came forward with a boldness that was a fair match for Grandfather's own.

In 1908 George Marston personally guaranteed the financing that brought a newly graduated landscape architect from Harvard, John Nolen, to make San Diego's first "master" plan. In 1974 Hamilton Marston and his aunt Mary provided the funds whereby the city of San Diego brought two seasoned urban designers, Kevin Lynch of MIT and Donald Appleyard of Berkeley, who were given a mandate to produce not just another plan but a "reconnaissance" or overview of the entire San Diego region.

There are intriguing comparisons to be made between the resulting documents spaced 66 years apart. By noting the fate of the early one, we may better judge the prospects of the latter.

Starting as a poor boy from the streets of Philadelphia, Nolen became a potent mixture of the reformer—after the model of Lincoln Steffens (whom he knew)—and the success-monger, after the model of Horatio Alger—to whom Shakespeare addressed these words across the centuries: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Nolen was to develop an enormous practice nationwide as a city planner, though he had no degree as such and was truly a self-made expert. (Degrees in city planning hadn't yet become an academic offering.) He was well-traveled and had a gift for words as when, upon first entering San Diego, he pronounced it a place of great promise, "with the nation in back of us, the world in front."

Nolen was drawn to other men who combined the success-drive of Alger with the ethical fiber of Steffens, so he struck a lasting friendship with George Marston whom he was later to call "one in a

thousand, not only in public spirit but in his broad views and ideas.” But the opening paragraphs of his 1908 plan for San Diego made clear that Nolen had small regard for mere profiteers. He wrote:

“Notwithstanding its advantages of situation, climate and scenery, San Diego today is neither interesting nor beautiful. Its city plan is not thoughtful, on the contrary, it is ignorant and wasteful . . . It has done little or nothing to secure for its people the benefits of any of its great natural resources, nor to provide those concomitants without which natural resources are so often valueless.”

“It is too late,” Nolen continued in 1908, “to make a plan for San Diego based simply on a thoughtful recognition of the topography . . . The street system is fixed almost irrevocably, not only in the built-up sections but for miles beyond. Acres upon acres, still houseless, have been platted through the energy of real estate agents and others, and tiny lots of 25-foot frontage sold to hopeful persons scattered all over the country. . . . Another unhappy and inescapable result is the small size of the blocks, a size devised by ingenious real estate owners and operators to make as many corner lots as possible.”

But, somewhat contradicting himself, Nolen proceeded: “Fortunately, the public-spirited men and women of San Diego are preparing to act in time . . . The problem resolves itself into a call for art and skill that will not only provide the degree of convenience and beauty that must soon be regarded as indispensable to city life, but will also recognize the peculiar opportunity for joy, for health, for prosperity that life in Southern California, more especially in San Diego, offers to all.”

Thus idealist Nolen had a concept of the City Beautiful that involved not only picture-postcard effects but good living conditions throughout the population. “To beautify a city,” he wrote, “means to make it perfect, perfect as a city, complete in serving a city’s purposes.” Lincoln Steffens, whose powerful book, *The Shame of Our Cities*, has appeared in 1904, must have approved of Nolen’s definition—and must have been highly skeptical of its fulfillment in a society so dominated by profiteering as ours.

The details of Nolen’s marvelous plan for the “perfect” San Diego can be read in the California Room of the Public Library. As to the *fate* of the plan, a number of good people have tried to carry out its spirit at least, but, as we all know, the pressure of “progress” exploded the city out of all resemblance to any possible dream of a place “complete in serving a city’s purposes.”

San Diego’s official reconnaissance artists Lynch and Appleyard—let’s cable-call them Applynch—considered that the opportunities dictated by the nature of the region had been rather thoroughly ignored. Indeed they considered that the priorities were reversed, with the people as a whole taking seats in the back of a business world dominated by the “military-industrial complex” against which no less a conservative than President Eisenhower had warned the nation. The Applynch report is written with academic expertise, yes, but with enough fresh breadth of human concern to sound a bit like Walt Whitman. I can hear Walt exclaiming: “Those are my boys!” Their title alone is a stinging question: *Temporary Paradise?* It has been printed by the city administration in a first edition of 25,000 in relative cheap tabloid newspaper form, with a tear-off sheet whereby readers can make and mail in their comments. Copies are still available at libraries or from the Planning Department.

After being out for a few weeks the dynamic report has induced only some 30 citizens to send in their comments, pro or con. Some of these were very pro and some very con, but the small total does reflect an apathy that is the more surprising in light of the challenging fact that one of the main propositions set forth by Professors Lynch and Appleyard is that we think about reclaiming San Diego Bay for the people as a whole and, to do so, moving away all Navy installations that don’t actually need the bay. Even the *San Diego Union*—which published the entire lengthy Nolen Plan in its stupendous New Year’s Day issue of 1909—had hardly any coverage of *Temporary Paradise?* Though the *Union*’s sister of the evening, the *Tribune*, printed a digest of it along with an editorial calling the perspective of the professors “breathhtaking, like the view of planet Earth from space.”

Another of the Applynch advisements is that air traffic be banished from Lindbergh Field, and that the great bayside area of the Field be converted into a residential park for some 100,000. They see a

similar development of North Island, suggesting a residential population there of 150,000. In both cases, the public, as well, is to have ample access to the waters and a considerable width of the land bordering these residential compounds. And all this is to be done while keeping the buildings low so as not to compromise the ocean view for people living further inland.

Hamilton Marston supports this Applynch equation, citing the high value of the land as real estate, but to me this seems as ill-considered as Hamlet's jilting of Ophelia, though it may be good stage business—at this stage of the city's hunger for tax income. To be consistent with ideas, I have expressed before in these pages, I have to question whether residential use of Lindbergh Field or North Island is desirable, except perhaps as temporary super mobile-home parks while the trees grow. It seems to me that both should be developed, eventually, much like Mission Bay Park, with most of the land (and water inlets) given over to recreational uses—always remembering that evermore millions will be discovering the attractions of San Diego's seacoast.

Thus I would seem to be advocating a course quite different from that put forth by Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard—but those wise gentlemen actually urge in their report that their ideas be weighed and shaped as changing conditions warrant. Really, we are not so far apart because they say: "We believe that the ocean shore should be the possession of *all* those who live in the region. Shore communities should not have exclusive rights, nor should tourist accommodations be able to appropriate special frontages . . . Commercial, industrial and military uses should be on the water only when they make active use of it, and then not for long continuous reaches." (The Navy is sure to stiffen in defense of its numerous waterside holdings except for the Marine Corps Recruit Depot which it is prepared to move to Camp Pendleton if the city—or, theoretically, any individual—comes up with \$100,000,000 or so for the land along the bay. More remotely possible is a move of the Naval Training Center—at even higher cost.)

One of the most startling statements in the Applynch text is this: "Alas, an opportunity missed! Had UCSD been located to the south it would have given an impetus to border cooperation and growth!" Hamilton Marston probably did not inspire that particular comment, but the important Applynch chapter on "The Mexican Connection" reflects Marston's main philosophical conviction which he expressed in a letter to the urban reconnoiters early in their assignment. (Even the title, "The Mexican Connection" was first used in that letter.)

Marston wrote for a moment as though he were descended from Spanish grantees, or grantees, rather than from of New England's early settlers: "San Diego might become a major Mexican city of a different Mexico, if the United States had not taken, by the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, the northwesterly third of the Republic of Mexico. Given her splendid harbor, the amenities of the Californias and the extent of the hinterland such a San Diego would likely have been a large city, and certainly a regional center for areas to the north, south and east. The Mexican War made San Diego a U.S. border town."

Some months later, in addressing the City Council, Marston said: "Lower California is on the threshold of immense development. We share with Tijuana the same physical region . . . we shall be two cities in team, each of about a million people, at about the same time, and not too far from now. To the degree that we can cooperate successfully in major public functions we shall rise above the limitations of our respective border sites and realize in combination the fuller potential of our region."

Another recent statement of the newly extensional Hamilton Marston is this: "Water is the principal key to development of Baja California, and it may well be that in assisting in the provision of an adequate water supply (there) San Diego will find her earliest and most urgent role>"

Such talk must sound like Hamlet's madness to the profiteering old guard of California's power structure who for long were willing to draw off so much of the Colorado River's water that the relatively small amount dribbling on down that river's route into Mexico was loaded with salts that poisoned rather than nourished crops. Recently, under pressure from Mexico's President, the U.S. has improved the quality of that particular source, and the San Diego County Water Authority stands ready with

engineering concepts, which, in the long run, could supply Tijuana's share of that water as less cost than the engineering concepts presently favored by the Mexican government.

Hamilton Marston, at this strategic moment, has been appointed to that Water Authority by our canny Mayor Wilson, eager—both of them—to work for a better shake for our neighbors.

Possessed as he was of an idea whose time was ticking, Marston became a central figure in the planning of San Diego's contribution to the nation's Bicentennial observances in 1976. The Copley Press has a keen, almost vested interest in this subject, and Copley's Director of Special Projects, Walter Swanson, credits Marston with making the point that "any programs would have to have a real intellectual content, and be more than simply a patriotic exercise—of which there will be many others anyway."

Swanson, who may be the most thoughtful man ever employed by the Copley organization (he retired this winter), and Marston together shaped a Bicentennial program intended to provide a broader base for relations with Mexico. They called it "Fronteras 1976"—and I found each insistent on crediting the other with thinking up the name. Marston, who became chairman of the executive committee and is now heading the drive for funds, further insisted, "Kim Moore (former city manager), Mayor Wilson and Dr. Clifford Grobstein (vice-chancellor, UCSD) all saw the border picture as early as Walter and I, or earlier."

In presenting the big idea to the regional Bicentennial Committee, Swanson put it well: "All over the world, countries are having to learn to be better neighbors. With increased interdependence of peoples, across-the-board opportunities and problems known in San Diego are also experienced in every other land. What about a Bicentennial project that would deal with this—create a special year for interchange of knowledge and cultures across our borders, an interchange of good will and good deeds that could be an example for many other lands."

The concept of "Fronteras, 1976" was endorsed by the regional committee, by the state committee (headed by another Copley grad, Richard Pourade) and by the entire contingent of U.S. Senators and Congressmen representing San Diego. More importantly, the University of California's most yeasty campus, UCSD, became a joint sponsor (with the City of San Diego) and promptly rose to the occasion with ideas for symposia, exhibitions and other events to give substance to "Fronteras, 1976" which, if you haven't guessed, translates as "Frontiers, 1976."

Of course Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard caught the Marston persuasion in their sails though they were inclined in the same direction because of their own observations. Their report practically denounces San Diego for having grown upside down—with all the gravy gravitating north to La Jolla, leaving only the feathers of the feast in the southerly reaches of the metropolis. They endorse moving the main airport to the border, and are most concerned to modify the effects of the "artificial boundaries," mainly for the benefit of our neighbors. Their design concepts for correcting this blind spot are so important that we will deal with them in a separate article, only noting here their conclusion: "Can one dream about a region as large and complicated as San Diego/Tijuana? We think so."

There is no doubt of the ethical convictions of Messrs. Marston, Lynch and Appleyard when advancing the idea of cooperation in depth with the Mexicans, but when the idea is supported by the general run of businessmen it will be because they hear the march of economic progress being generated on our border by the Mexicans themselves. According to our leading newspaper, the *Los Angeles Times* (November 25), Milton Castellanos, the present governor of Northern Baja California (the state wherein Tijuana occurs) has made the whole state the *modern* frontier for all of Mexico—really collecting taxes for the first time, drawing huge support from the federal government for the first time ever, converting the state budget from chronic red to new black in three years, and generally outdoing his own promises. "Castellanos had promised to build a new classroom a day while in office," said the *Times*. "Nearly two per day have been added in three years."

The *Times* also said that “Baja has attracted international attention over its geothermal power project in the Mexican Valley.” By 1976 it well may be that Mexico is showing us more new tricks than we them. So the “Fronteras, 1976” project being pushed by Hamilton Marston comes none too soon, even if anyone should be thinking only of the American business interest. But, clearly Hamilton—while remaining a businessman—is committed to the higher interest of correcting injustices in this city and in this international region. The ghost of a proud grandfather can get some rest now—but with eyes eternally open, searching and researching the future.

March, 1975, San Diego Magazine, Vol. 27, No. 5. The Palaces Need a Czar: Is Balboa Park Sinking or Just Losing Ground?, 50+, by James Britton II.

Please forgive the teasing title. Of course the *terra firma* of the marvelous park is not sinking. There are no oil deposits being sucked out to cause a collapse. Most of the surface is underlaid with hardpan—getting harder every year, as Arnold Moss of the Museum of Natural History notes, because all the watering of the vegetation automatically deposits more Colorado River salts below.

One speaks of a person as “sinking” or “losing ground” when he is near the end of his life. My real question is whether Balboa Park is losing its vitality *as a park*. The question is hardly new. San Diegans have fretted over the park’s quality for at least six of its 11-decade history, and are fretting particularly today because of the desire on the part of the descendants and beneficiaries of William Shakespeare to expand the Globe Theater complex, which occupies an exceptionally magical patch of the park. The Globesters are charting their plans with the help of Robert Mosher, who is a keen architect and a keen wordworker. In December he told me, “I wear two hats. . . . In addition to seeing this issue from the Globe’s point of view I am a member of the Facilities Committee of the Park and Recreation Department. . . . The committee has just written a report calling for still another master plan. We need to draw back and take a fresh look at the whole park and define the proper balance of usages.”

Mosher’s eloquence in meetings of the Facilities Committee was what led to that report “calling for still another master plan,” which I’d like to examine here after running lightly over the background. The first of several professionally prepared master plans for Balboa Park was made in 1902 by no less an authority than the president of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Samuel Parsons, Jr. He was selected and paid by park board’s man George Marston. Previously the most developing figure in the park had been Kate Sessions, nursery person extraordinaire, who did most of the early planting which, in due season, was to erase the memory of the desert this “City Park” was when dedicated in 1868. (New York’s Central park—the design of which by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux influenced park design all over the country—is only three years older [sic].

If your acquaintance with Balboa Park extends no more than 25 years or so, you will have to be surprised at how Parsons saw it in the first decade of the century, before the trees amounted to much. He wrote: “As one rides through the roads of the park the eye swims in rapture at the entrancing colors of Point Loma, the bay, the ocean and the mystic-wonderful Coronado Islands, which seem to belong entirely to the imagination, like the stately pleasure domes of Kubla Khan and seen by Coleridge in his opium dreams.” Parsons, who was not on the drug, also saw from the park—in the clean-air era before smog was invented—the peaks of San Jacinto and Palomar to the north, the Cuyamacas, San Miguel, Table Mountain and the Silver Strand to the east and south.

As Mary Marston wrote in her 1956 biography of her father: “Mr. Parsons thought that nowhere in the world was there a park completely surrounded by such magnificent views . . . He felt that roadways should be planned to make the most of the views. Planting of trees and shrubbery should not interfere with them.” But, Miss Marston added, “Today (1956) only a few view points are left, As one drives through the park, towering trees give shade and beauty, but even glimpses of sea and mountains are rare. With the growth of park and city we have lost something unique and priceless.” So much for the first master plan.

In 1908, another landscape architect, John Nolen, was working on *San Diego—A Comprehensive plan for Its Improvement* (See *San Diego Magazine*, January, 1975). He too was chosen by Marston, who underwrote his costs. His view of Balboa Park is even less imaginable in our day than the Parsons’ view.

Wrote Nolen: “The authorities must consider the wisdom of withdrawing permanently from use so large a tract (1,400 acres) in the heart of the city, of separating so completely the business and residential sections, of blocking transportation for 22 squares each way.”

But Nolen also gloried in the astounding circle of distant views to be seen from the high plateau of the park. He recommended that the plateau areas be reserved for “golf, tennis, and a large general playfield,” and he preferred that most of the trees be confined to the many canyons. Indeed, he advocated calling it *Canyada Park*. His, then, was a sort of negative master plan, which may have encouraged the nibblers who, over the years, transferred much acreage to San Diego High School, Roosevelt Junior High School, the State Division of Highways and “the world’s largest Naval Hospital”—to name only the most conspicuous bites. The nibblers even opened their jaws for an extra large chew when a site was being sought for the college that now is called San Diego State University. That, of course, would have wiped out the park, as park, if it had gone through.

When San Diego’s world-stirring exposition of 1915 was being planned, George Marston sided with still a third professional landscape architectural opinion, that of the Olmsted Brothers—sons of the Central Park genius—who were brought in to re-think the park in readiness for the tourist flocks. The Olmsteds wanted to keep the expo buildings on the edge of the park, near San Diego High School, and they resigned in a professional huff when the high-octane architect Bertram Goodhue sold the expo leaders on his elaborate vision of a simulated Spanish city in the heartland of the park. The exposition was a phenomenal success because Goodhue’s design concept had the power to stir men’s souls—even though most of the buildings were whipped up of temporary materials. It was an evocative *mélange* of exuberant variations on originals from older cultures—an early example of the dress-up make-believe that was to proliferate on Hollywood motion-picture lots and eventuate in Disneylandia—but the real key to its appeal was the splendid arrangement of the buildings in relation to one another.

So, such planning as the Olmsteds did, got shelved immediately in favor of the masterly plan imprinted on the park by the overpowering Goodhue. Yet Goodhue’s plan was promptly threatened too, and by none other than Goodhue himself! He became the first of a long line of architects who lobbied to get the “temporary” buildings removed from the park *ex post expo*. His main reason was that for all the bravura poured into them, the temporaries did not represent him and his associates at their constructional best, but he may also have had in mind that the park, after all, was the province of landscape architects. He would have been happy if the California Building and its tower, along with the Cabrillo Bridge and—at a discreet distance—the Botanical Building were all that remained—and he saw these as suitable to be surrounded by extensive gardens.

Meanwhile, George Marston switched too, and showed up leading the consecution of citizens clamoring to retain the expo buildings! In a 1922 letter to the *Union* he wrote: “Why should the park buildings be saved? Were they not built as temporary, without any thought of being retained? Yes, it is quite true, but there may be reasons for doing differently . . . Notwithstanding the advice of the architects themselves, and the sheer impossibility of permanent restoration at present, the community has grown slowly into conviction that what we have there in the park—which is something more than mere buildings—must not perish. You may prove what you will in facts and figures about the shaky old buildings. The only answer is: ‘They shall not pass.’ Somehow, without knowing how to explain it, we are instinctively, unconsciously, incurably in love with them and will not give them up. It’s the grant emotion and is founded, I think, on something real and vital. The truth is that the Exposition ‘buildded better than it knew’ . . . You can cross the great bridge and find yourself in another world.”

Another world, George? Did you mean that competitive jostling is left behind and harmony prevails? Well, hardly. Small wars flared repeatedly in the park during the years since you wrote that letter. Museums settled and grew in the old buildings, or in replacements which sometimes respected but mostly violated the Goodhue scheme. John Nolen and the Olmsted firm won new “master plan” contracts to only spotty effect. Another architect of sweet talent, Richard Requa, did a master plan to encompass a new exposition for 1935-36, using the Goodhue inheritance and adding the rather jumbly mix of structures now found in the Palisades area. The Navy came in with master plans, too, beginning in World War I when it

started to acquire what is now 100 acres near the center of the park. World War II was rough on park buildings, which were taken over in toto by the Navy because of the grievous hospital needs.

By 1960 we were ripe for—yes—a master plan, and this time it was prepared by the prestigious St. Louis firm of Harland Bartholomew and Associates, which tried bravely to make sense of the accumulated confusion. The Bartholomew Plan, however, caused a new and hotter sequence of brush-fire wars within the park so that by 1975 the Facilities Committee deemed the plan of little further use. Curiously, it had been projected to cover a 15-year period, the period had expired, and not much of the plan had been followed.

Now—to pick up the thread from our second paragraph—the Facilities Committee’s prospectus for a 1975 master plan contains these difficult proposals:

- 1) Return El Prado (the central core laid out by Goodhue and associates) to “its original form” eliminating most auto traffic and parking re-development to be “totally pedestrian-oriented” except for in-park transit systems.
- 2) Limit autos to certain areas elsewhere in the park.
- 3) Re-locate athletic functions from the Palisades area to Morley Field *and* re-locate non-museum functions (except the Globe!) from the Prado area to the Palisades area.

Lost sight of in recent years is an idea advanced in the Bartholomew Plan: convert the California Building (now used uncomfortably by the Museum of Man) into a theater. Craig Noel, the wizardly director of the Globe for, lo, the three decades of its existence told me that it was he who had urged the Bartholomew planners to include that proposal—which conforms with Goodhue’s intent that the building be used “as an auditorium of some type.” Noel and his Globesters have put that idea aside long since in favor of the new theater for which Mosher made schematics (after the Balboa Park Committee approved the concept.)

There is no doubt that Noel and his professional colleagues have the imagination and ingenuity to do wonders with any space they may inhabit. The California Building and associated structures are adjacent to the Globe. Enough space could be allotted there to develop the full-fledged theater school which would be the natural fulfillment of Noel’s stewardship.

A delightful example of Noel’s ingenuity surfaced at a December workshop of the park board on the question of traffic. The Globe’s vestal matron, Delza Martin, was on hand to present a parking plan that Noel had hatched after sitting on the egg for years. He had an actor friend prepare an amateur rendering of a parking structure he proposed to tuck into the canyons at the eastern end of Cabrillo Bridge, which happens to be just west of the Globe. The structure would be facaded with a series of round arches repeating the arches of the bridge, and atop the layers of parking would be spacious promenades. To sell this presto solution of a severe problem, wizard Noel also prepared an acetate overlay which, when flipped across the rendering, shows how the trees would hide the parking! Note that his quite architectural scheme was offered as a non-professional conception, not at all associated with Globe architect Mosher.

The heavily-wooded canyon site of the proposed 800-seat theater (east of the Globe) is one of the most attractive glens of the park for those who bother to seek it out—the true park seekers, some of whom are strongly challenging the Globe plans. On the other hand, a sizable piece of the terrain targeted by Noel for parking could be given up reasonably for that purpose if it would mean easing the intrusion of cars in choicer areas. Besides, a parking structure—topped by promenades setting off the California tower—could be so designed that it would serve other, more useful functions when we finally bring in transit systems to supersede the auto. Road access to this parking would be a bit of a challenge. So the whole question of what to build, and where, indeed, should wait upon new studies by a sufficiently talented master planner.

What Balboa Park needs now and hereafter is a resident genius of design—an individual, not a committee—empowered to make a master plan and continually update it. He or she would take account of the political pressures brought to bear through the Park and Recreation board, but would be the final

referee. To attract the right incorruptible person, George Marston's fine house, which is not part of the park, might be thrown into the contract.

At least two of the 13 people on the Facilities Committee have the talent to fulfill this function, but none of them is likely to be available. They are all busy professionals in architecture, landscape architecture, building construction or art, and the time they can give to the committee activity is very limited. A glance at the minutes suggests that most committee time is spent evaluating contracts for outhouses somewhere or other in the city's far-flung park system. They have a hand now in selecting designers for minor projects but not for major projects (like the Globe Theater), for which committee members themselves often win contracts. Ideally, though, these pros, just because of their expertise in design, should have been charged with deciding *in the first place* whether the Globe's third theater is a good fit in the overall layout of the park, but that sort of basic judgment is made instead, repeatedly, by the Balboa Park Committee, hardly any of whose members are qualified on design matters.

The words in the FC's prospectus about returning El Prado to "its original form" have to be taken loosely. They really refer only to turning El Prado into a *prado*, or promenade, once again. Architects educated in this century generally believe they can improve on the imagery left from the Goodhue era, and that they have in fact already destroyed the ensemble effect of the Goodhue heritage. Mosher's firm designed the new wings of the Fine Arts Gallery—creditable design, these wings, but hardly retaining the original form. Frank Hope's firm did the Timken Gallery, a blatant wrong note in this neighborhood, reeking of nouveau richesse. The firms of Richard Wheeler and George Hatch (with Louis Bodmer) did the Casa del Prado and the Science Center respectively—the one duplicating the original exterior motifs found on the site while failing to produce a significant building behind the facade, the other accommodating an amazing technological feat within while mocking the Spanish-Colonial masters by settling for blown-up residential stucco style on the exterior.

The architectural firm headed by Homer Delawie (who is a city planning commissioner) won the contracts to design the "floor" functions of the Prado. His Plaza de Balboa with its windblown fountain at the eastern end of El Prado has its own clean look—quite different from the setting of 1915. He is presently re-designing the Plaza de Panama in front of the Fine Arts Gallery, which again will be something new—inevitably an easy improvement on the nervous sea of cars there now, but further erasing the original form.

Facilities Committee chairman Joe Yamada—who, like Mosher, wears two park hats—has a contract to help the Delawie company on this plaza as he did on the earlier one. Yamada told me something of his current thoughts for the Prado (while emphasizing that nothing of this had been decided): "We need a surface that can be traveled over by necessary vehicles but is basically designed for pedestrians." I like the idea of a floor made of six-foot squares of decorative concrete paving, separated by four-inch strips of grass—picking up the theme used so successfully at the University of Mexico. It will be agreeable to look at, pleasant under foot, and cars can park on it until we decided what else to do with them. Also, the squares can be lifted out at any point to provide beds for planting. I'd like to carry this motif down the entire Prado across the bridge and all the way to Sixth Avenue, getting rid of the asphalt. In front of the Fine Arts Gallery would be a good place for an outdoor dining arrangement.

The Yamada artistry is highly reliable if not infallible. (His striking fence around the Fine Arts Gallery's sculpture garden needs to be painted dark to diminish its distracting op-art effect.) His idea described above sounds like a genuine aesthetic enhancement of the Prado's ambiance. There is no doubt, now, that the Prado's future will not be a restoration of its original form but a mixture of nostalgia phenomena and contemporary expression. (Tiny Bea Evenson's mighty Committee of 100 will continue to do battle for reincarnation in concrete of the fragile Goodhued ghosts, but she faces strong opposition—for example, in the looming case of the Electric Building, the one whose cornice is held up by plastered naked ladies. This is a period piece if ever there was one, and I think it should be treasured.) The serious challenge is to see that anything added along the strip of the Prado is a plus rather than a nonplus—concerting but not disconcerting. A new unity has to be discovered.

Though intending to discuss the whole of the park, I have kept the reader pinned on the Prado because that is where the definitive changes are occurring. If we step for a moment to the east of Park

Boulevard, opposite the end of the Prado, we can touch on a really thorny issue. A rose garden is being created there, while just north of it is a desert garden where cacti will stand and point. It makes no landscaping sense to have these two gardens as neighbors, considering that the two classes of prickles tend to jam each other's messages to man. An alternate site for the roses, near the Federal Building, was foreclosed because the area had recently been planted to trees and grass.

Grass is being used widely now in San Diego parks because, as park superintendent Dave Roberts explained to me, it is easy to maintain with modern equipment and requires fewer man-hours than more complicated vegetation. Of course, the grass is welcome to the average eye and foot, though it seems alien to lovers of the native heath, and it does drink oceans of water. In Balboa Park the new expanses of grass also mean that this very particular park is returning somewhat toward the condition of openness that so fascinated Samuel Parsons in 1902. However, the distinct views that he raved about are being blocked now by buildings rising high outside the park. None of these buildings risen to date is as rewarding to gaze upon as is the park's centerpiece, the California Tower, which once was smothered in eucalypti but is now quite exposed because of the removal or topping of many trees—another result of managerial rather than design intentions.

The park superintendent and his design staff have valuable experience on which to draw, but they do not have the time, the authority or even the inclination to ride herd on all the people who contribute parts of the Balboa Park future. So the fact remains that no one is in a position to assure that the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts—i.e., a masterpiece of design. Yet, obviously, the finest park must have the finest guidance. Or sink.

April 1975, San Diego Magazine, Letters: Hodgepodge and Nonsense in Balboa Park

The article on Balboa Park by James Britton II in the March 1975 issue represents a reversal of views expounded in your magazine by James Britton, Marilyn Hagberg, and Edwin Self. Britton II has not, however, gone to the heart of the problem. Balboa Park is an indigestible hodgepodge of good and bad architecture, nonsensical landscaping, and dwindling open space because politicians and officials in charge of the park have consistently surrendered to pressures from city, state and federal government, religious, political and philanthropic groups, musicians, artists, floral societies, theater goers, hobbyists of one thing or another, and a vocal minority of women in love with stage decoration. As a result the park has been given up to restrictive, undemocratic, non-park uses and all sense of common pleasure and purpose has been lost.

Richard W. Amero

April 1975, San Diego Magazine, UPTOWN: Will Hillcrest become Hellcrest?

“Uptown” is the name given by city planners to an area in San Diego that includes Mission Hills, Hillcrest and the richly varied streets west of Balboa Park. The current population of 34,000 is only 5 percent of the city's total but that percentage tells very little. Historically, this area has housed more of the city's leadership than any other comparable acreage—naturally enough, it's just north of downtown. Uptown is still the residence by choice of wealthy people who could go anywhere—intermixed in the healthiest way with every style of the unwealthy.

The medium age is 39.1 years, whereas for the city as whole it is 25.8 years, and “seniors” abound. Only one-third of Uptown families have children now, as compared with the city average of 54 percent. Not surprisingly, then, there is one school too many at present, and Florence Elementary is being eyed for conversion into a senior center. Yet a proper future for Uptown would bring children again.

More significantly for the future, there are twice as many medical workers in Uptown as in the city as a whole, and there is a saturation, so to speak, of hospital beds. Uptown is already a regional medical center and is set on a course of becoming more so. Also Uptown is where high-rise towers want most to sink their roots because of the superb convenience to the principal urban attractions, including the views.

How can intense urban growth be accommodated without destroying the delightful historical and geographical qualities? That question occupied Uptown Planners and occupies us here.

Six years of feverish meetings among representative Uptown residents and owners produced a scenario called *Uptown Community Plan* which will surprise most Uptowners with its information about their past and its schematics about their future. However, it hardly reveals the tension between those participants who watered at the prospect of profits, and those who simply wanted to hold on to the serene mode of living Uptown had developed at relatively low cost.

The most cherished house in Uptown is what looks like a cottage from the street but, because it spills over the edge of a canyon, may have two or more stories at the rear plus a setting of mystical wooded landscape worthy of a palace. It is the very opposite of high-rise. Yet high-rises also covet canyons and have already pre-empted some. Furthermore, even if the high-risers settle for the flat tableland between canyons they will tend to elevate all nearby property values, forcing wealthy and unwealthy alike out of their R-1 canyon perches. Good design and certain new devices of government can modify this threat, as we shall see.

Uptown dwellers used to control the destiny of the city, but no more. “Things are in the saddle and ride mankind,” announced Emerson in his *Ode* of 1843. Today he might agree that mankind is saddled with the things it rides. Scatteration via automobile has determined the make-up of the city, especially since 1945, and it seems that—sooner or later often or not—every auto around San Diego must run its wheels through Uptown streets. Hillcrest has long been the most hellish traffic situation outside of downtown.

The very fact means that the straight line between downtown and Hillcrest is the most logical place for a rapid-transit shuttle needed to fulfill Mayor Wilson’s program of compacting the city in order to make it less wasteful of energy and money. When the city puts in the shuttle CPO planned, with a series of stations near the western edge of Balboa Park, you will have an urban corridor which will be as singular and as important to San Diego as your spine is to you. (The shuttle will follow Fifth or Fourth Avenue or both.)

To pursue that vertebrae figure of speech a moment, we can call downtown the seat of government at one end of the spine. Then there should be a head at the other end. There is. It is the ripe “Residential Medical” zone highlighted on our map. Few San Diegans have ventured to become acquainted with the incredibly unused peninsulas at the extreme northern portion of this zone because these are controlled by the University of California’s hospital and the county’s mental health facility. Also in the zone are Mercy Hospital and an assortment of homes which gradually are making way for apartment houses.

Will this “headland” of the new urban core be clear and high-minded, or muddled and mean? In other words, what are the chances of good design in the Res-Med zone? The zone is undergoing a traffic study just now by Alan M. Voorhees & Associates whose Jim Federhart told me that the present thinking is to plan for somewhat more than double the number of auto trips presently recurring in the zone. He speaks of a possible “mini-interchange” just north of the heavy traffic corner of Sixth and University Avenues. Mercy Hospital and Hillcrest North Medical Center (at Fifth and Washington) might join in raising a multi-level parking structure near their two buildings, feeding it from the interchange.

Because the road will come in from below, the logical site for the structure is a gorgeous remnant of canyon which should not be filled unless a rewarding complement of landscaping and pedestrian amenities can make one forget the loss. Federhart said his company will recommend a park-like top layer for the parking, and he spoke also of the “tradeoffs,” including a substantial reduction of smog from all the stop-and-go traffic that surely will increase in nearby streets if the mini-interchange and parking structure are not built.

Architect Frederick Meyer, president of Uptown Planners, who has stayed on that groaning blackboard since its start in 1969, feels that a sufficient parking structure could be tucked into the *edges* of the canyon, leaving a large part of it in its natural state. He is a strong advocate of saving the uniqueness of

the canyons wherever possible, and he endorses the idea that parking structures on canyon edges should be decked out with “hanging gardens” so that they can become part of the canyons visually.

It happens that one of San Diego’s enthusiast for good architecture, Richard Clayton Adams, also owns a large piece of that canyon. He is a classic car collector without much love for the ordinary variety. Of them he says, “We’ve got to tame the damned things. . . . They’re ruining our lives.” So he too wants to build a parking structure in the canyon. Obviously there is need for a carefully worked-out master plan—an architecturally inspired plan or what is now being called an urban design plan—to relate the actions of institutional and private enterprisers in situations like this.

“Mercy Canyon” is an appropriate name for the key corner of the Res-Med zone. The whole zone wants to have an urban design plan so that it will not go on developing the way it has and become a monstrous confusion especially after the arrival of the rapid-transit trains now being plotted. The public agencies involved could lead the way if they only would raise their sights, yet one of them, the University of California, has set a bad example by rearing the most offensive of parking structures on the edge of a canyon near University Hospital. It consists of seven layers of raw metal scaffolding which may be efficient enough as the mindless auto is concerned but is an obscenity in the eyes of its neighbors, particularly the Unitarian Church whose vast picture window assures the congregation a weekly eyeful of this monument to our metalsome time.

A university spokesman defends this creation as logical and budget-minded (in a time when U.C. funds are hard to come by) while the evidence says that all the brainpower assembled in the name of the University of California has not really exerted itself, has not really cared. A little exercise of imagination would have shown, for example, that the structure had better be spread more broadly along the canyon rim land controlled by the university, in order that no parking need arise above the street level. (Both here and in Mercy Canyon the top level of parking should be at street level. A roof deck—either now or in the future—would be for pedestrians, who otherwise will not get to see the canyon beauties once the area is fully built up.) A little more imagination would have suggested a staggered arrangement of decks so that, with plantings, the university parking structure would disappear from view in time. If something like this might costs a bit more, the university should fight for it on principle rather than build in a manner that undermines the environment.

The city’s outspoken Environmental Quality Department issued a report (prepared by a liberated woman, Marilyn Colombo) questioning, in effect, whether University Hospital should be in Uptown at all, it being a regional rather than a local facility. Arguing the case for an alternative conception of Uptown that would make it more heavily residential, EQD said: “A reduction in the intensity and continued centralization of medical facilities . . . would provide an effective reduction in auto trips and thereby alleviate auto-related environmental impacts. Gorge rising, UCSD assistant chancellor Donald Sites fired a protective volley: “To suggest that medical facilities now located in Uptown could be moved elsewhere takes into account neither practical economic realities nor the convenience of the existing complex to many low and moderate income families.” That’s what he said. The EQD view got little support and official UC stomachs alkasettled into place. EQD itself was shortly to be disciplined for its irritations of Important People by being deprived of its liberty and confined within the Planning Department where it might learn to speak less like a lion, more like a kitten.

If I were Pharaoh, I’d see to it that parking structures of the better type were built all along the edges of the Res-Med canyons, intermixed with houses. The “parkaids” themselves would be designed for ready conversion into residences in the happy days when auto usage shrinks. Residential and office structures in the zone would be graduated in height to form something of an alp off each peninsula, with one true skyscraper in the center in order to give the maximum exposure to the most dramatic views in town westward across Mission Bay Park to the ocean, eastward up Mission Valley to the mountains, as well as north and south until the eye gives out. From high points, San Diego’s setting compares favorably with San Francisco’s. We only need [to] do out skyscrapers better.

Fred Meyer told me: “What is needed here is a topographical model so the public can see how marvelous the site is. On the model, architectural ideas could be demonstrated so the public can understand

them.” He’s right. Enlightened countries like Sweden and Switzerland frequently resort to such models, on which a developer is required to show how his project will impact on his neighbors. A suitable model should be produced (financed by Uptown doctors and dentists maybe?) not only for the Res-Med zone but for the urban “spine” of commercial and office zones running south to downtown—and, of course, downtown should be on the model too (so the bankers will chip in on the cost?). The model should not be merely a cosmetic toy but a heroic giant to really give a sense of the place. A model for models was created decades ago in Philadelphia where it played a star part in awakening public support of urban renewal. It was 20 feet square or so, surrounded by a ramp which took the viewer up from dog’s-eye level to bird’s-eye position while sections of the model rotated to show the new urban fabric replacing the old, in sync with a recorded spiel.

San Diego’s model should show a series of skyscraper peaks rather than a continuous Manhattan-style crowding of mediocre high-rises along the future rapid-transit corridor of Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Avenues. As many local voices have said, a solid wall effect along the Sixth Avenue edge of Balboa Park should be avoided, so the planners made a mistake in the Uptown Community Plan when they indicated that all of the highest-density buildings in the corridor should be lined up facing the park. Towers rather should be staggered in a belt three or more blocks wide. As long ago as 1938 in *The Culture of Cities*, Lewis Mumford was preaching that apartment buildings, even expensive ones, are slums when they are too close to each other. He advocated that the distance between tall buildings should be at least as great as their average height.

Councilman Leon Williams reflected what one hopes is the prevailing view of the City Council when he told a *Union* reporter in March: “I am thinking of a height/open-space ratio”—meaning that builders could go extra high if they arranged to leave relatively low-density usages in the space between towers. Williams stated that current zoning laws generally are inadequate, and said that the city should offer “bonuses” to builders (allowing them to go higher) if they build in the spots designated as best by the city planners. He warned that towers going up in the wrong places, ill-related to the emerging transit system, “may be in a competitive disadvantage with reference to units built near the rail lines.”

If all of a city’s big buildings could be confined to well-chosen spots, one effect would be to keep the market value in low-density residential zones from zooming, because speculators would not be able to nibble away at the zoning. Owners of homes presumably would be content with only slow increases of property value, because it would mean that property taxes, which are tied to market value, would remain bearable. As we shall see further on, such home owners also could be granted a bonus, a *money* bonus, in return for giving up the game of speculation.

Most members of the City Council really want to provide decent housing for the “disadvantaged” among us, a category into which many of the elderly fall. Three-quarters of the voters lately asked the city to get on about the business of housing the elderly, and architect Loch Crane headed a board which delivered a bristling bible on the subject in January. So an urban design plan that makes an American city safe for profiteers, must also make it safe for those who are not profiteers. To me this means that all new apartment buildings, even the most elegant of them, should include a portion of suitable spaces for people whose rental is guaranteed by public agencies.

Humans should be cherished just because they are humans, but old buildings can only be saved selectively, according to merit, if at all. An urban design plan would save, on its present site, such a masterpiece of historical architecture as Irving Gill’s Klauber house at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Redwood Street. When the Allan Klaubers found the three-story mansion looming larger each year after their children left, they sold it and moved into a condominium. The new owner, Tom Kelly (who owns the Imperial Tower Apartments further south on Sixth, wants to build another tower here and may legally seek a demolition permit at any time.

The city could say no to Kelly if it had an urban design plan with teeth, yet in the face of doom for the Klauber house the city planners have only been able to talk rather abstractly about making a corner of Balboa Park available as a site where threatened Gill buildings could be relocated to form a safe preserve of the evidence that one of America’s more important architects did most of his work in San Diego. This area

(shown on our map) bleeds north of the park to include the “dead end” of Seventh Avenue, which already has several choice Gills. Surprisingly, the Planning Commission voted to retain this as a low-density zone—thus quashing for the present at least—Hamilton Marston’s project for a high-rise there.

To finance the use of Planning Department staffers to draw up an urban design component for the General Plan, Planning Director James Goff applied to the National Endowment for the Arts, asking \$50,000. He was turned down on the grounds that San Diego is rich enough to provide such funds for herself, as compared with many other applicants. The turndown reflected the fact that San Diego’s recent official essay in urban design—the “overview” by Professors Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard called *Temporary Paradise*—was primarily financed by the Marston family.

The benighted cities of Chicago, Washington and New York are seeking urban design benefits through new legal techniques. The historic Georgetown section of the nation’s capital may be saved by allowing property owners there to build high-rises *somewhere else*, specifically along the corridors of Washington’s new rapid transit. As its reward for providing these windfalls, the city gets funds from developers to restore the old section. The idea, though not yet tested in the inevitable court cases, is regarded as legally sound because it does not take away a man’s fondest rights, his property rights, but simply directs his use of them in the public interest. The technical term now coming into the language is “development-rights transfer”—so new that you may tend to remember it as “development-transfer rights.”

Whatever it is called, the idea surely will evolve and be used quite creatively in some places because most cities’ leaders realize that they cannot go on condoning the old routines that produced so much unsatisfactory urban structure. Uptown San Diego is one of the best places to try the new way. There, the landowner who is willing to maintain a small home that helps preserve the living quality of Mission Hills, Hillcrest and Park West—saving the historical flavors and at the same time keeping the views uncluttered for the big buildings that surely will come in some form or other—should be awarded a piece of paper which he could then sell, trade or lease to a wealthy builder who could use it to qualify himself for the privilege of building additional space on selected sites—selected that is, in conformity with the city’s Urban Design Plan.

In the sweet-by-and-by, the increased revenue from taxes on the new density in certain spots would compensate the city for the cost of public improvements—sunken roadways, landscaping, car concealment, street furniture, works of sculpture and al fresco art—to make one long urban enrichment of the three-mile corridor between downtown and the drop-off to Mission Valley, north of Hillcrest. The “tax increment” financing already in process for the Horton Plaza Redevelopment downtown is the prototype for this. It allows the street scene to be developed by the city with amenities far better than usual. Also important in the urban design equation is some incentive—more bonuses—for builders to spend another 10 percent to assure that their skyscrapers rise above the boring business-is-business style. San Diego’s skyscrapers should be sublime works of art, objects of endless marvel, not transparent print-outs of the calculations that go into their production.

If the new legal devices seem suspiciously to be variants of the carnival barker’s shell game, they really are variants of the tortuous capitalism practiced all around us. My assumption is that San Diego is going to be as populous as Manhattan, and she simply has to avoid the sins of that ruined island. A young city, like a young person, has to be sharply discriminating, with fresh outlook, or get swept into an inferior career.

Emerson delivered another incantation 132 years ago which is up-to-date here and now. He said, “There are two laws discrete, not reconciled, the law for man and the law for thing; the last builds towns and fleet, but runs wild, and doth the man unking.” The Finest City has to see that the laws for things—especially the laws for wheels and the laws for real estate—are reconciled with the laws for men who are in search now of their lost urbanity.

May 1975 thru October 1976—no articles by Britton in San Diego Magazine

November 1976 thru April 1977—No articles by Britton in San Diego Magazine

December 12 1976, San Diego Union, C-8. Balboa Park organ rates a new chance, by James Britton II.

San Diego's super sugar daddy, John D. Spreckels, had a habit of building extraordinary settings for music in San Diego.

His mansion boasted a superior pipe organ, suggesting that he had a taste for more than sugary outpourings of lesser organs. In 1915 he built the Spreckels Theater, which is today by far the best public room for music in town, a miracle of acoustics.

As though to clasp the city in a perpetual embrace, Spreckels built the Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park. If you hate good music, you might see the thing as an octopus, or rather a duo-puss, sprawled out there with a giant head and two long curving arms to strangle you. A music lover should recognize its gesture as kindly intended.

The instrument in the "head" is one of the largest pipe jobs ever exposed to the outdoors, and perhaps the largest still functioning. Baring any organ to the weather is a chancy business, even in San Diego, but this one has a massive iron curtain which is in place except when a concert is under way.

When the iron curtain is visible it is a bland dumb "face: that tends to make the embrace of the arms register cold and repellent, like that of a mechanical monster in a mad movie. Clearly this staring blank could use some imaginative paint—a mighty work of blazing outdoor art to match the mighty music locked within.

A competition should be held to select a local artist for the iron mural, as an important move to reclaim this singular structure for a more lively future. Otherwise, the structure needs no revision—for a reason that will appear.

As a terrible warning that autos are becoming more important than humans, the embrace of the big pavilion catches few people these days but acres of asphalt. However, Bea Evenson has been talking to Joe Yamada, the ubiquitous landscape wizard, about replacing the asphalt with grass and ornamental paving within the circle defined by the embracing arms.

And Bea has a record of getting beautification accomplished—such as the landscaping of Spanish Landing and the concretification of the Casa del Prado (Yes, concrete can be beautiful if paddled with love.)

In one breath today this valiant senior citizen will tell you: (1) she doesn't know how she can last long enough to revive the Organ Pavilion and (2) it must be done.

Bea thinks that areas for picnicking should be included within the magic music circle, but way not add a dozen tables with colorful umbrellas, such as are _____ Café del Rey Moro garden?

Come to think of it, why not invite the café management to provide a chicken-a-go service to these tables in the embrace of the organ? Said management could concoct a suitable mobile unit—quiet, quaintly designed and filled with munchables, to pass among the tables periodically. A little stretch of the imagination is called for, a little stretch of service. But no hot dogs.

Of course, the presumption is that the noblest music would continue to percolate at suitable hours from the noblest organ, and that the crowds gathered there would be appreciative. In fact, bouncers should be on hand to see that troublemakers are kept out. We are cultivating here a remembrance of things past, things worth an echo in the future.

This project is one more point of entry for leadership from city hall. Full maintenance should be accorded the organ itself as a civic treasure. There should be budget enough to provide nimble fingers and busy feet as required to activate the organ whenever enough people wish to lend their ears.

The grass, the tables, the umbrellas, the catering and perhaps a fence to keep locked at the vandal hours—all those are obligations upon the city council. But an even higher priority must go to restoring the structure itself, which was not built of sufficiently lasting materials.

Bea Evenson is ready with crafty persons who can recast the ornamentation of this affectionate confection into permanent concrete. Give her your hand, your check-writing hand, or at least urge your councilman to write the necessary checks in your behalf.

There is no point in claiming, in lying, that the Organ Pavilion is great architecture. At the time it was built in 1915, a University of California professor of design, Eugen Neuhaus, wrote: “it is hard to understand the pygmy scale of the colonnades as contrasted with the great bulk of the central part . . . of all the architecture of the Exposition, it is, to my mind, the most uninteresting, most untemperamental creation . . .”

Nevertheless, it stands today as a rare monument to the mix of grandeur and gaucherie that simply had to be present in the adolescence of America. As such, it is San Diego’s nearest equivalent to the Statue of Liberty.

To nurse back this warm-hearted, songful, living and breathing monster from our past, to feed it and keep it and return its embrace would be no waste of tax money or transient-occupancy funds (the room tax paid by visitors). The expenditure would enrich San Diego as a place to visit—and as a place to like.

December 21, 1976, Park & Recreation Board. F. Reports of the Balboa Park Master Plan Review Committee; Due to a possible conflict of interest based upon a prospective contractual agreement regarding the expansion of the Natural History Museum, Mr. Sadler announced that he would abstain from deliberation and voting on the Master Plan Review.

1. Presentation of Plan: Mr. Milch thanked the Ad Hoc Review Committee for the long and hard hours devoted to their report. Mr. Stickney and Mr. Sisk (Co-Chairman of the Committee) noted they were especially proud of the work done by Mrs. Alice Stephenson and Mrs. Frances Morton. Mr. Sisk proceeded to review the Plan and amendments approved by the Balboa Park Committee (George Loveland’s memorandum of December 21, 1976).

Regarding the transportation aspects of the Plan, Mr. Sisk noted that the Transportation Department either concurs or has no objections.

Mr. Mendoza clarified two points: (1) Regarding the Old Globe Third Theater, Council Resolution No. 213924 of July 31, 1975 approved the concept of the construction of such a theater without any contingency as to solving parking problems. The matter of parking came up as a matter of Council discussion and led to the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee. (2) Regarding the re-establishment of Pershing Drive Route 5 to Redwood Street, Transportation is not in complete agreement in that they feel that Pershing Drive should not be terminated at Redwood Street but instead continue (not necessarily on its present alignment) to Upas and 28th Streets, so as to allow for an uninterrupted north-south route through North Park via 28th Street and Utah.

Mr. Charles Strong of the Transportation Department thanked the Board and Ad Hoc Review Committee for the opportunity to review the Plan; he then proceeded to summarize the Transportation Director’s memorandum of December 15 1976, mailed with the agenda. Regarding the Quince-Richmond connection, Mr. Strong noted that increased traffic volume would be expected on Upas and Richmond; but the connection is need to facilitate traffic flow across the park.

2. Public Testimony. The following people spoke:

a. Bob Martinet spoke in support of a parking structure at the east end of the Cabrillo Bridge with a capacity of approximately 1,000 cars. The upper level of the garage would be at level with the bridge.

Underground, ventilated parking would cascade down the canyon. The bridge would be converted to one-way, east; cars would exit the garage to the north on Quince. Mr. Martinet urged that, in acting upon the Ad Hoc Committee's report, the Board would also recommend the inclusion of the parking structure in the fiscal years 1978-1979 CIP. He noted that he would be available for presentations before Council. (The Ad Hoc Committee deliberated upon the structure and excluded it from its report due to aesthetic concerns, vandalism and noise problems.)

- b. Charles Wolf passed out a list of revisions most of which were covered by the Balboa Park Committee.
- c. Mr. Richard A. Mills, on behalf of the residents of Richmond-Upas-Myrtle, voiced objection to the Quince-Richmond connection.
- d. Mr. George M. White, Vice President, Great North Park Community Planning Council, spoke in opposition to the closing of Florida and Pershing.
- e. Kathryn C. Willets, Chairman, Greater Golden Hills Precise Planning Association, noted (1) concern with the traffic impact on 30th and (2) lack of provision for changes in demography (the need for family-oriented recreation facilities on the eastern and southern boundaries of Balboa Park, known as the Golden Hill triangle).
- f. Mary Alice Peitz, reporting for neighbors in the area east of Balboa Park, noted that (1) the area west of Balboa Park should share the service portions of the park, so that the people on the east are not burdened with all of them, and (2) access through the park should be maintained.
- g. Heinz Wolf noted that the Uptown Planning Committee is against the Quince-Richmond connection.

3. Deliberation - REFERRAL: Staff is to review the community input, summarize it, and distribute it to the Board well in advance of the January 18, 1977 meeting in order that the Board may deliberate and act at that time; staff should include an inventory of playground equipment in the Greater Golden Hill triangle and the cost of additional equipment. . . . Board Action: Continued to January 18, 1977.

A. Balboa Park Committee Report: (1) Balboa Park Signs and Information System. Mrs. Dickinson noted that the Committee recommended to the Board that the proposal for the Information Centers be disapproved as inappropriate for Balboa Park. The Committee further recommended that a "You-Are-Here" type map be incorporated into a design which also gives information on where to obtain small maps and information of activities. . . .

REFERRAL: Mr. Roberts asked that staff be directed to:

- a. Expand upon existing signage, improving composition, etc.
- b. Work with the concept of "You-Are-Here" map/bulletin board to be serviced by Community Services.
- c. Explored the possibility of directing people to maps available for purchase at the various gift shops in the park.

Mr. Sadler reported that the Facilities Committee found the method of dispensing information which was proposed by the Consultant to be inappropriate. Mr. Sadler concurred with Mr. Roberts' recommendation that a study regarding signage locations for the Space Theater should also be accomplished. By consensus, the Board agreed to Mr. Roberts' recommendation, as amended by Mr. Sadler.

2. Balboa Park Bowl Name Change: Mrs. Dickinson moved that the Board recommend approval of the Balboa Park Committee's recommendation that the name of the Balboa Park Bowl be changed to "Starlight Bowl." Mr. Skill seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

D. Facilities Report: (1) Haraszthy Memorial. Mr. Sadler reported that the Facilities Committee recommended as follows.

- a. As the memorial is to a California pioneer, the Committee recommends Old Town as the most appropriate site.
- b. If Balboa Park is selected as the location, the Committee recommends placing the memorial adjacent to the Hungarian Cottage on the west side, centered in the area now planted with Juniper bushes.

Mr. Joseph Fedak appealed, reiterating the points made at last month's Board meeting regarding the inadequacy of the side yard.

MOTION: Mr. Leyton moved to reconsider the matter. Mrs. Dickinson seconded the motion which carried unanimously. Mr. Leyton moved to approve the memorial at the Hungarian Cottage at the area recommended by the Facilities Committee. Mrs. Dickinson seconded the motion which was carried.

2. Balboa Park Signs and Information System—Covered as part of Balboa Park Committee Report.

1976—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James (Eliz.), author, 1154 12th Ave.

Timeline: 1976-1989—Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Inc. owned and operated Sea World, Mission Bay

December 26 1976, San Diego Union, B-5. Committee reviewing Balboa Park master plan suggested a new museum devoted to Balboa Park, by Carl Ritter.

A museum devoted to Balboa Park, its origins and development, and to the two exhibitions held there should be established in the park, an ad hoc committee reviewing the Balboa Park Master Plan adopted in 1960 said.

Nine members of the full Balboa Park Committee served on the ad hoc committee formed in May, 1975, and included this recommendation among many in a 27-page report.

City Park & Recreation Directors recently accepted the report for further study.

TEMPORARY SITE

The suggested museum could be started in Casa del Prado and transferred to a better location later, the report stated. "An appropriate civic organization could operate such a museum under Park & Recreation Department sponsorship" and it could house mementos, books art work and documents, the report said.

The committee also recommended restoring to park use a 14.2 acre area at Russ Boulevard, 23rd Street and Pershing Drive, used as a heavy vehicle storage yard.

The isolated portion of Balboa Park between Upas Street and Cypress Avenue, west of Richmond Street and east of State 163, should be opened, developed and landscaped for park use, according to the report.

It also favored opening and developing an area west of State 163 and north of the Camp Fire Girls' area. This action should be simultaneous with opening of Marston Estate house and grounds to the public under supervision of the San Diego Historical Society, the report suggested.

LEASE CANCELLATION

Consideration should be given to canceling present leases involving the Boy Scouts, the Camp Fire Girls, Girl Scouts and similar organizations, it was recommended, "if and when the public need is greater than provisions for exclusive use."

“No future leases for exclusive use and /or fencing off of park areas to keep out the general public should be permitted,” stated the report.

The committee recommended that “pathways, hiking and/or jogging trails should be developed in every available and appropriate part of the park.” These were envisioned as “footpaths through the central portions plus a major trail circling the entire perimeter of the park.”

The ad hoc group termed the protection and preservation of the Moreton Bay fig tree, north of the Natural History Museum, “one of the most urgent landscape necessities” in the park. A flower garden there was declared a threat to the tree.

Among other recommendations were the following:

- When the Museum of Natural History is expanded, the building should remain within the present site.
- The Electric Building should be removed as soon as possible.
- The San Diego Art Institute should be moved closer to the Spanish Village and closer enforcement of standards should be invoked for all village lessees.
- The deteriorating House of Charm could be rebuilt or, if financing is not available, the Alcazar Garden expanded to fill the area.
- The old Photo Arts Building, occupied by the United Nations Association, should be added to the House of Pacific Relations by removing the association and finding a location for that organization outside the park.
- The Ford Building should be removed if the time limit set for Aerospace Center occupancy expires and the structure is not renovated.
- City administrative offices should not be permitted to occupy portions of the Conference Building and the Balboa Park club.

NEW GYM

- Use of the Federal Building by appropriate activities should continue until a new gym is built in the Morley Field area, when a “new and useful service” should be found for the Federal Building.
- Work should begin immediately on removal of streets in the northeast corner, turning Pershing Drive east on Redwood Street.
- Pepper Grove parking should be restricted to picnickers.
- Intrapark transportation should be part of long-range plans for solution of parking and traffic problems.
- There should be lighting for all major trails, and additional bicycle trails should be provided.

There were a number of additional recommendations at the meeting, a considerable part of which was taken up by citizen concern over the possible widening of Upas Street to a four-lane thoroughfare extending east of University Avenue.

December 1977, San Diego Magazine, 126+, The Stone Flower: The UCSD Library a working sculpture, a cathedral in the plaza (article appeared in August issue of American Institute of Architects Journal); Pereira the Great: Conqueror of Southern California.

This article appeared in the August issue of the American Institute of Architects Journal. The author has added some material of particular interest to San Diego readers.

Tiger, tiger burning bright
In the forests of the night.
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake's famous lines may come to mind if you wander at twilight in the heavily wooded campus of the University of California at San Diego and encounter the central library. There is indeed something immortal about the hand and eye of the architect when his structure achieved poetic force.

The "forest" is here, for sure, and so is the "symmetry." The brightly burning inner illumination of the building shows through the 360-degree surround of windows. And a "fearful" sense may arise from the fact that the main body of the structure looms larger than its base, like a cat coiled to spring.

Fearfulness is very real, furthermore, for those students who dare not go to the library at all after dark because there is no way to reach the entrance except by walking or cycling through the risky woods. Their danger is not from the tiger.

The woody nature of the UCSD campus is largely left over from the days when eucalyptus trees were planted intensively in the area with the idea of using them for railroad ties. Because the wood proved unsuitable—wouldn't hold spikes—the trees were left to grow their way. Newer plantings are lusher, often brought in full-grown by the landscape architecture firm of Wimmer, Yamada & Associates, of which Joe Yamada is the prime (tree) mover.

The most touching touch, however, is a small and ghostly garden created by art students of Michael Todd within the woods just east of the Central Library. This is a memorial to George Winnie who immolated himself on campus during the Vietnam agony (though not necessarily because of it). The chief feature is a eucalyptus lying fallen and seemingly dead on the forest floor but nonetheless sending a dozen strong "shoots" straight up. Also present is an iron sculpture that could serve the unwary as a picnic table—or a fire ring.

The conversion of grassy campuses prowling-grounds for beasts on two feet is widespread in progressive America. U.S. Attorney Michael Wallsh's first job in San Diego was as assistant to his wife in policing dangerous dormitories at UCSD, San Diego State University problems so severe that whole cadres of reliable male students are on police duty, wearing red, not however, so as to be better targets.)

The generous campus of 1,000 premium acres abluft the Pacific has been master planned for 12 colleges grouped in three pedestrian-scale clusters, each with an undergraduate library. But this grand pattern has not matured, and may not. So undergraduate use of the Central Library is more heavier than intended. It was conceived mainly for graduate students in humanities and social sciences.

Architect William L. Pereira, FAIA, told me why the library was located at the geographic center of the campus, somewhat distant from the portions of academe already built, The leaders of the campus wanted a centerpiece. They wanted the middle of the university to start, and the middle was to be the library."

The UCSD leaders—the friends and followers of Roger Revelle wanted urgently to make this strategic move while funds were still in prospect. A marked drop-of UC financing statewide was achieved under Governor Reagan, and his ascetic successor Jerry Brown has extended the dry spell. Even so, there are several libraries on the UCSD campus, including a new one for Scripps Institution and the

undergraduate library on Revelle Campus, which is now a study in student jamming as well as a nesting place for swallows (under the eaves). As to the Central Library:

The plaza is 200 ft. square and sits atop two floors bustling with basic library business—processing, cataloging, administration—and bursting with periodicals and government records. Entrance is at floor two.

A central library core shoots up through the plaza and feeds into five floors of books (and music). What Pereira & Associates did with those five floors was to raise this library to high individuality as architecture. For one thing, the superstructure had absolute completeness as a form “in-the-round,” with little evidence of mere practicality anywhere on its exterior, except for inconspicuous fire exits at plaza level (there is no entrance from the plaza) and the usual blank utility penthouse.

“That library is a piece of sculpture. I love it,” said Paul Saltman, vice- chancellor. “It’s the best thing Pereira ever did.” Most observers that I talked to, including architects, expressed overall approval, though some architects were in sharp disagreement. “It’s just another monument, it’s not a library,” said one. “Circulation is terrible,” said another. We’ll see/

Each of the five floors takes its rise from its place inside the spheroidal volume of the superstructure. Why this shape? Pereira: “The spheroidal form is unusual and could be expected to establish a more powerful image for the university center than a tower or cube. Functionally, it allows a high degree of flexibility in organizing the collection, and does not rely unduly on elevators for circulation within stacks. The general library is on the largest floor, and you can go up a floor, down a floor, to the more specialized material.”

Why so much glass? No doubt it helped keep down the construction budget even if it now presents problems of energy conservation. Certainly, glass all around was invited by the splendor of the site. Pereira: “A perimeter to get out of the way of other people was important, a place to gather your materials and digest them. A library is a restaurant.”

One notices that the process of digestion in this restaurant or library seems to call for young patrons to press as close as possible to the glass walls and face outward. Not that they gain extra light. They may be unconsciously struggling to escape the bulge of unread books behind them and to soar out into the treetops, beckoning on every side. The “call of nature” is at least equal to the call of culture in this phenomenal place.

The sculptural character of the superstructure arises from the use of 16 concrete bents or brackets to hold up floors which otherwise would have strenuous cantilevers. The architects wrestled with space-frame conceptions in 1965 when they expected to build the entire structure in steel. Drawings show that the design at that time suggested a fancy layer cake supported on toothpicks, with nothing like the visual impact that finally emerged.

Fortunately, high cost of the design in steel forced the architects to consider concrete instead. One of them, James Manning, recalls that he held up his hand with fingers spread in a gesture to suggest the supporting structure that was finally accepted. Indeed, one of the symbolic overtones of the final design is of books held high above the earthbound. Quite appropriate on a campus where one professor, John Isaacs, plots ladders into space. This is the first step.

It took the combined persuasions of Pereira and A. Quincy Jones, FAIA (UCSD consulting architect) to convince the board of regents that the expensive *looking* design in concrete was really not going to cost them more than they were paying for library construction on other campuses. Even so, at least one regent urged that the library not be publicized because it does not look like fiscal prudence.

Pereira told me something of his adventures with cost: “I saw the building in concrete from the very first, but I was dreadfully disappointed by the estimates of cost, so we tried to do it with steel. When we couldn’t get the steel to look right, and stay within the budget, I thought perhaps we weren’t searching

the right disciplines. I felt the best concrete I had seen done—intentionally or otherwise as to aesthetics—was that of the master builders whose business is concrete, bridges, dams, freeways. So I called on Bechtel Corporation to help with their guidance on designs, forming, the whole process of construction, we learned to do the library with concrete, within the budget.

“From Bechtel we learned why there is a wide range of cost for concrete. It has to do with the forming and the finish. We selected the texture imparted by six-inch form boards rather than plywood. There’s no easy way to hide the plywood look that comes from plywood forms. We learned that treatment of corners with chamfers was important to keep down costly repairs of the finished concrete.

“We built a quarter-size mockup which showed us what we might expect in the building. It also showed bidders the character of concrete we would accept. With a model to go by, their notion of the cost dropped dramatically. Even so, we were nervous. We knew we couldn’t go back and patch the concrete and get an aesthetically acceptable result. So we had in the specs that we could paint the concrete. Of course, we didn’t have to.”

So the library is aesthetically a stone flower of the freeway technology. Who was it that observed that freeway complexes are the 20th century equivalent of the medieval cathedrals? The mighty bents of the library surely remember the buttresses that muscled the daring reaches of the Gothic. And they echo the Victorian era, too, when Gothic brackery was rampant, etching architectural memories.

It’s an inside-out cathedral, a California original, whose plaza—overhung by the mighty structure—is deliberately offered as a gathering place for throngs intent on higher existence. T.S. Eliot’s *Murder in the Cathedral* has not happened here yet, but Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* has. It was, indeed, a happening. As adapted by Michael Addison, it was offered as a *Carnival and Raree show—a Burial in Thebes*. Distant airplanes added a few cracks of doom by bouncing their decibels off the library, and into the audience.

A graduation was mounted in the plaza in 1977, with speakers using microphones to outwit the cathedral acoustics. All graduates except one wore the usual rented robes and mortarboards. The one came in a wet suit and scuba gear, ready to take the plunge.

The reverberant sound generated in the plaza by the overarching concrete serves to underline words and thus gives oracular weight to a conversation of two or three persons. It also could heighten the menacing air of an angry mob. The plans include a good deal of plaza planning which, if ever budgeted, will soften all tones.

Angry campus mobs were something to reckon with in the ‘60s when Pereira conceived the plaza, and UCSD had its share. After all, this is the home of Herbert Marcuse. Pereira may not have had protestors in mind, but he did intend here an “uninhibited social forum—a focus for both campus and community.” He explained that the first floor of the library superstructure is raised well above the plaza to avoid the distraction of a look-in-look-out relationship.

“True, it would be hard to throw a rock through the high library windows,” said Vice Chancellor Saltman, who in the ‘60s had his own office in another building, fitted with large glass deliberately. “It is more important to acknowledge the fragile nature of education than to hide from campus moods.” Of course, he occasionally had to fit in plywood where a pane would be smashed.

The distance of 40 feet between the central library’s entrance level and the first floor of racks means that stairs are not an attractive means of circulation between them, especially not for pampered Californians. There was no opportunity here to make the stairwell interesting. It is merely a stack of firewell grimness where, according to one professor, even spring-legged students can be found pausing for breath on the landings.

Users prefer the elevators—when these are working and not too slow to respond. There are only two of the hand-pressed shuttles and they have broken down frequently. There is space for a third, but the

only thing that rises is the price—well over \$100,000 now and out of reach. Thus, when traffic is heavy, a user might testily conclude that “circulation is terrible.”

One of the virtues of the superstructure, the spheroid, is you can always tell what floor you're on from its feel, its character. Sixth is the largest, fifth and seventh are the same size, and so are fourth and eighth—but similarity of size is offset by the fact that fourth and fifth enjoy deep overhangs, not requiring much in the way of sun screeners, while seventh and eighth have broad terraces formed by roofs of floors below.

Seventh and eighth also have major battles with heat and glare so that slat blinds are much in use. Floor eight even uses draw draperies exclusively because it houses the university's special collections and rare books—items which, least of all, can stand heat and light.

There was administrative logic before the fact in placing those bibliophilic treats on the top floor, but the building tends to reject them as a human body tends to reject a baboon's heart. When the roof was new, it leaked on the paper treasures, so now each precious stack wears a casual canopy of plastic film, though the roof has long since been fixed.

Its isolated splendor of setting is one of the reasons the library makes a powerful impression. By its out-thrusting nature it does not want massive neighbors too near. Yet, the architects expected other structures to rise up quite close. In the big-dreaming '60s, they (Pereira's firm and Jones) master-planned a university center with relatively sober buildings studded about the library, and with a grand boulevard, designed to be of Champs Elysees quality, connecting to the commercial center, calculated to grow some two miles away.

The commercial center is now under construction and may well become the center-centers for the San Diego County (big as Connecticut).

Pereira, who made the site-selection studies for the commercial center as well as the campus, manifestly has in mind the building of a whole new major city just as though little old San Diego and its festering downtown did not exist. He argued the case for the University Towne Center before the City Planning Commission and Mayor Wilson, but Wilson had already committed himself (and his planners) to do all he could to make downtown the prime center. So efforts were made to keep the Towne Center smaller than it wants to be.

The commercial forces couldn't be impressed. They gathered their strength in two smallish centers—La Jolla Village Center and well as University Towne Center—the one dominated by Bullock's, the other by Robinson's and the Broadway. Obviously, time will bring the two centers together, and all the pretenses about keeping them town-size will be forgotten. Meanwhile:

University of California budget cutbacks have shelved indefinitely the grand boulevard as well as the big buildings that would diminish the fearful/blissful aloneness of the central library.

“It should not be called the center at all because it will never be, certainly not in this century,” one member told me.

Also “shelved” if not too ironic a word are plans for expansion of library into the region's first full-scaled research facility. Pereira's for expansion was a series of low-rise extensions into an adjacent canyon with giant-stepped plazas and car parking swallowed up in layers along with the parked paper. Theoretically, the plan and the site are ideal for unlimited storage expansion without compromising the monument,” though the latter will probably always remain the preferred perching place for readers. The entire contents of the Library of Congress could easily be lodged in that canyon without any of the structure being very noticeable. However first studies show a “cookie-cutter addition unworthy of the ambiance to be established.

Of course, a campus running over with environmentalists will not readily allow major canyon to be plugged up clumsily. An early master plan done by Robert Alexander, FAIA, shows a lake there. Lately there has been talk of forming such a lake from sewage reclamation. When I told Pereira of this, he instantly responded that a lake could be incorporated into the design of library extensions.

With or without the lake, the library extensions into the canyon could provide appropriate semi-dark place for the special collections housed uncomfortably now on the top floor. If you ask that top “what floor it wants to be,” you gather that it wants to be a restaurant (for feeding more than reading). It wants to have sliding glass rather than fixed panes, and full utilization of the potential roof-deck terraces. One of the more logical complaints of library users settled in for long hours with books is that there is no refreshment service in or near the building.

Rather than immediate expansion, the library faces when many stack areas may have to be compacted so more storage can be squeezed in. Stacks are now almost totally open, and a large minority of users find their way in from off campus. They come because there is no library that is both so attractive and so well stocked—not in San Diego County. Needless to say, UCSD scholars also place a high value on the open stacks. They want open stacks, plenty of open spaces in the aisles—and more books, an impossible combination without added building.

The pressure for growth was expressed to me by retired librarian Mel Voigt, who had laid out a program for Pereira in the first place. “Most librarians might think that the central library is about as good as a million volume collection as any in the areas we have covered. But it simply will have to be expanded. This campus which probably engages in more research than any other of its size in the world and this city with its research industries, cannot live without better library resources. That’s the big argument going on right now in the statewide university administration, and a new attitude seems to be shaping up in the state capital.

“Our scholars now have to take a special bus which goes daily to the UCLA campus, spending five hours on the road to gain four or five hours in the library there. Los Angeles has 14 million holdings in research libraries while San Diego has only 2.5 million. But San Diego is growing at a faster rate than Los Angeles in population and I just don’t believe all the projections that suggest this campus will never grow beyond 15,000.”

Voigt, not at all commercial himself, might have heard the future music of commercial drums. Once the campus is surrounded by major crowds in the name of business, the campus is bound to attract more population. UCSD could easily become as busy as UCLA, while the commercial activity grows to exceed that near the Westwood campus. There is still a chance for a Champs Elysees, with non-vehicular bridges tying the super campus and the super center across the freeway. Presto: Super city.

Neither Voigt nor Pereira expects books to disappear as microfilm and other systems come into use but the spheroidal reading chamber—the egg for eggheads—is adaptable. Those chairs by the window will always be preferred spots to commune with words on paper, be they print-outs or old style volumes. The chairs, by the way, and most of the furniture are ingenious products manufactured by Hiebert Inc., with design guidance from UCSD project architect Robert Thorburn. Items can be taken apart quickly with a jumbo Allen wrench (not found in most students’ pockets) whatever portions are wrecked and need replacement. Another insurance policy that came out of the stormented ‘60s.

For all the grandeur of the superstructure, there is a visual uneasiness about it relative to the pedestal (the lower two floors) which admittedly is intended to spread and multiply itself as described above. Altogether, however Pereira’s library is a satisfying expression of the wise mystique already infusing the rather young UCSD campus. Nobel laureates (Harold Urey et al.) doff their laureates to each other daily.

In my mini-poll a second professor used the word “monument” which has reached extremes of ambivalence in meaning as has the whole subject of building aesthetics. “It is a terrific monument,” he said, “but I’m not sure about its lasting . It may come to be regarded as corny. That is unlikely to happen to the

present building but the word “corny” might apply to the scale model in which the weak first studies of the canyon extension are much in evidence while the mighty canyon itself is not. One hopes that any extensions eventually built will have the disappearing character of the Oakland Museum.

An enchanting distant view of the central library—the stone flower of the freeways—may be had as you travel south on Interstate 5. Just before the Genesee Avenue off-ramp the library looms (like a lantern is a common reaction) at the head of its canyon to the southwest. A good building should increase as you approach. This one does. When you are close enough the light, almost feminine upper floors have disappeared from you and you are much involved with the muscular bents.

It this is a monument. It is not the kind that celebrates the ego of the architect. The architecture in which the walls tend to disappear and the bones show strong. It also satisfies Emerson’s claim that the beautiful rests on the foundation of the necessary (a line he developed in discussions with his prescient sculptor friend Horatio Greenough).

William Pereira’s library may even stand the test of Lewis Mumford’s 1934 observation in *Technics and Civilization* that “in the light of new technology one might reverse Emerson’s dictum and say that the necessary can never divorce itself from the superstructure of the beautiful. (As Mumford developed it, this idea may apply to such diverse projects as the UCSD library and the Centre Pompidou, the new and wildly controversial art museum in Paris. Gloria Self’s “The Two Faces of France: Culture and Culture,” November, San Diego Magazine, focuses on Paris’ new Centre Pompidou.)

William Pereira is a big success in business. but he’s also an artist well descended in American culture of the best stripe. Chicago-reared, he acknowledges the shaping influences of Sullivan and Wright on him, but he also exudes magnetism and idealism, that would win in a simile from the Sage of Concord.

William Pereira’s words at the library dedication 1970 underlined his good connections.

“If it appears to some that the design of this library building conveys the idea of that powerful and permanent hands are holding aloft knowledge itself and offering to future generations wisdom and hope with conviction.

I can only say in all humility that is what we meant to do, as a dividend of spirit beyond the library’s practical capacity as a functional building. And, in future years, I like it to be said about the authorship of this building, as Emerson said it: “He builded better than he knew.”

Pereira, The Great: Conqueror of Southern California

If Alexander the Great had lived to 69 and sat for his photograph, he could pass for Bill Pereira, who surely was modeled on Greek marbles and seems as ageless. Alexander conquered much of Asia, and Pereira conquered much of Sothern California, probably more than any other architect. Biggest chunk was Irvine Ranch (93,000 acres) for which he did, is still doing, the master planning. Next in size was Catalina Island (47,000 acres) master plan and numerous other curve-ups.

Many airports took the imprint of his designing hand, including LAX (with other firms) and—in San Diego County—Palomar and Gillespie. At least eight southern California campuses were shaped by his office. He did the site selection for UCSD (something of a charade because it ended up where Roger Revelle wanted it in the first place).

Other broad San Diego County projects in which Pereira and his large staff were involved are Mission Bay (plan revision), Lost Valley Scout Reservation (168 acres), La Jolla Alta residential spread (350 acres, but see main story), the Mission Valley property of the Carlton Santee Corporation (a mere 12 acres) and the Mission Valley Medical/Dental Center (an \$18 million project).

As building designer in San Diego County, Pereira placed his signature on the Convair-Astronautics plant (striking the eye in dynamic black-and-white, the almost invariable scheme of Pereira’s

personal threads) and General Atomic's circular research complex on Torrey Pines Mesa (La Jolla) where scientists have gone round and round for years now. These two assignments came when he was in partnership with Charles Luckman between 1950 and 1958.

After going it "alone," Pereira (& Associates) produced designs for Robinson's and Penney's department stores in Fashion Valley, a hospital and bachelor enlisted quarters at Camp Pendleton, a computer programming building for the Navy on Point Loma, a not-modest house for Frederic de Hoffmann in La Jolla and the UCSD central library.

In San Diego only the UCSD library attains the unforgettable status that the Pereira office sometimes reaches for. Other unforgettables of his are the Transamerica high-rise in San Francisco (disliked by many for its non-conformity, even in San Francisco, but praised by some critics because its tapered shape eats up less of the view than the upended shoebox profiles of most high-rises) and the Great Western Financial Headquarters—far and away the most seductive design on all of Wilshire Boulevard's 16 miles in Los Angeles, a high-rise of brown glass springing from an oval plan. A Pereira designed Great Western satellite at Newport Beach's impressive (Pereira-designed) Town Center cashes in on the success of the pioneer UCSD library, imitating its system of angled supports. The difference in the two is like the difference between FDR and Jimmy Carter—the one rather rakish and bravely original, the other more businesslike under a radiantly smiling exterior.

In 1976 when he was on the California Assembly's Science and Technology Advisory Council, Pereira was impressed by an assemblyman named Pete Wilson. "He asked the right questions, he went after the facts," Pereira recalls. The particular assembly of facts on which Wilson impressed Pereira had to do with the location and proliferation of nuclear installations at San Onofre, which Wilson has consistently supported. Power is as power does.

As a big-dollar American architect, Pereira must be expected to gain projects around the globe. Currently, for example, he has underway a royal library for Iran where advanced knowledge of librarianship will come into play far more than at UCSD. As he built his huge practice, Pereira found time to be a forceful teacher at USC. Still very much the commanding Alexandrine, Pereira lately wears his authority as chairman of the (drafting?) board, while a new generation's Glenwood Garvey—our of UCLA, not USC—salutes as president of Pereira & Associates.

1978—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY**: James, author, 1154 12th Ave.

January 22, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Old Town works in spite of attempts to improve it.

January 29, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, UCSD library could serve all San Diego.

February 5, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Ex-Planner Glenn Rick, If They Had Listened to Him

As an Iowan born and bred, Glenn A. Rick cannot be expected to like Harvard's Franklin D. Roosevelt, though he's a remarkable look-alike. Even at 78. Even with a mustache.

The Rick voice is quiet and persuasive. That voice quietly persuaded many a doubter when its owner was San Diego's planning director prior to 1955. It also may have sounded like the hiss of the serpent in the Garden of Eden to the unpersuadable.

Like Roosevelt, Rick practiced public office with a sense of humor. In retirement, Rick's humor is much to the fore now, along with his golf. He has written "Recollections of a City Planner," dedicating it to "my sons and grandchildren and their children in time—and perhaps a following city planner as well, who will get a wry appreciation."

The sons, William and Wallace, paid for the printing done locally. It is not a masterpiece of the book making arts, it is surely full of wry. There is also some Rotarian toastmaster humor, such as this about Kenneth Gardner, a really funny man who preceded Rick as San Diego planner.

“Kenneth was attentive to his mother. One Mother’s Day he spent the entire day with her. When evening approached he prepared to go out on a date. Hurt, his mother asked him if he didn’t remember it was Mother’s Day. He replied it didn’t mean it was a mother’s evening.”

Gardner didn’t quite intone like FDR either, though he did go to Harvard. He came to San Diego in 1920 as assistant to John Nolen, another Harvard man who was making the grandest plan ever to be ignored in this town.

Rick himself came in 1927, and one of the first things he noticed here was an ad in the San Diego Union proclaiming that “San Diego has the most salubrious climate in the world or elsewhere,” Rick wryly: “I had no ability or desire to go elsewhere.”

He had been trained as a civil engineer and had selected San Diego as a place to build houses. When financing proved elusive, he “took a temporary civil service job with the city which lasted over 27 years.”

Though he had not been trained academically as a planner (hardly anyone was in the 20’s) Rick rose to the top planning post here and then cast eyes in 1940 at Los Angeles, which was seeking a planning director. He scored 100 on the tests, so of course no one did better of the 42 applicants from around the country. He got the job and stayed only eight months.

One reason for his return to San Diego may have been that he finally took to heart a long letter from George Marston urging him not to leave San Diego in the first place.

Wrote Marston: “Los Angeles is a huge, misshapen city . . . John Nolen told me he would be disinclined to accept any job of city planning there . . . Considering the jealousies, I wonder if you would have a continual struggle . . . Here in San Diego you have no opponents so far as I know . . . More important is the opportunity you have of making San Diego one of the foremost cities . . . Friend Rick, I believe I would stay here . . .”

Marston was the quality merchant with quality ideas who had brought the Harvard wits to produce the Nolen Plan. Though Nolen originally thought of clustering public buildings about where they are now, his designing mind finally came up with a true inspiration, extend the southwest corner of Balboa Park to the bayfront and distribute the public buildings along the water’s edge.

Rick credits the suggestion for this to Marston.

Shortly before his death in 1946, Marston invited Rick to visit him at his home. “For years he had given me books on city planning and encouraged me in my work,” Rick recalled. “I was pleased to accept his invitation and was ushered into his room where he was in bed. Ill as he was, he discussed the needs and desires of the city of San Diego and the Nolen Plan. I will always appreciate this occasion.”

What happened to the Nolen Plan, which, in effect, Marston had bequeathed into the keeping of Rick? Wrote Rick;

“The City Council chose to put industry and commerce on the desirable waterfront land . . . Hotels, resorts, restaurants, yacht clubs and associated uses found easy acceptance . . . The powers that be didn’t listen to men like Marston, Nolen.”

As city planner, Rick tried to swing the “powers.” “I had the brilliant idea that the city could salvage some of the Nolen Plan by constructing a mall along Cedar Street (from bay to park) patterned after the Washington, D.C. mall.”

Now that—as this writer sees it—was a better idea than Nolen’s, even though the public voted against it twice. My feeling is that the plan wasn’t presented well enough to overcome the prevailing

indifference. Still Rick came very close to getting it through the City Council in spite of the wishy-washy public sentiment.

The attitudes of a few men made the difference. Mayor Harley Knox refused to vote at all when he had a chance to decide a 3-3 tie in the council.

Chamber of Commerce president T.C. Macaulay was enthusiastic about the Cedar Street Mall until someone accused him of wanting to cash in on several lots he owned in the area.

Macaulay, a retired major, now switched in anger. He persuaded monied Oakley Hall, a retired captain, to fight the mall in newspaper and billboard ads. When the school board and the library board chose sites that suited them better, the game was up.

Rick's present home on Point Loma looks down on the stunning bay, and the view includes the site of his stunning defeat. I sat in his aerie in January and heard not bitterness but quiet speculation that the Cedar Street Mall just might have saved downtown from the collapse that overtook it when outlying shopping centers began to draw.

"We had plans for parking . . . My intent was underground parking at the mall, though we couldn't say much about it at the time."

Indeed, the slowly rising terrain along Cedar Street from the bay to the park, was ideal for underground parking. A series of grand terraces could have held the buildings and produced a scenic bonanza for pedestrians, inviting them to drink in the bay view. And the sunsets!

Because of the singular site, the Cedar Street Mall could have avoided the pall of dreariness that was to descend on the civic mall that Los Angeles went ahead and built. And the buildings themselves would have been at least a little better than the jumble we got, if only because they would be so visible to the freeway that was to come.

Rick told me "I have never seen an attractive high-rise parking structure." He did not say he has never seen an attractive high-rise office structure (probably he has) but it was clear that he did not love the grouping of public buildings San Diego ended up with.

He repeated a point he made in his book: "The city became like Omaha or any other inland city when it could have been unique with public buildings on the waterfront in a very distinctive grouping."

So much for Rick's great loss. His big win, his monument really, is Mission Bay, though he took pains in writing to show that the project "was not a one-man enterprise." There's no doubt he put it altogether, the state and federal contributions, the committees and city staff—and Pappy Hazard.

Roscoe E. Hazard was a contractor and cement mixer who, according to Rick's book, "pioneered in Mission Valley and pioneered in air pollution . . . Or that's what the neighbors south of Mission Valley said."

Hazard owned huge acreage in Mission Bay. In 1945 he sold it to the city at, or near, his 1920 purchase price. At any rate, it was a real bargain for the city trying to assemble a park.

In 1970, as Rick recounts, the city "with a little urging" gave Hazard a plaque in recognition of his good and cheap deed, causing Pappy "in his droll way" to say: "What took you so long?"

"Of course," Rick told me, "he was a contractor in 1945 and he knew a \$2 million bond issue was coming along."

The bond issue required two-thirds voter approval, so Rick wrote:

“Everything possible was listed in the publicity: picnic grounds, safe swimming areas, yacht basins for large and small boats, an aquarium, amusement center, sailboat course, marine stadium, wild life preserves, bath houses, rowing course, riding stables and bridle paths, airfield, hydroplane area, golf course, ball park, power boat course. The more things mentioned, the more it would appeal to everyone, even though \$2 million could not do it all.”

A 1969 report put the cost of Mission Bay at more than \$65 million to date and anticipated that it would go to \$100 million. The comfort was that the park began to bring the city upwards of \$25 million a year, its spectacular success as a major recreational wonder of the world also brings yearly balm to Rick to compensate for the loss of the grand Cedar Street Mall.

Having had his fill of wins and losses, Rick suddenly quite his “temporary” job with the city in 1955, switching back from civil service to civil engineering. He started a land development firm with his sons in key positions, on the strength of a contract offer from oilman William Black, who was subdividing his incomparably located La Jolla Farms (Black gave his name to Black’s Beach before it became the buff stripper’s buffer strip.)

The new Rick prospered and developed attitudes not likely to be held by a functioning city planner. Of course, he has not been one for 22 years. In his scrappy book he strays beyond the limits of the title, “Recollections of a City Planner,” and flashes some reflections on the current scene.

He writes: ‘Can the decline of the center city be reversed? Mayor Wilson thinks it can with ‘planned growth’ and a large ‘redevelopment project’ . . . I am a little skeptical. Other cities apparently have done the impossible. Maybe San Diego can.’

Our former city planner dismisses the planning department’s Lynch-Appleyard report as “far-out,” especially in its suggestion that the Navy vacate much of its waterfront property so the public can have more access. Furthermore, he told me, he does not accept the ideas of Hamilton Marston (grandson of George) with respect to moving the U.S. Naval Hospital out of Balboa Park and abolishing Lindbergh Field (presently our main airport).

On the hottest issue of the moment, the Freilich program for growth management (being debated by the City Council) Rick told me:

“If you delay growth in some parts of the city, as Freilich proposes, the cost of property in the remaining parts is bound to go up. And if you crowd people into one old section, all the utilities will prove inadequate and will have to be reworked. Where are the savings to the taxpayer then?”

That question should be weighed in the light of the late California poll which reported (in the San Diego Union, Jan. 20) that “the public today overwhelmingly favors stricter control of urban spread.”

In his concern about taxes, Rick offered a partial, a very partial panacea when he wrote: “Planning today is well established (in San Diego) with a budget of nearly \$3 million and a large staff . . . I doubt the justification of the enormous staff and expenditures for so little in return.”

He was referring to the department that got a large portion of its growth when he was director. But let comfort fall where it may, Rick also wrote: “I don’t endorse the idea expressed by Gov. Brown that planning is just wheel spinning.”

February 12, 1978, San Diego Union, F-2, Hartford, Connecticut.

February 19, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Lloyd Ruocco, retired architect.

February 22, 1978, Fire destroys San Diego Air & Space Museum

February 26, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, City architecture—a mixed-up future.

March 4, 1978, San Diego Union, D-1, Artist Dan Dickey.

March 8, 1978, Old Globe Theatre burns down.

March 16, 1978, San Diego Union, D-7. Review of three books on architecture.

March 19, 1978, San Diego Union, F-10. Peter Blake.

March 21, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Will Bank of America come up short?

March 26, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Mission Valley is engulfed in a flood of development ideas . . . Britton's Belief in Good Design in His Own Words (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

Mission Valley: "The real issue is to maintain enough design momentum so that people everywhere are the winners of a unique wonderland, a balance of free public parks and visitor attractions second to none. To assure the best, it would not be a mistake to appoint Mickey Mouse architect-in-chief and call on Cindy and Sandy, the brainy Sea World dolphins, to add their female grace to the design mix. Let's go superior, or super, at least."

March 26, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, F-8, Mission Valley Engulfed in a Flood of Development Ideas

When the real rains come you'll be able to step into your canoe from the porch of the Serra Museum in Presidio Park and puddle north to the high ground at the University of San Diego.

Mission Valley will have become Mission Gulf. The ocean will have risen too, wiping all of low-lying San Diego et al. The issue of downtown versus Mission Valley will be fought among the fishes propagating in the recesses of our submerged buildings. Fish-fed humans will build a new city on a higher plane.

Until then, we have to do the best we can with Mission Valley. Not the whole valley, but a considerable stretch down the middle has to be treated as a flood plain. Thereby hangs an opportunity for one of the most fascinating urban developments anywhere.

The city planners knew this decades ago when they attempted to promote recreational zoning for the valley. But some property owners were in a hurry to cash in on the commercial bonanza made possible by the new freeways. Weak city councils were pushovers. Planning and design in the valley became mockeries.

Now the city planners have a technique of endless rhuvarbing with property owners (called citizens) before an area goes to hell. The area may still falter on the steps to heaven after the "citizens planning process" has occurred, but it's the best we can get unless a city council makes its decisions strictly on professional advice in design matters. That will be the day.

In Mission Valley, under pressure of competition—competition from a downtown struggling to be born again and from "north city," which threatens to take the main commercial action away from both Mission Valley and downtown—property owners are beginning to see design possibilities that will guarantee the attraction of millions forever. Millions of people. Millions of dollars. Design is the key, not mere exploitation.

Great design is only possible if the river is respected. The hidden river. "What river?," you might ask if you only whiz by on the freeways. The San Diego River is pretty well hidden by businesses lining the freeways, and by the fact that most of the time its waters sneak along underground.

For years the Army Corps of Engineers was pushing a concrete-lined flood-control channel to contain the San Diego river's intermittent rampages. That would have been like the ghastly one that follows

the tortuous course of the Los Angeles River and helps give the “City of Angels” the wasted look San Diegans love to hate. Such a thing would have guaranteed Mission Valley a future as a slum.

Lately—Johnny come lately—the Corps has seen the wisdom of park-like treatment of river courses, such as the green triumph in Scottsdale, Arizona, featured in the March “Sunset” magazine. The rich people of Scottsdale demanded heaven and got it in the form of a flood plain transformed into a park. The message had not been lost on some, at least, of the property owners in Mission Valley.

There is talk that the (Corps of) Engineers would like to wash their hands of the river, and may do so next month, letting its future be managed by other agencies so the Corps can go elsewhere.

Last month, several agencies—having to do with water quality, fish and game, public health—got together with city planners to figure once again what area the flood plain should encompass, and academic gravity was lent by Dr. Richard Glenn of San Diego State University, heading a committee to resolve the varying outlooks. The cumbersome procedure is based on good design for the valley, and suggests that government is getting serious about doing it right.

Good design got a considerable boost in 1975 when young Kim Wiley was at Cal Poly, Pomona, pursuing a masters degree in landscape architecture. He elected to conceive a “Mission Valley River Park,” and he gave it all the trimmings he could think of or adapt from his seniors.

Professors Donald Appleyard (Berkeley) and Kevin Lynch (MIT) were topmost of these, along with Roy Mann, a Harvard-Fulbright scholar who wrote “Rivers in the City” (Praeger), a book that should be known to San Diegans especially because of the warnings it contains. Mann traces the ill fate of the Charles River in Boston, which a full century ago received the benefit of just such landscape design as Wiley has now sketched for us. (See illustration.)

I don’t doubt that the Wiley academic scheme is what inspired Eldon Anderson and the Mission Valley Council (a loose aggregate of property owners, many of them sand and gravel men) to come up with the recently announced “Convention land” feeler.

If the sand and gravel were converted to enough concrete under this conception, we’d get a superbowl for outdoor concerts (presumably on Stadium off-nights) and a superbarn for conventions both near the Stadium, with hotels and other visitor-oriented pleasure-places amiably spaced out to the west.

In other words, the proposal is Hotel Circle Repeated, only more so. The whole thing is intended to add up to the world’s wowingest convention complex. The enthusiastic proponents suggested that it might even be designed by the same people who did Disneyland and Disney World, though there has been no contact with them yet.

An enthusiast for the Disney World of success is Dr. David Chigos, president of National University, situated in Mission Valley. He is impressed by Disney World’s traffic management.

“You have to drive 26 miles through their undeveloped land to reach the gate,” he says. “On the way you’re instructed to turn the radio to their private frequency, which then tells you just where to drive, depending on which hotel you’re booked into . . . You have to engage a hotel because you’ve previously been brainwashed by everyone you meet in Orlando into believing it takes two days to see Disney World . . . It can be done in a day, but that’s beside the point. You’re geared to spend three or four times what it costs to visit Disneyland in Anaheim,”

David Chigos doesn’t necessarily advocate a chicken-picking operation for Mission Valley, but he thinks the Disney World monorail is a must. “You get to see the whole layout, which you never get to see at ground level . . . Imagine monorails elevated above Interstate 5 and Friars Road looking down into the river park and all the developments that ought to occur along its banks.”

The secret power available to planners for Mission Valley is that most of its floor is an eight-mile strip between Interstate 5 and Friars Road. While the traffic may be horrendous on those roads there is no excuse for letting autos dominate the space between. They should be banned altogether except in parking under buildings. Circulation within the charmed corridor should be on foot, bicycle and horseback, with golf carts and horse-drawns for the handicapped. The monorail would be forever circulating too, connected to other fast transit around the city.

Wiley, Anderson, Chigos, you could call them pipe-dreamers or fast-talkers. But they're way out in front of the average thinking that too often filters out of City Hall after all the departments get through inputting and frustrating each other.

There is a nearby precedent for the kind of enterprise represented by the Convention-land idea. That is Sea World, the biggest thing in Mission Bay, our closest approximation of a Disney commercial success in recreation. Yet, it lies in the same bed, and is fairly well integrated with a public park.

Sea World's George Millay recently formulated another large-scale recreational enterprise, a "water theme park" for which he sought a lease of county-owned land near El Cajon's Gillespie Field. The pastoral people of Fletcher Hills could hear the coming screams of children being processed through the ecstasies of Millay's park, so they showed signs of opposition.

Millay just might be amenable to moving his concept and his money into the Convention-land territory of Mission Valley. Eldon Anderson hopes so.

There are other interests playing for action in the valley. Residential developers have had good success selling "condos" there and want to continue, so there is pressure too for stores, schools, libraries, all the complements of a neighborhood.

The sand and gravel people operate in an engaging industrial zone which, unless changed, would allow factories to multiply. It should, of course, be changed.

So the city planners have what is hopefully called the Mission Valley Unified Planning Committee—something of a shotgun group-marriage of interests that have been fiddling with each other, or fighting. The wedding party is supposed to thrash through all the options and come up with a seminal conception by July 1.

My March next profiles of the future are supposed to emerge. Will we have twins, quintuplets or a retarded misfortune? In any case, the gestation period cannot be relied on. It may take much longer. And sterility could show up, one possible outcome being that the messed-up status quo be preserved.

Looking to the prospects with professional enthusiasm, project planner Doug McHenry says, "I believe the end result will be a composite of the options . . . I think the floodway as park conception will be retained in any case, and new uses will be oriented to the river rather than to the freeways."

"Composite" is a wonderful word. It can mean composition, or it can mean compromise. The real issue is to maintain enough design momentum so that people everywhere are the winners of a unique wonder-world, a balance of free public park and visitor attractions second to none.

To assure the best, it would not be a mistake to appoint Mickey Mouse architect-in-chief and call on Cindy and Sandy, the brainy Sea World dolphins, to add their female grace to the design mix. Let's go superior, or super at least.

April 2, 1978, San Diego Union, F-6, Skyscrapers are New York City's good points.

April 9, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, A dream of a park, crowned by Cowles Mountain.

April 16, 1978, San Diego Union, F-6, Metropolitan Correctional Center.

April 23, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. The quacks keep nibbling at museum row, by James Britton, II.

Is our row of museums (El Prado in Balboa Park) being nibbled to death by ducks? Or is it going to become one of the world's most satisfying combinations of cultural establishments?

It has the potential for the latter, but greatness can't happen by blind chance. Trouble is, no one's in charge. The Park and Recreation Department, the Park Board, the Balboa Park Committee, the Intermuseum Council, the Department of Engineering and Development—all have something to say. Architects and consultants enter the picture from time to time, yet there's no one to tie together all the design considerations.

Dozens of groups that have nothing to do with the museum idea claim squatter's rights along El Prado, so its fate is usually a compromise among their conflicting demands. The museums themselves are concerned about their own advantages, not about the total ensemble along El Prado. Indeed, some of them wish others would just go away.

Things were different, much better in 1915. One man of fine talent, architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, was in charge along El Prado then, and he produced an incredible orchestration of architectural forms as an exposition to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal.

At that time, we were sure the canal would be ours "in perpetuity" and, odd as it now sounds, we were equally sure that most of the exposition structures would be wiped out in favor of gardens in a couple of years.

As of 1978, we're not so sure about the canal but we do know that the 1915 exposition "temporaries," what's left of them, will be with us in perpetuity. They're now on the National Register, and everyone agrees that if any more of them are knocked down they'll have to be replaced exactly as is, in permanent materials.

"Exactly as is" applies, however, only to the facades. The space behind the facades can be rearranged to suit whoever has the political clout to get what he wants. That's where the nibbling ducks come in.

Casa del Prado was the first of the temporaries to be replaced under the rescue mission of Bea Evenson and her Committee of 100 (make that 1,000). The original street facades were copied closely, but the building behind them became hopelessly cut up to satisfy too many demands. It should have been one great exhibition hall and it should have been assigned to the neighboring Museum of Natural History for the expansive expansion they have in mind involving a display of the entire Pacific Ocean and all its wonders, drop by drop.

Now, Casa del Prado is a dead loss to Museum Row. It couldn't possibly be converted as display space. Some observers are inclined to blame the architect, amiable Richard George Wheeler, but his role in the matter was to accommodate a hydra-headed client.

Next comes the Electric Building, the one famous for its naked ladies holding up the cornice, the one that was burned to the ground in February. Reconstruction will start before January, with Wheeler again providing the architectural service. He can be counted on to meet all code requirements, but, here too, his architectural achievement will be limited because the people with clout are demanding the wrong things.

The façade will be duplicated in concrete because molds were taken before the fire. As now planned, the building will have two floors, and a mezzanine for exhibits, as compared with the one floor of the original. The lower floor will be 14 feet high and all below the level of El Prado.

No air-conditioning is planned and this, on the face of it, is sensible. However, it may prove impossible in practice when they turn on all the hot electric lighting required throughout a building that is to have no windows to speak of.

The south wall of the building will be essentially solid, without glass, ignoring the beautiful wooded canyon beyond. Yet that wall ought to be all glass, suitably shaded so the museum usages within can flow into the outdoors as conditions may suggest.

The old building was just a huge barn, but it had skylights. The new one will have none. Another mistake. Skylighting is still the best thing that can happen in a museum. Besides saving energy, it gives light that has life in it rather than the deadly steadiness (or worse, osculation) of the artificial.

As a rude critic, I believe Dick Wheeler should throw a fit and refuse to build according to the program that has been developed to this point for the Electric Building replacement. Better he should produce one majestic space stepped down from El Prado, thus giving impressive height. Skylights should bring the heavens to kiss the exhibits, and the space should open generously to the south, where the convenience parking for employees should be eliminated in favor of outdoor enticements for visitors.

This is easy for me to say, but impossible for Dick Wheeler. He is at the mercy of the ducks. The absurdity of his mandate comes from the impossible combination of three unlikely tenants: the Natural History Museum (which will try to squeeze the Pacific in here), the San Diego Historical Society and—of all things—the Hall of (Sports) Champions.

The Historical Society is a worthy addition to Museum Row, but it belongs most obviously in the California Building and the associated quadrangle which Goodhue himself declared to be the chief portion of the exposition complex deserving of perpetuity. (This happens to be the only portion he personally designed.)

Now for the snag, the California Building is presently occupied (awkwardly) by the Museum of Man, which has so laboriously built itself in there that it is reluctant to move, even to better quarters. It had a chance to get the Electric Building, but turned it down. It is now entertaining notions of adding on to the California Building (a dubious proposition architecturally) and building additional space to the west.

One of the most significant and prosperous “museums” is the Old Globe Theater, though its preservation along El Prado much shock the hispanophilic ghost of Bertram Goodhue. It might suggest a re-run of the English routing of the Spanish Armada. The Globe still has in mind a third theater, but for the nonce is fixing to redo its burned 400-seater, upping the capacity to 525.

The Globe is also offering leadership in the matter of parking, especially at night when walking any distance can be hazardous to your health. Perennial pollster Oscar Kaplan is in the field counting hubcaps. Globe activist Richard Croxton Adams feels strongly that just over the horizon—and just over the edge of selected park canyons—is a series of parking structures artfully tucked into the landscape so cars can be kept altogether off El Prado, and so a great deal of blacktop can be returned to grass.

Parking structures in the park will best be done as a private enterprise—controlled by a sufficient public policy. That means, of course, that they should be practically invisible, heavily screened with planting. Their top deck should be landscaped extensions of the park.

In the end, I guess it is unfair to blame the ducks for the spotty condition of El Prado. Most of them are confined to the Zoo, though there are a couple of “Mandarins” who fly out occasionally and light in the lily pond. Anyone who understands Mandarin can hear them deploring the decline of El Prado since Goodhue’s day. With their ancestral Chinese memories, they expect a great deal more than they see around them.

April 30, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Gaslamp planners catch a bad code.

May 7, 1978, San Diego Union, F-6, Planners have designs on urban blight.

May 14, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Art-less building tries SDSU students' creative souls.

May 21, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Sculptures, downtown San Diego.

May 28, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Marston pushes vast oceanfront development.

June 4, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Proposition C would preserve open space.

June 11, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Richard George Wheeler, architect, has plan for downtown.

June 18, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Robert Wellington Quigley, architect.

June 25, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Wright's sons left designs for better living in California.

July 2, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, F-10. Architect Mosher—top designer and still at it.

Robert Mosher, FAIA, would get the vote of most fellow architects in this, his hometown, if it were a matter of ranking the 10 best building designers of San Diego's history.

At 58, he's still at it. Looks a lot younger. Has lived the best of lives in La Jolla, and kept trim, partly by skipping "Friendship," his sailboat—excuse me, yacht. Yachts are fairly "common" among San Diego architects who prospered in the rapid growth of the city after World War II. In Mosher's case, he even designed the Yacht Club.

Navigator Mosher should get every San Diegan's appreciation for the part he played in the design of the Coronado Bridge. In the powwows of bridge conceivers, he argued persuasively for the "orthotropic" configuration, giving us the sleek, slim lines you see instead of a fatty with girders.

Mosher also chose the blue color of the bridge. Have you noticed that the blue is subject to 1,000 changes as the angle of the sun changes? It can appear almost black, almost white, and any shade of blue or green, even copper, orange or aflame with the last of the setting sun. Ours may be the most alive bridge on earth, the most protean—a gorgeous female, so changeable.

Our two art museums have been shaped and reshaped on Mosher's drawing boards. He likes to give credit to his partners Roy Drew and William Watson, but in fact the "looks" of both museums and a good deal of their functional arrangement, should be credited to Mosher—or discredited as the case may be.

Both museums have roots in the work of deceased architects who also happen to be among our historical top 10.

William Templeton Johnson designed the original and still central body of the Fine Arts Gallery in Balboa Park in 1926. (Well, not so original. It was copied or translated lovingly from Spanish buildings he knew.) Irving Gill designed the original (quote original) structure that was to become the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art.

The Johnson design was intended as a museum, but the Gill was not—and thereby hangs the contrast of what Mosher was able to do as he expanded both plants.

The Gill started life as the residence of Ellen Browning Scripps, and it proved very stubborn about being converted. If you believe in haunts, you might say the spirit of the place defied and fought the younger architect as he sought to change its nature.

Neither of the Mosher museums ever got national recognition as exceptional work of architecture, but the La Jolla job got national attention for having destroyed a fine example of residential design by Irving Gill. Gill has steadily rise in the estimation of architectural historians and they inevitably deplore the loss.

Gill has to be No. 1 on our hit list. I mean our list of best San Diego architects. His value lies in having explored—on his own—the paths of simplicity before these became widespread in modern architecture. Every one of his remaining buildings, even the ungainly ones, should be preserved because—taken as a whole—his San Diego work is a precious ingredient in this town’s differentness.

Tough concrete walls meant that Gill’s Ellen Scripps house wanted to live for centuries. Mosher broke up some of the walls, plugged up some of the windows, seeking to give more convenient arrangements for museum purposes. He couldn’t or didn’t raise the ceilings, however, so the overall effect is of cramped space.

In the same period when Mosher was attacking the Gill with little success, contemporary art got bigger on average, requiring more space to be seen effectively. Contemporary art, when well displayed in suitable spaces, is in a much better position to overcome public hostility than when it is hurled at the public in a clumsy way.

For the most part La Jolla Museum installations have been inept because the building with its old memory doesn’t want them.

The exception is the giant space of Sherwood Hall, where paintings hand with vivid impact. The hall, by the way, has its own perversity. It was designed (by Mosher) especially for music, and it’s fairly good for that, but it’s better for speech—and yet it was specifically planned so as not to encourage use by theater groups.

A most perverse failure at La Jolla was the sculpture court designed by Mosher. Sculpture never got much of a shake there because it was surrounded on all sides by distractingly busy building elements. Lately the court has been revised to serve as a new entrance to the museum, as part of another extensive reconstruction now in progress.

The thing to hope for, when the dust settles this time, is some significant interplay between the museum and the beautiful coast scene lying just beyond. Gill’s original Scripps’ estate had that interplay, and so does the nearby Coast Walk shop complex recently designed by Dale Naegle’s office.

Recognition of the Pacific should be basic design policy along La Jolla’s Prospect Avenue. That’s what “prospect” means.

At the Mosher expanded Fine Arts Gallery, the most successful space is the sculpture garden, with its nice adjustment to the heroic park landscape. For this Mosher had to yield some of the credit to Joe Yamada, the landscape architect with whom he has worked closely on many projects. Yamada designed the fence, a work of minimal sculpture itself.

Much of the credit goes also to director Henry Gardner and other staffers who selected and placed the smashing works in the garden.

(Harriet Wimmer, Yamada’s former partner, did the handsome street front landscape of the La Jolla Museum, where presently may be seen the museum’s popular presentation, a startling configuration of bronze figures by Francisco Zuniga, courtesy of Mexican dealer Jose Tasende.)

The west wing of the Fine Arts Gallery was added by Mosher in the ‘50s at a time when public feeling ran high, but not high enough, about tearing down the old expo buildings—which some Spaniards claimed made a better impression than most things in Spain.

With the help of sculptor Malcolm Leland, Mosher carefully tooled columns and roof edges, as though teaching them to speak soft Spanish and thus assuage partisans of the old. Also, he groomed the concrete walls and walkways so they had a lovely warmth. And Leland designed grillwork that cagily tied the new wing to the old body, the Temp Johnson gallery.

In the same period, the distinguished lawyer Walter Ames designed the Timken Gallery (with help from the architectural firm of Frank Hope), flanking the Fine Arts Gallery on the east. The Ames design is generally viewed by experts as out-of-place, though undeniably a treasure house.

As the present decade began, Mosher added an east wing to the Fine Arts Gallery, tucking it discreetly behind the Johnson body so as not to flap in the face of the Timken. This wing contains the best art space in town, ample in height and breadth, though it lacks the ultimate (and difficult) “luxury” of skylights. (In the best museum practice, skylights are not a luxury at all, but a necessity, to add subtlety to the viewing experience.)

Another notable space added by the Mosher firm is the Asian court. The west wing contains an agreeable library set-up and a flexible auditorium. Even the new basement offices behave swimmingly.

The ultimate test of an art museum these days is whether it provides an exceptional place to re-fuel between tours of the exhibits. The Fine Arts Gallery has Café del Rey Moro practically in its front yard. When the front yard is cleared of parked cars (some years hence) and converted to gardens, everyone will recognize that here—in the center of the central park—the finest fruits of civilization are still served. (This is not an endorsement of the café’s menus.)

Director Gardner reports that the gallery’s varied collections will be extensively presented next year in ravishing color, in the ultra-smart publication on the arts, “Apollo.” International blue-ribbon recognition would have been slower to come by if architect Mosher had not done his work so well, though the Fine Arts Gallery has long had an air of social self-satisfaction.

A more important point is that this palace of serendipity, largely supported by public funds, is happily accessible to everybody. You don’t have to wear coat and tie. Just wear shoes.

As for the La Jolla Museum, it will be closed for reconstruction, except for the gallery and Sherwood Hall, until August 1979. When it opens it may finally have cast off the Gill spell so it can fulfill its intention to be the West Coast equivalent of New York’s Museum of Modern Art.

July 9, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, One is in Danger: The Gills Breathe Life Into City . . . efforts to save Klauber house.

Speaking of Gills, as we were last week, there’s much more to be said on the subject. It has nothing to do with the fishy life offshore. But our Gills are vital to whether we sink or swim as a place of special appeal.

Irving Gill (1870-1936) is frequently publicized as the San Diego architect who rose posthumously to the pantheon of leaders who deserve to be written about in the luxury books. History book author Esther McCoy put it this way in “Five California Architects” (Reinhold, 1960): “He developed one of the few wholly original styles of architecture in the United States.” And he did it in San Diego.

He designed over 100 buildings here, mostly residences but including churches and other public buildings. They were not all masterpieces, but most of them had the power to generate fondness in people who knew them.

Fully three-quarters of his total, all built before 1919, still stand and that in itself is remarkable. Few deceased architects can point to such a survival rate in fast-growing American cities. The history-minded architect Robert Ferris says: “Owners are beginning to realize that here is something special. I don’t think you’ll see many Gills destroyed in the years ahead.”

Still one of Gill's best is currently threatened because it is on a piece of land that has become too valuable to be maintained as a single residence. This is the house designed in 1907 for Melville Klauber on Sixth Avenue, at the southwest corner of Redwood Street. The place is a connoisseur's dream—from the garden designed by Kate Sessions to the studio designed for artist Alice Klauber on the third floor with its generous north light.

The Klaubers cared greatly about the city in which they prospered. Yet Allen, the last Klauber to live in the great house, made the choice of selling it commercially rather than giving it to the city. (It must be said that the city didn't have the wit to ask him for it.)

Allen had a heart condition and couldn't cope any more with the handsome staircase of the three-story home, so he moved in 1972 to the elevatoried Del Prado high-rise that looks down on Balboa Park at the north end. He died shortly thereafter, and his homestead-mansion went into gradual decline until today it is a forlorn sight—a seeming target for vandals, with tinder-dry remnants of the once-exquisite landscape nuzzling against the house as though waiting the torch of an arsonist.

Many people are now concerned to rescue the house. The present owner is Tom Kelly, a lucky enterpriser who built the lucrative Imperial Towers farther south on Sixth Avenue and aims to repeat that success on the site of the Klauber house. So demolition is called for and while the deadline is not set yet, it surely will come if the multiple bidders for the property all fail.

Kelly's attorney, John Davies, son of the Globe Theater's Lowell Davies and good friend of Mayor Wilson has had inquiries from 20 persons. The most serious is Dr. Douglas C. Deeley, who recently came here from Boston. He conducts the Family Development and Psychiatric Medical Clinic, Inc. in Chula Vista. Under that broad umbrella he also engages in environmental psychology.

When based in Boston, Deeley rescued several buildings in declining cities of the East. He asserts a strong conviction in favor of human scale in city building as against what he sees as the "fortress mentality" reflected in many large-scale buildings.

With the help of a local architect (who didn't want to be identified so I don't know who he is) Deeley determined that the Klauber house could be moved advantageously to a piece of leftover canyon-side land at the northeast corner of Maple and Albatross streets. A glance at the site showed me that, if the house were relocated there, the front could not face east as now, nor could its north skylight face north. The ghost of Gill should be consulted.

This site would be available only if the city decided to sell the land to Deeley at an attractive price. His objective is to place the house under his own non-profit corporation and provide it with a caretaking residential tenant. Perhaps he can find another site which would allow the original orientation of the house to be preserved.

Owner Kelly has said he would give the house to any non-profit outfit willing to move it so he can get on with his condo-building. Or, he would sell it to a commercial reuser for \$65,000 plus the promise of swift removal. If any one wants to buy it as is, with the land it's on, the asking price is \$550,000.

As to moving costs, an estimate of \$12,000 was made for a one-mile move by John Hanson some time ago. It might be twice that now. Add in \$100,000 for total rehabilitation of the moved structure and you still have only one-quarter of leaving the house where it is—supposing you have a site that doesn't cost anything. That's where the city comes in, as we shall see.

The dynamic Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO) wrestled a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation—\$1,000 to be spent in seeking a method to keep the Klauber house on its present site. The head of the trust sent a letter to the city recommending that the house be saved on site, and the Keeper of the National Register for the Department of the Interior opined from his perch overlooking the

country as a whole: “The objective of the city to develop higher density is worthy, but we urge an exception in the case of the Klauber house.”

No doubt one of the rewards of travel in any city is to discover genteel pockets of the antique holding their own against the pushiness of the modern. Trinity Church in New York’s Wall Street is the most stunning example. In the Klauber case, high-rise neighbors are sure to crowd close in time diminishing the effectiveness of the Klauber in its setting. Already it is hemmed in so bad its exceedingly handsome west side is hardly visible.

Deeley agrees that retaining the Klauber house on its present site is the first choice. But SOHO’s \$1,000 will be hard put to transmute itself into the half-million plus required to buy the ground out from under Kelly.

One proposal is to downzone the Klauber site in order to cheapen the price. That surely would end up in the courts, wouldn’t it? After all, Kelly has a handful of the most persistent American dream, property rights.

San Diego’s Historical Site Board is now weighing the idea of moving the Klauber house into Balboa Park, even though park administrators don’t welcome the addition. They view it as one more drain on their time and budget. The Park Board has not yet considered it formally, Of course, the City Council would have the final word.

The house could go directly across the street and replace one of the park’s undistinguished senior recreation structures there. But, far better, it could travel up Sixth Avenue a few blocks, turn right at Upas Street and come to rest in the park at the head of Seventh Avenue, just south of the venerable George Marston mansion.

The Marston home is also one of Gill’s best, and 10 other homes in the immediate neighborhood were designed by him on short dead-end segments of Seventh and Eighth avenues. Altogether, the area is well on the way to being a “Gill Preserve” of impressive scope, a showground befitting the architect who produced “one of the few original styles of architecture in the United States.”

The Marston home and extensive grounds are to become city property, an extension of the park, after the departure of the distinguished elder spirit who lives there now, Mary Marston. At the other end of the “Gill Preserve,” Hamilton Marston has carefully rehabbed (with architect Ferris) the Gill house in which he grew up. Councilwoman Maureen O’Connor’s husband, Bob Peterson, owns, with Richard Silberman, the fine Burnham house (by Gill) and these men as respecters of the arts might be expected to help advance the “Gill Preserve.”

Other Gill owners in the neighborhood tend to appreciate their Gills though they may object into being frozen into a historical district. The city’s challenge is to come up with a formula that will account for private feelings as well as advancing the public interest in making the most of our Gills.

The Klauber house, relocated in the park at the head of Seventh Avenue, could look better than if left in its old location. One trouble to watch for is that the wealthy residents of the Del Prado high-rise (corner of Seventh Avenue and Upas Street) may object to an old house nuzzling up and trying to be neighborly. However, Mrs. Allen Klauber lives in Del Prado, and it is touching to think that her beloved house might follow her there like a faithful dog.

If it comes off, the consecration of the house in the park at the crown point of a “Gill Preserve” will represent a triumph for Gill that he hardly could have dreamed of.

Explanation: Gill almost became chief architect of the 1915 exposition that left us the wondrous spread of museum facilities along El Prado in the park. But he was pushed aside in favor of the more sensational Bertram Goodhue.

How sweet it would be now to have Gill make a delayed re-entry to the park—and do so in a manner that would create an architectural sensation comparable to that of the exposition itself.

July 13, 1978, San Diego Union, E-1, Twenty six artists put city on map with Los Angeles “Big San Diego Show.”

July 23, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. AIA “onion” and “orchid” awards.

July 30, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. Woman artist asks “architects” to explain.

August 6, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. Planner John Nolen in 1908 said Balboa Park was nice, but nuisance, by James Britton, II.

Balboa Park? Bring On The Condos

In this time of withering the public weal, it would be neat to divide up Balboa Park and fill half those acres with nice fat condominiums to provide easy-spending customers for Ernest Hahn’s hypothetical downtown shopping center.

We have the word of a distinguished fellow, a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, no less, that Balboa Park is a nuisance. He questioned “the wisdom of withdrawing permanently from use so large a tract of the city, of separating so completely the business and residential sections, of blocking transportation for 22 city blocks each way.”

That was John Nolen, the famous park designer, and he was speaking out as early as 1908. A Harvard-bred citizen of the world, he had come here to make our first significant city plan. He found much wrong with the city, and we’ll come to that, but the jolting surprise was his daring to doubt the vast park—he, of all people. He said his question about the park was something “the city authorities must consider.”

Now in 1978, we have a city council more or less bent on rebuilding downtown as the center of centers for the region. And the council is more or less bent on growth management—meaning that as many people as possible should be induced to live as near downtown as possible, preferably bringing money. Obviously, dividing up Balboa Park is the clincher.

Actually, the park is so overrun with people from everywhere (and their cars) that it is no longer a place for squirrels, and what’s a park without squirrels? Come to think of it, I can’t remember when I’ve seen a squirrel in Balboa Park. Of course, some readers may think I’m one for bringing this up. Is it so nutty?

Seriously, that close-in tract of 1,400 acres (originally) is a new-town planner’s dream, and its carving should appeal to a council as construction-industry-oriented as the present one. Developers should be delirious at the prospect of a piece of the park, and industry spokesman Phil Walling should be dancing.

High-rise towers look their best surrounded by tall trees and rolling lawns. They could be given a good 50 percent of the park with the remainder reserved for museums, theaters and strolling grounds, open to the public (for a fee). The canyons could be filled with profitable parking garages decorated with greenery on top, and all those five acres of blacktop parking could be built on for paying customers. Let the free-loading common people get in their cars and go elsewhere.

Balboa Park could easily house 250,000 high-tax-paying residents in comfortably spaced towers, each and every one enjoying such glorious views as are had today by the pioneer inhabitants of El Prado and Coral Tree Plaza. Many of the residents would be of the money-saturated types who are pouring into San Diego today from Iran, Afghanistan and other exploitative countries, including South Africa.

Naturally, for tax deduction purposes, these super-rich will all be handsome supporters of the museums. But the Zoo would have to scam because pocketless beasts don't pay taxes, though they're big at the box office. Besides, we do have the Wild Animal Park to satisfy the crave for species baiting.

Let's look a little closer at John Nolen's 1908 plan for San Diego, frequently extolled as the backbone of all city planning that has occurred here since. He began his report with the ultimate in euphoristic panegyric: "San Diego is a city of uncommon interest. Even in Southern California its situation, climate and scenery make it stand out in permanent attractiveness beyond all other communities."

Coming from a connoisseur of the globe, Nolen's next line ought to set us up for a collective ego-trip if we're not already on one. More importantly it ought to wake us up why the superrich are increasingly discovering San Diego. He wrote: "Its resources as a city are in many respects unrivalled."

He spelled out what he meant by that: "The bay on which it directly fronts is one of the safest and most beautiful harbors in the world. . . . From the bay the land rises gently to the north and east, and on the slopes thus formed the city has been built. Not only the bay but every other type of scenery—beach and promontory, mesa and canyon—unites it in never-ending variety to form a city that is strikingly individual in character and of great beauty.

"The climate—dry, fresh, equable, wholly without extremes of heat or cold—must constantly be taken into account in estimating the future or providing for it. Health is almost guaranteed. A disinterested visitor once remarked; 'If nervous prostration is wanted, it must be brought here, and it cannot be relied upon to continue long.'"

The ecstatic landscape architect expounded upon the wonders of the scene, "Its beauty crowned by the islands of the Coronado, the caves and coves of La Jolla, the unique Torrey Pines, the lovely [sic] Mission Valley. . . . These are but some of the features of the landscape that should be looked upon as priceless assets to be preserved and enhanced. . . . And the 'back country,' hospitable to every sort of tree, shrub, root, grain and flower, is an inexhaustible source of commercial and aesthetic wealth."

If that sounds as though the notable Nolen had been drifting overhead in a rose-colored balloon, he soon came down to earth and asphalt and examined the faults.

He wrote: "Notwithstanding its advantages of situation, climate and scenery, San Diego is today neither interesting nor beautiful. Its city plan is not thoughtful, on the contrary, it is ignorant and wasteful. It provides no wide and impressive business streets, virtually no open spaces in the heart of the city, no worthy sculpture.

"Aside from the big undeveloped City Park (as Balboa Park was then called) it has no pleasure-grounds, parkways or boulevards, no large, well-arranged playgrounds. It has no public buildings excellent in design and location. It has done little or nothing to secure for its people the benefits of any of the great natural resources, nor to provide those concomitants without which natural resources are so often valueless."

How was a planner to deal with the mess? "It is too late to make a plan simply upon a thoughtful recognition of the topography and a skillful consideration of the normal needs of city life and the special needs of San Diego. The street system is fixed almost irrevocably. . . . The method of building streets has required cutting through innumerable hills and the filling of deep valleys and canyons, the destruction of rare opportunity to secure significant beauty. . . . Another unhappy and inescapable fact is the small size of the blocks, usually only 200 by 300 feet, a size devised by ingenuous real estate owners to make as many corner blocks as possible.

"Mistakes of the past may be attributed in part to a low standard of city making, a disregard of the future and a lack of civic pride. They show what is now impracticable and, incidentally, illustrate the folly and waste of haphazard procedure in such large affairs."

To counteract the haphazardry, Nolen proposed five classes of most-needed improvements: a Public Plaza and Civic Center; a great Bay Front; revised Streets and Boulevards; Small Open Spaces; a System of Parks.

The 1908 Nolen Plan for San Diego is available in libraries if you want to compare what he recommended with what we got. In 1938, City Planning Engineer Glenn Rick wrote: "The Nolen Plan is well established as a permanent part of San Diego's future." Rick was introducing a WPA manual on the plan which was used in the city schools.

In 1960, architect Sam Hamill assessed how much of Nolen's architectural scheme had been followed and found the most glaring failures were along the waterfront where industry and the Navy had robbed the city of the grand entrance Nolen had contemplated.

The very same Nolen came back in 1925 and (along with George Marston and others) promoted the bayfront airport as sound planning. Little could he see that the modest fly patterns of his day would escalate to make that airport location intolerable in 1978. Today, Marston's grandson, Hamilton Marston, is a leading agitator to move the airport and no doubt John Nolen would be too if resurrected.

A good question is whether John Nolen in 1978 would say Balboa Park should be converted to close-in residential usage. I think he would. In 1908 he wrote: "No single park is sufficient . . . A system of parks is unquestionably the demand . . . It should include characteristic, inexpensive, almost ready-made parks in every part of the city, to be united in a corrected series of pleasure grounds."

He proceeded to lay out such a system. In truth the park departments of city and county have expanded considerably on his system, and the citizens of San Diego—even in the greed-bound year of 1978—voted bonds to buy a major portion of it (Proposition C).

Mission Bay Park is fully flourishing, three times the size of Balboa Park, and a new park is in the offing, five times the size of Balboa, centered on Mission Gorge. Those are only the biggest lumps of the system. So, as time goes on, if Balboa Park were to convert to housing, the loss might well be considered a gain.

It is only fair to note here that, while Nolen had that massive doubt about Balboa Park, he was sporting enough to congratulate the people of San Diego on having it. Still, that was in 1908. What would he say today? And would he be run out of town?

August 13, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. Plan to bring trolley cars back to San Diego.

August 13, 1978, San Diego Union, F-6. Richard W. Amero defends Balboa Park's status.

James Britton's dislike of Balboa Park is of long standing.

In the past he has advocated replacing the streetcar station to the east of El Prado with a skyscraper to house park and museum administration offices, replacing Spanish palaces with glass buildings, putting pedestrians on top of arcades and automobiles in the streets, turning the Palisades area into a Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, installing layers of concrete floors in the canyons for parking lots, turning the Organ Pavilion into a chicken a go-go restaurant equipped with bouncers and fences, and moving the Melville Klauber residence into an area between Quince Drive and Upas Street.

In his August 6 article, Britton misrepresents city planner John Nolen's 1908 statements about the size of City Park (today's Balboa Park) to back up his own view that San Diego's major park should be located elsewhere. In 1959 he suggested Miramar Air Station or Camp Elliott. Nolen, in his 1908 plan, actually wanted to make City Park larger by extending its boundary to Fifth Street.

After seeing the changes wrought on City Park by landscape architects Samuel Parsons and George Cooke and by the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, Nolen, in 1926, added to his 1908

statement: “Balboa Park is one of the largest, most unusual and beautiful parks in the United States. . . . Under present conditions it appears to be the best policy now to hold the Park as it is, exclusively and rigidly for well-defined park purposes without further encroachment, with the exception of two carefully located, adequate lines of communication across the park, in general, one north and south and one east and west.”

The north-south road (Cabrillo Freeway) was built in 1941, however construction of the east-west road was prevented by the expansion of the San Diego Zoo and the Old Globe Theater.

Far from wanting to sell the park for residential development, in his 1927 Master Plan for Balboa Park, Nolen wrote, “From time to time part of the original property of Balboa Park has been turned over to other uses. These are the High School (including the Stadium), the Roosevelt Junior High School, the U.S. Navy Hospital, and the Children’s Home. We are firmly convinced that the use of the property of the Park for other than park purposes should in no wise be extended.”

In 1933, in a article in “California Southwest,” Nolen classed the Prado section of Balboa Park among the 10 greatest examples of landscape and building architecture in the United States.

I do not think citizens of San Diego would run John Nolen out of town, as Britton suggests, but they might be interested in setting up a fund to sent James Britton back to school.

August 15, 1978, San Diego Union, D-1, Edward Durrell Stone died August 6; put light of sun in all his works.

August 20, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, F-10, Southeast Quadrant of Downtown Could Stand Revitalizing; A Navy Hospital In The Sky? Build 50 Stories

Things could be looking up if the Navy follows an old Navy man’s suggestions for a new hospital.

Having sold off half of Balboa Park to the condo builders (Aug. 6), I haven[t the heart to let my Navy have its way with the remaining acreage.

The Navy wants (maybe) to build a new hospital on 39 undeveloped acres, and give back to the city 39 of the 75 acres on which the tired old hospital stands. It should only happen if two-thirds of the citizenry vote permission, but the City Council doesn’t dare put the question on the ballot.

Architect Don Reeves, an old Navy man himself, has tried to steer the shipmasters to a site just south of the park, in the middle of what has to be called the most stagnant quadrant of downtown (the southeast quadrant). The Reeves site deserves a careful look.

Reeves’ basic idea is that the Navy could pull an oar, at least, in rebuilding downtown—without pain to itself. He would expect the whole stagnant quadrant to come alive in modern terms just because the world’s biggest naval hospital was there.

As Reeves sees it, the hospital design could be meshed into a huge parking “reservoir” which downtown badly needs. As I mulled this concept, the thought occurred that another important spinoff of the hospital design could be a downtown “people mover,” perhaps the most critical ministrations needed to make the juices flow salubriously in the city’s alleged center.

Once you latch onto the idea, the design conception is easy. You just build several layers of parking over a really generous site and then raise a skyscraper hospital in the middle of the parking. Top deck of the parking would be totally devoid of cars. It would be a landscaped park exclusively for patients and their angels of mercy.

A skyscraper was not part of the Reeves proposal. Empathizing with the Navy's pattern of old-time thinking, he fancied a group of buildings, the tallest being 12 stories. I fancy a single gorgeous skyscraper at least 50 stories tall.

Such a skyscraper would be the highest in town and quite possibly would remain so forever. How appropriate. The tower would be a monument to our most pervasive institution, a celebration of San Diego's history as a "Navy town" and an unavoidable reminder of the wages of war.

At the same time, the grievously wounded, who are so numerous in a Navy hospital, would have many windows on the world, from which they could watch a major city grow and feel themselves part of it. They'd even be able to watch their old ships ply the harbor and the ocean.

Though the medical community never seems satisfied with any configuration of hospital design, a wisely thought-out skyscraper probably is the maximum in convenience and fringe benefits for all concerned. The scurrying nurses have shorter footpaths to cover. Adequate elevators can zip doctors to where needed. Best of all, access to the healingness of windows can be provided more patients.

As I'm forever drumming the bottom-line secret of building a superior skyscraper is to keep it a sufficient distance from other tall buildings. This could be done in the area under consideration.

The skyscraper could be a joint project of the Navy and some investor (maybe an Iranian?) who would control a certain number of floors for business occupancy, or condo living. The Navy would have the everlasting option to take over floors if needed—and conversely could lease out floors it didn't need as case loads fluctuated.

As to the people-mover, it would be a sophisticated "horizontal elevator" system. That is, it would glide smoothly along a selected guideway, well above street level, with plenty of cabs to pick up and drop off however many people wanted to use it. It should interest the Navy especially since its logical course is a one-way loop between the skyscraper hospital and the waterfront.

The cabs should be free to all sober riders and they should start from a splendid station at the edge of the Navy's landscaped hospital "deck." They should roll west along B Street, stopping just four times at City College, Fifth Avenue, Second Avenue (the deck of the Community Concourse) and Columbia Street (the Convention Center).

Another especially handsome station should be along the waterfront with the cabs sweeping in a great arc past the 11th Naval District headquarters to begin the return trip east on E Street. Stops on E need only be at Front Street (the Federal Building), Fourth Avenue (the Horton and Hahn Plazas) and Ninth Avenue (the Public Library).

The elevated guideway could be an urban design asset, linking buildings along the route. It should hug the building line on the north side of B and E streets. In some places, it could form a sunshade, and rainshade for the sidewalk below.

In other places architects could dovetail it into the design of new buildings, or adapt old ones. It doesn't even have to go straight and narrow but could take on seductive sinuosity to suit the architecture—not becoming exactly a roller-coaster, mind you, but surely a moving experience. It beats trolleys with their wires.

Considering the addition of the people-mover to the Navy mix, one sees that Reeves' first choice of site for the Navy hospital is just about ideal. He made his presentation upon the basis of the 30 acres bounded by Broadway and G Street, 12th Avenue and 17th Street. Navy says it needs 65 acres, counting recreation space, but if all the hospital operations are consolidated into one tower, 30 acres would give as much recreation space as 65 acres encumbered with several buildings.

The site definitely should include the blocks between F and G streets because these arteries are forever flowing with traffic going to or coming from State 94, one of the heaviest used.

Reeves posits a parking structure of five levels between F and G, from Twelfth Avenue to 17th Street. I think the parking structure should extend over the entire hospital site, at least three times as much area as that between F and G.

Furthermore, the parking structure should be so designed that its vast fireproof concrete structure can be adapted easily for a variety of uses if the future finds us—by some benign twist of fate—getting by with fewer autos.

In the worst of cases, bringing huge casualty loads to San Diego, the parking structure should be adaptable for housing the victims, like the London subways of World War II.

The top deck of the parking structure (the private park for the Navy hospital) should be calculated at the right height to launch the people-mover above the streets. Even if confusion of traffic continues to be a feature of the downtown streets (it can't get much worse than it is) the people-mover will add a level of serene and efficient movement. It will be a delightful ride, a reason in itself for downtown visits.

The people-mover is essentially "light-rail transit" in the sky, as compared to the proposed trolley system, which is light-rail transit fighting with autos for street space (and requiring uglifying wires in the sky).

Elevated people-movers can be ugly too, but if handsomely designed they can contribute positively to the urban design while giving riders a dramatic perspective view on the excitements of the city. Expositions such as those of Montreal and Seattle long since have shown the way on this, as has Disneyland.

It's true we got the transit light touch, the light-rail transit touch, and made downtown San Diego come alive as an entertainment rivaling any expo—even while it prospers as the core of our economic vitality. The most intriguing view potential in the people-mover will be the bay with its assorted waterborne wonders, of which the most impressive, of course, are the Navy's.

If the Navy brass would clang their clouts together, surely they could come up with a presentation to Congress that would win financing for the proposed triple-threat—or rather triple-treat: hospital, parking reservoir and people-mover.

Our congressman, Bob Wilson, could take the lead. He not only loves the Navy, he loves his city. Here's his chance to tie the two loves together with a dazzling ribbon to be cut on dedication day.

One truly notable skyscraper would do more than any other single building to assure the future of downtown as an irresistible place. It would be a mighty anchor for a civic dreamboat that seems bent on floating away.

Nobody can supply a mightier anchor than the U.S. Navy.

August 20, 1978, San Diego Union, F-10. Michael Gottfried, Richard E. Reed and Clarence T. Paul, readers, comment/object to concrete park as described by James Britton, II, (August 6, 1978).

Real Estate Editor, The Union: James Britton II proposes in his Architecture column (Homes, Aug. 6) that Balboa Park be paved over and filled in with condos and parking garages. Quoting, he says: "let the free-loading common people . . . go elsewhere" and that the Zoo would have to "scram." Does Mr. Britton believe writing a newspaper column places him above the "common people" he sneers at? His comment on the Zoo scrambling is not worth a reply.

How could a man with such irresponsible and addled thoughts gain a position on the newspaper? Balboa Park is the pride of San Diego and must be considered inviolate as a cultural and recreational resource.

In simple economic terms, suddenly increasing the population of the downtown area by the 250,000 he predicts for such a plan would raise unemployment in an already troubled area. Since money and profit are all that apparently concerns Mr. Britton, it should be noted that tourist dollars from the Zoo and Balboa Park benefit many, rather than the few wealthy developers who would profit by the figurative rape of Balboa Park.

Could it be that Mr. Britton would gain financially from such a scheme? In the future, let him confine his column to architecture and leave Balboa Park alone. Mr. Britton can move to Florida, if he wants condominiums.

MICHAEL GOTTFRIED, Encinitas

Real Estate Editor, The Union: After reading James Britton's Sunday article for the second time, I have concluded that he was trying to be ironic. But because of the mentality of our City Council, they may see it as a support for their continued trashing of whatever open space and heritage our city has left. They have already decided to give away part of the park to the Navy, and there is a good chance they will give of it to the Old Globe Theater. It would seem logical that they would be delighted to give the rest away to their developer friends.

Jim, say it isn't so. You were trying to make a "Modest Proposal," a la Jonathan Swift, weren't you?

RICHARD E. REED, La Jolla

Real Estate Editor, The Union: I want to express my appreciation to The San Diego Union for publishing the James Britton II feature, "Architecture."

As a retired architect, I enjoy reading his knowledgeable comments on the local scene.

CLARENCE T. PAUL, San Diego

August 27, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Mission Bay Park still around.

September 3, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Miramar choice airport site.

September 10, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Coat of paint freshens image of San Diego Club, now the Harcourt Brace Building.

September 17, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Charles Eames' national aquarium site would be ideal for Mission Bay.

September 21, 1978, San Diego Union, E-1. The Disney touch—Is it fitting for Balboa Park?, by James Britton, II.

A fright-bearded fellow named Charles Darwin shook the world in 1859 when he wrote a best-selling sex book with a round-house title: "On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life."

One of Darwin's readers, Herbert Spencer—though long-winded himself—managed to make the idea alarmingly vivid in a phrase: "Survival of the Fittest."

Similarly, the Natural History Museum of San Diego believes in Natural Selection. Survival of the Fittest is a very real issue among museums plagued by rising costs and declining public subsidy. The local (Natural History) museum has been waging a monumental Struggle for Life—that is, a battle over policy, with members testing their strength by voting on board vacancies, six being contested. The outcome will be known Monday, but may not be announced unless leaked until the annual dinner, September 29. Bon appetit!

What's the Struggle all about? In a word, it's about Disneylandishness. Opponents of the present administration say the board of trustees, lead by president Burt Raynes, is trying to escalate the Museum's display activity along Disneyland lines and, in the process, weaken the traditional attention to natural history. For his part, Raynes says he'd be glad to hire Son of Disney to help him bring the marvels of nature to a waiting world of wide-eyed wonders.

Perhaps the seeming strife in the museum is only a rehearsal of a remake of "Mutiny on the Bounty," with president Raynes loosely filling the uniform of Charles Laughton as Captain Bligh and wearing a suitable scowl. In this scenario the role of Fletcher Christian, leader of the mutiny, is assumed by David Binney, champion of an unhappy crew, who might be as handsome as Clark Gable if he'd come out from behind the formidable beard that seems to have been inherited from Darwin. The new film must be called "Mutiny on the Beagle."

Actually, Raynes is an upstanding Unitarian, so he can't be all Bligh. He ran Rohr Corp., where he espoused bold programs including the manufacture of rapid-transit trains—a considerable disaster for the company.

Raynes is determined to make a success of the museum, which today stands rather inert while across the street in one direction is the prospering Reuben H. Fleet Space Center and across the street in another direction is the extraordinary business success of the San Diego Zoo. He is backing a bold program of expansion. Binney is for a bold program, too. Their split is over quality. Let's see how the mutiny developed.

It started innocently enough with San Diego's lovable Foxy Grandma, Bea Evenson. Bea is the driving force of the Committee of 100, which has at least 1,000 members bent on saving and restoring the old buildings in Balboa Park.

In 1975 the Committee hired Alfred Gobar Associates (of Brea) to suggest uses for the Electric Building, which was due to be vacated by the Aero-Space Museum. That's the one that burned to the ground last winter along with priceless exhibits. The ground is still there, however, and the federal government has earmarked a million for resurrecting the historic structure. What to fill it with?

Gobar sifted "several hundred possible uses" and ended up urging a "Pacific People's Center." The term hardly explained itself but Gobar did. He compared it to "Ghirardelli Square and the Cannery in San Francisco, Ports O'Call in San Pedro, Fisherman's Village in Marina del Rey, etc."

Said Gobar: "Representative of the types of attractions that would comprise the Pacific People's Center are restaurants—foods of Pacific-basin countries; import outlets—specifically gift items, jewelry etc.; unique apparel shops; import and gourmet food, liquor and wine shops; furniture outlets—imported; entertainment centers—theaters, pachinko, etc.; specialty shops and art stores; craft stores and shops."

He advised: "Advertising and the maintenance of a theme and an aura of excitement are critical factors. These entertainment values are the reason why facilities of these types have had records of both extremes of success and failure."

Then came the clincher: "There are several well—qualified development and operating firms interested in pursuing the project immediately."

When Burt Raynes got wind of this, his survival instinct took over. His vice-president wrote the museum members: "We were initially concerned about the prospect of a second natural history museum competing with us right across the street. We reasoned that, if such a museum were to be built, we should be the ones to do it—with taste, and without the outlined commercial aspect."

So the Raynes board hired another consultant, Joseph A. Wetzel Associates (of Stamford, Conn.) to improve on the Gobar formula. Wetzel came up with "Pacifica—a New Natural History Learning Center."

Someone on the Wetzel staff must have just put down a book by James Michener because the report's rhapsodic prose sounds like that master. "The Pacific . . . Embracing easily within us depths, mountains higher than Everest . . . in a very real sense the great ocean is unfathomable . . . It is a major force in creating the world as we know it."

The Wetzel sell: "Visitors to Pacifica will become aware of the myriad ways in which the Pacific Ocean touches their lives . . . It will entertain, enthrall, educate, entice and create the sense of wonder."

Wetzel whets the Pacifica whistle and pipes a dozen topics for possible displays. Formation and geology of the Pacific Basin; Properties of water and winds; life in the Pacific waters; Migration; Seafood; People's various responses to the Pacific; Flora and fauna of Australia; Life on tropical islands; A water playground; The explorers; Treasure-hunting in the deep.

Treasure hunting is, of course, the most important activity the Museum of Natural History can engage in—in order to make other activities possible. One reason the museum director is a retired admiral (John B. Davis, Jr.) is that such a commanding figure should be able to draw major contributions from firms that have done big business with the Navy.

Wetzel, like Gobar, relies on commercial activity in the park facility to provide the main financing and he, too, is sure bidders are waiting eagerly in the wings. He writes: "From a financial viewpoint, Pacifica should contain a mixture of exhibitions, shops and restaurants which will appeal to a diversity of funding sources. The large number of Pacific nations offers obvious funding possibilities, from both foreign governments and corporations. Exhibits about the scientific discoveries associated with the Pacific should appeal to foundations, U.S. corporations and the United States government.

"Operating budget funding would be generated by admissions and by sales from Pacific restaurants and shops. The potential also exists for creating extensive catalog sales based on a line of items oriented toward the Pacific Basin."

Sears, Roebuck move over! Park lovers are bound to go white in the face while contemplating the transformation of Balboa Park into a shopping center, but they should reflect that it's nothing new. Museums everywhere, including Balboa Park, make a big thing of their shops these days. The great Balboa Park exposition of 1915 was as commercial as it was magnificently educational.

Then there's the example of Mission Bay Park, rampantly commercial and still a superb recreational environment. Or Old Town, once seedier than the mustiest museum, now transformed into a state park with a considerable degree of historical presentation made possible by the booming commercialism there, some of it truly delightful.

If one believes that San Diego should have an unsurpassed cluster of museums then one has to believe that Raynes and his natural history board are making appropriate moves in the struggle.

The dissidents are boosters of a more effective museum, too. They are not necessarily against Pacifica, perhaps not at all against it, though they want to keep natural history research from being wiped out by commercialism. Their particular conceit is to continue research of the San Diego region for which the museum has developed a fine reputation. When scientists employed by the museum were asked,

beginning in 1975, to start bringing in money (by practicing grantsmanship), a sickness of the spirit set in among the staff, causing the loss of four valued curators.

The obvious way for the board of trustees to keep the Natural History Museum from floundering in a sea of doubts is to invite the six challengers aboard the trusteeship as a loyal opposition—even if they lose the election.

September 24, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. City College passes living design test.

October 15, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. Aerospace conversion—growing pains seen at Ford Building, by James Britton, II.

Juan Larrinaga's original preliminary study for the interior of the Ford Building is shown on left. Before the final decoration for the opening in 1935, the huge figures on either side of the entrance were replaced by complex designs representing the East and the West.

(Caption only—picture not given in this collection)

When this column toyed with the notion of high-rise condominiums popping up throughout Balboa Park, I did not know that the Ford Motor Co. has plotted the first high-rise for the park in 1935.

A photo on page 6 is proof. It shows Henry Ford himself, his son Edsel, and a model of the first version of the Ford Building—a building which was constructed minus the tower, on the best point of land in the park, and is being reconstructed today as the new home of the Aero-Space Museum. The grand figure in the middle of the photo is San Diego banker G. Aubrey Davidson, a key in the daring exposition adventures this town undertook in 1915 and 1935. It was the exposition of 1935 that attracted Ford.

Records are sketchy about the phantom tower shown here. In all likelihood it was intended to be nothing more than a means of raising the Ford name as high as the heavens. With a little imagination, one sees the tower (as tall as any of our present high-rises downtown) like the Cylindrical Marina City in Chicago.

Henry Ford said, "History is bunk" (and Aldous Huxley enshrined the line in his "Brave New World"). A close reading of the photo suggests Henry thought the model was bunk too. Edsel, on the other hand, looks as though he thought it a good idea, may even have thought it up. (He also backed a car that bore his name and bored the buying public.)

As built, the Ford Building is one of the most significant designs in San Diego "history"—if the word may be allowed. That is, the floor plan is really magnificent, based on the grand geometry of the doughnut, a continuous ring of exhibition space (55 feet wide, 31 feet high, 750 feet around) with the "hole" comprising the delicious surprise for the visitor, a vast patio (almost 200 feet across) with open-sky light giving an intense vividness to anything exhibited there.

Special though it be, the layout is not unique to San Diego. It was first dreamed up for the Chicago World's Fair of 1933 by Walter Dorwin Teague, an industrial designer high on the Ford payroll, and a similar installation was at Dearborn, Mich., for a while.

Ours is the only one of the monumental doughnuts that hasn't bitten the dust. This may be one reason the National Trust for Historic Preservation wants it restored as it was, with all the trimmings—and with some absurd results.

The most preposterous feature is a garden laid out in the patio in the shape of Ford's famous "V-8" symbol. Around the edges of the refurbished V-8 will be benches where the foot-weary may sit as though the gas-guzzler is the thing that gives them the most comfort in the world.

From the ground you might not notice that you were being absorbed into the V-8, but the image leaps out at you as you pass over it in an airplane. Most airplanes heading for Lindbergh Field go directly over the Ford Building, adding an air of reality to an aviation museum. If pilots should proudly point out the Aero-Space Museum, passengers could peer out the window—and stare at the world's biggest V-8, with people clinging on its edge!

The paradox will be heightened by the sound effects—jet noise rocketing repeatedly against the reverberant walls of a patio in which the sweet appearance of a well-groomed garden has promised relaxation. This way to the schizophrenia.

Thus the preservationists are trapped by their own good intentions. They should not be allowed to trap us all.

Having accepted the Aero-Space Museum as tenant of the remarkable building, the city should insist on converting the central patio into the climatic exhibition space that it clearly wants to be. With its circular floor plan, it could begin to equal the drama of the stunning U.S. Pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal. Anyone who visited there has to remember forever the breathtaking sight of our space capsule suspended under its three orange and white parachutes. Something like that belongs in the Ford patio. The silly V-8 must go.

The magic of Montreal was compounded by the fact that the U.S. Pavilion was one giant geodesic structure—the most impressive example ever of Buckminster Fuller's wonderful creation. A geodesic dome of similar quality could be mounted atop the giant circle of the Ford patio. The dome would modify, though it would hardly kill, the overbearing noise of the jets tearing the sky just above.

So great is the worldwide enthusiasm to supply items—including whole planes and rockets of the outsize class for the AeroSpace Museum that even this big building, patio and all, will hardly be enough. There is talk of installing some of the larger hardware in the parking lot east of the building. This would amount to cluttering the park, and should not be allowed. Instead the biggies should be installed in a corner of Lindbergh Field. When that field is abolished, the exhibits can remain as memorial to an era.

Inside the Ford doughnut, or “concourse,” as it is being called, the floor should be kept clear as possible because the crowds are going to be unprecedented. That means most of the exhibited aircraft should be hung from the ceiling. Ah, there's the catch! This building, if faithfully restored, is not strong enough to hang heavy objects.

To hang planes overhead, where they make their best impression, the doughnut would have to be laced with steel girders, and that's exactly what should be done. It's not in the plans. It wouldn't be true to the 1935 original. Preservationists would have to fight it even if they could see the absurdity of the situation.

The preservers (who control the money) have allowed some modifications of the structure, not necessarily improvements. The continuous skylight has disappeared, replaced by continuous artificial light. Yet this light is useless for exhibits, according to the installation architect, Richard Selje. He'll be using track lights installed along the walls.

Another paradox, born of preservation fever, is that \$100,000 is being spent to touch up murals that were produced in the first place with impermanent paints on a poor grade of plaster. The issue I would raise is whether the busy wall pictures will be an asset to the effective display of aerospace technology. No matter, history-happiness decrees that the images remain.

Upon entering the Ford Building you are in an extremely handsome round room, 100 feet in diameter and 50 feet high, a choice rotunda with a domed ceiling lit indirectly.

Plans are to fill the rotunda with exhibits, the centerpiece being a new copy of Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis—on the floor, not up in the air. Plans are, also, to cover up the mural that runs along the wall of the rotunda—a quite different mural from the one in the concourse.

A perverse critic would have to say that the museum would gain infinitely in majesty if it left the beautiful entrance rotunda essentially empty, as a huge mixing bowl for the crowds of visitors. On high-style occasions it would be a ballroom of special appeal.

In this conception, the rotunda's period-piece mural should be retained. The Aero-Space Museum would be all the more dramatic if it held back its treasures a bit from the entrance, allowing the visitor to soak in the contrast with the ghostly parade of antique autos seen in the rotunda mural.

The exterior of the Ford Building has always seemed incomplete to me, and now I know why. When the high-rise tower was chopped out of the plans, the cylindrical entrance element was left as a stump—or at best a pedestal begging for something surprising to happen on its rooftop.

The most surprising climax for the building would be a giant Atlas rocket poised to lift off from the entrance pedestal. Any such sculptural extravaganza is probably beyond thinking of. It would be too great a shock in the park.

The most surprising climax for the building would be a giant Atlas rocket posed to lift off from the entrance pedestal. How about another transparent geodesic dome atop the pedestal, to go with the one that ought to cover the patio? At night, light from within would cause a glowing of the domes that would be all the advertising that the Aero-Space Museum ever needs.

I have tried to show that strict preservation of the Ford Building is not so important as dynamic adaptation for its new use. Besides, if you want true preservation, including a quiet garden in the patio, you have to start by eliminating the airplanes that fly so noisily overhead. Historic preservation is one of the best things America does—when it works, but this particular preservation program is for the birds.

October 22, 1978, San Diego Union. F-1, "Progress Guide and General Plan" hits sticky going.

October 29, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. One Star Pupil, Richard Requa: Did San Diego have a school of architecture?, by James Britton, II.

In 1934 all was quiet on the western frontier. San Diego was asleep in the sun when . . .

Architect Richard Requa, in his prime at 53, got involved in a fever of activity that threatened to explode his thermometer before he finally put together the California Pacific International Exposition, more or less in time for the opening in Balboa Park on May 29, 1935.

Of course, he didn't do it alone. His most forceful ally was a gentle woman, Gertrude Gilbert—whose house was to become many years later the nucleus of the Heritage Park in Old San Diego.

Gilbert was a music teacher, known for her leadership in bringing top concertizers here. She pushed and shoved the male leaders of the town who were about to tear down the crumbling but still captivating structures left over in the park from the exposition of 1915. The lady induced the lads to save the crumbs, and Requa was put in charge of restoration.

The leftovers of 1915 were mainly along the super-street called El Prado, the extension of Laurel Street into the park north of the organ pavilion. For a 1935 exposition they were not enough, so Requa staked out a spread of sites to the south of the mighty squaker in an area called the Palisades. He then coordinated the design and construction that followed in a rush.

Requa attacked the assignment with a passion that still breathes heavily as one reads the book he wrote: "Inside Lights on the Building of San Diego's Exposition 1935."

By way of warm-up, he wrote: "An impressive incident from the 1915 exposition proved effective in winning supporters to the cause . . . G. Aubrey Davidson (president of the 1915 exposition) was conducting through the grounds a distinguished visitor, Count Salazar, consul general of Spain, who viewed the park and buildings in contemplative silence. Then, as they were walking back across Cabrillo Bridge, which spans the deep canyon leading to the main entrance, he paused and glancing back at the towers, domes and parapets gleaming above the treetops, said: "Mr. Davidson, we have buildings in Spain just as beautiful, we have gardens just as fine, but nowhere in my country have I seen such a perfect blending of the two. You have out-Spained, Spain."

Requa was all for out-spaining Spain, and he reported: "By the spring of 1934, thanks to an indulgent winter, the work of renovation was nearing completion. At last the buildings were seated firm and square on concrete footings. Plaster and paint had worked their miracles of rejuvenation, and visitors were flooding to the park in rapidly increasing numbers to marvel at the success of the restoration program. A genie with magic wand would hardly have performed a feat more astonishing.

Now came Requa's main chance, the new expo. The financing of the exposition was accomplished with phenomenal speed when one considers the apprehensive atmosphere that clouded those dark days.

"There were, of course, some dissenters, the ultra-conservatives who muttered over their breakfast coffee, 'It can't be done.' But we did not hear. We were too busy. The clatter of typewriters, the clanging of hammers, the grinding of concrete mixers and the roar of motor trucks drowned out the cries of malcontents and the chicken-hearted.

"I was responsible for the general plan, the design of the new exhibit buildings with their surrounding landscaping, the new architectural gardens, the remodeling of the old buildings where required, and the interior and exterior decorations.

"Of invaluable assistance was Juan Larrinaga, an artist of marvelous ability and diversity of talents. He could do everything in art and decoration from executing the preliminary colored sketches and models to building and placing the ornamentation on new exhibition palaces. Of Mexican ancestry, his was a natural talent, developed in the Hollywood studios to a great versatility and technical accuracy. A lovable personality, he brought freshness and enthusiasm to his work that was a constant inspiration to me and to all who collaborated with him."

Larrinaga's name will be familiar again when the Aero-Space Museum opens next year against a background of vast murals master-brushed by Mr. L. for the 1935 expo. Requa's praise of him is typical of what the architect wrote about the people he worked with. Evidently, Requa was that rarity among architects, both a considerable artist and a considerable diplomat in personal relations.

Requa's education occurred not in any architectural school but in San Diego offices, including that of Irving Gill. The ripened Richard was much in demand for residential design here. He also got into big industrial commissions; Rockfield on North Island and the Consolidated Vultee plant in Fort Worth.

The pride of his youth was, no doubt, the tender reconstruction of the town of Ojai (1913) where the new center included an outdoor music facility which is prized today because the setting registers as beautifully on the eye as the festival does on the ear.

In similar natural intimacy, he designed the outdoor theater atop La Mesa's Mount Helix, where Easter is greeted with highest hopes (and where the rest of the year, punks on junk can be found among the rocks, the punk rocks).

Caring as he did about whole environment, Requa made a plan in the '30s to convert musty Old Town, San Diego, into a romantic Mexican village that probably would have out-Mexicoed Mexico. He was a generation too early to get action on that. However, he did create on the north side of Old Town

plaza, an exceptionally handsome motel which after 30 years was transformed into the Bazaar del Mundo. Requa could have lived happily with that. (He died in 1941.)

His village-making propensity got a workout when he took on the 1935 exposition. The Spanish Village (now an artists' protectorate) and the House of Pacific Relations (really 15 houses where partisans of many nations live in peace each weekend) came from Requa's busy drawing board as did the Globe Theater.

Explaining his aesthetic creed for the 1935 expo, Requa wrote: "in 1915 there was presented for the first time an idealized conception of a Spanish-Colonial city of the 17th and 18th centuries, following the suggestion of the architect Bertram Goodhue. In considering the general architectural scheme for the 1935 exposition I was determined that the original and inspired idea of Mr. Goodhue must be carried on . . .

"In my search for a style that would combine novelty, beauty and authenticity and yet remain in harmony with the old buildings I turned for inspiration and ideas to the prehistoric and native architecture of the Southwest, studying the Indian pueblos and the architecture developed to such a wonderful state of perfection in Mexico and Yucatan by those mysterious early inhabitants, the Aztecs and the Mayas.

"One of the surprising facts I learned was that the principal elements or fundamental features of our so-called modern styles of architecture had all been admirably employed in the creation of the prehistoric buildings of America. There is striking similarity in the arrangement of masses and the use of horizontal lines, in the employment of geometric design in the ornamentation and in its application in a few selected spots—particularly for doorways, friezes and parapets."

That last paragraph shows that Requa, the loving traditionalist, didn't fully understand modern principles. He (Requa) proceeded to develop the Palisades area as he fancied the ancients would have done if they enjoyed modern technology. The result was an architectural disaster, neither convincingly traditional (like Goodhue's) nor significantly modern for the most part.

In the Palisades, Requa didn't even achieve the "sense of Place" that Goodhue et al got in El Prado. His plaza was so broad that unity had a poor chance to start with. Today the plaza is filled with parked cars rather than the gardens Requa planned, so the disunity is more apparent than ever.

Three of Requa's weak designs in the Palisades—now called the Conference Building, the Gymnasium and the Federal Building—should be studied in comparison with designs Frank Lloyd Wright did a decade earlier when Wright was under the spell of the mighty Mayas. Palisades would look much better today if Requa had been able to achieve such effects as Wright got in Pasadena (645 Prospect Crescent) and in Hollywood (8161 Hollywood Boulevard, 2607 Glendover Road, 1962 Glencoe Way).

Requa and company had to work with money limitations that didn't trouble Wright, but Goodhue and company had scant funds too.

Though Requa didn't come up to Wright in the matter of Mayamania, he did wax hugely enthusiastic about the master's utopian "Broadacre City" concept, whereby every last living American was to get at least an acre per family. Wright's lofty ideal was that the family would be held together by working the acre to supply the table. Innocent genius!

Requa thought the Broadacre pattern could be implemented at least by people who had the leisure or income to maintain their gardens. He considered it perfectly suitable to the local all-year climate. What's more, he thought it was already pretty well underway at Rancho Santa Fe (the town north of San Diego which Requa helped design).

The San Diego Union in February 26, 1933, carried Requa's evaluation of Wright's sweeping plan along with photos of the two men and a six-column headline: "SAN DIEGO IDEAL FOR NEW FAMILY ACRE PLAN."

Our Requa was a grand dreamer and often a fine doer. Lasting proof of his artistic eye is the series of photographs he did to illustrate “Inside Lights,” capturing at its best the spirit of the 1935 exposition.

Richard Requa, the artist in architecture, was created in San Diego. He couldn’t have developed quite the same anywhere else. After he settled here (from Nebraska) he worked for Irving Gill and he worshiped Bertram Goodhue, the two strongest shapers of San Diego in Requa’s time. They shaped him too. Thus, without calling it such, we had a San Diego School of Architecture—with one star pupil

Caption: Richard Requa designed the ivy-covered building below for the San Diego Gas & Electric Co. in 1923. At left is the interior of the Ford Building, crowning achievement of the 1935 Exposition, for which Requa was architect-in-chief. Below left, Requa’s Spanish Village archway shows the design influence of Irving Gill and Bertram Goodhue.

November 5, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. Spreckels marches in parade of San Diego shapers; Clare Crane tells of leaders in radio series: “Twelve Who Shaped San Diego”

“Pass me the sugar, Daddy,” said John. And Daddy obliged.

John Spreckels inherited Daddy Claus’s sugar empire, but not until after he had gone seafaring and made his own fortune. Fortunately, John sailed into San Diego harbor one day and laid claim to the place in the name of the King of Carbohydrates.

He saw the exceptional harbor as the natural silver gate for controlling the flow of profit in and out of the United States via the Pacific. It needed a railroad crossing the mountains into Arizona, so he would build one. San Diego would grow enormously, so he might as well lay trolley tracks all over town. The trolleys would need a lot of juice so he might as well own the electric supply system for the whole city. And, oh yes, water. He had better pipe it in from the far mountains.

One big thing led to another. He couldn’t parade up and down Broadway everyday but he could and did establish a permanent parade of Spreckels buildings there—the Broadway Pier, the generating plant at Kettner Boulevard, the San Diego Hotel, the Spreckels Theater, the Union-Tribune building (this newspaper’s former home), and, proudest of all, the Spreckels office building at Seventh Avenue (now the Bank of America headquarters). All are still in place except the newspaper plant, torn down to give us the Central Federal Tower.

Of course, John should own a newspaper to develop right-thinking in the populace. I haven’t checked his attitude on churches; suffice it that he could personally deliver, “Nearer My God to Thee” on the organ installed in his Coronado mansion. He owned Hotel del Coronado and much of the island on which it sits. His most expensive performance of all was to occur in 1915 when he delivered a whole organ, largest in the world, for the exposition pavilion in Balboa Park that bears his name.

The above is a very loose embroidery on an underlying web of facts. The story was told more carefully, but also with color, by KPBS radio in its current series on “Twelve Who Shaped San Diego.”

Shapers already treated are Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, Father Junipero Serra, Henry Fitch, Jose Estudillo, Alonzo Horton, Louis Rose, Spreckels, and the two women of the troop, Kate Sessions and Ellen Scripps. Programs still to be heard center on William Kettner, Edward Fletcher and George Marston. Catch them on Mondays at 12:30 p.m. or on Tuesdays at 7:30 pm.

Originator of the troop of 12 shadows is Claire Crane, who is a standout personality herself. She has a warm generosity of outlook, yet is not at all Pollyanna. She didn’t just float through the American educational system, but made the most of it (at Wellesley, San Diego State University, UCLA, and UCSD), winning scholarships and polishing off with a Ph.D. in history.

More important than the doctorate was the brace of high school summers (1940 and ’41) she spent at Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin (Wisconsin) “labor camp” as a bonus for growing up in Milwaukee. I call

in a labor camp because in fact all enrollees worked at the master's chores while they absorbed his far-reaching philosophy. Clare met architect-to-be Loch Crane there. In 1946 they were married, making San Diego their chosen place.

When Clare conceived the KPBS series, her grant worthiness paid off. The National Endowment for the Humanities came through with \$30,000. Helen Hawkins, the resident KPBS humanitarian shepherdess, piped the grant, and Peter Hamlin boiled the 12 hours of radio out of perhaps 60 hours of interviews with local reminiscers. The first flood of taped talk can be dipped into by anyone who cares to call San Diego State's Research Center at 288-5751.

The Crane radio series will be available in cassettes and the hope is they'll be used much in schools. With smart editing and a Clarevoyant choice of illustrations, the material would make an engaging addition to the coffee table literature of San Diego, but that is not in sight at this time. A plain booklet, featuring bibliography, is available from KPBS.

"Father" Wright's wonderful way of relating architecture, environment and society is reflected in Clare Crane's handling of her subject. Given their differences I character—and disregarding the question of genius—her evaluation of San Diego is not sharply critical, as his would be. He would approve her celebration of the local landscape. Many of the buildings she dwells on fondly, he would consign to the bulldozers.

Of course, Wright would be in favor of saving the many San Diego buildings by Irving Gill, who is sure to get much attention when Clare takes up George Marston (Nov. 21 and 22). Wright knew Gill as one of the more original architects. He also knew Harrison Albright, who designed the Spreckels theater, and he surely would demand that we cherish it forever, if only because it was truly exceptional acoustics.

The theater's present owner is Jacqueline Littlefield, who also owns a well-developed aesthetic sense. She is determined to keep the handsome house just as alive as when it was built in 1912.

Currently her happy tenant is the Old Globe Theater company, which will stay only until its new theater is built—possibly no longer than 1980. After that, one hopes the Spreckels can have good-music ensemble, possibly the Sinfonia Revived. The acoustics for music are so good (the best in town by far) that our top musicians should be playing and singing there all the time. (Don't take the recent and raucous Globe production of "The Robber Bridegroom" as a test. It used amplification for singers who couldn't function without mikes. Amplification is not needed at the Spreckels.)

To atone for their acoustical sins, the Globe masters would do well to fill their "dark" nights (Mondays) with chamber music. They, at least, might investigate the offerings of Charles MacLeod, the San Diego clarinetist who also is so determined to deliver first-rate chamber music here that he recently sank—that is lost—\$2,000 of his own money in an East County trial concert. And the Globesters should reach out, also, to the UCSD faculty group (Robert Hamburger, chairman) which brings such stunning visitors as the Beaux Arts Trio and the Tokyo String Quartet.

When the fine-tuned Tokyo quartet played Oct. 21 at the campus hall (Mandeville), all the seats were filled by fans totally absorbed in the feast. Not a cough in the house. Surely there are 600 more non-coughers who should have heard that sterling concert. If it had been presented at the Spreckels, where it could have—and it would have—sounded better. The UCSD crowd could jolly well stretch a bit to share the goodies. After all, many of the same people tuck downtown regularly for the concerts (at Civic Theater) of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

These music notes, these quavers, are inserted here to underscore the importance of the Spreckels Theater as an irreplaceable San Diego asset. Everything possible should be done to assure its future as a scene of quality offerings.

Similarly, other distinguished architectural legacies have to be protected by giving them an acoustic reason for being. The KPBS series provides a basis for identifying the most worthy.

Already identified as most worthy is Irving Gill's Klauber house, subject of much publicity, but still an endangered specimen because of new designs on the site. There she stands deserted, yet still lovely, at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Redwood Street, mutely begging to be saved from the oversexed bulldozer rumbling up and down. Will Chivalry come to the rescue?

November 11, 1978, San Diego Union, D-1, Photo-essayist W. Eugene Smith, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona.

November 12, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Orchard retirement home; elderly woman wedged between airport and freeway.

November 19, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, View in Vista leaves a lot to be desired.

November 26, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Jim and Kathleen-Kelly Markham fight for Irving Gill buildings; formed Friends of Gill, P.O. Box 91931, San Diego, 92138.

December 3, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Sculpture Garden, San Diego Museum of Art.

December 10, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Hats off to Bank of America for its landscaped plaza—but about that tower.

December 17, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, Allan Temko, San Francisco critic of architecture, his comments about San Diego architecture discussed.

December 24, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1, F-4, Torrey Pines Park Offers Growth Possibilities; Revival of the Restaurant Suggested.

If the carpenter of Nazareth had been able to book a vacation flight to San Diego, 1,948 years ago, he would have found Torrey Pines State Park just about as it is now. Heavenly.

Naked people (Indians) would have been gamboling beneath the park site, on Black's Beach, and grubbing for seafood, including grunion. The high bluff and spectacular canyons would have been dressed in the same rich fabric of rare trees tourists marvel at now, and which San Diegans never tire of nodding at as they rush by in their cars.

Oldest pine currently growing in the park dates merely from the 16th century. The forest, however, was here before any men were, and that could be 50,000 years ago, and then some. When the planet was cooler, experts figure, forests spread from the mountains to the sea. Torrey Pines Park is a mere remnant, a "last stand" of a once-endangered species. In the last century the tree has gone off the endangered list, thanks mainly to San Diegans, as will be touched on below.

The Torrey Pines Lodge, in the middle of the "last stand," was not there in the Carpenter's time, though it was designed to look like dwellings the Indians of that period were making. It dates only from 1922. Its basic material is the same adobe (dried mud) used widely by tribes in Arizona and New Mexico but never in California until the Carpenter's followers, the missionaries, brought it along in the 18th century.

The mission builders undoubtedly used the trees for light structural needs and for firewood, as did the Indians before them, though it was hardly a first-class material for either purpose. The population of Torrey pines shrank, whatever the cause, until by and for firewood, as did the Indians before them, though it was hardly a first-class material for either purpose. The population of Torrey pines shrank, whatever the cause, until by and for firewood, as did the Indians before them, though it was hardly a first-class material for either purpose. The population of Torrey pines shrank, whatever the cause, until by 1883 they could breed themselves only in a small area around what is now the park (one the coast just south of Del Mar) and the Santa Rosa Island off the coast.

The year 1883 was the turning point in time for the Torrey pine, named after a Columbia University professor. One of Torrey's students, botanist C. C. Parry, challenged the San Diego Society of Natural History to save the remaining trees. He waxed emotional, to wit:

“Here, seeking shade from the fervid rays of a February sun (in 1883) under the shade of a decrepit forest monarch, listening to the sullen dash of the Pacific waves against the bold shores, I had one thought floating uppermost like the drifting seaweed. Why should not San Diego secure from threatened extermination this unique Pacific Coast production? . . . Why not perpetuate this spot where wiser generations than ours may sit beneath ampler shade, listen to the same waves and thank us for sparing this tree?”

We may not be a wiser generation on the whole, but we have done at least a halfway job of securing the park from vandals and/or developers. Because Ellen Browning Scripps bought up much of the land (from would-be developers) from 1908 to 1912 and gave it to the public, the high portion surrounding the lodge became a candidate for perpetuity. The pines within the protectorate took heart. Propagation increased.

However, many monarchs were felled to make an ugly path for the straight highway, Torrey Pines Grade, which replaced the two-lane road (that still winds through the park) as the main auto route to Los Angeles. Torrey Pines Grade was needed for only a quarter-century, until the present Interstate 5 freeway would be built.

In the time of road-building devastation, something else was happening to multiply the Torrey pine in the world. According to San Diego horticulturist Karl Schnizier, seeds from Torrey pines of the San Diego region “probably: were the source of the tremendous propagation of the tree in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, where it is used for paper pulp.

Karl also believes, though he says there's no way of knowing, that—because of extensive aesthetic plantings in the last century—San Diego County today has far more Torrey pines than existed when the padres first set foot on the needles two centuries ago.

The winding road, as distinguished from the straight “Grade,” provided the logic for building the lodge. It was conceived as a friendly wayside inn at a time when auto trips were long-drawn out. Because all auto traffic went by the door, there was no trouble maintaining a restaurant, at least a tea room.

As for the implication of the name “lodge,” two bedrooms were included in the plans, enough for a caretaker family, but not for travelers to bed down.

From the terrace of the lodge you can look in all directions upon views of ocean and mountains through a foreground of semi-transparent forest, a landscape setting unsurpassed. Obviously it would be the ultimate in buildings sites for the superrich, if marketable.

As you took to the north, the middle ground of the picture is a lagoon with toy trains and toy autos tooling through it. Just past the lagoon rises a hillside of very special character. From a distance, it is a fascinating mix of housing shapes in counterpoint with eroded landforms and flourishing landscape. Torrey pines are so heavy there that public money went in and snatched a large segment from the market, calling it Torrey Pines Reserve Extension.

Environmental sanity would call for the extension to connect with the lagoon and thus be tied directly to the park proper. It wasn't to be. Tight ranks of houses now separate the park extension from the lagoon, thanks to the superior power of big builders like the Pardee Co.

In the park itself, not far from the lodge, is a single house, in a sheltered dell, sheltered from the ocean winds. Visitors to the park often miss the house altogether, which, of course, is part of the design. It was built by Guy Fleming, with his own hands and with some assistance from artist wife Peggy. They were

gentle people, and must have lived there in most harmonious bliss, as though waiting for a visit from the Carpenter.

Fleming was into plant life in depth, so Ellen Scripps awarded him a lifetime super-curatorship at Torrey Pines. That's why he was able to build the house. He went on to become a state superintendent of parks, building a reputation for caring.

Clearly, the house was designed to be of the same family appearance as the much larger Torrey Pines Lodge. However, its adobe-look is only simulated. Basically it is a stucco-covered wood-frame house, and chances are there will be demands to tear it down—or completely re-make it to be fire-safe. Currently it is not lived in by a caretaker but is rented out to young people of the caring kind.

The lodge itself is sufficiently fireproof. Walls are 16 inches thick, of dried mud. The ceiling structures are wood lath and plaster, high enough to be out of reach of your occasional vicious vandals. Windows are small-paned and not easily breached by punks. Fire hazard cannot be used as an excuse to tear down the lodge.

There has been talk of tearing it down, however, because it is not very comfortable in its present use as a park office. The main room—20 by 40 feet—is a splendid space, with only a fireplace for heat. Other rooms are heatless. Except in summer, the coastal dampness settles in to mix with low temperatures and set up an ideal environment for pneumonia.

On most days, even the casual visitor finds the lodge repellent in atmosphere. Displays have been set up in the main room, but they are a jumble of authentic artifacts and downright frauds, ill-displayed. The walls have been painted a “practical” semi-gloss white, a most hideous material when applied to irregular surfaces, such as the “Spanish-textured” plaster of these interiors.

The thick adobe is covered everywhere, inside and out, with plaster or stucco so it has shown little disposition to crumble despite the heaviest rains. All wall tops wear a permanent umbrella of steel-reinforced concrete, which has a great deal to do with the intact survival of the solid lodge. Some roof leakage, some foundation leakage and some bug damage are threats that should be taken care of.

Design of the lodge came out of the firm of Richard Requa and Herbert Jackson. San Diego's chief collector of architectural history, Sam Hamill, was for some years a partner of Jackson and he credits the latter as designer in this case though—as is so often the case—drawings give no indication on this point.

Being imitative of the pueblos of the Southwest desert, where large windows would have been a mistake even if they were possible to build, the Torrey Pines Lodge decidedly is misplaced in its setting of super-views. Through the tiny windows one gets only tantalizing glimpses. If ever there was a setting for a glass structure, this is it.

So the lodge should be torn down and replaced by a superb piece of modern design. This shouldn't happen, though, for another 50 years or so, at which time “superb modern” will be a sure thing (won't it?).

One thing that might happen now to good effect is to revive the restaurant—with style. The new one could be much like the immensely popular Casa de Pico in Old Town, mostly outdoors. The parking space in front of the lodge could be converted to a dining plaza, with tables, umbrellas, heaters, a glass fence—and especially at Christmas time, garlands of tiny lights in the Torrey pines.

And how do people get there, if there's no parking? That's easy. For the next 50 years, the neighboring UCSD campus will have many unused acres which could be borrowed for parking. Suitable jitneys would run patrons to and from the restaurant, or just to and from the park. Access to the park should otherwise be forbidden to cars.

The state Department of Parks people like to keep the total traffic down to 400 at any one time to protect the environment; so they would undoubtedly be less than thrilled by a restaurant. They don't even call the place a park. The official title is Torrey Pines State Reserve.

It's an uplifting place for walking and jogging and sitting "beneath ample shade." The Carpenter would approve.

December 31, 1978, San Diego Union, F-1. "Charm so infectious," props hold up park buildings, by James Britton, II.

A late report is that the House of Charm (on the Prado in Balboa Park) may fall down "like a house of cards" because of decayed timbers. House of Charm? Any relation to civilization?

Civilization is based on the wisdom of the species, and we all know how sound that is. The House of Charm was a false-face sham from the beginning. That was all right for the exposition of 1915 when this was one of the big display barns. Since then the "temporary" structure, and others like it, have been kept propped up and in use because charm is so infectious.

The Old Globe Theater knows about charm. The production of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in 1978 was charming in the park, whereas his "King Henry V" was a trial, like civilization. Both plays were mounted in the "temporary" outdoor theater which the Globesters are trying now to keep in place for future seasons though it was announced at first for just one year.

The outdoor theater occupies a canyon that had its own charm before there was any building. After the soldiers of Henry retired, there remained a war, a tug-of-war, at least, between two schools of charm—the one wanting the theater, the other wanting a "natural" canyon.

Globemaster Craig Noel dreams of expanding his famous enterprise into a performing arts center with at least three theaters. Having found a new dimension of success with the outdoor stage, his board of directors abandoned the idea of replacing it with an indoor theater on the same site. Furthermore, Noel and company have been forced to question whether it makes sense to rebuild the burned-out "original" imitation Old Globe—which certainly would have to be much changed to meet present requirements.

Nonetheless, funds are being sought for the latter project and an architect, Eugene Weston, is wrestling plan. Meanwhile, Craig the juggler has sent another architect, Robert Mosher, to drawing plans for a theater (of the proscenium type) to be slipped into the nearby House of Charm.

Of course, the House of Charm would have to be completely rebuilt. That fits right in with the intentions of the Committee of 100, a citizenry lobby, which wants the charm part—the facades—rendered into long-lasting concrete wherever they still exist along the Prado. The committee also wants some facades rebuilt that have disappeared, and is forever pursuing the big dollars needed. The group appears ready to back the Old Globe expansion in Charm.

With the Committee of 100 and the Old Globe both raising funds, Craig Noel's latest ploy may play. Thereafter, the logical step will be for the Globemaster to revive his old plan of chasing the Museum of Man out of the California Building and converting that haunted house to still another theater. It could be a far better use of the handsome permanent structure, and would be in keeping with the expressed hope of its architect, Bertram Goodhue, who in 1915 envisioned this as an auditorium.

Taken together with the neighboring Cassius Carter Centre Stage and the outdoor Shakespeare staging these developments could give San Diego a performing arts center at least as attractive as the original imitation Old Globe ever was. One shouldn't underestimate the power of architecture in this context.

The atmosphere, the ambiance—the charm—of the Old Globe probably had more to do with its reputation as a place of distinctive entertainment than the prevailing standards of the productions, though

these be held in fond memory. The stagecraft of the Old Globe, indoors and out, is of a superior order, and is a valuable form of architecture itself.

On this point it is useful to quote the view of Professor David Gebhard (UC Santa Barbara) that all architecture aims to fulfill the function of stage sets. Die-hard modernists will bridle at that, especially when he cites as recent examples the J. Paul Getty Museum (“a first century Roman villa”) in Malibu and, as he names it, “Split-Pea Anderson’s Restaurant” on I-5 north of Santa Barbara.

The latter is a simulated Danish windmill. Gebhard finds it significant that the windmill actually works, producing electricity. The lesson for the Globesters is not to build a dozen windmills or any other variety of Danish pastry in the park, nor, even to rebuild the original imitation Old Globe. Rather it is to stretch their artistic sensibilities and come up with a new architectural milieu there on the Prado, incorporating the leftover charm and encouraging their architects to add true delights of design instead of tired professional clichés. The Globe veterans, and particularly Craig Noel, should be an excellent client for architecture because of their easy familiarity with design challenges.

Architects these days are trying every variety of design caper to overcome the curse of sameness rising out of modern technology. The thing to watch for in Balboa Park is that every new construction there should have quality not easily found elsewhere.

The old 1915 baroquetry of the Prado can’t be found anywhere else in quite the same mix, so it remains one of San Diego’s few architectural distinctions. As this stuff of dreams is transformed into tough concrete, one would expect a client like the Old Globe to maintain a worthy standard in the new interiors.

More than that one would expect the New Old Globe to combine the spaces of the House of Charm and the California Building to provide classrooms, studios, workshops—all the appurtenances of a globe-worthy performing arts center where music, dance and motion pictures, as well as stage plays are offered under quality control.

Unless this is the ultimate objective, unless the California Building is included in the complex, the placing of a theater in the House of Charm will amount to no more than opportunistic grabbiness by the Globesters.

Making the most of the New Globe will only happen if big private money attaches to the idea. Government can’t supply the major funds. Our city government probably cannot even endorse such a big idea—because of the conflicting claims of Downtown. Yet there is no reason on earth why San Diego should not consciously aim to take the main action away from New York in all the arts. What place is better qualified to do so?

Chasing the Museum of Man out of its old haunts will take some doing. The Museum is run by Victor Frankenstein’s famous monster, the one made familiar for all time by the late Boris Karloff’s movie rendition. When last seen in Mary Shelley’s account, the monster had vanished in the polar ice fields. But, like so many other senior citizens, he finally settled in San Diego and proudly assumed the name of his flattering filmic impersonator, Boris Karloff II.

As spiritual leader of the Museum of Man, Karloff II attracts talented people to work there in the dank, dark, dungeony passages. What’s Karloff up to? Why, he’s cloning about. He’s trying to make a whole tribe of monsters like himself, using the Museum’s vast collection of bones. Knowing the public’s fascination with lugubrious make-believe, he lets people into his museum on a paying basis. Monsters need cash too.

As the misanthropic Karloff II operates it, the place comes on as a Museum of Anti-Man, and is tolerated by a time that also welcomes anti-Art. He has begun to see the light, however, and has proposed that a huge glass blister be built attached to one side of the California Building as a space for expanded exhibits.

Architecturally, the blister is a monstrous idea because the one aspect of the California Building that ought not to be changed is its carefully composed exterior. The interior does need artful alteration, for its chief feature now is a horror-movie echo due to the configuration of the dome.

Where's the Museum of Man to go then?

Karloff and company should pick up their bones and march one mile south to the Palisades area of the park, where they could become good neighbors of the new Aero-Space Museum. The area has a number of large, disposable structures which could be replaced when funds allow. Meanwhile, one or more of the barns could be halfway houses where the minions of Karloff II could set about evolving from ingrown to outgoing in their policy.

They should be inspired especially to develop outdoor exhibits. Light and air will do wonders for the monsters.

The grand aim should be to make the Palisades a permanent exposition on a non-commercial but still paying basis—a demonstration of the best efforts of civilization, with our reformed Museum of Man reaching out to connect the millions to their heritage.

1979—**POLK'S SAN DIEGO DIRECTORY:** Jas. (author), h. 1154 12th Ave.

January 7, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Barrio Logan.

January 14, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Architecture answers public's quest for books.

January 21, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1. Likes Old Globe in park; ruins, if cultural, can't hurt, by James Britton, II.

The ruins of the Old Globe Theater in Balboa Park, reflected in a pool of rainwater at right, are “a magnificent piece of sculpture,” says Britton, and ought to be left standing as a gift from the gods.

(Staff photo by Ian Dryden not shown in this collection)

Richard Amero is one of Balboa Park's most ardent lovers. The amorous Amero is writing a book on the park, and is forever writing deeply-felt love letters such as the one printed inside on page 4.

The last half of his last sentence is the key to his ingrained feeling: “Do not destroy natural beauty and do not deprive the public of their rightful commons.”

As to “natural beauty,” its worth remembering that the whole of Balboa Park was naturally something of a desert, and that most of the luxuriant plant life was set going by human midwifery.

As to “commons,” its worth reflecting that Balboa Park is the actual center of a great metropolis, much more so than Downtown. Everyone wants to go to the park. Not everyone wants to go Downtown any more.

A great metropolis needs great cultural architecture, and this had best be in the center. Because San Diego citizens as a whole own the park (the Navy notwithstanding) they have territorial freedom to produce, through their leaders, the finest cultural attraction anywhere. In fact they got an impressive start at doing so in 1915, when the aesthetically best of all world expositions was created, as though of sugar and space, in Balboa Park.

Amero favors a limited amount of cultural architecture in the park, while I believe the park can stand much more, provided it has quality. As to the Battered Old Globe (theater), Amero thinks it shouldn't use more space, indeed it shouldn't be in the park at all. I disagree, as recited here December 31.

As noted then, the Globesters could expand wonderfully in the House of Charm, the California Building and other nearby spaces that Amero identifies as the California Quadrangle.

The Globesters would take a giant step for mankind, and for themselves by capitalizing on the much more significant mystique of the 1915 exposition architecture.

In any case, the shell of a theater's architecture is one kind of mystique and what goes on the stage is another. After all, the new outdoor festival theater delivers Shakespeare at least as well as the faulty Old Globe ever did—probably better, except for the intruding airplanes (which ought to be banished).

The fire that destroyed the fondly-remembered imitative Old Globe Theater left standing a huge reinforced concrete ruin which turns out to be a magnificent piece of sculpture. It ought to be kept in the park as a gift from the gods, dramatically eloquent in its towering muteness. Besides, it would be costly to remove, so strong is it.

Famously in history, ruins have been mightily impressive in the landscape, and rich men often have had ruins deliberately constructed at great expense. This one is absolutely authentic—and more, honoring of the authentic author, whose works are the chief stock in trade here, than any Elizabethan cuteness.

The fine architect Eugene Weston, who won the contract to design a replacement for the burned-out Old Globe, produced an ingenious plan which would be an improvement in comfort for both patrons and performers. It does, however, attempt to recapture the cutesy "image" that meant so much to a couple of generations of Globegoers.

My reading of the plan is that cutesy probably won't work on the enlarged scale of the replacement. Overall, the plan takes perhaps twice as much ground space, and the front protrudes to shrink the approach environment from a feeling of park to a feeling of manicured patio. Furthermore, in their eagerness to woo customers, the Globesters hope to take over a stretch of park all the way to the street (El Prado) and install booths in this space for refreshments and gifts. The overall result might be a bit crowded and hucksterish, not in keeping with the mood of El Prado, which, whatever its faults, is not commercial in appearance.

El Prado (for those who don't remember) once was lined with arcades all the way from the California Building to, and beyond, Park Boulevard. Eventually these arcades should be replaced in a conscious effort to rediscover the ensemble of the 1915 expo, which was much more impressive than the present architectural miscellany.

With the arcades functioning as a screen, the various gardens along El Prado will be even more intriguing. Another eventual objective should be to enlarge the Art Museum's Sculpture Garden so that it becomes the Garden of the Globe.

It would be interesting to see what the resourceful architect Gene Weston would do with the challenge of providing a theater in the California Building, thus making the present replacement plan unnecessary. It would take some doing, but that is what architects are for.

In any case, the fund drive for the Old Globe will be getting into high gear shortly, and it ought to be supported with the understanding that the money will be used for the best possible architectural resolution of the remarkable company's needs. If that proves to be the Weston replacement plan, so be it.

Even if the Globesters reject the California Building, its present occupancy by the Museum of Man is wrong, as Amero makes fragrantly clear. The Museum of Man, however, is one of San Diego's most valuable institutions and will get extended attention in this space at any early date.

The tortured discussion by us non-professional architecture watchers may give some idea how difficult it is for professionals in architecture to come up with superb results such as Balboa Park deserves.

The biggest of all design problems in the park is traffic and parking. Next week this column will propose a specific parking pattern intended to upgrade both Balboa Park and downtown. Readers who have followed these weekly word works can guess what's coming. I'm sure Richard Amero can.

January 21, 1979, San Diego Union, F-4. Museum of Art? . . . What to do with the California Quadrangle, by Richard W. Amero

In 1960 the Bartholomew master planners for Balboa Park quoted architect Bertram Goodhue as saying the California Building was designed to be "an auditorium of some sort, that is for either theatrical, musical or lyceum purposes." As Goodhue's statement was given without documentation, doubt exists as to its authenticity.

Letters written by Goodhue and his assistant Carleton M. Winslow, Sr., to the San Diego Board of Park Commissioners stressed the inadequacy of the California Quadrangle for the needs of the San Diego Museum Association (today the Museum of Man). Goodhue and Winslow wanted the Indian Arts Building (today the House of Charm) and the Science of Man Building (since demolished) replaced by low buildings minus the staff ornamentation so loved by today's Committee of 100. These buildings would then accommodate the San Diego Museum Association.

The California or theme building of the Quadrangle was paid for by the State of California. Until 1926 the state contributed to its maintenance. The Bartholomew planners, notwithstanding, the building was designed to be a State of California information center and exhibit space (museum?) The ornament on the façade, windows, domes and tower was symbolic of the building's role.

The 1915-1916 replicas of Maya stelae and monuments were exhibited in the rotunda for the Panama-California Exposition. These were placed widely apart and seemed as appropriate as anything could be for the space except a Christian altar! In 1916 the French government used the building to display French perfumes and art objects. The Museum of Man did not finally take over the building until 1925.

The gallery to the south of the California Building (now housing the Wonder of Life exhibit) was originally an art gallery (the forerunner of the San Diego Museum of Art). It was built at the expense of the City of San Diego.

For people who love purposely defined volumes and spaces, the occupancy of the California Quadrangle by the Museum of Man is an aesthetic desecration. The buildings suffer from vandalism in the same way the Cathedral of Notre Dame would suffer if it were used as a department store. The Wonder of Life exhibit is particularly heinous, for it conceals the quoin vaulting of the ceiling and the sculptural portal and balcony of the west wall.

From the practical viewpoint, the Museum of Man bursts at the seams. Exhibits are arranged in an uncertain sequence. People coming and going on stairs and passageways create traffic jams, frayed nerves and body odors.

The Bartholomew planners wanted the Museum of Man to move into the Electric Building and a theater arts complex to move into the California Building. A Youth Cultural Center was to be added as an annex to the south side of the Quadrangle.

The planners were trying to regroup activities in the Palisades and El Prado areas. Their solution also disregarded aesthetic values and practical requirements. Since 1960, James Britton II has been captivated by the Bartholomew idea of a theater arts complex in the California Quadrangle, which would operate in conjunction with (or as part of) the Old Globe Theater. Nobody has ever tried to fit theaters into the Quadrangle buildings. Nor can one visualize a proscenium stage in the rotunda or elsewhere with a seating capacity of 420 (the seating capacity of the Old Globe before the March 1978 fire).

Since Britton enjoys imagining pots of gold at the end of rainbows, in the same spirit, I suggest the ideal solution for the California Quadrangle is to turn it over to the San Diego Museum of Art. The reuse of the building is primarily an artistic task which should be performed by people with aesthetic training and with sensitivity to Bertram Goodhue's fairy-tale visions. The exhibits, whether originals or copies, should conform to the Spanish-Mexican and early California character of the Quadrangle. The St. Francis Chapel, now closed, should once more be open to the public.

An enlarged Alcazar Garden should be planted on the site of the House of Charm with ample Spanish-Colonial arcades acting as a border and balance to the architectural massing along the Plaza de Panama. A similar arcade should be erected in front of the Timken Art Gallery. To avoid the inert and inhospitable arcades inside the Casa del Prado, I suggest the appointment of architects Kruger, Benson and Ziemer or Robert Ingle Hoyt of Santa Barbara or of Mexican architects prominent in Vice-Regal restoration, such as Jorge Medellin (Mexico City), Diaz Morales (Guadalajara), Manuel Gonzalez Galvan (Morelia), or Alberto Velasco Adalid (Puebla).

The Alcazar Gardens of Seville should be closely studied by a landscape architect who is willing to let period and stylistic harmony prevail over the expressionistic demands of his own ego.

As a second alternative for the site, I would invite Robert Mosher and Roy Drew to design a building in stylistic congruity with the west wing of the San Diego Museum of Art for the purpose of housing one of the present tenants—the San Diego Art Institute, the Hall of Champions, and the Model Railroad Club. The other occupants should relocate to Spanish Village or downtown San Diego.

My plans do not envision the Old Globe Theater getting bigger. Ideally, the Old Globe should move downtown or to Fiesta Island, where a Renaissance Fair could be held every summer. Land behind the California Building and in nearby areas, now restricted to archery use, should once more be turned into a public park. If the Old Globe's management believes they must grow or die, they should grow where they do not destroy natural beauty and do not deprive the public of their rightful commons.

Richard W. Amero, San Diego

January 28, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, F-7, A relief from downtown chaos; parking structures built into the sloping sides of Cabrillo Freeway, a parkway and a car(e)-free park, by James Britton, II.

A park ought to be a place where you can look in all directions and see not a single automobile. The upgrading of Balboa Park requires that they all be hidden.

That's easy. Put a roof over Cabrillo Freeway, and include parking decks under it.

Madness? It certainly seems mad—until you examine the proposition. The everlasting and increasing stream of cars there divides the park into two parks that are connected (so far as most people are concerned) by only one narrow bridge—Cabrillo Bridge—shared by cars and walkers too close for comfort. A walkable roof over the freeway would make Balboa one park again.

It will never happen for two reasons. 1) Everyone loves to drive through Cabrillo Freeway, even in heavy traffic, because the side-show of park landscaping is so gratifying, even the Chamber of Commerce plugs it as an asset. 2) Tooling under the magnificent Cabrillo Bridge is one of the experiences of which San Diegans never tire, and a roofed freeway would not show it.

Meeting the issue halfway, we construct instead a series of parking structures built into the sloping sides of Cabrillo Freeway. The sky would remain open above the roadbed, and artful landscaping along the sides would be just as comforting as before, serving to hide the parking. The grand stand of mature sycamores in the center strip could be maintained too, earning their keep because they drink fumes and administer oxygen to the troubled air. Cabrillo Bridge would remain the eyeful it is, as seen from the Freeway.

Delightful footbridges could be engineered to span the freeway from parking deck to parking deck, and the top decks would become pedestrian supplements to grassy spaces now available. No longer would the two-lane road atop Cabrillo Bridge have to entertain autos shaking their way in and out of the park heartland. These autos would be absorbed into the freeway led structures, and the people would be popped by the elevator onto the higher planes of the perfect park.

If traditional freeway engineers read this they will be apoplectic because their imagination tells them that off-ramps should be fewer, not more numerous, along Cabrillo Freeway. A few years back those engineers were all for widening Cabrillo Freeway but were stopped—as their battered elder, Jacob Dekema, will tell you—by citizen protest.

Disregarding all that, we may consider that the status of this particular freeway is so special that it should not be called freeway at all. Because it ends in the streets of Downtown it can properly be regarded as a major Downtown artery. With its new role as parking-feeder, plus its park-like character, Cabrillo Freeway deserves to be re-named Cabrillo Parkway, and thought of primarily as an elegant parking superstrip. As such it would call for reduced speed, and this in turn would divert many cars (and trucks) to faster alternate routes.

As a Downtown main artery, the many-layered, hidden park-parking of Cabrillo Parkway obviously should collect a high percentage of the cars that otherwise would clog the Downtown streets each day. Cabrillo Parkway would be so mightily engineered that it easily could reduce the parking dilemmas of both Downtown and Balboa Park. Why not? This is a mighty city, largest in California (except for Los Angeles, which is too incoherent to count as a city).

Having stashed all those cars in Cabrillo Parkway, we obviously need a people-mover to shuttle the warm bodies into Downtown. Does all this seem hopelessly beyond the capabilities of our leadership? Not at all. The mayor and City Council, a few years ago, accepted a Downtown Plan, which called for both people-movers and “parking reservoirs” (enormous, multi-deck structures). The latter were to be on the fringes of Downtown, though no one had the gall to slip them into Balboa Park.

Currently, the Downtown Plan is at the mercy of a business-minded group called the Centre City Development Corp. (CCDC), which is selling Downtown to the highest bidders, determined to get something done in a stagnant area. Incredibly, CCDC is, by its own admission, planning in such a manner as to increase traffic congestion.

As Downtown is shaping up under CCDC, there will be a series of pedestrian islands, each involving several blocks, each created by closing several streets, each calling for a great deal of parking hidden underground or in high-rise structures. So far so good. But getting from one island to another, either by car or on foot, is going to be a nightmare—and the street life, except for the islands, is likely to be of the caliber you can now study around Horton Plaza—raunchy.

CCDC planners hope the pressure of congestion will cause people-movers to emerge by popular demand in a working pattern. One possibility is to extend the “Tijuana Trolley” in a series of loops Downtown. For example, trolley lines might use the existing tracks on L Street and turn up Fifth Avenue to meet the line now committed to run on C Street and 12th Avenue. Another loop could swing into Cabrillo Parkway and out again.

A truly convenient system of people-movers would shuttle so many strap-hangers to and from parking reservoirs that much less parking, and much less auto traffic would riddle the Downtown. Indeed, if all the money about to be spent on parking structure inside Downtown were to be spent instead on peripheral reservoirs, we’d have a much sounder Downtown Plan, one worthy of a top city. Of course, you couldn’t get investors to make this leap as long as everyone, including me, demands parking 10 steps from his or her destination.

The cure depends on people-movers at least as soothing as airliners with at least as good control over nuisance-makers. From an urban design point of view, trolleys (with wires) are not the best answer,

though they're what we are about to get. As time goes on, perhaps they can be invested with distinctive style. For example, instead of wires to supply juice, electricity stored on board may become practical—after we've strung the city with wires!

Meanwhile, look for Downtown for the next 20 years to be more congested, more hectic—except for those money-making islands. Thus it will be all the more important to render Balboa Park car-free as a sublime relief from the neighboring chaos.

February 4, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1. A new character at relatively low cost; giant sculptures, concrete Maya screens installed throughout the Palisades could spur Museum of Man expansion, by James Britton, II.

Copies of Maya monuments dominate the Museum of Man displays at top left, yet thousands of bones and hundreds of statues are still in storage awaiting display. At bottom the Wonder of Life display is an ambitious exhibit under the vaulted gallery at left. At center a hidden fountain quotes Pindar.

(photos not given in this collection)

You have to believe that museums will have a place on Earth even after man (and yes women) has disappeared in favor of the superior Computer. Especially the Museum of Man.

The Museum of Man will be needed to remind the Computer of its quaint ancestors. Of course, the Computer won't need museum buildings or original artifacts. Retrieval systems will cough up total exhibits on command.

Until then, for 1,000 years or so, the San Diego Museum of Man will continue to protect valuable items that, day by day, try to become dust. The anthropological wonderwork in Balboa Park is housed now in an ill-fitting though magnificent complex that was created in 1915 by the town of San Diego bent on being noticed. Naturally the roofs leak now. Renovation is going on continuously.

In touring the museum's extensive quarters in the California Quadrangle (under the landmark tower) I came upon a magnificent fountain which has been as dry as a museum bone for years though the inscription reads (in Greek): "Water is the best of all things." These are the opening words of a poem by Pindar written several centuries B.C.

Pindar in that poem (Olympian Ode 1) also had a good word for the sun. With his pitches for sun and water, he comes on as the first public relations man for San Diego, the city that has traded so heavily on both elements. Yet the fountain is buried in a room in the Museum of Man that is now used for storage. The Museum has a heavy need for new space, even though the spaces it occupies must easily add up to 100,000 square feet.

All this floor space is chopped into rooms of many sizes on several levels. In our age of Petty Vandals and Hideous Hoods most of these spaces could not be opened to the public without an elaborate system of camera surveillance or other private measures to protect innocent museum goers and vulnerable exhibits.

Housekeeping is a tremendous burden. A visitor could conceivably expire there and get lost in the storage, only to turn up eventually as exhibit bones. The macabre tone is guaranteed by the pigeons that, in great numbers, home in on the museum's tower and die on the floor there.

The museum's management has made a conscientious effort to come up with expansion plans that would yield workable space for both exhibits and storage—these being of roughly equal importance for any museum.

In the '50s, architect Sam Hamill designed an addition to the Spanish-Renaissance manner to go where the garden is now—south of Alcazar Garden, in the '70s artist Charles Faust designed a glassy addition to explode out of the California Building's west wall.

Both plans proved beyond reach financially, for the museum has never had the membership it deserves, considering the scope of its collections and its intentions. Yet membership undoubtedly would zoom if a new shake of architecture allowed the museum's fine staff members to express themselves as they crave to do.

Just what is the scope?

In the museum's own words: "To collect and preserve the material, culture, language, folklore, and physical remains of the aboriginal Western American peoples . . ." in a word, Indians (as Columbus was the first to call them, thinking he had reached Asia). John Wayne, for example, is not considered Western American and is not exhibited here, box office or not.

More exciting than Wayne, actually, is the Mayan Indian who provided the Museum of Man with its most imposing exhibit, a set of jumbo monuments, some as tall as houses. The Mayan stelae and super-boulders are one very good reason the Museum has not moved out of the crippling quarters. They are exceedingly hard to move.

Not that they are as heavy as they look. They are merely hollow castings, nearly as thin as eggshells and as easily smashed if knocked about. They were made laboriously from the real things rescued from the Guatemala jungle prior to 1915, and have been here ever since that year.

Their value is the greater today because Guatemala no longer allows castings to be made from its touristy treasures. The proper future of these monument shells is that they be recast in concrete and installed outdoors as the beginning of a new deal for the Museum of Man.

In the '40s, Gordon Petit and other board members dreamed of moving the Museum of Man to the Ford Building, the vast circular display facility lately reborn as the Aero-Space Museum, one-half mile south of the California Quadrangle in an area called the Palisades.

"The central patio of the Ford Building would have been ideal for the Mayan monuments," reminisced Petit, who is still a leading member of the Museum's board. He is also a grandson-in-law of George Marston, and he reveres the memory of that leader.

Not being able to swing the Ford, the museum people considered the Federal Building (also on the Palisades and now used as a gym). It is a large square space that could be partitioned at will by the museum. The reflective Gordon Petit says he is of two minds about all of the options of moving, of expanding. The fascination of the old home weighs against the adventure of homesteading anew.

The Federal Building seems to be beckoning the Museum of Man because it wears on its front a set of sculptured decorations modeled after the Mayan. If the gymnasium activity were provided with another place (Morley Field's the place) this sound structure still could be awarded to the museum. And there are other buildings nearby of varying quality, which could be either removed altogether or converted for museum use—for the Museum of Man or for other museum associations whose displays can be logically related to the story of humankind from the early fumbling on this planet to today's fumbling in the sky.

Because the mysterious Maya dealt with both earth and universe in astonishing ways, and because their architecture is among the most impressive ever, their genius should be asked to preside over the entire Palisades and give the area a character at least as interesting as the Spanish-Colonial area of the park. The Maya can't do this personally because their men of genius are long dead, but modern architects, sculptors and painters could carry on for them. How tie it altogether?

An extensive assemblage of giant sculptured concrete screens could be installed throughout the Palisades in such a way to hide the confusion of buildings left over from a hasty 1935 exposition there. Even the dumb exterior of the Aero-Space Museum could be masked by screens. (Masks are very Mayan.)

Combined with gardens, the Mayan “screenario” would give an experience to be had nowhere else, not even in Maya country. The profusion of screens would be an open book of many pages to be read on many visits, just as is the heavily sculptured architecture of the many Maya sites in Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras.

Some of the screens might be copies of choice Mayan material, and labeled as such. Others could be the inventions of our contemporary artists. Charles Faust, for example, has done numerous sculpture panels around San Diego, using the sand-casting technique. This quick method could be the basis of a very extensive development of the Palisades at relatively little cost.

When the time and money come to replace buildings behind the screens, reflective glass could come into play to multiply the imagery of the screens. I’m sure the Maya magicians would have been dazzled by reflective glass.

This column is another free exercise in large-scale, mind-stretching prompted by the conviction that San Diego can become the country’s most important city.

Pindar—San Diego’s potent PR prompter—surely would approve of the deliberate big reach. After all many of his odes were in celebration of winners in the Olympics. He believes in going first class.

February 11, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Trolley for downtown, Hillcrest, Balboa Park.

February 18, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Dale and Doug St. Dennis home in Coronado.

February 25, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Holding a mirror up to downtown reveals all the angles.

March 4, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Condominiums for downtown San Diego.

March 11, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, San Diego Historical Society takes over Title Insurance photo collection.

March 18, 1979, San Diego Union, F-6, “Transformation in Modern Architecture” exhibition at Museum of Modern Art, New York City.

March 25, 1979, San Diego Union, F-2, North City West; lofty plans may be in for a rough landing.

April 1, 1979, City of **San Diego**, Progress Guide and **General Plan**, adopted.

April 1, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Speaking of Irving Gill—then and now.

April 8, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Getty Museum in Malibu.

April 15, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Navy’s 400-page book on building Hospital in Balboa Park . . . “Draft Environmental Impact Statement.”

April 22, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, “Second Airport” at Lindbergh.

April 29, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Frank Lloyd Wright’s “Falling Water.”

May 6, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Marie-Christine Forester’s series of thirteen hour length films for public broadcasting.

May 13, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Vermont Street Bridge, alternative replacement, homes above.

May 20, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, What to do with military bases and land holdings after the military is through with them.

May 27, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, American Institute of Architects' Kansas City convention to focus on creativity.

June 6, 1979, San Diego Union, A-1, Roof of Kemper Arena in Kansas City falls in during storm.

June 10, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Boston, Massachusetts.

June 17, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, National Gallery of Art's new East Building is a triumph.

July 1, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Warren Nielsen studies sites for Naval Hospital.

July 8, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Britton touts use of Electric Building for San Diego Museum of Art.

July 15, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Bradshaw & Bundy Growth Management Report: denser population, etc.

July 22, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Controversial Gund Hall, Harvard.

August 5, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, CCDC vs. the "Columbia Squares" . . . downtown redevelopment is now on.

August 12, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Chicago's Marina City offers model for San Diego.

August 19, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Competition proposed for designing of police substations (Proposition B).

August 26, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, James Hubbell.

September 2, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Marston and Revelle effort to relocate Naval Hospital to Helix Heights.

September 9, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Mission Valley—saving the slopes from condos and skyscrapers.

September 16, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Should growth be guided by ballot or government planning?

September 23, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Question and answer with Pete Wilson who sees city on right track.

September 27, 1979, San Diego Union, D-1, New décor for Civic Theater to follow tradition of opera houses.

September 30, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Neglect of copper decorations at Civic Theater painful for artist Jackson Woolley.

October 7, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Coronado sailor, Dunham Reilly, guards his town.

October 14, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, American Institute of Architects orchid and onion awards.

November 1, 1979, San Diego Union, E-1, Harding House, Del Mar, California.

November 4, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Marilyn Hagberg and Charles Moore show at Orr's Gallery.

November 18, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, La Jolla outgrows village image to rival downtown.

November 25, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, San Francisco architecture chaped for people.

December 9, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Navy building designs reflect energy efficiency.

December 23, 1979, San Diego Union, F-1, Wayne Tyson seeds area with native plants.

January 6, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, La Jolla—no longer a village.

January 20, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Escondido lacks design.

February 3, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Oceanside looks west.

February 17, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, F-8, F-9, The Vinegar and the Honey: The Arch of Mr. Wright's Mind; San Diegans who studied with Wright.

Caption: Two generations of architects applied the lessons of Frank Lloyd Wright in these San Diego houses. Generation 1: Loch Crane, whose house is at left, and Bruce Richards, who designed the two houses below, actually studied with Wright. 2. Kendrick Kellog, who designed the house at lower left, once worked for Richards, as did John Reed, who helped design the triangulated house below.

The sorcerer's apprentices called him "Mr. Wright. Sometimes they borrowed his stepdaughter's endearment of "Daddy Wright," but never to his face. The public learned to intone the magic of three syllables: "Frank Lloyd Wright."

Edgar Tafel was one of the more resourceful of the apprentices. He lived with the sorcerer for nine years and kept a camera cracking. When it came to do a book on the experience ("Apprentice to Genius," McGraw Hill, 1979, \$19.95), the pages could be populated with his lively snapshots as well as a strategic section of photos by others.

The book is an event, a work of art in itself—if you disregard the ugly jacket. Lettering on the title page and the cheaper heads is an echo of the style Wright designed into his own books, but the game plan is Tafel's own. The writing develops momentum worthy of a novel, with easy humor and human interest sweeping the reader into the craggy landscapes of the creative mind. Tafel admits to "being an architect, not a writer," and gives due credit to editor Esther Gelatt and book designer Jan White.

It helps to have a great subject, and Wright was just that. Others have done absorbing books about him, though none could equal the extraordinary charisma of his own writings. He wrote not history but mythery.

Wright's book version of his Princeton lectures and his "Autobiography" took such a grip on 19-year old Tafel that he signed up in 1932 for "The Taliesin Fellowship Spring Creek Wisconsin" (Wright brooked no commas.) which the underemployed architect was just starting—at a time when he had no money. Wright was under the influence of his new wife who, in turn, was under the influence of an exotic guru, Georgi Gurdjieff.

It was a drastic change of venue for a child of New York's garment district, but Edgar was prepared with well-developed interest in art and music. He also had been introduced by his parents to practical crafts, including those needed on a farm.

Taliesin was a farm which provided much of the sustenance for the fellows (also fellowettes), but only after they had done their share of the work. The master was forever building on the premises, too, so budding architects could learn the hard way.

Of course, there was a drafting room. And there was a telephone within earshot of the boards. Overhearing Wright's resonant voice gave Edgar some of his telling anecdotes.

When a call came in asking if the leading German architect Walter Gropius could be brought to Taliesin to meet the resident genius, Wright said into the receiver, "I have no desire to meet or entertain Herr Gropius. What he stands for and what I stand for are poles apart. Our ideas could never merge. In a sense, we're professional enemies—but he's an outside enemy. At least I'm staying in my own country."

Wright was wrong on at least two counts, not counting rudeness. Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus, was as interested as Wright in getting people to work together. And Wright's own career, much earlier, had received a tremendous boost when his architecture was published in Germany.

Later, Gropius was taken by academic friends to see a Wright house, hardly expecting that Wright would come rolling up in his Cherokee red car driven by Edgar. Upon being introduced, the gentle Gropius said, "Mr. Wright, it's a pleasure to meet you. I have always admired your work." Still in the car, Wright made a wry remark about academics and then ordered, "Well we have to get on, Edgar."

Something similar happened when an effort was made to introduce a third giant of architecture, the Swiss-French Le Corbusier. "I don't want to shake his hand," said the master of Taliesin, as he planted aversion to Le Corbusier in his apprentices. Tafel was to tell me just last week: "Le Corbusier never paid attention to people, climate, materials. What he did to the architecture of this country and to the world is just abominable."

Certainly, Wright could not be accused of picking between Germans and French, as such. However—and very strangely—he did give his friendship to another giant German, Mies van der Rohe—who had even less in common with Wright than the other two.

The Tafel book explains: "The greatest difference between Mies and Mr. Wright, we felt, was that while Mies dedicated his entire life to the search for one style, refining and purifying, Mr. Wright kept evolving, growing and developing new styles. He was never locked into one design establishment. By the time architectural copyists had caught on to an idea of Mr. Wright's, he was already on to something new. His favorite phrase was, 'What we did yesterday, we won't do today.' Mies' credo was just the opposite. 'You don't start a mew style each Monday.'"

The vinegar of genius gets plenty of attention from Tafel and the honey also. The only excuse for his writing or your reading is that he can give a superior evaluation of various Wright buildings. As to the honey, you can almost taste the front door on which "the ornament is so spontaneous and free-flowing that the carver's chisel would roam around the wood."

Wright's technical innovations are sampled: the well-hung toilet and the garage floor that is a turntable so the proud householder never has to back away. The grandest schemes, built and unbuilt, are discussed, not uncritically. The Imperial Hotel in Tokyo and the Johnson Wax headquarters in Wisconsin get the most detailed attention. Numerous houses are brought home

to the reader, who comes upon them like sudden wonders of sunshine amidst the blusters and squalls of the Taliesin tale told by Tafel.

A delight of the book is that frequently photos are ganged so as to immerse the reader in the scene. In one touching case a Wright house is shown with a lovely girl in the front yard giving a nice sense of scale. Alongside this photo is another print of the same, as retouched personally by Wright, with the girl eliminated.

Among Tafel's fellow apprentice fellows was Sim Bruce Richards, who was to base his architectural practice in San Diego. Tafel told me that Richards showed up one day with a companion and offered to create fabrics for Wright in exchange for a fellowship. Though Wright depended on tuition income, he liked Bruce's designs and took him in—on—over—whatever.

Richards ever since has been as Wright as right can be, echoing his master in his flair for brilliant conversation—complete with monumental prejudices laughingly administered. He is very popular locally for his houses which are as appropriate to our area as any you will find.

When Bruce Richards got wind of Edgar Tafel's cultivated reputation as a lecturer on "Mr. Wright," he asked the San Diego Museum of Art to book the half-worshipful, half-irreverent act which has drawn good audiences around the world. "Edgar the Tafel," as Wright called him, will appear with his merry-go-round of color slides, at the Museum's Copley Auditorium March 9 at 7:30.

Almost a quarter century ago Wright himself lectured, nay scolded, at Balboa Park's House of Hospitality, a stone's throw from where Tafel will talk. If Wright didn't quite get around to throwing stones, he certainly upset complacencies of the day, so that at least one dignitary and wife stalked out fuming. Tafel, from the evidence of his book, seems to have been a worthy apprentice in stirmanship. His lecture should be both a corker and an uncorker—letting the genius out of the bottle.

February 11, 1980, San Diego Union, D-1, D-3. Poetic touch in murals by Belle Baranceanu

Belle Baranceanu's life drawings are as good as you'll see anywhere, wrote Ethel Greene, editor of the San Diego Artist's Guild bulletin. But these life drawings will not be seen in the exhibition of Belle's work opening Wednesday at the County Administration Center. The Public Arts Advisory Council decided the County couldn't show the life drawings because a few voters afraid of life might scream. The term "life drawings" usually means studies of the unclothed figure which—somehow—artists usually consider more vital than draperies.

Belle's vigorous drawing style will be seen, however, in the preliminary sketches for her WPA murals. Diminutive though she may be, she produced some of the most sweeping murals ever done in San Diego, mostly under WPA auspices in the 1930s.

(For young readers the WPA should be identified as Works Progress Administration, one of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's devices the millions for whom the private sector had no jobs.)

Artists all over America produced some 10,000 works including expansive murals and massive sculpture. Musicians performed 4,000 or so times a month and actors strutted their stuff regardless of box office. Writers did regional guidebooks.

Some of the murals around the country were abstract. That was confusing enough to FDR's enemies, but the big scream of the time was that the program was full of Communists. In this connection, one should read the vivid memoir of Edward Laning (in the New Deal Art Projects, published by the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972).

Laning painted the enormous murals in the New York Public Library, where he left no Marx on the wall, though, as he reports, he was fully immersed in leftist circles. After all the WPA paid the artists a (bare) living wage. The capitalist establishment provided the walls, paid for the artists' materials—and accepted or rejected the literary content of the murals. WPA bureaucrats also swarmed around the projects to make sure the artists neither goofed off nor toed the party line.

True, Rockwell Kent slipped into one of his murals a message urging Puerto Rican revolt, but he wrote it in Icelandic so no one would have known except that he called a press conference. All hell broke loose when he broke the Icelandic.

No overthrows were built into Belle Baranceanu's murals. If the kids who used to sit around and squirm in the Roosevelt Junior High School auditorium thought they saw a Nazi salute in one of Belle's imposing murals there, it was entirely unintentional on her part. The murals depicted the founding of California. In one 10 by 30-ft. panel padres and soldiers exchange salutes. In another, Indians and padres worked hand in hand. No oppression of the downtrodden. No turmoil. No sweat. No tears.

The Board of Education was the client in this case. The board was bored by California history at that point. They wanted something called, "The Four Cornerstones of American Democracy." Belle's own enthusiasm for the romance of California, then new to her, prevailed when she presented attractive sketches.

The Roosevelt murals, being on canvas, were rolled up and stored when the auditorium was destroyed. If they survive storage, they may be displayed once again when the Historical Society finishes its new headquarters in the Electric Building.

The secret of Belle's best was in her strong rhythmic insistence. Her painting could be overlooked as essentially academic and even cluttered, except when she achieved visual music. Her whole family is intensely musical. Her sister, Teresa, is an advanced pianist in San Francisco. Her uncle, Zach Barony, one of the most radiant characters in San Diego, is an ecstatic consumer of great music. Belle's own favorite composer is Bach.

What's more, the family is actively spiritualistic, always seeking the occult behind the merely ocular, the oracular behind the aural. They represent a Romanian contribution to America, the family have come late last century with a pocket full of diamonds to scratch out a homestead in the Midwest. Belle was born in Chicago, trained at the Art Institute there, and in Minneapolis.

Spirituality in painting takes many forms, some of the more evident being in the works of Odilon Redon, Albert Pinkham Ryder and William Blake. Belle sometimes comes up with a touch of Blake—a touch of the poet—as in her early self-portrait which includes a spectral image of her fiancé who had died.

There's an air of Blake also about the figure of a blond, blue-eyed youth who reaches out to embrace all of civilization in the biggest of Belle's murals, the one that hangs or rather is glued to the wall, all 40 feet of it, in the dank and dimly lit foyer of the Balboa Park Club. By a perverse twist of canvas, this is the only one of Belle's murals still easily seen—and it is one she can't stand to look at anymore!

It really is a Sears catalogue of civilization components. There's the Sphinx, the Pyramids. All manner of transportation. A quill pen and two varieties of printing press. Microscope and telescope. Factories and skyscrapers. And, oh yes, a tractor.

To explain her rejection of the mural, Belle says parts of it were "just scrubbed in," there being a time limit on its completion for the exposition of 1935.

One can see that the rendering of forms is not always what the renderer might wish. For example, the faces of the pyramids read as round rather than flat. Still, it is a charming period piece, the period being one in which technology was assumed to assure the future. As of 1980, we can say that the very weaknesses of this mural appear to have foretold our time.

The Board of Education ordered a second mural from Belle, for the La Jolla High School auditorium. This time she worked in tempera directly on the plaster, filling the oddments of space alongside and above the proscenium.

“Seven Arts” was her theme, and she featured individuals especially meaningful to her, sculptor Donal Hord, architect John Matthias, actress Katherine Cornell, dancer Harold Kreutsberg, conductor Leopold Stokowski. Belle, herself, was in a rear view as she worked on a mural within the mural.

The little auditorium had a distinctive air, aided by the friendly mural. The best of music and drama were presented there for years. When the educators destroyed the hall, the mural was reduced to rubble, while memories wept.

Ethel Greene’s comment on Belle included this about the 1930s: “If you were an artist, and lucky, you got on the WPA. Ask any WPA artist. It he’s honest, he’ll tell you it was the Golden Age.”

Others have called it the Golden Age, including Edward Laning in his memoirs. In Greek mythology the Golden Age was a period of serenity that proved unstable because it was presided over by Father Time who had come up the hard way—eating his children so they wouldn’t dethrone him.

Apply that to American history if you can. My own conviction is that the New Deal Art Projects were not as important as a great deal that went before, and a great deal that came after in American art. But they surely were necessary for their time.

And they gave us the grand figure that Belle Baranceanu cut as she cast her magnificent shadow about San Diego.

March 16, 1980, San Diego Union, Britton’s Belief in Good Design in His Own Words (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983); F-1, F-10, Planning the ‘80s: San Diego’s Future—Fact and Fiction

The old comes down and new come up on the San Diego skyline. This will be the shape of the 1980s says architectural critic James Britton II, who fantasies on the years ahead. The Federal Metropolitan Correction Center rises behind old buildings being razed at Columbia and G streets. At right, iron framing outlines the new Electric Building in Balboa Park. Old arches provide comparison with the new construction. At left is a sketch of linear parks and public areas, indicated in green, that are planned for downtown and along the waterfront to create a “park-like atmosphere” for pedestrians.

How will San Diego shape up in the 1980s?

Considering the goofy prospects for the globe as a whole, the best thing for San Diego would be to stand apart and grow different. Small chance. Still, we can play with the idea.

The first rule of differentness is to abolish all airports within the metropolitan area. Presto, the future of Lindbergh Field is settled. The military, with its terrifying jets and stockpiles of bombs, will settle quite comfortably in the 200 square miles of Camp Pendleton. We will persuade the Defense Department that it is no defense to keep such agents of death in the middle of huge dwelling populations.

As for civilians who insist on risking their lives in commercial jets our greatly expanded train service will whisk them into the Los Angeles area, with a direct spur to LAX, where they may catch any (more of less) fixed-wing aircraft they hanker after. (Orange County soon will provide us a nearer airport, just as big.)

Our own air will be reserved for dirigibles, gliding quietly, giving everybody a Goodyear Blimp’s eye view of their Paradise, teaching them to be watchful of the beauties below—including, for unreconstructed sexists, the beauties of the beach.

Those trains from the north will quit trying to make it all the way to downtown San Diego. Their southern terminal will be Del Mar because it doesn't make sense to struggle through the slow mountains between Del Mar and downtown. In any event, a train trip from downtown San Diego to downtown Los Angeles will be swifter than it is now by airplane, with trains re-engineered to do the run from Del Mar in under an hour.

Del Mar will become the best-fed transportation hub since New York's Grand Central Terminal. Layer or layer of mega-structured density will rise around the Del Mar hub, though the fairgrounds and race track will be retained as treasured cultural necessities. The residential hills of Del Mar will remain as they are, a sort of mini-Bel Air, surrounded by huge urban agglomerates.

Roger Hedgecock will become mayor of an expanded San Diego metropolis in the '80s and will flip flop in traditional fashion, to call for facilities at the Del Mar (mass transit) supercenter rather than downtown. He will redesign North City West to absorb five times as many people as projected in the '70s, each of whom will be offered a bribe to stay off the Del Mar beach. He will ring La Jolla with a Chinese wall honeycombed with parking spaces and decree that only people rich enough to own a car can be allowed to live in La Jolla or go to school at UCSD.

Mayor Hedgecock will discover that the entire island of Manhattan (New York) could be duplicated on the land formerly occupied by the Miramar Naval Air Station, but he will not allow it. However, when he counts the voters who have moved here from Manhattan, he will offer to move in some of their favorite monuments—say Rockefeller Center (renames Trilateral Commission Center), Guggenheim Museum (renamed Wright's Castle), Empire State Building (complete with mooring mast), maybe even the Brooklyn Bridge, if it isn't too rusty.

Old Manhattan is due to collapse in the '80s because the infrastructure of pipes and wires (and subways and bridges) has been rotting faster than it could be repaired. Hedgecock's substitute for Manhattan (on the Miramar site) will be a marvel of sophisticated architectural design in which all pipes and wires will be readily accessible rather than buried in the earth. We will learn to live with displays of mechanical intestines such as are more so proudly [displayed] by the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Architects will have mastered the Intestinal Style, causing us to love their works because of the confidence they breed that life is, after all, renewable. Actually, most displays of intestines will be at lower levels of the urban structure. At a suitable height above, landscaping and open sky will flourish, and the architecture will rise as a compendium of everything good that has come from the drafting boards of the ages. Direct copies of old masterpieces will intermix with new designs daring to stand comparison.

Architects will divide, as always, into two warring camps, those who love the achievements of the past and those who think they can do better. Sometimes the war will take place within the individual psyche. Professional schizophrenia will gallop.

The coming togetherness of old and new is foreshadowed by two long-standing institutions in San Diego, the exposition complex of 1915 in Balboa Park and the Mission Valley Shopping Center of 1961, with its low-lying parking surmounted by pleasure palaces. To start off the '80s, Fashion Valley Shopping Center was scheduled to carry the layering idea further. The decade should see much more of this.

Richard George Wheeler, local boy who made good architecture (proof, he owns a yacht) pioneered the new wave of devotion to the past by constructing duplicates of two old facades that had crumbled—the Casa del Prado and the Electric Building, both in Balboa Park. Unfortunately, he dealt only with appearances and designed interiors that are uninspired.

Well underway as the decade began was a process, largely led by local architects, of reclaiming old buildings downtown, some of them having stood since the more confident '80s of the last century. Nothing innovative about this. The rehabbers were following prosperous examples set in such places as Old Town (San Diego), Main Street (Santa Monica) and countless similar rebirths around the country.

Immigrants from the shuddering East will have will have increasing influence here in the 1980s. One of them is Richard Erne Reed of La Jolla, who wrote a book on how to restore old buildings and ourselves (no less) in America's historic urban neighborhoods. Title is: "Return to the City" (Doubleday, 1979, \$8.95).

Reed's book shows people rehabilitating derelict properties (and themselves) in nasty, tough old Eastern cities. If they can go it, why can't we? Our problem is often trickier than their's because we have earthquake potential hanging over us. It will not be enough for us to prettify old structures. In order to meet modern anticipators of the shakes, we will have to put many of the oldies in corsets.

One local convert to Reed's creed is Lucille Mortimer, the one woman member of the Centre City Redevelopment Corp. (CCDC), the mayor's scout troop assigned to help downtown cross the streets and otherwise shape up for the future. Mortimer may teach the boys to practice humanity and humility.

Court delays will stall downtown redevelopment until Hedgecock comes to the rescue. As noted, he will move the convention action to Del Mar and will promote super-centers all over the map. Thus, downtown's future will be assured as a relatively quiet waterside village—quiet like Tijuana.

Downtown, indeed, will gradually become an extension of Tijuana, aided early in the decade by the "Tijuana Trolley." In due time, as Mayor Hedgecock revs up to run for president of the North American Alliance, he will propose that all of San Diego south of Mission Valley be given to Mexico for a supertankful of oil.

I may not have go just right the shape of San Diego in the '80s, so I should call attention to efforts more likely to have an influence. Under direction of Max Schmidt, CCDC has lately offered the "Central Area Park System," intended to lace downtown with parkways and to stud it with plazas. This system, so pretty on paper, cannot possibly be financed by public funds.

Here's a chance for the rich, especially those who made their money in this city, to donate tax-deductible funds to a foundation for the express purpose of parkway and plaza production.

The most important thing the '80s can offer San Diego in the cause of urban design is its first school of architecture, and this is a real possibility. One almost started some years ago at UCSD when Professor Harry Anthony moved here from Columbia University. He bought a house here; still lives here but commutes to the California State University at Pomona where he is a most popular teacher of architecture and urbanism.

Anthony reports that his Pomona department turns away five students for each one it has room to enroll. "I'd like to start a branch of the Cal Poly Pomona in downtown San Diego," he says. Meanwhile, the art department at San Diego State University is exploring the prospects for a school of architecture there. California politics and jealousies among schools will determine which project moves first.

Clearly, if both schools had the green light, Pomona would be able to act the quicker because it is already accredited in architecture, landscape architecture and planning, and has the momentum of teaching in the field. This issue for San Diego is this: How soon in the '80s are educators going to do enough to assure superior shaping of San Diego?

March 2, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, City needs tall trees; where have they gone?

March 16, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, San Diego's future—fact and fiction.

March 18, 1980, San Diego Union, D-1, William H. (Holly) Whyte shows short film on Today's Show concerning "vest-pocket" parks.

March 30, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, CCAIA's first "Monterey-Carmel Design Conference, March 27-30.

April 13, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Architecture and megastructures.

April 27, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Rhoda Lopez creates ceramic wall for First Unitarian Church on Front Street.

May 11, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, County Administration Center.

May 25, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, San Diego beach communities.

June 8, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Logan Heights—a challenge of integration and development.

June 22, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Push by American Institute of Architects to educate the public about architecture.

July 13, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Creating a “new” Oceanside waterfront.

July 27, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Post-modernism tilt at Aspen, Colorado.

August 10, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, F-6, F-8, Influence on Valley? Mission Arches Could Soften Stadium Image (contrasting architecture of San Diego Stadium and University of San Diego).

The current war of ideas in architecture—the moderns vs. the historicals—can be clearly illustrated by contrasting projects, the University of San Diego and the San Diego Stadium.

It appears that both were the products of the large architectural firm, the Hope Consulting Group—proving that architects are pulled every which way by the demands of clients.

Obviously the stadium had to be a study in handling huge crowds, so functional modern was an easy choice. It could have been “historical”—for example laced with arches like the unforgettable Roman Coliseum—but there was no thought of spending money on such eyewash, so simple and striking honesty prevailed.

Though our stadium grates my eye, coming across as an efficient people-grinding machine, the design has received high praise as the best in the West, so I hardly favor dressing it in arches now. Or do I?

Arches are very big in California history. The first issue of the Harvard Architecture Review (an immense editorial effort by students of the Graduate School of Design) includes an article by David Gebhard on the archful influence of the California (Roman Catholic) missions. Twenty-eight of his 32 illustrations show mission-like arches in a variety of non-religious buildings.

Gebhard, a UC Santa Barbara professor, writes: “At the turn of the century almost the whole of California became entranced with the image of the mission. California’s Mission Revival (circa 1890-1915) was one of the state’s great exports to the rest of the country.”

Run-of-the-mill builders as well as architects “all tended to utilize a limited series of elements which would evoke the theme of the Hispanic Mission in the popular mind,” according to Gebhard. “The vocabulary consisted of extensive stucco surfaces, tile roofs, arched openings, arched loggias, projecting parapeted gables, often with curves scalloped edges, and round or quatrefoil windows.

“For larger structures an entire mission façade might be produced with a pair of low-tiered bell towers pressing in on a scalloped central gable with an arched loggia below.”

Among the advantages of the “mission image” was “that it could easily (and cheaply) be realized by any of the current techniques of construction. . . . The general faith in the modern age and in its technology was not seen as being in any way in conflict with the historic image of the mission.”

“After 1910,” wrote the professor, “the widespread acceptance and enthusiasm for the mission image broadened to include the whole of the Mediterranean tradition.” This was the mood set for, among other flamboyant constructions, the 1915 exposition in Balboa Park, whose remnants still are a popular treasure.

The popularity of the “mission image” in everything from houses to railroad stations has to be seen as a major media success of the Roman Catholic Church, reaching the hearts of millions who had nothing to do with the church. When the Catholic University of San Diego was being planned in the 1950s, there was no question whether to go modern or historical.

Gebhard judges that “one of the great assets of the mission image was that it referred exclusively to a building as an object in the landscape.” What we got in USD was supermission superimage in the landscape.

As I wrote in 1959 (San Diego magazine): “The hilltop is so exposed to view that no one traversing the San Diego scene can fail to notice the installation proudly rising as certainly the most favorably located institution in the entire region. . . . Seen from a distance, the university is impressive . . .”

However, I called the architecture a failure, mainly because the styling interfered with good space planning. And my points were reinforced surprisingly by a San Diego architect whose finest work has been done in the mission manner.

Richard Requa, writing in 1929, long before USD was conceived, said: “The greatest obstacle in the part of architectural progress in America is the prevailing notion that a building of architectural pretension must be designed in some recognized ancient and exotic style.

“It is the established custom to decide the question of exterior design even before the plan and practical requirements of the building are given serious consideration.

“Then follows the painful distorting of the plan and subordinating the purposes of the structure to the correctness of its external treatment. Seldom is such a building in harmony with its environment or a true expression of its materials and purposes.”

Clearly in 1929 Requa had been swept up by the rising tide of modern architectural thought that was saying in effect, “Go easy on history. There’s a new world to make by thinking everything through again.” In his own case, the new thought led him to make much weaker designs than when he was steeped in the Spanish.

If Requa were alive today, he probably would be prospering as a Spanish-accented designer, for “period sentiment” is “in” again and bare-bones modern is on the defensive, as reported here July 27.

“Bare bones” is certainly the nature of our mighty stadium. It seems to be a masterpiece of macho Nosturing to match the macho posturing of the sports-business conducted therein.

Its fitness to purpose would have to please Richard Requa, though I doubt he would settle for its fierce appearance as an object in the landscape.

The stadium was designed by architect Gary Allen, while he was working for the Hope group. Now that he has his own office, Allen is seeking to be recognized as the best qualified person to design the enlargement of the stadium to superbowl size. His chances are not too good because he has not been cultivating the inside political track.

One thing working in Allen’s favor is that he has just designed for Sacramento a stadium that is a considerable improvement on ours. The improvement lies in the extraordinary new notion of combining a

stadium and an office building in one structure—the idea of a young enterpriser, Gregg Luckenbill. The offices consist of rings of comfortable floor space tucked under the ramps that hold the seats.

That may not be just the ticket for our stadium enlargement, but it does suggest that rentable space (profitable for the city) of one sort or another could be built into the enlargement plan here. At a minimum, parking structures should be built so that much of the present blacktop can be converted to green park land along the river. And the parking structures could have rentable superstructures.

The surround of new structures might eventually cause the stadium to disappear as a bare-bones image in the landscape. Rounded arches might even make an appearance in that area one day. I, for one, wouldn't mind that, for the arch is an everlastingly satisfying element of visual design, universally pleasing. An increase of arches in our Mission Valley could help unify what is now a display ground for the confusions of the architectural world.

The very best we could do in the very special landscape of Mission Valley is to continue playing variations on the mission inheritance while not distorting the plan.

That applies to individual buildings and it applies to the valley as a whole. Perhaps the stadium remodeling could trigger a revision of the entire valley. A really comprehensive plan is long overdue.

The Harvard Architecture Review, Volume One, is recommended for anyone wishing more detailed reports from the warfront. The theme of the issue is “Beyond the Modern Movement.”

Many good professional voices are heard, most of them supporting the various efforts to give more human interest to contemporary building—paradoxically—paying more attention to what was done in past periods.

The review, launched by students, represents a set of views largely opposed by Harvard's dean of design, Moshe Saldie.

Both sides will bring their arguments to San Diego in the next few months. La Jolla Contemporary Museum of Art will show the work of anti-Saldies, so to speak, in September. Saldie, himself, is being sought by UCSD's Extension Division for a lecture in the Spring.

August 31, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, F-6, F-7, ARCHITECTURE: **Seaport Village Turns Into Golden Fleece**

Ship's light, left, sets nautical theme for architecture at tourist-popular Seaport Village on the waterfront. Colorful tiles create “V” in entrance walkway and a visitor, right, rests in one of the attractive gift shops. Below, sketch shows overall plan of the waterfront project.

Who can argue with success?

Our brand new Seaport Village, which looks so olden time in its bayside setting (foot of Kettner Street) had customers buy out of packing crates even before the shops were completely constructed. In its first few weeks the commercial village, as it is frankly called, has had standing room only in the parking lot while visitors passed cash and credit cards over the counters of little shops and restaurants.

Nothing cheap about it, in the price of merchandise or in most of the construction, though I did spot some low-grade hinges, rusting already in the salt air. Actually a little shoddiness could add aesthetically to a project that claims to recall San Diego's past.

Nothing cheap either about the brochure which surely helped Bryant Morris and Sheldon Pollack win the contract to build and operate the golden fleece. They bound the huge vellum pages in enough cowhide to upholster a director's chair. The copy put them in direct line of subliminal descent from Richard

Henry Dana, the celebrated author of “Two Years Before the Mast,” whose ships collected cowhides (handsomely) in this city 145 years ago.

Part of M&P’s sales pitch and yaw was to moor a replica of Dana’s ship, the Pilgrim, at the water’s edge of the village. All hands abandoned the ship idea on the grounds that the Star of India, a similar ship doing business nearby, was enough of that sort to maintain along one bay.

The winning combine of M&P comes from outer space. They are not San Diegans. A San Diego combine, Don Allison and Bill Zongker, was the only other serious contender for the lucky lease. They lost out primarily because they didn’t seem likely to raise the necessary capital. They could only present waffling letters from local institutions. The project eventually weighed in at \$14 million.

In presenting their concept, the San Diegans came in with an elaborate model illustrating the design ideas of Don Naegle and Bob Bowlus reinforced by the landscape architect Joe Yamada, who so often wins big contracts.

Oddly the model (still to be seen at the offices of the Port District which controls the site and created the project) has a dull and drab look though the design depicted is in the same delightful vein of laid-back modernity as the same team’s Coast Walk in La Jolla, a complex that gets its charm from extensive use of shingles and extensive glimpses of the sea.

According to a high official of the Port District the San Diego team might have won the contract if the decision had been delayed another year, for in that year the Coast Walk proved itself financially, thus showing them more likely to float the Port’s commercial village. This means that the design character of the village was determined not on architectural merit, but on ability to perform with dollars. If somehow the design motive and the dollar motive can be brought into sync, the look of the future can be a considerable improvement over the present.

Allison and Zongker said of their plan: “The architecture is intended to reflect the character of Southern California today. The character consists of a variety of tasteful expressions, not simply one overall style.” They did gesture toward the architectural heritage of San Diego by including “Spanish-Mexican fountains of authentic design,” and they proposed moving in “an existing house of Victorian vintage.” The site plan was designed to achieve the best possible first impression by visitors arriving at the Embarcadero Marketplace.

Note that A&Z called their proposal “Embarcadero Marketplace.” The winners, M&P, went on up in semantics when they called theirs “Seaport Village.” Seaport is a commercial idea bound to thrill port commissioners, whereas embarcadero is a lesser idea, a mere jumping off place.

Another stroke of upmanship by M&P was to introduce liberal quantities of Spanish clay tile roofing, the wavy kind. A&Z didn’t even mention this universally popular element.

The winners, like the losers, professed to be reflecting the architectural heritage of San Diego. What they actually built is prettier and more happily laid out than anything that existed here in Dana’s day, or for some time thereafter. The biggest difference is that instead of buildings lined up on straight streets, we get carefully calculated pedestrian flow-patterns and picturesque eyefuls in all directions, all this helped by the segregation of auto traffic.

In developing their design approach, both of the proposing teams paid close attention to an exceptionally detailed book of rules prepared by the Port District. The book’s most striking statement, worth copying by other government bodies, was that “the Board of Port Commissioners requests that no potential proposer contact them in conjunction with this opportunity to lease . . . Such contact will be grounds for rejection of the proposer.”

The Port District’s mandate was “effective utilization of the full potential of the site”—a great prescription for city-building. The winners of the fleece—or lease—dealt with that in this way.

The concept of buildings arranged in plaza groupings for weather protection, visual unification and central activity was natural to the site as well as historical realism. Visual contact with the bay and marina and public access to parkways along the water's edge presented an essential element in the design.

The concept of a village park with buildings arranged on a gradual hillside slope became apparent as a means of varying the grade to lend interest to the essentially flat terrain and to provide a connecting element between the bay and marina waterfrontages. Allowing the area to enjoy open vistas and predominantly green areas, retains its public and park-like character.

With modification the parking areas would become waterways and channels to which future buildings would be oriented. Circulating through the parking area, a tree-lined roadway has been set aside for a carriage to proceed at a leisurely pace through the village.

“The buildings themselves shall have simple beauty and the natural functional quality of early California architecture with use of native materials, simple but innovative construction methods and warm quality of shelter with broad porches, low-pitched roofs. Some buildings with more sophistication shall reflect the influence of Spanish motifs with beautiful proportion of windows, decorated tiles and heavy timbers . . . The theme tower has been appropriately dedicated to fair winds for the San Diego Seaport Village and for the entire city.”

The above is quoted extensively because it is a remarkable example of the urban design mentality at work. What's more, it was largely carried out as stated so that the Seaport Village is the most successfully knit large-scale urban design in San Diego since the great exposition of 1915 in Balboa Park.

Runners up are Mission Bay Park and Old Town State Park, but neither is total in design control. The challenge for the emerging downtown redevelopment, and especially for the enlarging Gaslamp Quarter is to be as good in urban design as Seaport Village. How fitting that San Diego is being reborn as it was born on the waterfront—this time with a higher level of design consciousness while still developing as a commercial enterprise.

Full-blown professional architects commonly express scorn for the cuteness of Seaport Village, which was designed by an amateur, Ray Wallace, whose design experience is very big in the character of theme parks, but the pros are missing the point if they do not respond approvingly to the functional fluidity of Seaport Village.

Though not at all original architecture the totality of Seaport Village and its complementary public park areas is successful architecture because it works as a people-mover. Moving people—physically and psychologically—is what the crowded future has to do.

August 31, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Seaport Village turns into golden fleece.

September 19, 1980, San Diego Union, E-1, Architecture: plumbing depths for awareness.

September 21, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Helix Heights Site for Naval Hospital.

October 5, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1. F-4. California Classics, by James Britton II.

“California Classics” is a title used here with fear and trembling lest some cultivated reader complain that “classic” means first-class.

In writing about such marvels as Disneyland, Hearst Castle and Queen Mary, would it set better to call them California lower-classes?

Most cities now seek to cash in on such mass attractions. New in San Diego is the swarmingly successful Seaport Village, a collection of new buildings (shops and restaurants) trying to look old,

occupying a choice segment of bay-front at the foot of Kettner Boulevard. It was designed not by an architect but by a specialist in theme parks and architects generally don't like it.

My compliments, which appeared here five weeks ago, was not for the buildings but the way they related to form an environment capable of handling crowds. In my view, the "village" is a success of urban design and, as such, an architectural success even if the buildings are merely cute, designed to catch customers.

This newspaper published an outspoken letter (Sept. 14) from Steve Kratzer calling Seaport Village "the worst stew of mongrel stage sets . . . a tired, cynical, totally unimaginative reworking of Fantasyland." He asserted: "There is no endearing environmental quality there," and he concluded: "I pray for the failure of Seaport Village because otherwise it will become a model for future projects here . . . and eventually it will be impossible for honest architects to convince anyone that good design pays."

Following which, architect Don Goldman wrote me (and sent a copy of his letter to the American Institute of Architects to which he belongs). He said: "If the majority of architects in San Diego were as articulate and honest as Steve Kratzer, the quality of design in this community would improve immensely."

An honest and articulate local architect is Rob Wellington Quigley (also an AIA member). Last month he burst out with comments that also might upset his fellow architects, if they are not already upset with their own performance. In effect he was denouncing most of their work when he was quoted in *The Evening Tribune* (Sept. 25) as calling San Diego architecture "pretty awful." Ann Ehrenburg's article said Quigley considered the best of San Diego architectural history to lie in some of its most humble structures—"The old bungalows, the metal warehouses, the World War II military buildings."

Quigley also denounced Seaport Village as "a fantasy without dignity . . . That's worse than Disneyland."

Poor little-rich Disneyland. For our discussion, the enchanting thing about the king (or mouse?) of theme parks in Anaheim is that honest architects can be found either to condemn it as fakery or to praise it for its success in handling crowds.

It is often cited as a good example of urban design, mainly because it is an agreeable walking experience and its various forms of transportation are delights at least equal to San Francisco's famed cable cars. These include horse-drawn trams, double-deck buses, a monorail and a train that circles the whole compound—which is essentially a heavily landscaped park of seemingly infinite expanse, but really only a modest portion of the dull flat basin south of Los Angeles.

The train offers vistas of varied attractions tucked among the trees and the trip includes tunnels that open up on make-believe landscapes populated by animals and birds that partake of Hollywood animation. What natural history museum feeds the kids better?

Disneyland's "Main Street" is the oldest, and remains the most satisfying of the many mini-environments. Its particular magic is that it evokes the spirit of a thousand American small-town main streets, and it does so better than most of its originals ever did—even though it is a fake.

The secret lies in the somewhat miniaturized scale, so that people entering the scene may feel somewhat larger than life themselves. Not the architecture, but the people are grand at Disneyland. The effect on me, as one observer, is to feel that my fellow humans are beautiful to look at, one and all. I don't get that feeling in many "real" city scenes, and I don't get it in most of Disneyland. I get it on Main Street. That's design magic. That, despite the absence of architects, is architecture.

In Balboa Park, San Diego has a great example of that same magic fakery long before Disney. In 1915 a group of quite honest American architects, led by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, laid out a whole "Spanish" city here for exposition purposes, and it was a universal success largely because of the artful way

in which fakery was piled on fakery, making use of all the dynamic eyewash tricks of design developed through centuries by Spaniards leaning on Roman and Moorish precedents.

Goodhue and friends were real architects of the highest professional standing, not set designers, but what they produced was essentially a gorgeous collection of stage sets backed up with usable exposition spaces.

Remnants of Goodhue's masterful environmental triumph remain in the park, chiefly along El Prado (extension of Laurel Street), but the scene is intermixed now with the work of more recent architects who may have made more safe and sane buildings but certainly did not maintain the magic of ensemble that prevailed there in 1915.

In creating his immortal motion picture "Citizen Kane," Orson Welles filmed some of the fancy Spanish plaster in Balboa Park to stand in for Hearst Castle, William Randolph Hearst being the model for the film's "hero." Hearst Castle is now a state park, a "theme park" if ever there was one, and is visited yearly by almost a million bipeds on wheels even though it is relatively inaccessible on the coast highway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. (Don't go without phoning a reservation or you might be turned away.)

It is one of man's choices in architecture and in art that brings all these people. The castle, which looks more like a cathedral on the exterior, is mainly an amateur work of building design by the strong-willed Hearst. True, he had in hand (or underfoot) a lady architect, Julia Morgan, but she mostly did his bidding even in details of design and probably died of biting her tongue.

Here again, as at Seaport Village or Disneyland, architects and connoisseurs of architecture can be found aplenty to tell you how crude, gauche, insensitive and downright bad is the design of Hearst Castle—how the mighty publisher's taste ran delirious in buying old art and stuffing his castle with it. Nonetheless, all those people are drawn there and get, maybe, their closest contact ever with many manifestations of artistic, including architectural, expression from past epochs.

The savvy guides at Hearst Castle don't hesitate to leave you with the impression that their late castle-master was given to excesses and lapses of taste. They might consider adding to their patter the suggestion that all visitors to Hearst Castle should also visit New York's Cloisters museum, where comparable (and often better) hoardings of old European art and architecture are displayed in a much more "tasteful" manner. The Cloisters is a popular place though not nearly as popular as Hearst Castle.

Similarly, the reconstructed colonial town of Williamsburg, Va., is popular though not nearly so popular as Disneyland. Let the one whet the appetite for the other. The point is that life is a popularity contest. That's all right so long as some people—honest architects, for example—keep pushing for quality.

Quality is undoubtedly what was aimed for throughout the design and creation of the huge ocean liner called the Queen Mary. When the bottom fell out—not of the ship but of the market for crossing the ocean by liner—the Queen ended up as a museum moored in Long Beach.

A mighty effort was made to render the beached whale attractive to the multitudes, and it is indeed an exceptional adventure to visit though it seems to be more of a travesty than any of the "theme parks" described here, perhaps especially because of the cute English village arranged shipside to scrape the tourists coming and going.

What would a Rob Quigley make of the fact that the Queen Mary as museum is California's nearest equivalent of the new and revolutionary Paris museum, the Beauborg (which Rob has to approve because it looks like his work.) Both museums wear a good deal of their machinery on the exterior—handsomely. Yet one is a graveyard laden with memories. The other is, or intends to be, the nerve center of tomorrow's progress in the arts, including the art of architecture.

All the theme parks take liberties with architecture, including naval architecture, and may be offensive to honest architects. But just ask yourself, Would California be more or less of an architectural experience and excitement for millions if all those California "classics" were done away with? Honestly, now.

October 20, 1980, San Diego Union, D-1, Civic Theater gains luster.

October 26, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Onions and Orchids sponsored by A/A.

November 2, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, San Francisco's Performing Arts Center.

November 16, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Mark Twain's voice tinges Mayor Wilson's ideas on cities.

November 30, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, Rancho Bernardo developer R. Barry McComic is interested in Southeast San Diego development.

December 14, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, F-6, F-7, ARCHITECTURE: **Freeway Is The Road To Renewal Plan** . . . proposal to build Convention Center spanning Interstate 5.

Chances are that Mayor Wilson's downtown renewal will be crippled because of opposition to his expensive convention-center proposal. Here's how to have it.

The capable architects (the San Francisco office of Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum plus the local firms of Hal Sadler and Bob Mosher) should go back to their computers and redesign the convention center in a way that will neutralize the opposition. The new design easily could be better architecture, better urban design.

The secret is in the siting. The old site down by the railroad station (Kettner Boulevard at C Street) could be justified if you believed that tourists and conventioners should be given priority use of the waterfront. But why hang onto it, if you can't get the public to go along?

The mayor expects that his plan will be approved in the upcoming vote if enough people believe his argument that the center will generate business to offset the cost, which figures at \$224.2 million for starters. Ultimate cost, counting add-ons and interest may exceed three-quarters of a million dollars.

In my opinion, a better site for the behemoth is the great stretch of empty space bounded by Second, Sixth, Cedar and Elm Streets. That's where the freeway runs, you say? The point is the convention facilities could be built on a platform spanning the freeway.

There's nothing new about air-rights construction. In this case, half of the necessary support pylons are already in place, holding up the streets that cross the freeway. They are strong enough to carry a great deal more weight. Additional foundation work need not cost as much as the budgeted \$67.6 million the city would save if it didn't have to buy private land.

Of course, there would be lease payments to the State of California, whose Department of Transportation surely could use the money, but the improved plan would strengthen the mayor's case that the project will pay off in economic benefits.

Much public opposition would be eliminated by using land already in the public domain, leaving the old site to breed more property taxes. The old site might be zoned to promote private building of market housing similar to the marina housing planned nearby but with a few high risers interspersed because of the premium character of the site. (Demand for units in the marina project is said to be great even before it is built. You may see it as a vast cleared site around the Pantoja Park at F and India Streets.)

The Second Avenue end of the freeway site for the Convention Center is near City Hall, and there is already a start on hotels nearby. The cylindrical Holiday Inn is a block away. Three new soundly-built

high-rise residential towers, filled with senior citizens, are standing around close at hand. These could be bought and converted by hotel interests which would bargain to provide equal or better dwelling units for seniors elsewhere.

The huge parking requirements of a convention center (not well supplied in the mayor's plan) would be met by hanging parking structures over the freeway between the avenue bridges. The bulk of the convention-center structure would rise above the avenues so traffic flow could continue.

The Sixth Avenue end of the freeway convention-center site abuts Balboa Park. An obvious bonus for convention visitors would be walkways leading them into the park. An obvious bonus for all park users is that great numbers of their autos could be stashed in those parking structures suspended over the freeway, especially when conventioners were not present in force. As time goes on additional parking over the freeway (which stole the park land in the first place) might allow virtual car-free development of the park.

Also at the Sixth Avenue end of the site is the hill topped by El Cortez Center, which was built as a hotel using ingenious architecture, notably a combination of moving sidewalk and elevators to scoop up pedestrians who otherwise might climb steep streets. The newer breed of hotels also finds business advantage in architectural ingenuity. Some of them might want to build on El Cortez Hill, making it a magic mountain, the crown of a renewed downtown.

There might even be room for an especially good hotel on the spacious platforms over the freeway, say between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, if the owners were prepared to help finance the convention facility sufficiently. Logical candidate for this honor would be Hyatt Regency, which was in bed with the city fathers to generate the existing convention-center plan down by the old choo-choo station.

Hyatt Hotel Corporation really owes its present prosperity to an architectural decision made in 1967 when it latched onto the invention of John Portman, the Atlanta-architect developer who originated the high-rise hotel lobby or "atrium" that has now appeared in city after city, thanks mainly to Hyatt. Conrad Hilton said "it would never fly" but people everywhere, not only hotel customers, swarm to the new atriums as though drawn by the Pied-Piper.

The Hyatt Regency planned for San Diego—the design that now is sure to be scrapped if the present convention plan is adopted—was designed by the prestigious firm of John Carl Warnecke. Of course, there is an atrium. This one is a triple threat. Each of three successive segments has a loftier skylight. Indeed the first skylight is pure sky. If a conventioners main objective at his hotel is to get high, the architecture does what it can to contribute.

Our Hyatt, as planned, would be no higher than the typical downtown high-rise (under 30 stories) except for an imposing silo studded with exterior elevators which would rise to a circular restaurant, view from which would be the ultimate. Otherwise, the design is not distinguished, consisting of several box enclosures for about 1,000 rooms.

Local observers have complained that this Hyatt does not sufficiently recognize the special quality of San Diego, the extra outdoorsiness of the region. There is a considerable roof garden and the plan allows for eight tennis courts, appropriate for a hotel in this tennis-tweeted town. The courts, however, were designed to emerge on the roof of the convention facility and they are in question because they require expensive reinforcement.

The Hyatt was lovingly courted by the city in another sense. The hotel is being granted exclusive use of about one-third of the space inside the convention center on a lease that will help finance the center.

Thus the hotel and convention center together represent a resourceful dovetailing of private and public finance as well as architectural interplay. The neatest trick of all is that the hotel is poised to go on top of a garage to be built by the city. "Air rights" are essential, but the hotels should do the catering, not be catered to.

As indicated the Hyatt people have proved themselves capable of creative flexibility. A key figure in their success through architecture is Jay A. Pritzker, whose family fortune grew on timber, publishing, real estate, manufacturing and—oh yes—hotels. As president of the Hyatt Foundation, he set up the Pritzker Prize specifically for architecture, intending it to be the equivalent of the Nobel Prize (which has never gone to an architect).

In its first two years the Pritzker Prize of \$100,000 went to two world-class talents who didn't need the money and didn't have to rent a tuxedo—Philip Johnson and Luis Barragan. Don't be surprised if John Carl Warnecke wins it somewhere down the line, and not because he worked for Hyatt.

Clearly Jay Pritzker and his fellow boarders at the Hyatt Hotels are devoted to the art of architecture. Let them now advance the art by increasing their investment of money and architectural ideas to assure that San Diego's entire downtown be regenerated at the same level of innovation they achieved with their atrium triumphs. To start with, let them finance a study of a hotel-convention center complex above our freeway.

December 28, 1980, San Diego Union, F-1, San Diego's distinctive architecture.

January 11, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, F-4. *A FANTASY CRYSTALLIZED*

The Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, designed by Philip Johnson, is sensational architecture to view and is also highly attractive to photographers because of the variety of effects created by reflections in the mirror-glass sides of the building. View below [not given] includes part of the earlier church designed by Richard Neutra.

If the Indians who sold Manhattan for \$24 in 1626 had put the money in a bank at 5 percent compound interest, they'd have \$26 million today.

This outlandish statement was part of the tour talk I heard at the "Crystal Cathedral," the country's most sensational new church, located in Garden Grove not far from Disneyland. The figures are no more spectacular than the rise of Rev. Robert Schuller, whose mastery of modern media is responsible for the edifice that rivals the medieval cathedrals in its grip on public attention.

The astonishing Schuller, known to millions through the TV "Hour of Power," was ordained in the same (Dutch) Reformed Church that counts among its 17th century members the equally impressive Peter Minuit who relieved those Manhattan Indians of their heavy real estate.

Schuller himself is a wizard at compounding interest, in the '50s before the TV explosion, his Sunday morning listeners sat in their cars and had the word driven in at the Grange Drive-in Theatre, a few blocks from where, thanks to his TV appeal, in 1980 he was to erect the \$20 million meeting house with the \$20 million name. "Crystal Cathedral" is media type so vivid that it appears in parish literature to the exclusion of the name, Garden Grove Community Church.

The wizard of Garden Grove certainly knows how to pick architects. In the years between the drive-in and the Crystal Cathedral he built a relatively modest church to designs of Richard Neutra, who was the most celebrated architect in California at the time. For the Crystal Cathedral he chose Philip Johnson, who is surely the most celebrated architect at large in America today.

Johnson is a demanding architect and a profound scholar who hardly needs lessons in architectural history. Yet it was Schuller, not Johnson, who caused the design of the Crystal Cathedral to come out very much like London's illustrious Crystal Palace, which way back in 1852 showed the light to modern architecture, being as largely transparent as a greenhouse.

Long ago, Philip Johnson expressed his disapproval of autos dominating the cityscape. When he was director of the architecture and design department of the Museum of Modern Art, he tooted about

Manhattan in a tiny three-wheel Isleta doing his bit to minimize traffic. His first proposal for Schuller was a solid-walled enclosure as though to shut out the traffic and parking which seem to be all there is to Garden Grove. He did provide a glass roof so the preacher could keep his eye on the sky.

The prescient preacher, on the other hand, knew that he wanted all-glass—just as he had known that, in the Neutra-designed church, he wanted one wall totally of mirror as though to give the illusion that his parish was bigger than the body count. In fact, his attitude toward architecture is: “Don’t fence me in.” In reference to the cathedral, he said: “If people see the sky and the traffic on the freeway, that’s good—it means that religion is not divorced from reality.”

So Schuller, in a typical outburst of what he calls “possibility thinking” (a variant of his mentor Norman Vincent Peale’s “positive thinking”) challenged the challenging architect to come up with a steel cage, clad from the ground up to and including the roof with glass.

Even if he’s in love with the freeway traffic which he tapped so brilliantly for his first success, Schuller’s ideal is an audience gathered literally in a garden grove. The Crystal Cathedral, then, is a compromise, acknowledging the need for shelter from the elements even in Orange County. It’s a happy compromise in terms of the Schuller mystique.

Sitting in the balcony of the cathedral one is surrounded by glass that is not really clear, but is clear enough to show a sea of parked cars on all sides. Still, the visual and acoustical qualities within the church are delightful enough to suggest a heaven, a heaven made all the more comfortable because one is able to keep half an eye on the vehicle that brought him and stands ready to return him to his accustomed round on earth.

Even the traditional image of heaven as a place of glorious clouds is evoked by the myriad panes of cloudy glass and the forest of tubular structural steel painted off-white. And the cloud illusion is enhanced because the overall interior light responds sensitively to weather. There is even a sense of great danger defied, as when climbing a snowy mountain, because all that glass hardly seems prepared to withstand an earthquake.

Actually, the cathedral is designed to ride out an earthquake registering 8 on the Richter scale. And the glass is of the type that powders upon being fractured, so the effect of a severe earthquake would only be a snow job, another first for the California lowlands.

The sound of voices or music seems to come out of the corridors of time. Reverberations swell and subside like the ever-changing pulse of the ocean. The overall acoustical ambiance is very much what one wants of heaven, quite dreamlike. But, even while the air is filled with acoustical effects suggestive of eternity, a more distinct version of the service is being heard by each churchgoer from a “pew-back” speaker—not a loudspeaker so much as a softspeaker.

The sense of suspension between heaven and earth, between the mystery of eternity and the familiarity of people and things is maintained on the exterior, largely because it is nothing but glass—glass which does so many tricks of disappearance against the sky that the clumsy bulk is not oppressive.

Most impressive to see is the weird reversal of solid and void at the entrances where breezeways puncture the glass walls. The void of the breezeways appears solid while the surrounding “solid” structure seems to be not there. Similarly, if you get far enough back from the building, preferably to the south where some tall trees provide a screen (if not a grove), the entire structure can disappear from your eye on a good day and at the right hour. I suggest taking a camp stool and sitting by the side of the road to contemplate the chameleon marvel.

Here we have the creative triumph of the two wizards dancing together in the non-existent grove. For all his aesthetic sovereignty, Johnson couldn’t have achieved this particular masterpiece with a less masterly client. He admits as much, saying: “This is fantasy architecture for a fantasy client.”

Not that P.J. was a stranger to the wiles of glass. The launching platform for his dazzling career as designer was the glass house he did for himself in New Canaan, Conn. in 1949—a house that is totally transparent and that lies in an idyllic garden such as Schuller dreamed of.

And don't think of Philip as a patsy easily pushed by patrons. In one of his salty lectures for students, he said: "When do the client's demands permit you to shoot him, and when do you give in gracefully? It's got to be clear, back in your own mind that serving the client is one thing, and the art of architecture is another."

There's no question that client Schuller got a work of art that serves his purpose. Publications tumble over each other to feature the photogenic building. In the architectural press it proportionately makes as many covers as Bo Derek.

The vital statistics (the cathedral's, not Derek's), 128,415,207, the numbers of feet being respectively, height, length, width. Nearly 3,000 seats are arranged in a diamond pattern that is wider than it is deep with reference to the sanctuary. The site is 19 acres, most of which is assigned to parking. A traveler northbound on Interstate 5 would take the Garden Grove exit and find the cathedral a mile west of the freeway, adjacent to a grand shopping center called The City.

A provincial observer who dwells on the fate of San Diego must wonder why our self-proud city doesn't have more fantasy architecture comparable with the Crystal Cathedral. The UCSD library and the Salk Institute can be put in that class. In the past, San Diego produced on Point Loma, the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity, and, in Balboa Park, the Panama-California International Exposition, both depending on fantasy architecture beyond the call of mere reason.

Yet when we set out, as we have lately, to rebuild the exposition buildings, we fail to catch the spirit of the originals, though we faithfully reproduce their facades. The "Electric Building," for example, is approaching completion now as a large exhibition space without any distinction of mood despite a setting, a garden grove that would bring rapture to Schuller's eyes.

The building could have been the equal of the Crystal Cathedral as an architectural statement, but the client (the City of San Diego) had only a limited view of what it wanted and the genial architect (Richard George Wheeler) was too obliging.

The lesson of Garden Grove—a no-place in Orange County—is that splendid architecture can arise anywhere if the human spirit is sufficiently functional.

November 30, 1980, San Diego Union, Britton's Belief in Good Design in His Own Words (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

"The grand landscape of Southeast (San Diego) is not likely to get what it deserves in good design. That landscape is easily the equal of Rancho San Bernardo's setting. Why shouldn't it be treated as well, architecturally or better?"

January 11, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1. Garden Grove's Crystal Cathedral.

January 25, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Building and industrial boom in North County.

February 8, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Old Town and new form uneasy relationship.

February 22, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Balboa Park's Electric Building might suit CalTrans better than it suits San Diego Historical Society; Britton's Belief in Good Design in His Own Words (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

"With or without a superflowering of art, the El Cajon civic complex can become a good example of a government mental installation, that does not shut down at 5 p.m., but serves the public happily into

the night. Its architectural influence also should be felt when high-rise buildings start to gather around the regional center, as they surely will. The city has bargaining and should use it to orchestrate the appearance of those towers and make a town center worthy of world notice.”

February 22, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1:1-8. James Britton II: Electric Building is all wrong for Historical Society; building could best be used by Natural History Museum and Museum of Man.

Of course, California’s Department of Transportation building in Old Town should become the Museum of San Diego History.

As discussed here, February 8, the giant CalTrans office block at Taylor and Juan streets is out of place, blocking the main entrance to Old Town, the site where Europeans first settled in California. The structure could justify its existence if transformed into a museum that gives dramatic focus to local history.

The San Diego Historical Society has been wandering as restless as a ghost looking for a proper place to spread out its huge horde of memorabilia.

When the city didn’t know what to do with the immense space newly created in Balboa Park (the Electric Building on the Prado), the Historical Society eagerly put in a bid and won a lease on about 50,000 square feet.

The space and the place are all wrong for their purpose, but the society is hard at work designing exhibits in a quite awkward pattern dictated by the unfortunate nature of the Electric Building.

Inside the building are two huge floors, uninterrupted except for columns every 32 feet. The Historical Society has plans to partition and partition until the sense of the space is lost in favor of a series of close-focus encounters with historical exhibits.

Director Richard Esparza and his devoted helpers may produce quite an engaging smorgasbord of history, but it hardly needs this particular space.

Should the Historical Society trade places with the CalTrans people? The Electric Building could be subdivided to house any number of highway men and the CalTrans building could easily accommodate the Historical Society displays, especially since these could logically spill out into the landscape surrounding the building and leading visitors to Exhibit A, Old Town itself.

Even an Indian Village, such as existed before the whites came, could be simulated at the front door as the introduction of introductions.

San Diego’s leading benefactor of all time, George W. Marston, was on the right track when in 1929 he built the Serra Museum in Presidio Park overlooking Old Town. The Historical Society was happy there for awhile until it found expansion in that spot impractical. Hence the hunt for a new home.

If you listen carefully you can hear the Hamletic ghost of Father Marston approving the idea of keeping the Historical Society close to Old Town, where it can set the pace for trustworthy interpretation of our past. He, by the way, was not fond of Balboa Park with buildings.

If CalTrans moved to the Electric Building, the freeway buildings would find themselves under the same roof with one of the world’s biggest spreads of miniature railroads, to be laid out in the same building by another tenant.

CalTrans could justify its presence in the park, and rise one up on its neighbors, if it set its engineers to designing a small car railroad to run throughout Balboa Park carrying passengers, so all the automobiles could be kept out of the park.

Dropping the facetious mask, one may note that CalTrans isn't the right tenant for the Electric Building. The building could best be used by the Natural History Museum, the Museum of Man—or both. Yet both have already rejected it because they are not strong enough to make big moves.

Of all the misplaced museums in San Diego, the Museum of Man's anthropology is the most crippled. By ingenious contortions it has managed to live in the California Building under the tower in Balboa Park. Moving would be literally a monumental proposition, and that's one reason the management passed up a chance to take over the Electric Building.

Man's new director, Douglas Sharon, has sounded off bravely about the need for a workable museum space. He'll have a chance to expand along the Prado when, right next door to the museum's present address, the House of Charm is rebuilt. Only tenant already lined up there is the Art Institute whose crafty artists might well be enlisted in developing museum exhibits.

In all the rebuilding that has gone on and will be going on along the Prado there was a chance to create a museum complex equal to anywhere. Unfortunately, no unified concept exists.

The new Electric Building is essentially an ugly place inside behind its charming facade.

Possibly blame can be placed on the limited budget. There also was limited thinking. There is no excuse to leaving the south wall practically windowless. There is little excuse for ignoring the possibility of skylighting.

When fully in use, the building will require enormous amounts of electric lighting. Perhaps this is the more easily swallowed because the building is named Electric, but it is a poor response to the energy conservation awareness of the times. On the credit side, there is to be a minimum of air-conditioning—though this may have to be added expensively when all the lights giving off heat are turned on and the employees wilt.

Worst fault, which indeed could be excused by the limited budget, is the failure to develop an indoor-outdoor relationship of the Electric Building to the canyon at its rear. A neighboring structure, the House of Hospitality, has such a relationship, which was generated at little expense and is popular as the Café del Rey Moro.

Again on the credit side, there is twice as much floor space as the original because a certain amount of digging was done to allow the two floors instead of the original one. With a suitable infusion of visionary money, the digging could have been continued to produce four floors instead of two. Because of height limits along the Prado, the additional floors would have to go down, not up. The southerly opening of the canyon would have made all floors light and airy.

The piecemeal work and lack of imagination in reconstructing the Prado chain of buildings compares most unfavorably with the unity of concept and the high imagination that went into the original construction of that site in 1915—world-class enterprise when San Diego was a small town. Now that we're a world-class city in size, we too often are crippled by small-town official policy.

Meanwhile, many cities that are faced with meaner problems overall than San Diego are bringing museum buildings along in fine shape. The latest issue of *Perspecta*, the Yale Architectural Journal (don't ask why it's published in Cambridge, Mass. by MIT Press) tells about museums of quality planned or built in Dusseldorf, Cologne, Stuttgart, Florence, New York and—yes—New Haven. What's more it reproduces floor plans of 30 museums for comparison—none of them, alas, in California.

The *Perspecta* editors (or rather its advisers from the Yale faculty) assert that there is a “renewed interest in public architecture,” and also a new awareness of “the validity of the architecture of the past.” They find that the resurgence of the museum as a significant architectural image is “an important manifestation of these concerns.”

The clear star of the *Perspecta* discussion is the ancient complex of museum spaces in Florence that includes such famous names as the Uffizi, the Pitti Palace, the Ponte Vecchio, the Boboli Garden—none originally designed for museum purposes yet all gradually adapted by generations of architects. Comparison with our Balboa Park complex (and our CalTrans block) is most instructive.

A careful reading of issue No. 16 of *Perspecta* (the word means well-seen) will tell you that San Diego is far behind in the appropriateness of its museum facilities, though there is a great deal of rich material ready to be displayed here. Divisiveness and petty competition among the sundry museum leaders has to be replaced by a surge of higher vision. There could be no complaint if we reconstructed and adapted the conceptual power exercised here in 1915.

March 1, 1981, San Diego Union, F-4:1-4. Richard R. Esparza, executive director San Diego Historical Society, replies to James Britton's comments, February 2

James Britton II's Sunday column, February 22, 1981, on architecture while designed to point out lack of planning and insight on the part of the city, only managed to reveal to the reader an enormous lack of insight on the part of Mr. Britton. The ideas expressed went from the ridiculous to the absurd, and certainly were not world class. I guess the fact that Mr. Britton brought neither pencil nor paper with him when he interviewed me about the San Diego Historical Society's plans for the new Museum of San Diego History and the fact that he seemed preoccupied with his own ideas led to some of the mistakes he made in his column.

First of all, the San Diego Historical Society is not leaving the Old Town area. When our library and manuscripts division and our administrative offices are moved from the Junipero Serra Museum this summer to the new museum in Balboa Park, more space will be available to interpret the Spanish-Mexican period in San Diego and the life and work of Father Junipero Serra. This was George Marston's original intent when he built the Serra Museum and I am certain that he would applaud the result.

Secondly, the San Diego Historical Society is very pleased to finally have the opportunity to create a Museum of San Diego History in Balboa Park, and for good reason Balboa Park is the showplace of San Diego. The hundreds of thousands of annual visitors deserve a first-class museum along museum row to learn the history of this beautiful city and that of the park they are visiting.

I regret that Mr. Britton uses his position and his column as a forum for his own ideas on city planning and museum design. As a museum designer myself, I can say his suggestions were thoroughly unsound. It takes more than a cursory reading of *Perspecta* to excel in this area. His proposed destruction of one of the park's most beautiful canyons by excavating four stories down is not appealing and his ideas about CalTrans do not even warrant a reply.

James Britton answers: My inciteful column did not say the Historical Society was abandoning the Serra Museum. The Society also maintains the unique Villa Montezuma on K Street and is set to inherit the George Marston mansion on Seventh Avenue. The valued non-profit group deserves everyone's bequests—and membership and wits.

Sorry about the pencil. I prefer a quill pen.

March 8, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Warren Nielsen's idea to house the Convention Center in the Sports Arena.

March 22, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Dr. Harry Anthony feels that Dutch housing problem has been misunderstood.

March 29, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Architect Moshe Safdie will speak at symposium on "Design: San Diego."

April 12, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Architectural group, SITE, uses illusion as brickbat against the restraints of tradition.

May 13, 1981, San Diego Union, B-9, Commentary on Lloyd Ruocco who died on Sunday.

May 24, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Commentary on lecture given by Frederick Koeper at UCSD on San Diego architecture.

June 21, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Architect Lloyd Ruocco to be remembered Saturday at UCSD.

June 28, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, San Diego's Rob Wellington Quigley and Tom Grondona.

July 12, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Sea World

July 26, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, F-14, F-16, ARCHITECTURE: TIME TO DREAM; **Roller Coaster & Chicano Park**

The Belmont Park roller coaster stands as a symbol of a bygone era. No longer viable, but standing on priceless land, controversy swirls about its fate.

The Belmont Park roller coaster still roars and soars in the memories of thousands though its mechanism has long been silent. It was the crowning glory of an amusement acreage located between Mission Bay and the Pacific Ocean.

The city is considering several plans for profitable leasing of the land, calling for destruction of all or most of the roller coaster. Another plan calls for preserving the entire area as a stretch of public park, the only such link between bay and ocean.

Kent Whitson of Carlsbad likes the latter plan because it would allow the "unique" 1925 coaster to stay. Being an engineer, he realizes that putting the thriller back into action "may not be viable" because of its age. So, he's willing to treat it as a "work of art."

He urges that it be restored "in an attractive setting as a symbol of man's technical fascination with physics, speed and centrifugal forces."

As Whitson envisions it, the city should "come up with a pleasant, simple, non-garish color scheme that would be in concert with the upgrading of Belmont Park as an attractive and ambient spot."

He'd go further and deck it out with stairways and walkways, allowing guided walking tours to the top, fees for which would mitigate the cost of maintenance. It would be San Diego's echo of the Eiffel Tower, though not rising so high

Given the nature of our boisterous beach bums, there would have to be ingenious security. A wide watered moat surrounding the coaster would serve, if provided with alligators, electric zaps or some other distancing devices. The moat would reflect the coaster and double its visual pleasure.

Whitson calls our coaster unique because of its "dramatic twisting track configuration." He should know, being a member of two clans you may never have heard of, the American Coasters Enthusiasts and Roller Coaster Buffs International.

I endorse Buff Whitson's proposal and hope others will also because it means holding on to a delightful piece of evidence that a smaller San Diego had flair and dash and grace that are harder to achieve now. Some of the commercial proposals for the area also would treat the coaster as an ornamental asset, but this very special stretch of park is surely best kept non-commercial.

Meanwhile, in another part of the urban jungle, Chicano Park is trying to expand to the water's edge. In this case too, official support for money-making use of the land threatens to abort a humane contribution to urban design. The Port District wants the land to remain industrial.

How important is Chicano Park? For many San Diegans the first question might be: "Where is it?", even though it has had much publicity—both for the beauty of its conception and the ugliness of some of the behavior there. It is under the approaches to the Coronado Bridge, San Diego site. Its history is told thoroughly and sympathetically by San Diego State University geographer Larry Ford and Ernst Griffin in the current issue of "Landscape," a prestigious national journal little known to the public, though packed with intelligent material on public issues.

Ford and Griffin describe Chicano Park as "personalizing" an institutional landscape. What they mean is that the massive concrete of the freeway and the bridge approaches comprises the "institutional landscape" (ugly and intrusive," they call it) and the Chicanos with their bold paint brushes made the place very special for people by "personalizing" it.

The authors argue that people always try to personalize the area in which they live to make it their own special place. The professors choice of examples is interesting. They cite "the dells of New York, the beer gardens of Milwaukee, the Chinese pagoda restaurants of San Francisco."

They quote studies showing that public housing projects where people have been able to express themselves have lower crime rates than those that are "inflexible, sterile and institutional." But the need for "symbolic and identifiable landscape is strong in upper-income suburbs as well."

In focusing on Barrio Logan (the waterfront ghetto of Latinos around Chicano Park) Ford and Griffin again call on their taste buds to demonstrate that the neighborhood has "a sense of place." They clearly with relish and maybe Tabasco, note that "tortillerias, taco stands, and Mexican restaurants have sprung up" in the two decades of the ghetto's Chicanoism.

They also report that "houses have been painted bright pastel colors, hanging plants have appeared on nearly every porch, yards have been filled with a mixture of corn, beans and medicinal plants, graffiti wall murals [sic] and low-riders abound."

The low-riding Chicanos could be kept under control more easily if the state built a highway patrol headquarters under the bridge. This may have been the official reasoning but when the Chicanos heard of it, they simply took over the site and started planting a park.

"The city reacted with shock but soon acknowledged that the community has been ignored," wrote Ford and Griffin. Thereafter, official backing was given to the "people's park" and murals started to proliferate on the bridge piers and abutments.

Today the park is still rather starved-looking in landscape terms. Its sense of place is firmly established, however, by the murals—and by the graffiti which appear on piers not yet tapped by murals.

The murals and the graffiti are both loaded with messages, very "personalized." Much of the mural painting is grossly incompetent. Some of it rises to a sophisticated standard remindful of the mighty Mexican mural tradition born of revolutionary zeal. Commercial slickness sneaks in here and there.

The prevailing tone of the murals is grim and angry like the prevailing tones of the street gangs that hang around the park. Sometimes the happy side of the Mexican make-up shows through. Perhaps the clouded aspect of these murals will lighten through the years as tired old murals are replaced by better ones reflecting new hopes. A hope-fostering project for our politicians would be to extend Chicano Park to the water, even if this means removing some warehouses. The completed park, however, should welcome everyone, not just Chicanos, though the latter might rightfully glow with pride in an urban achievement of the first water.

There is a way in which the industrial usages and the park could occupy the same space. Warehouses and workshops could be built strong enough to carry playing fields, grass and even trees on the roof. This would allow the park to continue to the water without being interrupted by streets. You will be hearing soon from Warren Nielsen, the purple-hearted hero of Helix Heights with a plan of this nature.

Ford and Griffin told the history of the handsome kiosk that is now the chief Chicano Park structure. In "Landscape" they wrote: "The neo-Mayan-Aztec design of the kiosk resulted from the (Chicano's) steering committee's insistent rejection of a Spanish-Colonial structure. Park and recreation officials wanted the colonial style to represent the city's official image of the Mexican heritage. The Chicano community wanted to emphasize its pre-Columbian origins and disassociate itself from red-tiled Mission Revival styles. The bold colors and geometric shapes of "El Kiosko" thus enhance the distinctiveness of Chicano Park in the San Diego landscape.

Here we have two immensely significant, personally important landscapes, pathways to the common man, to the sea, one Anglo, the other Chicano—one embellished with a roller coaster, symbol of the pursuit of happiness, the other brooding, still with painted symbols essentially rejecting the world of roller coaster-capitalism. When both key pieces of public turf are fully operative as parks open to all, we will be a little closer to living reasonably together. The obligation of politicians is to coordinate the "personalities" of various landscapes in our region so that fully developed humans will find this the ideal place to live.

August 2, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Italian architect in the 1700's, Piranesi's vision inspired skywalk idea; Kansas City Hyatt Regency Hotel accident.

August 16, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1:1-8. The time has come for the city to trade off Balboa Park—all of it' Feature by James Britton, II . . .

Parts of the park have been traded by politicians ever since its original 1,400 acres were dedicated in 1868. Sometimes the public got great benefit out of the deals like when Kate Sessions set up a nursery business there in trade for planting trees in the park. Local businessmen got the middle of the park for an exposition in 1915, leaving behind a complex of buildings which to this day has served assorted educational and commercial special interests. Similarly with another exposition in 1935.

In the 1970s the Navy began considering moving Balboa Hospital out of the park and chose Murphy Canyon north of Mission Valley. But at the urging of San Diego's congressmen, the Navy decided to rebuild in a section of the park. And even though another preferable site came along (Helix Heights), the Navy was so deep into the park plan that it decided, "Full steam ahead."

There are those who still think they could get the courts to keep the Navy out. The Committee for Charter Protection for Parks has filed a request in federal court for an injunction blocking construction of the hospital. A hearing is set for August 24 on the request. Even if the Navy is permitted to build in the park, many opponents believe it ought to pay full market value if it takes park land. That would be an immense income for the city's gaping treasury.

As a direct consequence of the shrinkage of tax sources, plus the rise in costs of everything, governmental bodies everywhere are looking for new gushers of income. There will be a universal increase of private operations on public land. Interior Secretary James G. Watt's threat to the National Parks is merely watt's in the air.

Thus, for example, the "Spanish Village," where artists of sorts have been indulged for decades with cheap studios, is being eyed for conversion to another Bazaar del Mundo. The original Bazaar is a phenomenal multimillion dollar profit mill, created out of an old motel in Old Town. Call it Bonanza del Mundo. Call it what you will, it was this enterprise on public land that caused Old Town to come alive as a popular attraction which the state of California is now trying rather ineptly to glorify as a historical park.

Though there are two violently opposed schools of opinion about Bonanza del Mundo—purists believe it should be done away with—there is little doubt that sinking governments will be grasping at similar lifesavers.

Take your friendly county Board of Supervisors. Their elegant offices are in the historic (1936) and architecturally significant structure on the waterfront at the foot of Cedar Street, now called County Administration Center (CAC). CAC has two generous parking lots worth as much in land value as any site in San Diego. The supervisors are itching to get the maximum income from these by indulging the delirious dreams of enterprisers whose mouths water at the waterfront. For example, Holiday Inn would love to build another high-rise hotel in the south parking lot.

With the CAC scheme in the air, the stage is set for another of many confrontations between the county and the city of San Diego. These government bodies are supposed to cooperate in carrying out the adopted Center City Community Plan, which calls for parklike development of these CAC parking lots, with the parking either under the park or kept out of the area altogether. Banning would be possible if downtown transit matures as it should. The city's planners do not favor high-rise engulfing the historic CAC which ought to be shown off proudly as a park setting.

Comes now a bystander motivated to offer a solution. He is William Tyson, who desecrates himself as an architecture buff. He has plans for a four-story office building at Pacific Highway and Beech, across from the south CAC parking lot.

What's more, though an old man himself, he is concerned about the Navy's sinking image after the expropriation of Balboa Park, so he feels that the Navy itself should be involved in enhancing the beauty and public convenience of the waterfront., adding to our park system as well (or better) than subtracting from it.

Tyson and landscape architect Mike Theilacker dreamed up a park treatment for the south CAC parking lot. It is a two-level parking structure, heavily landscaped on top, something like San Francisco's Union Square. Structures shown rising from the trees, to be contributed by the Navy, would include a sort of conning tower for viewing of the bay and an information center orienting visitors to the city, and, incidentally, telling them much of the Navy's dynamic story.

Another possibility envisioned by Tyson is relocation here of the Scripps Institution's popular aquarium, which is hopelessly impacted by parking problems in its present location in La Jolla.

How serious is the county about making money on its underutilized properties. This year the Board of Supervisors approved the idea [of selling] these properties, the CAC parking here, the Pacific Building, Pacific Highway at Ash Street, Vauclain Point (choice view site overlooking Mission Valley). Also the supervisors approved selling large acreage the county owns in the back country. Revenues are expected to exceed \$50 million.

Because of its waterfront site, the CAC building ideally should be headquarters of the Unified Port District, which could afford to pay handsomely for it. The rich port has led all the government bodies in raising income from leases.

The city of San Diego has been amazingly prodigal in giving away the lands it owned, but lately has been buying (dear) and selling (cheap) downtown acreage with an eye to income eventually far exceeding costs. The process has allowed the city to engage in urban environmental design to a limited extent—limited more by shortage of vision than shortage of opportunity.

The city's biggest urban design success is Mission Bay Park, which also is a financial success, paying for itself and then some through leases, the most profitable of which is Sea World. By contrast, the city doesn't get a dime from the zoo, which occupies so much of Balboa Park. Instead the prospering Zoo this year is getting a guaranteed \$1.1 million of the city's property tax revenues, a windfall left over from when the Zoo needed help to get started toward its worldwide fame.

Currently the city is studying the future of Balboa Park. The firm with the contract is the Pekarek Group. Though the group consists basically of landscape architects, its mandate is to produce a “development and management plan.” Project manager Steve Estrada, who grew up here and studied landscape and architecture at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Seeking ways to make the park self-supporting, the Pekarek Group has hit on the idea of generating the park’s electricity from the huge landfill south of Morley Field where restless miasmas of burnable methane are trapped under the surface.

Restaurants—including good ones (and let’s put in a word for cheap-goods) – -- will multiply in the park if Pekarek and pals have their way. Transportation finally will be handled to eliminate much auto visibility. Parking will be in pool areas, possibly even in discreet structures. Transit vehicles will wheel people around. Already Pedicabs are in operation, proving popular.

A piece of poetic justice in the design of the new park would be to require the backers of the new automotive museum to provide huge parking structures as an extended and reasonably concealed foundation for their show-off museum building. The museum will be near the Aero-Space Museum. The brutally ugly field of parking in front of the Aero-Space Museum, where vandals and muggers now operate, will be transformed into a landscaped public plaza.

“San Diego now has no such plaza,” says Estrada with fire in his eye as he braces for the assaults on his play by the selfish.

The dauntless Estrada is even trying on fright masks to chase the Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls out of their cushy quarters in the park, possibly giving their choice acres to the Zoo for expansion. The kids could better set up camp in the more remote Mission Trails Park, he says reasonably.

Estrada hasn’t even dreamed of chasing the Zoo animals out of the park, though a good urban design case could be made for sending the beasties to the suburbs, specifically the Wild Animal Park, as the city fills up with humans who had have their fill of the suburbs. Possibly, however, the Zoo will be needed in Balboa Park to generate crowds who then will spend all the dollars expected to enter the city via the new Balboa Park.

Come to think of it, why shouldn’t the whole of Balboa Park, or what’s left of it be leased to the Zoo people, who know so well how to turn a buck and a panda to the public? Payments to the city could go on forever or until civilization has exterminated the last animal and the last blade of grass.

August 30, 1981, San Diego Union, F-17, Selection of finalists builds excitement in design competition for Rancho Bernardo’s Performing Arts Center.

September 6, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Rancho Bernardo, an arts mecca?

September 20, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, “California’s traditional Spanish-style” architecture in San Diego.

September 27, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Kenneth Neumann’s design for the Rancho Bernardo Performing Arts Center is chosen.

October 18, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Activists at “The Arts Edge” Conference in Pittsburgh focus on humanizing cities through art.

October 25, 1981, San Diego Union, E-8, Book review: “From Bauhaus to Our House” by Tom Wolfe.

November 8, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, San Francisco’s Yerba Buena Gardens with the new convention center; “Britton’s Belief in Good Design in His Own Words” (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

Downtown: "In effect, our downtown should be a continuation of Balboa Park all the way to the bay front, Places that don't have a happy mix of commercial and non-commercial magnetism surely will head for early economic decline as better environments emerge elsewhere."

November 22, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Robert Winter's lecture on "5,000 Years of Architecture" at San Diego Museum of Art.

December 6, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, The Storm King Art Center in New York's Hudson River Valley offers modern sculpture.

December 20, 1981, San Diego Union, F-1, Reconstructed California State Capitol.

January 3, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, F-3. "New" Old Globe jury out until curtain rises, by James Britton, II.

Would Shakespeare be satisfied with the new Globe Theater in Balboa Park?

Surely, as a playwright and player hungry for audiences, he would be grateful for the thousands of performances his works have had under auspices of the Old Globe. These occurred in the "old" Globe Theater built in 1935 and burned in 1978. The new \$6.5 million theater is a replacement for the old, occupying pretty much the same place—and there's the rub.

The new theater had to be squeezed between existing buildings. Its size was dictated by the available space and by the decision to duplicate the shape of the 1935 "original." The intent in 1935 was to simulate one of the Elizabethan theaters in which Shakespeare's works first surfaced. That meant, in Shakespeare's phrase, a "wooden O."

Because the new theater has not put on its first performance, no one can tell how it will sit, how it will feel, how it will listen, above all how it will deliver living actors into your lap. A visitor who picked his way among the workmen in the final throes of construction could sense that the ghost of the Old Globe was very much present in the new.

The interior is all black, so, in effect, there are no walls, only infinite space, waiting to be filled with significant sight and sound. The audience, cradled in seats more comfortable than before, is to be focused on the stage with minimum distraction.

The stage itself is as variable as a Rubik's Cube, as susceptible of combinations—and one hopes, easier to manipulate. Whole sections of floor go up and down on elevators. Trap doors are everywhere, as befits a house that is bound to abound with Shakespeare's numerous ghosts. A sizable segment of the seats can be wiped out instantly to allow actors to come and go beneath the feet of the others by way of the most inelegantly named facility, the vomitorium.

The stage can thrust forward or shrink back. Scenery can "fly"—that is, rise out of sight—but only to a limited degree, the limitation being caused by the fact that a "fly loft" of full height would contradict the illusion of an Elizabethan theater.

Illusion is the main game in theater, whether on the stage or in the house itself. True, great drama has been produced in plain brown wrap, in storefronts. But the San Diego Old Globe probably never would have achieved the momentum it did (getting a national reputation) if it did not give the illusion of an Elizabethan figment of space suddenly to be discovered tucked away behind the mighty armada of Spanish-style showplaces that predominate in Balboa Park.

One could argue that the Globe supporters should have been braver and moved their operations—lock, stock and wooden "O"—into the downtown, an area that needs every cultural help as it seeks to become a major metropolitan center. The Globesters actually did try using old theaters downtown after the

burning of their park property, but the results were limited partly because some patrons were afraid to go there after dark.

Grand plans were considered by Globe supporters to provide parking structures just west of the theater. If this had been part of the actual design procedure, the theater could have benefited in several ways, the most obvious being an easy access for patrons. More important from the production point of view, the backstage could have expanded into part of the parking structure, thus eliminating a certain tightness which directors are already finding troublesome.

Even more beneficial for the Globe's future would be a series of spaces usable as classrooms, allowing the dream of a theater academy to become a reality. All this should have been built, along with the parking structure, as part of the Globe's construction project. It could happen yet, if money gushed in.

Money to support the new Globe has to come from many sources other than box office. Increased seating of 800 or even 1,200 seats was considered before 580 was settled on. This is only slightly larger than the old Globe, which is why the rebuilt structure is likely to seem familiar rather than new, and retain the ghost of the old.

Also familiar will be the fake half-timbering on the exterior, the fake leaded glass of the few windows and the fake timbers on the lobby ceiling. The lobby space, upstairs and down, is somewhat larger than before. And the intermission crowds may be expected to filter into the night air on the green, as they always did. Intermission at the Globe was always one of the guaranteed pleasures.

One consequence of the limited acreage in which this theater was built is that the auxiliary usages—offices, dressing rooms, restrooms and the rest—are fitted into spaces that have a leftover look, not as generous as a new theater deserves. Fortunately, the workshop in which sets are prepared is a high loft that should please any craftsman and may be the envy of any sculptor.

Too bad the jealousy that prevails over every square foot of parkland prevented adequate enlargement of the site. Many San Diegans think parkland should be open space, free of buildings. Every project in the park is debated—you win some and lose some. The rebuilding of the Navy Hospital in the park is considered the greatest loss by those who care most about the park as a park. The Globe, however, was in no position to put up a similar fight.

However, the overall limitation of the site was a byproduct of the squabbling over usages of the park that have increased over the decades and is now civic disease for San Diego.

Ticket-buying visitors to the new Globe will be treated to the best efforts of seasoned theater professionals, aided and abetted by starry-eyed amateurs. As time goes on, the intent is to add music events and films of a high order. This building, which is a reverberation of Shakespeare's own theater, echoing through centuries, is sure to be a centerpiece of San Diego culture for decades.

The Globe is to be an all-purpose theater offering the top output of all periods including the future, but Shakespeare will remain the chief supplier of staging material. His plays will occur both in the theater and in the outdoor festival stage, a nearby facility tucked into a canyon.

Both the festival stage and the Globe Theater's internal arrangements were designed by Richard Hay, a stage designer whose main base is the Ashland, Ore., Shakespeare Theater. Eugene Weston of La Jolla was the architect.

In this case that means Hay's main contribution was not the concept of the building, but the details of construction that made it a safe and sane place to play. He gave the exterior a discreetly somber look, which will be relieved by tiny lights under the eaves. These eaves, by the way, should shed sheets of water on a rainy night because the sloping roofs have no gutters.

Hay was reluctant to take undue credit as designer of the Globe, but producing director Tom Hall made it clear that Hay had developed the Globe to resemble the successful arrangement he has established at Ashland.

Rave reviews on the building can be expected but as with performances of plays themselves, the building cannot be finally judged until it has performed.

The festival stage is an innocent-appearing entity but it represents the power of art to loom larger than the routine life around it. Everybody was sure this would be a temporary facility, to be torn down when the new Globe came into being. In fact, the Globe people promised that it would be demolished. However, it is so successful, so decided a triumph as an aesthetic environment, chances are it will remain until termites consume its woodiness.

The Globe Theater itself is a much more complex environment than the festival stage. It does not vibrate with free spirit as readily because it is loaded with more of the trappings of a serious purpose. Better sitting, and a more expansive "footprint" or basic plan, would have added much value. But how it performs is eagerly awaited by all who see the place as a touchstone, or touchwood, for new dimensions of artistic vitality in San Diego.

If Shakespeare himself were to stand on the new Balboa Park stage and look out over the audience, his all-seeing eyes would have to rise to the especially wondrous sight that can only be seen from the stage looking out. I refer to the tier on tier of catwalks built into the roof structure, where technicians can move back and forth manipulating equipment to strengthen illusions and perhaps even holding cue cards to give reassurance to actors whose hearts are where their tongues should be.

One can imagine that Shakespeare, standing there and taking in the dramatic technological tomorrowland of the catwalks, would glance down his nose at the comfortable audience and say, "Hereafter, in a better world than this, I shall desire much love and knowledge of you."

Shakespeare would be quoting a line from "As You Like It," his play which will inaugurate the new-old Globe Theater January 14.

January 17, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, F-12, F-15, ARCHITECTURE: Look around—L.A. Has Its Form Shapes

Los Angeles is the city we love to hate if we are San Diegans. We shudder that we might be getting similar.

The basic reason for the cringing is that the traffic is so difficult, and the smog is so heavy. When we get where we're going up there, however, we're often glad we hacked it. Los Angeles offers many rewards, not the least of which is architecture.

Julius Shulman, the famed architectural photographer, is one of the chief boosters in depth of the city which was the main fount of his fortune. On a clear day (rarity) he took his Laurel Canyon neighbor Donald Ackland high up on Mulholland Drive, where you can look down on a tremendous expanse of the city. He told Don: "We really ought to do a book that shows what the city has."

Don agreed. They set to and produced "The Architecture of Los Angeles" (Rosebud Books, 1981; 10 by 11 size, \$35). Don was the key because he is Rosebud's publisher, an exceptional Californian, a native son and I do mean native.

Both his mother and grandmother were born in the missions of the Franciscans. His father was a farmer from Kansas. Don grew up loving the state as though it were his estate. When he received a degree in art history from Harvard, he worked his way up in the art publishing world, ending his New York years as publisher of the New York Graphic Society's top-quality offerings.

He couldn't get California out of his blood or his blood out of California, so he left the Eastern establishment and established his own enterprise. Rosebud Books, based in Los Angeles (and affiliated as wholly-owned subsidiary with Knapp Press, which produces such glosses as *Architectural Digest*).

"The Architecture of Los Angeles" is worth reading in San Diego so we can be adequately aware of our big neighbor. Schuman, the enthusiast, supplied many of the photos, dozens of which are striking in color. Historian Paul Geyle wrote the text and contributed a good deal of color of his own. The Los Angeles Conservancy, a save-the-city group, participated substantially and presumably will buy many copies of the output.

Geyle takes the larger view from line one. "Until about 100 years ago, the Los Angeles Basin had passed through eternity in a fairly natural state. By 1880 Los Angeles had a population of 11,000 people who had turned much of the chaparral lands into fields and orchards. It was still a rural environment then, not a smoky metropolis like the great Eastern cities of the day. In 1980 Los Angeles County had a population of 7,477,000, it encompassed 4,000 square miles 495 miles of freeways and approximately 5,650 miles of surface streets."

For 100 years and more. according to Geyle, "Visionary designers have been engaged in a search for an architectural and urban form that would make Los Angeles something special." To start with, he credits the Franciscan missionaries with creating "a unique architecture of adobe and brick which has created an influence on California—and on the United States—ever since." This, of course, was not originated in Los Angeles but is a California phenomenon of many stations, the first being San Diego.

The author extols the railroads with bringing "the latest East Coast architecture—the Queen Anne (or Victorian) which was built here with exuberance." But: "When the city became too picturesque from the bay-windowed Queen Anne homes and stores, people turned back to the missions for inspiration, re-creating a whole California architecture from the style of an original handful of buildings."

Geyle implies that Los Angeles people "invent a new style, the California craftsman—low bungalows with exposed rafters decorated with burlap and Indian pottery—establishing an American type still with us in new forms. Actually, this style and the Mission and Queen Anne styles were practiced widely at the same time in California, including San Diego.

The author is narrow again when he leaves the impression that it was Los Angeles architects who "reached beyond the California missions to the great architecture of Spain and Mexico, bringing forth a whole generation of Spanish-Revival architecture which was Spanish in detail but Californian in spirit, an expression of the easy lifestyle offered in Southern California." That development resulted from expositions held in San Diego and San Francisco while L.A. slept.

Again, anyone who knows the climate of Los Angeles, with or without smog, must marvel when Geyle declares his city's climate is better than that of the fount of civilization around the Mediterranean Sea. "It demanded," he wrote, "a better architecture than had ever been known before, where the best forms and the best ideas could be united to create a paradise of a city to match the paradise of its climate."

Gagging and choking as they read that, most San Diegans, when they recover, will snugly assure themselves that their city is the only one where such dreams could be fulfilled. But we may remember the 1974 book about San Diego by professors Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard, which was called "Temporary Paradise?" Question mark?

It is true, as Geyle writes, that "Los Angeles is endowed with an incomparable array of historical revival styles from the early years of this century—from the formal Beaux Arts of the old downtown to the colorful Egyptian Revival apartment buildings having battered walls and lotus-flower capitals. The climax of historical revivalism in the 1920's was accompanied by an outpouring of Art Deco architecture of zigzag forms and dazzling colors. During the Depression fantasies of a better life led to streamlined forms in architecture that saw buildings styled in windswept lines and pothole windows.

Gleye asserts that “Los Angeles is a great source of the Modern Movement in the United States. A coterie of architects in the 1920’s and ‘30’s showed the potential of modern forms to a still conservative country. . . . In the 1980’s a new generation of Los Angeles architects looking beyond modern forms to create unique personal statements in architecture, once again posing the basic questions of architectural design and keeping Los Angeles in the forefront of international architectural practice.”

Here again, caution is called for before accepting as the principal generator of California innovation. One of that town’s most noted architects, William Pereira, made the most unusual designs of his career in San Francisco (Transamerica Tower, the pretty one) and San Diego (UCSD) library, the handful of books held high in the sky.)

The love of Los Angeles felt by Gleye and Ackland is well displayed in the book’s kissing coverage of the Spanish and Mexican periods, with a fetching selection of pictures and an informed assessment of reality, despite the romantic attachment. Example: “Pitched roofs of red tile were known but were probably less common than modern restorations would suggest.”

The transition to an American town, the intermarriage of styles as well as peoples, is nicely handled in Gleye’s pages, the photos suggesting a more substantial heritage than what San Diego has in Old Town, except that remaining examples are widely scattered. Los Angeles plaza near the railroad station is the nearest equivalent of our Old Town.

The architectural plot thickens, and the real estate plots thicken as Los Angeles really gets hit by growth hormones after 1880. The Victorian, Craftsman and Mediterranean styles comprise a cavalcade of edible designs at least as toothsome as the formal Rose Parade (which is another California original mobile architecture).

Revival meetings are very big in Los Angeles, were so especially in the 1920’s when revivalism in architecture was also very big. All varieties of historical styles came parading in their finery to show off in L.A. and in this book. Of special significance is that high buildings were officially discouraged there until 1957 (City Hall being an exception). When the ceiling came off after a public vote, , skyscrapers sprang upward but managed to achieve nothing like the excitement that attended the much earlier skyscraper spree in New York.

Strangely, the L.A. City Hall (1928) remains the most distinctive high-rise in the huge town. Skyscraping, then, has not been a category of design in which Los Angeles led the way, even though the city had the benefit of waiting while pioneers elsewhere risked making blunders. Bearing on this point, is the fact that L.A.’s Bunker Hill is now getting a bunch of relatively dull skyscrapers because the city’s redevelopment agency chose them over more exciting designs that were entered in a competition.

Strangely, too, the major influence of big Los Angeles on the architecture of the world came through the design of little buildings—houses. Gleye writes: “The freedom to build as one wished, particularly in the form of single-family homes, allowed architect to flourish on the fringes of accepted styles. The resulting experimentation on modern idioms would make Los Angeles a showcase of international significance by the 1930’s.

In running over the honor roll of modern originals, Gleye gives due attention to Irving Gill, whose main work was done in San Diego. One of Gill’s best designs, the Dodge House, was in Los Angeles until it was destroyed to make a buck. The destroyer was the Los Angeles Board of Education, no less. What does that say about the city that likes to present itself as a leader in architecture?

January 31, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Jon Jerde, chief architect for Ernest Hahn’s Horton Plaza project; “Britton’s Beliefs in Good Design in His Own Words” (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

“Keep it firmly in mind here that the intent here (at the Horton Plaza Shopping Center) is not only to build a better mousetrap to catch compulsive customers. The architect’s intent is to enrich togetherness. Watch for the model and study it when it comes. There is still time for reasoned criticism to be heard. It is

apparent to me that the architect (Jon Jerde) is trying to bring off a masterpiece that will show other cities the way. Help him.”

January 31, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, F-4, ARCHITECTURE: The Art of Communal Adventures (see above).

According to a new model, Horton Plaza is shaping up as a pedestrian adventure-land. The high entrance will be through an arch, below left, copied from the soon-to-be demolished Cabrillo Theater. Another old movie palace, the Balboa, will remain on site and keep its cupola eye on the new Robinson’s department store, below right. An interior street, right, will be a three-dimensional people scene topped by garden offices with shops and parking behind the arcades.

The last thing you might expect if you follow the architectural scene is an architect who comes on like Tom Wolfe. Wolfe is the pop-pop-popular author whose latest book, “From Bauhaus to Our House,” gives modern architecture a rough going-over and tumbles a barrel of laughs for the bestseller audience.

Though a graduate of the University of California, where modern architecture was taught with a vengeance, Jerde never was satisfied with simplification as a way of life and design. He spent much time reconditioning old buildings to his own satisfaction while designing shopping centers to the satisfaction of big-dollar clients.

Jerde is chief architect for Ernest Hahn’s Horton Plaza project, which is supposed to breathe new life into downtown San Diego. In Wolfish fashion, Jerde titled a recent speech to retailers, “You Too Can Create Real Time Ordinary Life for Fun and Profit in an Electronic Age.”

The fast-talking Jerde is contagious to listen to and his enthusiasm bulges out of his word—when printed. Here’s some of what he had to say on the design of Horton Plaza:

“Our culture is set up in such a way that the highest virtues of society are acquisition and possession. We travel around in our new automobiles, watch our video machines, race our speedboats—and spend our condominium weekends in splendid isolation, only the murmur of the stereo and the gurgle of the Jacuzzi breaking the lonely peace.

“Every now and then, however, togetherness occurs, as when people are pouring into a football stadium, sitting in an auditorium waiting for a play to begin, in the chatter of a movie crowd disbanding or the chatter of a sidewalk café. I perceive there is a sameness about people’s reactions to these communal events. Their senses are sparked and their spirits uplifted with a certain tingle. I have been trying to isolate those elements that combine or create that tingle and have been working hard to learn to weave those elements in everyday life environments.”

Jerde says: “To attract the seclusion-possession addicts and the video-mesmerized, you’ve literally got to drag them out of the woodwork with something surprising.” He finds his answer in older ways of planning and design mixed with the new. He rejects the simplistic watchword of modern architecture that “less is more.” He has a watchword of his own” “Old is new.”

What does this have to do with the Horton Plaza center that Hahn seems finally poised to build? The key word in Jerde’s reasoning is “attract.” The center has to be so attractive as an architectural phenomenon that everybody will love the area and want to be there as much as possible. The body count is crucial because the place will be full of shops needing customers.

In the early stages of planning it was assumed that the shops themselves, especially the big-name departments there, would draw people even as they do at suburban shopping centers. Therefore the original design was much like what had worked in the suburbs, popular stores served by easy parking. But many critics pointed out that downtown was a special place in which the suburban formula would not be enough. When the department store wizards showed signs of sharing the doubts, Jerde and crew got a chance to try again, congratulating themselves that the critics were forcing more of the art of architecture into the project.

Jerde's enthusiasm for togetherness now came into play. He happily identified himself with Carl Jung's concept of synchronicity and cited Disneyland as the perfect example. Said he: "Watch the crowds. The minute they pass through the turnstiles, go under the first bridge and start down Main Street, something remarkable happens. Dads put their arms around Moms, the kids grab each other's hands and everyone is saying "Look at this, look at that, look, look.' Everyone grows a smile and immediately wants to buy something. They want a piece of it, they want to capture it.

"The whole day is enhanced by a feeling of togetherness, not only you with your own, but you related to the larger group. A camaraderie emerges, perceptions are heightened, food tastes better, the sunlight has a certain sparkle, and the old ache temporarily goes away."

The ruminating architect concluded: "I claim you can create the sense of community not only in amusement zones like Disneyland. You can pitch it in to ordinary real life so in effect it becomes a whole new possibility of lifestyle. Go out and have an adventure instead of staying alone. Create infinite exploration complexes."

Remembering such successes as Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco, Jerde says: "We have discovered that people don't want to walk in perfectly straight lines—it's boring. They like to curve and angle, dodge and weave. They like to walk up and down gentle inclines and small groups of steps. They like to have conversations right in the middle of crowds, to hear water, to stop for a minute and watch some street scene unfold, observe a mime, or listen to a musician—or just slide out of the way to a corner and let it all flow by."

Waxing Wolfish again, Jerde announces a theorem he calls The Critical Mass Design Quantum Diversity Coefficient of Measuring Positive Urban Vitality, and he explains: "That means the more kinds of everything you have the better it gets, and that goes for people. Shoppers, theater goers, browsers, hotel guests, conventioners, tourists, culture buffs, people watchers, entertainment seekers and even bag ladies—every class and kind. When you get such variety exposed to infinite choice and given enough time, you've got an institution that works. In effect what we are attempting to create in Horton Plaza is an instant institution. Farmer's Market in Los Angeles is such an institution as is the newly reconstituted Faneuil Hall in Boston. They create the magical kind of satisfaction that unties people's knots and they score high in the same coefficient. They are, in effect, people machines."

Jerde describes his new Horton Plaza in this way; "The project lies in a surrounding context of marvelously renovated Victorian buildings (Gaslamp Quarter), a dozen or more office buildings and hotels and an entirely new inner-city residential area. Into the midst of this we carefully place the people-machine, connecting it to the old city fabric. The basic armature of the machine is a high state-of-the-art, five department store, regional shopping center, 150 specialty shops and the usual accoutrement of kiosks and wall shops. Wound into this are six to 16 cinemas and three live performance auditoriums, seating in all 2,500 people.

There will be at least 46 restaurants, from fancy French and other exotica to basic hot dogs in 18 varieties. Scattered about throughout will be street performers and vendors—highly edited by mall management, of course, no flashing, no mugging, no current-cult cajoling. Sidewalk cafes will abound on plazas decorated with trees and fountains, amidst bridges, towers and urban canyons."

Notes Jerde: "Just outside the plaza's nine blocks are 20 acres of new market-rate housing and the high-rise jail on the southwest, a new cluster of senior housing on the southeast and the best drinking bar in the city on the northeast."

The marina housing may be expected to supply a steady stream of customers for the retailers. Jerde doesn't say, but he does suggest that the seniors should be a source of bake sales and free advice.

Before long San Diegans will have a chance to see and debate over a large model of the Horton Plaza project. Final touches are being put on the model in Jerde's Los Angeles studio, not far from the old

dream factories of Hollywood. People experienced in film fancywork have had a hand in making the model, intending it to be a delicious experience in itself. Mrs. Jerde, Cheryl, lent a hand too, being in charge of supplying little people, little animals, little vehicles to suggest life among the cardboard cutouts that represent the buildings.

Jerde would like to translate the model into a moving-picture, using the techniques developed in the Charles Eames studio whereby a sense of animation takes over and gives you a feeling of being there.

As seen to date, many of the buildings in the model have a blank look, necessarily because no one has worked out the details of their appearance, but much of this should be improved before the model makes its public debut in San Diego. This applies conspicuously to the Robinson department store, which has the most highly visible site, the south side of old Horton Plaza (Broadway at Fourth Avenue).

One hopes that this will not wind up a dumb, blind block of a building, like so many Robinson's. It should open out with glass and landscaped terraces to provide an easy transition from the old plaza. As it stands, the plaza is a sad-sack leftover of urban history. The fountain by Irving Gill has aged so miserably that it ought to be largely screened by a forest of trees. That way we can have our marble cake and eat it too,.

Certain of the old buildings around the plaza are to be incorporated into the "fabric" of the new development, especially the Bradley Building (Third Avenue south of the plaza) and the Knights of Pythias (Third Avenue at E Street). This is strictly a face-saving operation, for only the facades will be retained, and only in copies at that. Behind them will be spaces designed for merchandising.

Such face-saving is an old and successful San Diego custom, it being the method used for the 1915 exposition in Balboa Park, where the play of facades dazzled millions of visitors who entered plain exhibit spaces when they passed through the grand portals.

In a sense Jerde's plan for the Horton Plaza Shopping Center is the opposite of the 1915 expo. That is the main architectural experience is to be inside the project, though still outdoors (as in Ghirardelli Square). Outside the project will be a sea of auto traffic, some of which will be drawn into parking structures within the project. This is an architectural mistake forced on Jerde and company by the fact that the city failed to make provision for cars away from the center.

Though people hate parking in layers, the interior experience of Horton Plaza Center is expected to overcome the disadvantage. One feature guaranteed to attract well-off people is a terraced garden-office complex which is oriented to a curved configuration to dominate gracefully the interior of the project. The interior street system is intended to have all the appeal cited in the Jerde quote above. It will be a complex twist-and-turn pedestrian linkage, a gastrointestinal tract furnishing nutriment to merchants. Organic architecture.

Though the model will give you a chance to feel your way inside the project, it also may give you some negative reactions because you will be seeing it from above. You will get a bird's eye view of blank roofs. The towers that are designed to carry the logos of the department stores may suggest the watchtowers of an old-time prison compound. Keep it firmly in mind that the intent here is not only to build a better mousetrap to catch compulsive consumers; the architect's intent is to enrich togetherness.

Watch for the model and study it when it comes. There is still time for reasoned criticism to be heard. It is apparent to me that Jerde is trying to bring off a masterpiece that will show other cities the way. Help him.

Caption: Jon Jerde reviewing plans for the Horton Plaza Shopping Center, has included a hotel, offices and recreational features in the \$140 million project expected to begin construction this summer, according to the latest schedule.

February 12, 1982, San Diego Union, E-1, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art show by Piero Sartogo.

February 21, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Two music halls are working wonders in San Diego area: Performing Arts Center in El Cajon and the new Old Globe Theater.

February 26, 1982, San Diego Union, D-1, Casa “ladies” to raise funds for Balboa Park.

February 28, 1982, San Diego Union, E-1, Many have designs for parking lots at the County Administration Center on the waterfront.

March 14, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Architect Homer Delawie.

March 28, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, South County Regional Center.

April 18, 1982, San Diego Union, F-17, Ilse Ruocco’s art: modern with built-in survival.

May 2, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, F-8, ARCHITECTURE: Del Mar—Wright Harmony; Elegant Hideaways in Jungle by Sea

Many styles of residential design are tucked into Del Mar’s densely-forested landscape, left. Several houses won awards there, including architect Don Schoell’s own residence in shingles, below. Architect Richard Requa’s dream castle of 1925, below left is the frosting on the architectural treat offered by the village.

“Del Mar, population 5,017, makes the absurd claim that it is a city. It is not a city, it is a state—a state of mind. It is a place where people love wrinkles—not on their faces but in their view windows . The corrugations and canyons caused in the hillsides by the passage of a few million years sometimes have been smoothed away by builders, but enough are left to stamp a special identity upon the limited acreage (1,000) of the “village” which calls itself a city for political reasons.

The combination of seaside location and well-sculpted hills gives a sense of place unsurpassed in the San Diego region. Other areas of exceptional landscape character—the best being La Jolla, Point Loma, Rancho Santa Fe, Mount Helix—all have somewhat less going for them than Del Mar as regards uniqueness.

Westward of old 101—it used to be the main road between San Diego and Los Angeles—and is now called Camino Del Mar—the beach frontage is a rather tense display of jockeying and jostling for position. However, eastward of the great divide, Del Mar rises to meet the challenge of the site. There is plenty of jockeying here too, but the site itself takes over and controls the people.

The glimpse of ocean, the persistence of those immigrant canyons and overall the really high-rise forest all around gives a sense of the ultimate hideaway to those lucky enough to fasten their scent upon a branch or two. Architects know all about this so an unusual percentage of houses have the mark of the crafty architect upon them, or at least the mark of the would-be architect.

Many architects have elected to settle there permanently in their own carapaces. Many others have built there for themselves then have decided to move to less withdrawn areas.

As one Marwag put it: “Everyone here is an architect or a realtor, or both.” Another Marwag said: “If you took away the trees this place would show up as a planning nightmare.”

As things stand, most houses look cleverly adjusted to the site, though a few are too big, and quite a few could stand redesign. Rehab is forever going on. The overall effect is of a forest, even a jungle, filled with surprises.

Cruise about in it, if you dare, but expect to find wary natives peering at you from behind trees, darting dark looks. And don’t knock on doors, especially those few that bear the fascistic words, ‘Armed

Response.' Of course it's a friendly enough village once you are known to be reasonably free of evil intent. After all, it's a heavily college crowd."

The jungle look was hastened by an ordinance that forbade cutting large trees. As views of the ocean disappeared into the greenery, a new ordinance came along to allow cutting all trees except Torrey Pines, the local specialty of nature. For the future, Del Mar will not be as intensely green as the present.

Adjacent to Del Mar are two built-up patches of the City of San Diego. Del Mar terrace to the south, and Del Mar Heights to the east. The terrace is rugged like Del Mar and has its new complement of adventure architecture. The heights is a competition of show-worthy houses looking somewhat straitjacketed because of overly rigid street layout with mean sidewalks. Del Mar proper is sparing of street improvements and has contributed to the settled forest look.

A glance at the map tells you that the Heights and the Terrace should be joined to Del Mar. As a comprehensive environmental quantity, the people of Del Mar have not shown themselves ready for this.

As it happens the chief planner of Del Mar was a snake. He frightened a lady some years ago, so her husband built a wall around their property, all 26 acres of it, to keep the snakes out according to local legend. Anyway the snake beat a path to the gate and the slithery road has been called Serpentine ever since according to the latest version of the legend.

The writhing Serpentine crosses Avenida Primavera not once, but twice. At the upper crossing is the town's chief landmark, The Castle, truly an American _____ pipedream castle built in 1925, over a century after the heyday of Spain in these parts. The designer was Richard Requa, a distinguished forerunner of the architects who were to discover Del Mar.

Serpentine Drive supports a variety of houses that stand for the range of architectural effort in Del Mar since Requa. At 340 is a costly new spread for manufacturer Andrew Kay.

It was designed by his daughter, Jamie and her husband Mike Batter. They met while studying architecture at Harvard and she brought him West to help her conquer her hometown architecturally. They have done a number of houses and the extensive Strafford Court apartments. Easily spotted because of their compromisingly white form in the manner of Le Corbusier's early work. Meeting the Del Mar mystique halfway, they sometimes render the same style in natural wood.

The illustrious "Corbu" was especially appreciated at Harvard which had the only building he designed in this country, the Carpentier Center for the Visual Arts. The Corbu connection is celebrated uniquely by Batter Kay, that 's what they call themselves as a firm They built their own house at 1930 Bal___ Avenue where the garden features a life-size cutout of sheet steel Modular male figure that Corbu drew to illustrate his conviction about man as the measure of architecture.

The house has a flow of spaces that reminded me of the American genius, Frank Lloyd Wright, who was not a fan of other's. Mike Batter readily acknowledged the Wright influence and said that he expects Wright to be appreciated as time goes on even more than he is now.

The one and only Wright occasionally visited 446 Serpentine Drive, the house of son John Lloyd Wright. John too was an architect, inevitably in the Wright mold. The main interior space of his house, designed by John, partook of Father Wright's rhythmic rationing of elements, to which John and his wife added grace notes of high good humor.

The delightful Wrights are gone now, but the Wright ideas show up in house after house throughout Del Mar. A direct connection to the founding father of the method can be found through Herbert Turner, who once was an apprentice to John Lloyd Wright and has gone on to design numerous homes in Del Mar, all reflecting in some degree the lessons of the master. He's like the pianist who studied with the pianist who studied with Liszt.

Turner's own house at 510 Serpentine Drive is a marvel of space budgeting on a minimum site. The interior is distinguished by sky lighting, ideal for an artist's studio and gallery. Herb is a painter who has an artist's eye in house design. His cluster of 10 shingled houses on Noh Avenue is an interplay of forms carefully adjusted to the site. Father Wright would have to approve.

Among the numerous architects who reflect Wright more or less in their Del Mar residential fabrications Don Schoell has done a deft design as any at the south end of Pine Needles Drive, where you can't possibly find him unless you get a map from his San Diego office.

The house is shoehorned into an "impossible" site. It seems three times as big as it is because windows are everywhere, including overhead, and they all seem to look out on composed landscapes. The view from the entrance catwalk is one of the best views to be encountered in the town.

The many-faceted reflections of Frank Lloyd Wright's influence are so pervasive in Del Mar that the town has become, unintentionally, a monument to the master. Of course, corrosive critic that he was, he could not approve of everything, but I'm sure he would beam upon the widespread effort to build in harmony with nature.

It is not possible even to mention all the worthy architects that have labored happily in Del Mar, nor all who labored unhappily. Building anything larger than a bread box and maybe even the bread box calls for courting public opinion locally. The good-humored Herb Turner showed me a 5-foot shelf of reports he had to tender relative to a commercial project of his which never came out in the way he thought made sense.

One frustrated architect told me: "The town is full of intellectuals who seem to have time to attend all public meetings and protest change." He didn't mean intellectuals, he meant Ph.D's connected to UCSD. Whether intellectuals or real people, Del Mar residents as a whole would prefer that the problems of growth not be visited upon their choice acres.

Ray Jung is one architect who tried mightily to bring Del Mar into a greater readiness for the inevitable increase of bodies in the metropolis. He took on his Del Mar neighbors at exhausting length—and lost—in an effort to produce the town's first high-rise residential tower at the south edge of town.

Years ago, John Lloyd Wright wanted to do a hotel on that 20 acres behind the snake wall. He didn't get to first basement.

Now the owner has offered that potential Garden of Eden (minus snakes) to the "city" of Del Mar at a bargain price, filling the air with the fears and _____ of every Adam and Eve. Can the city rise to the occasion? It's another opportunity for a public agency to meet its budgetary needs, not from taxes but from land leases.

Will all the intellect and all the architectural power of Del Mar come up with a major design achievement on the super-site? Will it be the place where high-rise finally comes to Del Mar?

The irrepressible Herb Turner has a picture of himself in the battle of Del Mar, the same Del Mar he helped make handsome. I can hear his prayer: "Oh, Mars, God of War, grant ye thy favor of Del Mar."

June 27, 1982, San Diego Union, Britton's Belief in Good Design in His Own Words (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

"Our Fifth (Avenue) is potentially as mighty as New York's. It begins in the Gaslamp Quarter south of Broadway, where the winos stagger and scratch in astonishment as their old haunts take on the fancy-dress trappings of nostalgia. Decidedly, things are changing for the better in that quarter. The winos will seek their fifth elsewhere, the junkies will scapheap themselves and the street will bounce with scrubbed tourists as the scene turns to the turn-of-the-century and then some."

June 27, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, F-8, F-12, ARCHITECTURE: It's Dull now—Sights, Sites Need Uplift on Fifth Avenue

High-rising Mercy Hospital in Hillcrest urgently needed new elevators to a tower to carry them become the bean-walk of a new expansion. Above the elevator tower is glimpsed through the glass roof of a new entrance galleria or 'atrium' (as it is being called). The tower offices and waiting rooms also have some of the best views in town. Below them, blue tile was being laid last week to line a pool for waters cascading from a fountain strategically placed to greet visitors. An amazing aspect of the hospital is the wall of reflecting glass which plays double-vision games with the eyebrows of the hospital tower. Left of the glass is a tower full of new elevators.

If you are a veteran of the New York streets for whom Fifth Avenue is a memorable experience—erupting throughout its length with impressive architecture—you are bound to suffer a letdown when for the first time or the hundredth, you travel San Diego's dull Fifth Avenue. It will change. For the better?

Our Fifth is potentially as mighty as New York's. It begins in the Gaslamp Quarter, south of Broadway, where the winos still stagger around and scratch in astonishment as their old haunts take on the fancy-dress trappings of nostalgia. Decidedly things are changing for the better in that quarter. The winos will seek their fifth elsewhere, the junkies will scapheap themselves, and the street will bounce with scrubbed tourists as the scene turns to turn-of-the-century and then some.

Architects are leaders in buying and reshaping Gaslamp buildings to their hearts' content, but on the nearly three miles of Fifth Avenue that extend north of Broadway, clients have overshadowed architects in most instances, only a few demanding design quality fit for the future, hardly any trying to reshape the street. They must lift their sights and their sites, as this strategic street comes into its own in America's eighth largest city (soon to be seventh or sixth). They could plant more trees without waiting.

The pioneer architect-owner on Fifth Avenue was Lloyd Ruocco whose Design Center near Brookes Avenue qualifies now as a historical monument of modern times, especially because of its landscape setting. Its front line of jacarandas, and backdrop of limb-dropping eucalyptus, gave it oasis quality. Fifth Avenue Financial Center at Laurel Street, stirred in more of the jacaranda sweetness and delivered a big building that (more than any others except the bank towers at B Street) seems equal to the scale that should prevail on Fifth (Bird, Fujimoto & Fish, architects).

Other architects have grand designs for the avenue, waiting for money to loosen up. The trend will be to residential towers, sometimes mixed with offices. Prowlers from old New York will look for distinguished walk-in stores and museum-quality interiors to supplement the pleasures of strolling on the avenue.

At the north end of Fifth, past the comfortable old shoe-center of Hillcrest (a favorite for old-shoe strollers) is a complex of medical buildings that qualifies as an amusement center. Literally in the middle of the road, where Fifth is interrupted by Washington Street, is a high-rise cube of medical offices whose busy façade of rhythmic pre-casters seems to be a frozen dance—geometric and jazzy at the same time, Rockettes of the concrete set (Deems, Lewis & Partners, architects).

Just in back of all that jazz is Mercy Hospital, a real eye-stopper and gag-starter, rising highly visible and risible on one of the best sites in town. The funhouse aspect of Mercy is found in three laugh-backed towers, as seen from Fifth looking north. The Sisters of Mercy, who own the excellent hospital, pride themselves on providing an affluent atmosphere and they "builded" more happily than they knew. They and their architects (Hope Consulting Group) are to be commended for their fun-power towers, their stand-up comic construction.

The most eye-catching joke, worthy of satirist Saul Steinberg, is a tower that contains nothing but elevators. There are elevator doors on each "floor" but they only open onto tiny balconies that go nowhere—so far as mortal eye can see. Actually the elevator tower was left standing when the building around it was demolished.

The main hospital tower itself has an amusing look because of the numerous concrete eyebrows that favor the windows. Now a new element of fun has been added. A wall of reflecting glass, jutting from the hospital tower in such a way as to mirror the eyebrows. Result is a delightful fool-the-eye effect. Are you seeing more eyebrows through the glass, or is it only a reflection?

One of the best glass games in town, this is the work of Hope's C. W. Kim, who also designed the glass-happy Columbia Centre at Columbia and A Streets.

Newly risen at Mercy is yet another elevator tower. This one actually connects to the hospital through that mirror-glass section. It soars behind a new entrance atrium in front of which is a garden blessed with old trees, including jacarandas, a giant sycamore and a much wounded but never-say-die orchid tree which is being tended as carefully as our senior citizens. The sisters insisted on keeping it as it was the first tree planted when the hospital first opened. "Suit yourselves Sisters," said the Golden Company builders as they carefully worked around the relic. It became part of the garden design by landscape architects Kawasaki, Theilacker & Associates.

Additional new low-rise construction allows the hospital to set in motion an Ambulatory Care service whereby many surgical patients can be snipped at under hospital conditions and sent home the same day rather than incurring the costs that escalate as soon as a bed is involved. However—and here the joke may be on the hospital—the view of San Diego is so entrancing from the waiting-room windows in the elevator tower that patients and or their families may have to be pried loose. And a seductive new auditorium may be a place to snooze while being offered the benefit of lectures.

Viewed from the luscious garden, Mercy loses its air of amusement. From there the relation of new forms to old is ungainly and harsh. A miscalculation of color is one reason. All that new construction was finished with ivory plaster, more or less the color of the old eye-browed tower. If the new tower were to be resurfaced dark in plaster or more rewarding materials in contrast to the old, the angular glass on the west end would take on a more expressive look. At present that glass comes across like the eyes of a mercenary, not a medical surgeon, dreaming vacantly of his real estate.

Another dimension of joy that might still be added to this hospitable hospital is to make gardenish use of the extensive flat roofs atop the low-lying elements of the new plan. Let the ambulatory patients try out their ambles there. As presently finished, the roofs are a sea of depressing asphalt to look down on from the view windows.

A new grand entrance atrium—narrow but lengthy and impressively tall with skylights—is being relied on to set a happy tone for visitors. Here, and elsewhere in the halls of healing, interior designer Marshall Brown has introduced color boldly, though the atrium still suffers, it seems to me, from a surfeit of ivory color in the upper walls (inside as well as out). Part of the thinking here was to hang rug-thick wall fabrics, but these were vetoed by the monitors of health who declared them hard to clean. The same monitors did not veto the use of plants in the atrium and these should be a refreshing delight as planned.

Focal point of the atrium is an end wall, obviously crying out for sculpture though it is being left a blank for now. A terra cotta figure, maybe by James Hubbell in his attenuated Lehmbruck mode, would do nicely, thank you.

Why so much attention to Mercy Hospital in a column that started out to consider the quality of Fifth Avenue? For one thing, the hospital is essentially a public place, and is opening itself up for public inspection (complete with goodies) at 2 p.m. today. Also, it is the crown of Fifth Avenue, not to mention the court jester, a place of considerable if accidental architectural entertainment, an example of the built-in adventure that ought to be available to the public in building after building along the avenue as new projects listen to the plea of that special street begging to be discovered. Let us have a stimulating Fifth. Humor will help!

Increasingly, a prosperous career can be had if you set up smartly as an interior designer—Marshall & Brown (of Fifth Avenue) is so set up, as is Jim Malkin of La Jolla. Both have done extensive work in medical facilities where they are relied on to banish the coldness inherent in most work spaces.

Malkin has written a book (“The Design of Medical and Dental Facilities,” 1982, Van Nostrand Reinhold, \$36.50) which, if digested, could be a full course in how to do what the title implies. She identifies the challenge in terms of patient uplift, and cites “worst cases” of facility grimness, which she insists are not rare.

Malkin writes as though from the middle of a nightmare. “All too many hospitals and nursing homes resemble a Kafka-like (surrealistic) labyrinth of corridors—endless in their dimly-lit pallor and multiple layers of chipped paint. Examination and treatment rooms are naked except for the snakes of electrical conduit lashed to the walls and the unfamiliar assortment of medical equipment with strange nozzles, dials, hoses. Antiseptic white walls. Is it any wonder patients are fearful and anxious? Who can fault them for letting a disease progress to its advanced stages before subjecting themselves to the terror inherent in a hospital confinement?”

Paradoxically, many of Malkin’s illustrations are of medical equipment that looks especially nightmarish in black and white. Significantly, the same equipment looks friendly enough in color, especially if its setting is also a composition in color.

May 30, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, American Institute of Architects’ award.

June 27, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Fifth Avenue sights; sites need uplift.

July 12, 1982, San Diego Union, D-1, The case of the missing Panama-California International Exposition time capsule.

July 25, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Major architectural exhibition in San Francisco is called “The Presence of the Past.”

August 15, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, F-8, Four new high-rise office buildings in downtown San Diego; Columbia Centre, Bank of America Plaza, Imperial Bank Tower and Wells Fargo Bank Building; Britton’s Beliefs in Good Design in His Own Words (from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

“Really good city planning would see to it that all future towers have a reasonable share of downtown’s elixir, the super view. The towers would be controlled as to spacing, and they would be kept well back from the bay, unless they are thin and tall, so as to leave much of the waterfront land to be enjoyed by the millions who don’t own the towers. Of course, this would be easier if the city owned the land—as it once did—and leased it.”

Towering Feeling: Clearly, Our City’s Skyline Is Shaping Up

Four new towers make 1982 a year of rising expectations for downtown San Diego. How good are they as architecture? How well do they fit our needs?

Architect C.W. Kim, Korean born and slight of build, has lifted more weight than any other San Diegan. That is, he designed the biggest skyscraper to date, the 27-story, \$70 million Columbia Centre at Columbia and B streets.

For all its size, the building has the lightest look. In fact, depending on time of day and angle of view as you travel about the city it sometimes seems to disappear. Of course, fog helps the disappearing act. In this respect it has very much the same bewitching effect as the famous Hancock Tower in Boston—the one that kept popping its girdles and hurling huge sheets of glass into the street.

Columbia Centre is an all-glass, “curtain wall” building not because of bewitchery but because glass is the cheapest, satisfying way to clad a tower. Luckily, it is also tremendously appealing to the aesthetic appetite. You should have an exhilarating experience if you venture on the sidewalk surrounding Columbia Centre and look up. All those sheets of glass just hanging there, making love to the sky.

The glass actually looks more likely to fall out than the Hancock’s, but in fact it is positively safe, according to Kim and other experts of Hope Consulting Group, for whom he works.

“In the first place,” said Kim, “our sheets are only half as thick as Hancock’s. And they are set in silicone. As they expand or contract the silicone stays with them, and it also stays anchored to the inside frame. The sheets can’t get away.”

Even so, it’s a major sensation to just stand and contemplate that skyful of “panes” (almost 4 by 7 feet each) which have absolutely no metal overhanging them on the outside. If your faith in technology has been shaken lately, here’s a place to renew it. Praise be to silicone!

And don’t take glass for example either. Its greatest virtue, aside from the obvious utility, is that it appears to be forever smiling as it wards off the ravages of time. Always it wants to come clean. And it is reflective enough to deserve the name of philosopher. Treat it with the respect it deserves.

At Columbia Centre (a Douglas Manchester enterprise) Kim has overcome the boxiness such buildings are likely to assume. Terraces at the bottom and top give the volume a protean shape. The top terraces cause the building to “read” engagingly at a distance. What’s more, if you get up on one of those terraces, you’ll find beautiful views of the bay reflected in such a way that the building and the city seem to become one. Double your money’s worth, Mr. Manchester. All very well, so long as no other high rises are built too close.

Kim’s subtlety as a designer serves him well in the entrance atrium. The warm honey-butterscotch colors would be delicious even if the forms were less interesting. Dynamic angles are everywhere, but muted by lovely lighting. Fountain waters sound like a mini-Niagara, invigorating, if possibly a bit loud. The architects look forward to a sculptural addition by Richard Lippold, known for his wizardry with gold wire.

Red brick plays a successful part in the atrium confection. The same brick is used outside in utility towers which seems alien and ill-related to the glossy complex. Kim will be doing more refinements of this street frontage, making recesses for shop entrances. Perhaps, he will find a way to integrate those utility towers—ivy overcoats, maybe.

Landscaping already has been used generously on the terraces, which will come to life with plenty of foot traffic as the shop activity revs up. But the glory of the terraces is that they provide office workers with some relief from the tinted-glass, air-conditioned interiors. (Columbia Centre also has a system to circulate natural air when air conditioning can be turned off.)

Going on stream at the same time as Columbia Centre is the Trammel Crow Tower at Seventh Avenue and B Street. There hardly could be greater contrast in color. The Crow is crow-black.

Excuse me, it is being called Imperial Bank Tower and is blatantly labeled “Imperial Bank” at the roofline. (Columbia has and needs no hat label, though it supports the largest American flag, also unnecessary.) The Imperial Bank management in Los Angeles couldn’t care less that this signage is a crude addition to the San Diego skyline but the San Diego city management ought to care more. (Imperial Bank lately went into a new building in little Woodland Hills, where such gauche signage is forbidden.)

Dynamic skyscraper design has erupted all over America under the sponsorship of the Trammel Crow Co., teamed with Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Chances are that their 24-story, \$50 million entry in the San Diego downtown scene, by ways of architects Ware and Malcolm of Irvine, will retain its look of singularity, with no one else presuming to build in unrelieved black, with rounded corners yet.

The easy reaction to Imperial Crow is that the designer was living in the world of Darth Vader. A better reaction might be to appreciate the design's sophisticated sleekness, suggestive of the well-groomed matron who wears black to perfection. She might wear a bit of white, but not those letters. A monogram maybe.

The blue-jean crowd have a hard time relating to the street-floor scene at Imperial Bank Tower. Behind a black boxy arcade exceptionally tall sheets of glass are stiffened not by metal but by glass fins, five-eighth inches thick, held in place by our old friend silicone. This study in sheer swank cost some \$300,000 more than a plainer system would. Even so, the scene inside the glass has a glum look. Experiments with color and light are called for to liven this street scene. What a chance for flowers!

Our sophisticated lady has a frumpy maid and a spoiled brat, and the three occupy a whole block. The maid is the plain-Jane Parkade, which may get a new dress of black. The brat is a troublesome matron built between the tower and the parking structure.

The atrium has the same black glass as Mommy Dearest, but the glass is sloped toward the sky, the intention being to ensure enough daylight. In fact, it lets in too much sun, even though it is somewhat heat-deflecting. What's more it casts an ugly pattern of shadows inside because of the trusswork holding up the glass wall. Another bratty distraction is that the sloped glass readily collects a coat of dust and droppings.

The enclosed space of the atrium needs drastic modification, after which it may be one of the grand gathering places of the town. At the very least, natural air should be let in. A more radical solution would get rid of the sloping glass altogether and make here a partially roofed garden, maybe with a waterfall.

Another contrast with Columbia Centre (for the present anyway) is the fact that Imperial Tower is jammed in New York style—too close to other skyscrapers. Again, we have weak city councils to blame. They should have required more spacing of skyscrapers. For example, both San Diego Federal and the Union Bank towers should have been built farther back on the blocks they control. Imperial Tower itself would have been better sited on the south end of the block, but that would have meant eliminating the Parkade and building new parking underground.

A third skyscraper shaping up this year is the Bank of America's 16-story, \$27 million regional office occupying the whole block from B to A streets west of Fifth Avenue. After several schemes were considered BofA and architects Tucker, Sadler & Associates correctly decided to raise the tower on the north end of the block, thus opening some plaza space on B Street. They also had the worthy notice of elevating the plaza above the traffic thus allowing the bank to develop its main money-changing floor under the plaza opening on to busy B.

Though it will not be ready for months yet, the bank's first floor already is a remarkable space, with several levels of ceiling height and with peek-a-boo windows for executives to keep an eye on the traffic from their offices on the second floor. The second floor is still under the plaza because the plaza is designed as a series of giant steps.

The executive suite is a splendid space of impressive height, with plenty of glass. The execs probably will find that they want to curtain all that glass so they won't see too much of what is passing outside. Like a nightmare, five or six huge signs come screaming through BoA's new windows—advertising other banks.

Even without the signs, there is a visual riot going on out there among the pattern of the various buildings which loom too close. Some of the patterns are quite handsome in themselves, but together on the street they create an asphalt jangle. The strongest pattern yet is promised for a skyscraper to be built on B Street directly across from BofA, again on the wrong end of its block. This one, First Interstate Plaza, will have horizontal stripes, like those worn by James Cagney in his prison roles.

The BofA tower is a strong pattern, resembling a giant ladder on which the giant Cagney might escape from prison. The giant steps of the BofA plaza are consistent with this fantasy. The stepped plaza will be inaccessible to mere humans because after building it, the bankers got queasy about letting the public up there. One report is that BofA, once the victim of riots, could not be sure it would happen again over the BofA executive heads.

Many San Diegans were surprised when the world's biggest bank did not design the biggest San Diego skyscraper. However, in constructing the plaza, BofA has put in place an element of good urban design that could foster a second-story street life for downtown—something much to be desired in view of the continuing crush of autos. Surely, one day, BofA will have the confidence to open it.

Here we have many architects ready to produce a city-scape that could be just great if better coordinated. But who's in charge? The City Planning Department certainly is not. It has contributed some ideas, but it is subservient to the City Council. The same applies to the Centre City Development Corp. (CCDC), whose staff and consultants, for the most part, can only do a patch-up job of urban design after decisions are made based on who shows up with money.

CCDC has hardly any influence on the architecture of the three projects discussed here so far, but did take part in design of the 24-story, \$47 million Wells Fargo Tower just being completed on Broadway between First Avenue and Front Street—a Koll Co. project.

Local architects and planners, acting as agents of CCDC, advised the out-of-town architects (Langdon Wilson) as to what would be desirable. The building should have plenty of plaza so as to pull people in off Broadway. What's more, for healthy circulation it should have a plaza at second level as well as at street level, and the building itself should be so profiled as to play a "laidback" role and give maximum possible visibility to its neighbors the Spreckels Building (historical) and the federal buildings (proudly new).

The architects succeeded admirably in meeting these requirements of good urban design. The spaciousness is literally sensational. The plazas are pleasurable, especially the upper one where you can walk all around the building as on a ocean liner deck, minus the rock and roll.

Another sensational feature of this glass tower is that—largely because it has more than four sides it changes shape before your eyes when seen at a certain distance. If you can accept another human comparison, it is as majestic as a slow dance by Martha Graham. The tower's serenity is flustered, however, by overbearing bank signs near the top.

There are some weaknesses as well as strengths in the governmental input to the Wells Fargo Bank Building. The street level plaza of the tower, combined with the plaza of the federal buildings could have been a major downtown park except that no way could be figured to get rid of Front Street, which carries autos through the center of the spread. And the ribbon of painted aluminum part way up the tower reads as a Band-Aid for sore windows, rather than, as intended, an extension of the Spreckels cornice line. Nice try.

All four new skyscrapers have marvelous views of the bay, the park or the mountains, except if you look in certain directions where you get an eyeful of other towers too close. No wonder our builders are jockeying for position on the water's edge where nothing can rise up to block their views.

At this moment in San Diego's architectural evolution the most significant view of downtown is to be had from a point on Harbor Drive 300 feet north of Broadway, where the two glass towers—Columbia Centre and the Wells Fargo Building—rise lightly to the left and the right of a heavy jumble of older buildings. The jumble represents the past, and the glass the future—a future full of promise as the glass tries on different colors and different shapes, putting up a show that implies infinite possibilities for architecture.

Really good city planning would see to it that all future towers have a reasonable share of downtown's heady elixir, the super-view. The towers would be controlled as to spacing, and they would be kept well back from the bay unless they are thin and tall so as to leave much of the waterfront land to be enjoyed by the millions who don't own the towers. Of course, this would be easier if the city owned the land (as it once did) and leased it.

In judging all major buildings proposed for San Diego, especially along the coast, one could give them high marks in proportion to how well they interplay with the outdoors, how well they catch the spirit of this special place, and how well they recognize our balmy atmosphere. The four new towers, in varying degrees as described, address themselves to this opportunity.

September 9, 1982, San Diego Union, E-2, Frank Lloyd Wright exhibit at San Diego Museum of Art.

September 26, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Forces build for boom in downtown San Diego; Britton's Belief in Good Design in His Own Words (excerpt from San Diego Union, January 9, 1983)

In spite of tough times, big changes are shaping up that will decide whether San Diego remains a refuge with a character all its own, or becomes just more of the Los Angeles sprawl.

The bullet train is pulling ahead, knocking over political and financial barriers. The hardware is ready. In this decade it will be slithering between Los Angeles and San Diego, offering millions of persons a shuttle in hardly more than an hour. So, the crowds of the one city can be in the one place as easily as in the other.

If those crowds are downtown-minded, they may well prefer San Diego's downtown to L.A.'s, if only because it is better located by the water cooler. With all those people coming, we have to be all the more careful about the architecture, landscape architecture, urban design. If these are developed to sufficiently high standards along with the other arts and entertainments, we must have right here, the best of all possible worlds dripping prosperity.

Our downtown's main problem will be super crowd management. Bear in mind that downtown San Diego will be the chief focal point also for Tijuans, who will have grown by next century to comprise the largest city of the West Coast as Professor Harry Anthony keeps warning us. Count in millions and start planning as you never have before.

In the same decade new pressures are growing to bowl over the Defense Department and win some of the military turf for a major "international: airport at either El Toro (Tustin) or Camp Pendleton. San Diego's failure to budge the Navy out of Miramar for a similar purpose is no proof that the more northerly effort will also fail. The airport would be primarily to serve Los Angeles, but San Diego would gain immensely because the bullet train would get us to either Pendleton or El Toro faster than most of us can now reach Lindbergh Field. Thus, Lindbergh can be given up to better uses, reclaiming great swatches of waterfront, adding mightily to our downtown appeal.

The evaporation of air traffic in and out of Lindbergh means that downtown can grow as high as sanity aspires. True, many people hate skyscrapers, primarily because they have seen so many bad ones badly located, but certain places on this earth—and our downtown is one of them—are going to build very high skyscrapers. Our official business is to build only lovable skyscrapers.

They are most lovable when they stand at sufficient distance from each other, especially in locations like our downtown where the views are staggeringly beautiful. Officials have allowed (indeed they had no power to stop) an oppressive crowding of our skyscrapers to date. Fortunately, air traffic forced a height limit but higher buildings will be proposed the minute air traffic is routed elsewhere.

By that time, perhaps we can have creative zoning, allowing the city to decide—in the public interest—which skyscrapers can go higher than the current limit. All skyscrapers over 30 stories should be owned in part by the city itself, which would decide their location, their height and their contents. Upper

floors would be essentially residential, including massive public housing which, in effect, would be subsidizing the less wealthy residents. Honest seniors, in particular, should qualify for this Shangri-la treatment.

It turns out that we Americans are still a revolutionary people, sometimes unwittingly. Our grand dragon Howard Jarvis led us to cut off the power of government to tax us, so government had to go into land development to gain funds, even in the most “conservative” places. Our Port District has done just that, very profitably, for years. Now the county is into the game, most notably its plan to lease our land it controls on the waterfront around the County Administration Center (CAC). The city is into various areas of downtown redevelopment which surely will pay off in due time, though they seem to be forever getting off the ground and, in most cases, are rather timidly conceived.

In the context of what has been discussed here, watch for the first of the city’s well-spaced 60-story skyscrapers to rise out of the ruins of the Marina Housing (which has just been built as a collection of low-rise condominiums and has about 20 years of usefulness ahead of it before it succumbs to the pace of California change.)

Another 60-story skyscraper can be built by a high thinking city council of the future astraddle the freeway near old Cortez Hotel on the edge of Balboa Park. El Cortez Hotel itself will be preserved as an historical conversation piece, an imposing monument to the attic agitation that frequently erupted in San Diego early in the century. The city will succeed in preserving the good oldie as part of a “deal” with the owners, who will get the city’s nod to build convention center-to-end-all convention centers.

The explosion of design on El Cortez Hill will serve also to integrate Balboa Park more intimately with downtown. Among other benefits, it will reclaim the southwest corner of the park which became poorly used when the freeway went there! Necessarily, given the millions of the morrow, downtown’s density will be felt also in much of Hillcrest and Mission Hills as well as Golden Hill and North Park. This means that at last Balboa Park will be like Central Park in Manhattan with skyscrapers all around its fringe.

There may even be one or two or three official city-owned skyscrapers inside Balboa Park—near the Zoo, perhaps, or near Naval Hospital. Don’t be shocked. You need only look at the precedent at Mission Bay Park where the city’s income is all the greater because of the high-rise hotels.

Of course anything built in Balboa Park will be of the highest visual appeal, won’t it? The Navy right now is in the throes of refining the appearance of the huge hospital about to go up. It will be the biggest construction ever in the park. If you have ideas about it, they should be addressed to Louis Naidorf, chief designer for the architects, Welton Becket & Associates, Santa Monica.

Public say as to the future of Balboa Park as a whole is being sought by landscape architect Ron Pekarek, who has a contract to provide a new master plan. In his struggle to solve traffic tangles, he proposes a new main entrance where you might least expect it, on the south edge of the park where Pershing Drive meets some of the freeways. A second important entrance would be via 25th Street, which meets still more of the freeways. And a train of some sort is proposed on Twelfth Avenue to funnel people into the park from the trolley stop at C Street.

Inside the park, Pekarek would limit the circulation of autos and even provide multi-level semi-concealed parking in selected canyons. One such parking structure would replace the old Ford Bowl, where Starlight Opera is now leading the theatrical equivalent of a paraplegic existence, paralyzed by the noise of the planes at Lindbergh Field. As the planners now think, a new Starlight Bowl might be built at the north end of the park at the point where Florida Street begins. The singers can’t just hold their breaths until the planes quit Lindbergh.

But there is a better place for Starlight Opera, not in the park at all. A great bowl, Starlight Bowl, could develop in the space between the County Administration Building (CAC) and the waterfront, a relatively quiet place where the prevailing air currents would favor musical acoustics and where aircraft noise is minimal.

The county's plan is to let developers build hotels on its land just north and south of the CAC, and also dress up the space between the CAC and the water. A competition for this purpose was won by a team that included the architects of the Navy Hospital, Welton Becket & Associates.

However, one of the competing architects, the Hope Consulting Group, offered a design that included curving arcades reaching out from both sides of the CAC toward the water. These arcades are especially significant architecturally because, though they could be improved in detail, they have the effect of magnifying the symmetrical Beaux-Arts design of the CAC itself.

But more than that the arcades suggest the outlines of an amphitheatre trying to be born in that space between the CAC and the water. The Hope firms arcades are only slightly above ground level. If they were raised 20 feet or so and extended further toward the water, they would form the rim of a deep enough bowl—or, rather, a half-bowl suitable for musical shows.

The interior of the bowl need not be a vast wasteland of concrete though it would need clusters of seats. It still could be a handsomely landscaped park space where many of the audience could stretch out on (or under) blankets. The stage might be a fixed installation at the water's edge, or it might be on barges that when not needed, would float away and leave the splendid view to be enjoyed by lunchers and loungers. The crown feature of the amphitheatre would be the CAC itself. The hotels behind the arcades would sit atop ample public parking, and they would be free to develop architecturally in complete independence from the style of the CAC, which would be getting all the stylistic support it needs from the Beaux-Artsy arcades.

On that level of reasoning, the county's intention to create a complex that is both profitable and valuable to the public begins to make sense. The amphitheatre could be a waterside wonder rivaling the Sydney Opera House, though it would be an outdoor facility especially suited to San Diego (and hardly to be matched in Los Angeles).

The marriage of public and private high intentions can indeed produce the best of all possible worlds. The impending wedding on the waterfront should appeal to all our sentiments because it has something old (CAC), something new (the hotels and the amphitheatre), something borrowed (the public land), something blue (the gorgeous bay, which is the reason San Diego may live happily ever after as the prime downtown of all Southern California and Baja.)

September 26, 1982, San Diego Union, BOOKS-4, Review: "The Architecture of Arata Isozaki" by Philip Drew.

October 24, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, Orchids and onion architectural awards.

November 7, 1982, San Diego Union, F-1, La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art will have show bearing the title, "The California Condition—a Pregnant Architecture."

January 5, 1983, San Diego Union, Architecture James Britton Dies at 67, B-1. B-4,
His writing helped shape the face of San Diego for three decades

by Linda Kozub, Staff Writer

James Britton II, whose criticism of architecture in San Diego helped shape the face of a growing city for more than 36 years that his articles were published in magazines and newspapers here; died Monday night in his downtown home.

Mr. Britton, 67, died in his sleep. He had been hospitalized with a heart ailment for three weeks last November.

Since 1978, he had written a weekly column in the Sunday Homes and Building section of the *San Diego Union*.

As Mr. Britton's longtime friend, architect and former city planning commissioner, Homer Delawie said, "He was an observer of architecture and planning and a critic. As such he didn't fit in any mold. He sensed design. He felt design and space. And this is why he was a good critic.

"Jim could feel spaces. He could feel how buildings went together and how they related to their environment."

Mr. Britton was a former editor of the American Institute of Landscape Architects Journal, and in the 1950s, was associate editor of *San Diego Magazine*. He covered fine arts, music and city planning for that publication. He also was a frequent contributor to the *Los Angeles Magazine*.

His magazine work led to a national award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1959. He spent the following year studying American cities under a Ford Foundation grant and studied at Harvard University and other colleges.

In 1968, Mr. Britton served as special architectural journalist for the AIA in Washington, D.C.

Gerald Warren, editor of *The Union* said: "Mr. Britton pioneered the field of architectural criticism in San Diego. He was dedicated to excellence and he loved his city.

"We will miss his provocative column in *The San Diego Union* and we will miss him."

Delawie said Mr. Britton was respected by professionals, but was considered controversial because he would openly criticize architectural design.

"Not everyone agreed with him. But almost everyone in the profession respected what he said. He was constantly striving to get people to open their minds to new ideas," Delawie said.

Ralph Bradshaw, president of the local chapter of the AIA, agreed.

"He was someone who made you stop and think, whether it was the shape of downtown or the way the corners of a building were."

Bradshaw noted that the San Diego Chapter of AIA presented Mr. Britton with a special award in 1978 for his contributions to the community as a critic of local architecture in *The Union*.

Mike Stepner, assistant planning director, recalls that Mr. Britton served on many city committees for urban design and preservation. Stepner worked with him on the creation of a guidebook to San Diego for the 1977 AIA convention here.

He pushed professionals to strive harder, said Stepner, adding that Mr. Britton favored the historic preservation of older neighborhoods here, so that the old and new would blend in the city.

Jim prodded up to be more visionary. He constantly pointed to the need for design quality.

Mr. Britton was born in Connecticut and spent his youth in that state as well as in New York. In the early days of his career, he wrote feature articles illustrated by his own sketches for daily newspapers. He once described himself as a "sketcher and a scribbler."

Mr. Britton did not receive a formal college education, but his sister, Teresa Britton, said: "My brother was educated in the sense of being well-informed and well-read."

Edwin Self, editor and publisher of *San Diego Magazine*, observed: “Jim had the ability to see into the future. He could write the English language with great beauty. He was an elegant writer.”

In the early 1950s, Mr. Britton wrote on a free-lance basis for both *Point Newsweekly* and what was then *Magazine San Diego*. He wrote full time in 1955 after the two publications merged.

Self recalled that for two years Mr. Britton campaigned against the commercial development of the Mission Valley area, wishing the area to remain as open space.

He didn't win that fight, but he raised the consciousness of San Diego. He was the forerunner of the environmental movement here. It's the kind of thing that won him national awards—he came out swinging.

Close friends and family recall that Mr. Britton was coached by his father, James Britton I, a portrait artist.

Surviving are his sister, Teresa Britton of New York, two daughters, Ursula Britton of Los Angeles and Barbara Britton of New York, a son, James S. Britton of Tennessee and two grandchildren.

Arrangements for a memorial service are pending.

January 5, 1983, San Diego Tribune, B-4. Architecture critic James Britton died at 67 in his sleep at his downtown home Monday night, January 3, 1983.

James Britton II, an influential architecture critic in San Diego for more than 30 years, died Monday night.

Mr. Britton, who would have been 68 on January 20, died in his sleep at his downtown home where had been recuperating from a recent heart attack.

Mr. Britton, a native of Connecticut, had lived in San Diego since 1948, contributing articles on architecture criticism to various publications here and around the country, including *San Diego Magazine* and *The San Diego Union*. He has written a weekly column in the *Sunday Homes and Building Section* since 1978.

Although he was not trained as an architect, friends, city planners and local architects described him as an influential and perceptive observer of architectural trends.

“He tried to keep us on our toes, and make people aware of what was happening in San Diego, both good and bad,” said Homer Delawie, an architect, former city planning commissioner and longtime friend of Mr. Britton. “He treasured San Diego and he wanted the best for it, and, I think, he was what architectural criticism is all about.”

“We didn't always agree, but he always made those of us in development think,” said Mike Stepner, assistant city planning director for the city. “This is a great loss for the city.”

Surviving are two daughters, Barbara Britton of New York, and Ursula Britton of Los Angeles, and one son, James S. Britton of Tennessee, a sister and two grandchildren.

Arrangements for a memorial service are pending.

January 8, 1983, San Diego Union, Memorial Service for Britton, B-7:1-2

January 9, 1983, San Diego Union, F-1, F-13, F-15. James Britton on San Diego. . . The Last Hurrah . . . a defense of government's role in San Diego city planning over the last 75 years.

The accompanying column by James Britton II ends four years of his architectural criticism in the Currents in Homes section of The San Diego Union. Britton, who died last week, mixed a historical perspective with a vision of the future. In this last column he defends government's role in city planning over the last 75 years and lauds—and lambastes—developers for their uneven record.

Ah, Glenn Rick! I remember him well. When I first came to San Diego in 1948, I visited him in his office as chief engineer for the city of San Diego. He sat serenely poised behind his desk, looking for all the world like Franklin Delano Roosevelt, man in command.

Rick never liked the comparison, but then he was operating in a city dominated by Republicans (and he was one), who often objected to government meddling in the development business.

His office was in a grand building that never would have existed except for the plansmanship and financing provided by FDR's Democratic administration during the Depression. The building on the waterfront at the foot of Cedar Street, called the Civic Center when it included county and city offices, is now called the County Administration Center (CAC). In the 1980s, as we shall see, this building was to be the key for a masterful piece of city planning—led by Republicans.

Early in the century this city developed the outlines of a superior planning overlook. After World War I, planning director Rick, who joined the city staff in 1927, had high hopes for an orderly evolution of his city.

He formulated plans in 1931 for a grouping of public buildings along the waterfront (including the CAC) in fulfillment of the 1926 city plan by city consultant John Nolen. After World War II, Rick modified the concept into the "Cedar Street Mall" for public buildings, stretching all the way from the bay to Balboa Park. It was voted down by a public confused by big lies on billboards.

Rick also had an architectural control ordinance ready to maintain the something like the charm of Santa Barbara, but this proved unpopular. It was opposed most loudly by architects who were ready to go off in all directions of design, good and bad, and wanted no government telling them how.

One thing they couldn't take away from Glenn Rick was Mission Bay Park. Dedicated in 1949, it stands as his monument because it was he who did the most to bring together all the powers and monies needed to turn a spread of mud flats into what is today our best park (better organized than Balboa Park), practically paying for itself. Federal money was very big here, too, provided by Democratic-controlled congresses for flood control and jetties. Incidentally, the concept of Mission Bay as a park was only hinted at in the Nolen plan.

Rick's lieutenants prepared plans to extend the Mission Parkiness far into Mission Valley. They wanted this gorgeous stretch to be a "commercial recreational" zone—which is essentially what both Mission Bay Park and Balboa Park are—quite appropriately for a city so bent on greeting visitors.

However, in 1958 the May Co. (based in St. Louis) discovered the rich and growing market of San Diego and announced it wanted to build a shopping center in the heart of Mission Valley. Plan-conscious citizens (a minority) knew and cared that the effect of this would be to pack the valley with more commercial than recreational activities, creating a second downtown of sorts and speeding the decay of the old downtown.

You might expect a worthy City Council would do everything possible to prevent such a disaster. But our council of the day was paralyzed like so many stuck fish when May Co.'s director, Walter Brunmark, issued an ultimatum: "If we are not given the privilege of the right of way of your city to locate in Mission Valley, we will not come here. This is a final statement."

The council—Ross Tharp, Dudley Williams, Chester Schneider, George Kerrigan, Justin Evenson, Frank Curran and Mayor Charles Dail—voted unanimously to let May have its way—in other words to let the Mayhemmers plan the city. Mayday! Mayday!

Among the downtown merchants who opposed the sellout to May Co. was George Jessop who said, “We might as well tattoo on the council wall: HERE DIED PLANNING IN SAN DIEGO.” Jessop, of course, was to open a shop in May Co.’s Mission Valley Center when downtown sickened and his customers fled thence. The center was popular from the start because it offered ease of parking, which downtown couldn’t begin to match.

The Planning Department itself had given up on providing convenient shopping downtown, because of opposition by many small minds. The department’s best alternate site for May Co. was Kearny Mesa, north of the valley.

But May Co.’s project had one feature that showed private planners aren’t all bad. Its mall in the valley was placed *above* the broad acreage of ground-level parking.

If the company had sponsored that sort of layering downtown, it would have set a standard that other big downtown developments could follow. Gradually the whole downtown would have been a free and easy place for pedestrians, who could circulate in the sun while their assorted tin cans were parked just underfoot.

Another benefit of lifting the pedestrians above the natural ground level of downtown would have been that vehicular traffic, parking and truck deliveries would be orchestrated in such a manner that downtown would be an inviting place to enter rather than the snarl of ever-more-confused wheel-wrestling we have been cultivating.

Some readers will recognize that this is an oft-repeated pitch of mine—for double-decking downtown. It doesn’t get anywhere because the Planning Department really believes in mixing people and cars at one level and business leaders lean that way too. When the Charles C. Dail Community Concourse was being designed in the late 1950s, the architects wanted to underlay the project with parking, but the leadership preferred to build a high-rise cage for cars.

The next big opportunity for double-decking downtown came in 1971 when Pete Wilson won the mayor’s office. He succeeded in assembling large tracts of slummish land and finding investors to build on a large scale. But the new buildings had parking for themselves—in cellars and cages—adding to the complexity of street traffic. Despite Wilson’s commitment to good planning, he did not have the resources to handle the overall traffic problem except in makeshift ways.

The most ambitious of the Wilson-era projects is Ernest W. Hahn Inc.’s Horton Plaza shopping center, finally being built this year. Here, too, parking will be in cellars and cages awkwardly related to traffic. But one of the chief features of the center will be a Robinson’s department store, much like the May Co., which refused to consider downtown 25 years before. Wilson deserves a plus mark for currying Hahn.

The best new piece of planning downtown involves the old landmark on the waterfront, the County Administration Center, where I found Glenn Rick in 1948. The county Board of Supervisors held a serious architectural competition last year and came up with a well-articulated scheme to surround the CAC with hotels that will include a great deal of parking as well as upper decks and terraces all open to the public. This, in high contrast to the takeover of planning in Mission Valley by the May Co., represents government playing its proper leadership role with investors happily going along to their profit, of course.

What is being proven here, in this still-Republican city, is that adequate governmental planning is indispensable if the public life is to reach its potential. That message needs to be heard in Washington.

Perhaps Peter Barton Wilson, the new US senator from California, our former mayor, will make a significant contribution in this regard.

January 13, 1983, San Diego Union, B-1:1-4, Memorial Services for Britton

February 16, 1983, San Diego Union, F-1:1-4, Memorial Services for Britton at First Unitarian Church, 4190 Front Street, at 1:30 p.m. today' family said a memorial fund in Mr. Britton's memory is being established with details to be announced shortly.

March 1983, San Diego Magazine, 80-83, 244. **The Battle of Britton: James Britton II, 1915-1983**, by EDWIN SELF.

James Britton walked unannounced into my office in the summer of 1950. Very formally, he inquired whether I would be interested in some articles by him dealing critically with the quality of San Diego's city planning, architecture and urban design. He was an impressive looking man, dignified, sizeable, sure of himself, seeming older than his 34 years. It's not everyday a writer drops in and starts talking like Lewis Mumford. Did we realize, he asked, what a critical time this was for San Diego? Was I aware of the shameful inadequacy of the plans for the city's new public library—in site planning, size and quality of design? Did we understand the urgency of moving to preserve Balboa Park's beloved and priceless El Prado—the string of “dream palaces,” he called them—from careless destruction by a know-nothing City Council?”

He sold me on the spot. We shared his convictions about the importance of planning and also his dream that San Diego could be one of the most beautiful and livable cities on this planet if only we could plan quickly and intelligently to avoid the mistakes of Los Angeles. I sensed we had found a writer who could bring to this assignment not only an immense background of professional knowledge but the talent, integrity, intellect, sensibility and courage to make people listen to him.

There was something else about him—a fire in his belly, a *passion*, in both his person and in his writing—that all of us who worked with him came to recognize and understand. Jim was a purist, a painstaking, sometimes cantankerous perfectionist—traits that could drive his coworkers up the wall at deadline and proofreading time. But always we knew he believed deeply in the urgency and necessity of the work he was doing. Sometimes I got the feeling he thought he might be the last person with his finger in the dike, trying to stop the deluge from descending on a city he loved.

I also was aware that these qualities would undoubtedly get us in a peck of trouble with some powerful interests in this area who might feel their ends and beliefs were threatened by such a forceful voice.

James Britton II died in his sleep January 3 this year. He was 67. Jim was a regular contributor to Magazine San Diego from the August 1950 issue to September 1955, the date of our merger with Point Newsweekly for which he also had been writing. In that year he was named an associate editor of San Diego Magazine and Point and served in that capacity until 1961, when he resigned. He returned as an occasional contributor in 196_ and then in the mid '70s, began writing for us regularly again. His last article for San Diego Magazine appeared in December 1977. He began his weekly column for the San Diego Union in 1978, continuing his never-ending crusade for civic sanity and beauty.

In those 32 years, Britton's powerful prose prodded San Diegans to look at their city and region with fresher eyes and better informed opinion. He was ahead of his time in most of his bold and often unconventional solutions to planning problems. His ideas fascinated readers but sometimes seemed to them (and to his editors) gloriously impractical—brilliant but politically unachievable. But Jim at heart was really engaged about the necessity for daring innovation in our public and private planning and building. San Diego forever would be going along with cheap, slapdash and mediocre solutions arrived at in haste by equally ignorant politicians under pressure from special interests. So he believed in copy that had shock value. Upset apple carts and mind-boggling ideas got people's attention. He was trying to wake the town up.

In the '50s his early warnings were right on target. San Diego was just beginning to experience the sprawl and blight that can overtake a city when it is going through pell-mell growth. City fathers and the public here were failing miserably to stand behind measures and standards recommended by the city's professional planners and its more far-seeing citizens. Short-sighted and hasty decisions that would plague us for decades after were being made by the Council and the Board of Supervisors.

An associate editor of the magazine from 1955 to 1961, Jim also assumed the role of critic-at-large. He presided over a 6 to 12-page section each month we called "Art of the City," which dealt not only with planning and architecture but with art, music, theatre, higher education—whatever he felt affected the overall cultural and aesthetic climate and demanded critical comment. The arrangement bumped him frequently into other staffers' domains and sensibilities, so there was recurrent scuffling over who got to cover what. Britton usually won. In retrospect, I believe his claim that he welcomed other contributions so long as they were of a sufficiently high quality was probably accurate and honest, in theory. But it could be hell to make work in practice.

James Britton helped reintroduce this city to the wisdom and economic good sense of planning. I say reintroduce because on his arrival from New York in 1948 he found a strong tradition of public concern for the environment had flourished here in the early days of this century. People like George Marston, John Nolen, Bertram Goodhue, Kate Sessions, Richard Requa and Irving Gill were our first futurists. They made their considerable influence and foresight felt in such grand achievements as Balboa Park and its El Prado, Presidio Park, the La Jolla community center complex and the Nolen Plan. Jim fell in quickly with the scattering of artists, intellectuals, enlightened businessmen, designers and architects who were the inheritors of this tradition. They included Lloyd and Ilse Rococo, John Lloyd Wright, Amistead Carter, Roger and Ellen Reville, Walter and Judy Munk, Homer Delawie, Russell Forester, Hamilton Marston, Sim Bruce Richards, John Rohrbaugh, Jim Mills, Eugene Price, Bob Mosher, John Henderson, Glen Rick, Pat Malone, Harry Haelsig, George Scott, Dan Dickey, Tom Robertson, Hugo Fisher, Martin Stern, Karl SoBell, Sam Hamill, Kramer Rohfleish, Marguerite Schwarzman, Eleanor and Dorothea Edmiston, and a few dozen more. Pete Wilson was the inheritor of their thought and work.

In fact, future historians may note that a curious cross-town-fertilization seemed to take place in the '50s and early '60s between the activist-intellectuals of Mission Hills and Point Loma and their formerly self-isolated and stylish counterparts in La Jolla. Suddenly all seemed to comprehend they had urgent civic problems in common and they'd better get their brains together to try to solve them. San Diego Magazine editors and writers like Mary Harrington Hall and Harold Keen, as well as Britton, were in the forefront of this action.

Britton was no ivory-tower critic. He marched into the big fights and gut issues with courage and gusto and he dealt with realpolitik as well as architectural and design profundities. One of his most memorable editorial battles was waged over Mission Valley was to be a green belt in the heart of a metropolis or a great commercial valley only five minutes from downtown and set in the midst of a semi-dry riverbed that could become a raging torrent in a matter of hours in the rainy season. In a series of articles over a two-year period he argued eloquently for its preservation as a green, commercial recreational zone. To give the reader an idea of the power and ring of his prose in those years, we quote from two of those pieces.

(Quoted articles appear in chronological succession in this collection.)

Within a two-week period in 1959, Jim Britton walked off with two prestigious national honors for the excellence of his work in San Diego Magazine. Competing against national magazines and journals, he was award second prize for architectural journalism in the American Institute of Architects annual national journalism awards competition—probably the first national prize ever won by a city magazine. The following week, he received notice that the Fund for Adult Education of the Ford Foundation had granted him a fellowship for a year's study of city planning and art history. Jim chose Harvard and travel to Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., New York, and other urban centers where exciting work in urban design was taking place.

The piece that won the A.I.A. award for Britton was a masterful critique, titled “Downtown Tomorrow,” of what San Diego’s then decaying central city would become, and an analysis of the forces that were blocking the evolution. The jurors commented: “We awarded second prize to Mr. Britton for his article in San Diego Magazine for an original and critical estimate of the development of downtown San Diego. Written for a local audience, the author did not hesitate to level hard-hitting criticism. The jury was impressed by the high quality of the writing Mr. Britton maintained in a series of articles in this magazine.”

We excerpt from it here because we think it’s Jim at his stylistic best, and also because the arguments he pounds home are as fresh and germane today as they were almost a quarter of a century before the groundbreaking for the Horton Plaza project.

December 1959

(Excerpt may be found in the chronological section of this collection.)

We’ve said this before, but it bears saying again. We believe that future historians of this region are going to shake their heads in disbelief at the prophetic body of work contributed by James Britton in a San Diego career that spanned 32 years. He was far in advance of his time in understanding and being able to convey to others the consequences of environmental blight produced by public and private carelessness and greed. The city needed him badly during his lifetime and he gave his life to his lifework. I see no one around to replace him. We—all of us—will miss him terribly. We owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude for the endless love and energy he expended in our behalf.

November 1983, City voters approve proposal to build waterfront convention center

Date Unknown (May 7, 1984?), Ilan Lael, Vol. 1. No. 1. Tribute to James Britton: VITAL SPARK by Wayne Tysora

One of the main things that made him exceptional was that his grasp exceeded his reach. He was a seer, in the sense that a great poet is. He thought much faster than he talked, so his conversation had the quality of being distilled into essences. Jim loves to throw people together. He would invite one or two new friends to meet one or two “old” friends over dinner if someone else would cook it. He was a catalyst, starting a subject but letting some one else carry it, shifting the conversation when it started to bore him. He believed, along with Robert Burns that . . . ‘tis friction’s brisk rub that provides the vital spark. Bristly he was on occasion, but always with a gentlemanly reserve. He stood his ground. He abhorred . . . ignorance in action. He did not suffer fools and knaves lightly.

His talents were so varied and so potent that no one human could possibly have seen them all to their full fruition. He was an artist in several media, and all that he did expressed special power. Even his sketches had the fundamental character that distinguishes art from mere repetition. They spoke the deep truth, usually the beauty hidden in the subject. His music had the same quality. His playing sang to the soul of the composer and the listener. He had the same kind of genius that Leonardo da Vinci had. There is a story about Leonardo that rings true to both men, whether or not it’s factual. It seems that Leonardo was busy in his studio, surrounded by the products of his work, when a friend asked: “Leonardo, don’t you think you’re spreading yourself to thin?”

But, being his own most terrible critic, none of his work, no matter how far it surpassed the public taste, was ever good enough for him. Still, he threw himself against mankind’s most pressing problem, its reconciliation with its *okos*, its house, in its total meaning. He saw this total world-life architecture as the ultimate expression of responsibility toward a life-affirming conduct of life. Needless to say, he saw much conflict in today’s society of sad skeptics so steeped in the mundane and oriented to expediency that it can’t see the supreme *practicality* of those principles of reconciliation that were so obvious to him.

Nonetheless, he was undaunted, not in any mere crusade, but in the job, difficult for most of us, of simply doing that which fell to him to do—of being truly, therefore, beautifully, his own true self while expressing the depth of his concern with the destiny of mankind's house.

SAMUEL WOOD HAMILL

November 22, 1989, San Diego Union, A-11, Samuel Wood Hamill; architect left his mark on public facilities

Samuel Wood Hamill, who was called a watchdog of San Diego architecture, died yesterday in a nursing home after a long illness. He was 86.

He will be best remembered as the 1935 construction coordinator of the waterfront County Administration Center. Mr. Hamill was on the job when decisions about the building's dome, elaborate tile work and other details were being considered.

Mr. Hamill was the architect who restored Balboa Park's House of Hospitality in 1934 and designed the garden court of Café del Rey Moro.

Friends say that this was the gentle man's favorite place in San Diego. They remember his stories about working on the site with wrought-iron artisans, carpenters, masons and landscaping contractors until a balance among nature, architecture and art was achieved. A sculpture by the late artist Donal Hord is the courtyard's centerpiece.

"He was a saint," said Mary Ward, the historian of the County of San Diego. "Sam was our generation's equivalent of George Marston and the others who came before him who set aside the acreage and gave us Balboa Park."

As the director of San Diego's WPA Design Office, Mr. Hamill was responsible for the original master plan for the Del Mar Fairgrounds and race track.

In the 1950s, Mr. Hamill participated in the design of the County Courts Building and Sheriff's facilities. He was the architect for the Marston Co. and the Union Title and Trust Co. He worked for school districts throughout the county and designed or renovated many homes. Mr. Hamill was part of the Balboa Park Citizens Study Committee that established plans to rehabilitate many Balboa Park buildings.

In the early 1960s, Mr. Hamill accepted the task of coordinating five other architects in the design and construction of the Community Concourse. He was a founding member of San Diegan's Inc. an organization interested in revitalizing downtown. As one of the founders of the Committee of 100 the architect continued to support the preservation of Balboa Park buildings.

Mr. Hamill served as president of the San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1938, 1939 and 1955. The national wing of the professional organization elected him to its College of Fellows in 1957. He retired in 1968, after 40 years of practice.

More than a decade after his retirement, however, Mr. Hamill was asked to advise the County Board of Supervisors on plans to build hotel and office space on the County Administration Center's parking lots. Mr. Hamill approved none of the designs submitted, and believed that open space next to the heart of government was preferable.

"Sam was a watchdog for the city," said Bruce Kamerling of the San Diego Historical Society. "He was one of the few architects who was committed to aesthetics rather than to the mechanics of architecture."

Mr. Hamill's concerns extended beyond architecture. He was president of the Community Chest in 1950. He served on the boards of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, the Museum of Man, the San Diego Museum of Arts, the Boys and Girls Aid Society, Citizens Coordinate for Century 3, National Catholic Community Services, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce and the Navy League.

Mr. Hamill was the second chairman of the San Diego Historic Sites Board. He was an active member in the San Diego Historical Society, Toastmasters, Lions and Rotary clubs. In 1971, he was awarded life membership in the San Diego Floral Association.

In 1931, he married Georgette Rousseau of Mexico City. She died in 1975.

Survivors include a sister, Ruth Mary Hamill of San Diego, daughters Georgette R. Serrano of San Diego and Annette M. Orendam of Dallas, eight grandchildren, and 12 great grandchildren.

The rosary will be recited today at San Raphael Catholic Church in Rancho San Bernardo. A funeral mass will be said at 10 a.m. Friday at the church.

The family suggests donations to charity rather than flowers.

December 17, 1989, San Diego Union, F-1, F-2. Relighting the light of architect's life, by Kay Kaiser, Architecture Critic.

Tonight at about 7 o'clock, the exterior lights of the County Administration Building will be relighted.

The public will be able to see the *grande dame* of the waterfront, wearing her evening jewels for the first time in 16 years.

If all goes as planned, the lights of the county building at Cedar Street and Pacific Highway will come on just as the decorated boats in the Holiday Parade of Lights reach its front yard on the harbor.

This will be a happy civic event, a natural blending of activity on land and sea that doesn't happen often enough.

But, for many people, the event will be a final "candlelight" vigil for the San Diego architect who designed the building in 1925. Samuel Wood Hamill died on Nov. 21 at the age of 86.

Anyone who ever talked with Hamill knew that the county complex was his favorite job. His 1934 renovation of the House of Hospitality in Balboa Park ran a close second. Finishing just a nose behind were the Del Mar Fairground's picturesque Mission-style Turf Club tower and entrance, grandstand and exhibition buildings.

I am ashamed to say that I didn't realize how many of his projects actually defined San Diego until he was gone. In his old age, we talked about technical things, how the concrete was finished, or how politicians shaped architecture in the 30's. He often said he wasn't much of a designer, but he did know how to run a job.

However, in terms of architecture that has become synonymous with San Diego, few architects can claim more landmarks than Sam.

He did his best work when the city was a more gentle and romantic place. The architect shared those qualities.

When the county building was added to the National Register of Historic Places last year, Hamill was asked what he would like as a memento of the event. He said he wanted an old picture of the building

with its façade lights on. The architect had missed seeing the drama of his design against a black sky since November 1973, when an energy crunch darkened many buildings.

Hamill's request sparked interest in restoring the lighting system, said Don Wood, the president of Citizens Coordinate for Century 3. That organization and the County Board of Supervisors, with particularly exuberant help from Supervisor Brian Bilbrey, sponsored the fund drive that raised roughly \$100,000. The Port District gave \$40,000 and San Diego Gas & Electric contributed \$20,000. The remainder came from many corporations and individual donors.

The lighting system will operate for \$16 a night. It is the same system that General Electric engineers designed to illuminate the Statue of Liberty.

"We will be honoring Sam tonight," Wood said. "I hope he's looking down and thinks the building looks pretty good."

The county building originally was the seat of city and county government. It was built as part of a general push to attract money to San Diego after the Depression. The revitalization of the Balboa Park buildings for the 1935 exposition also was part of this plan.

The architectural firm of Johnson, Gill, Requa and Hamill restored many park buildings. It not only won the commission to design the city/county complex, but also sent Louis Gill, the nephew of the well-known architect Irving Gill, to Washington to secure government financing.

Late in 1935, 100 draftsmen and other workers were assembled in a vacant Balboa Park building to begin the restoration plans. Sam Hamill, then 32, was named the chief architect.

Fifty years later, Hamill still talked about the dignity of the tiled domes and other symbolic details he so carefully supervised. He asked if I had noticed the images in the city seal in the terrazzo floor in the lobby. It was no accident that large glass areas in the lobby and mezzanine trained views to the harbor and the city.

The details of the iron railings and the office door woodwork are exquisite; perhaps many of them had been drawn full size. The 30-ton eagles that guard the Pacific Highway doors were designed and drawn in cross-section under Hamill's sometimes obsessive direction. The architect never ran out of praise for the Los Angeles man who designed and installed the tile on the domes and around the doors.

"Sam was interested in combining the arts," said architect John Henderson, a friend and former employee.

He believes that Hamill's favorite project as the 1934 restoration of the House of Hospitality and the development of the Café del Rey Moro restaurant. "It really was just a huge barn. Sam developed the interior courtyard and gardens," Henderson said. This was done without changing the elaborate façade of the 1915 Exposition building.

He remembered Hamill telling him about the tile, the scored and colored concrete, and the close work with craftsmen. The turning of the wooden railing spindles and the scale of the wrought-iron work were important to Hamill.

"Every time he went to the park, he went into that garden. He sat there and thought it had turned out all right," Henderson said.

The design was more than all right. Hamill brought art, architecture and landscape together in ways that are now called a sense of place. Each detail is related to the others, and the result is a place that could be confused with no other.

Henderson believes that Hamill's approach gave you things to appreciate from 100 feet away, 50 feet, 10 feet and just one foot away, when your hand touched the doorknob. "However, the doorknob was somehow related to that first, overall view," Henderson said.

Hamill used these principles of interrelated beauty in the many schools, commercial buildings and private homes he designed.

When Lillian Rice, the architect of Rancho Santa Fe's central district, worked for the Requa firm, she asked for young Hamill to work with her on the carefully scaled and detailed adobe structures. This experience was useful, when Hamill designed the Mission-style buildings on the Del Mar Fairgrounds in 1935. The soil on the property was just right for adobe, and the material was mixed on the site.

But not all Hamill's projects grew so naturally from the ground.

The city named Hamill the coordinating architect for the brainlessly modern-style Community Concourse project in the early '60s. He had the thankless job of controlling at least four architectural firms that acted like cats in a bag until the complex at Second Avenue and B Street was completed. Any credit for unity here can be credited to Sam's diplomacy.

"Sam was a romantic living in a Bauhaus world," said his friend and fellow employee, Al Macy. "He was a very good technician, but he always was an artist. You saw an entirely different Sam when you looked at his drawings. They were flowery, lacy, very romantic sketches.

"When he got involved in the business of architecture, he found that there was very little tolerance for the solely artistic, and a very great demand for the precise and the defined."

Architect C.J. Paderewski, 81, also a former employee, said he believed Hamill was held back by the times in which he lived. Hamill graduated from the University of California in 1927—just in time for the stock market crash of 1929.

"There was no construction. Frank Hope, Sr. and all the other architects were sitting in their offices looking at the ceiling," Paderewski said recently.

"They had no way to express themselves. But when they got a job, they would pour out their hearts and souls."

That is exactly what happened to Hamill's landmark projects.

His architecture will continue to speak for him well into the next century. Young architects will study the word in an attempt to find the secret of its beauty and sincerity.

"Sam was an architect's architect," Paderewski said.

"He left his mark in San Diego. The one thing an architect can be proud of is that his good buildings will be here for a great number of years. That's what makes the profession worthwhile.

"Every now and then, architects realize that they really accomplished something. Sam can rest easy."

