

# THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS NEWS

G. HOLMES PERKINS, FAIA, WALKER ART  
CENTER IN MINNEAPOLIS, BARBARA WARD,  
TO RECEIVE AIA MEDALS

Hold For Release Until February 11, 1977:

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 11, 1977--Architectural educator G. Holmes Perkins, FAIA, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis and noted economist Barbara Ward, the Baroness Jackson of Lodsworth, D.B.E., have been named by The American Institute of Architects as recipients of 1977 AIA Medals in recognition of their achievements in inspiring and influencing the architectural profession.

The Medals will be presented at the Institute's annual convention in San Diego, Calif., June 5-8, 1977.

G. Holmes Perkins, FAIA, who served as dean of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania from 1951 to 1971, has been a major figure in the development of the design movement known as the Philadelphia School.

Under his direction, the Division of Architecture expanded its offerings to cover a total concern with the built environment including not only architecture but city planning, urban design, and landscape architecture. Over the years he recruited a remarkable faculty whose members included Lewis Mumford, Ian L. McHarg, Edmund N. Bacon, FAIA, Romaldo Guirgola, FAIA, Robert LeRicolais, Hon., FAIA, and the late Louis I. Kahn, FAIA.

(more)

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Dean Perkins also led the way to an active participation by his faculty in civic affairs. For ten years (1958-68) he served as chairman of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and he played a major role in many other organizations responsible for the redevelopment and revitalization of Philadelphia.

Perkins' influence, said the AIA Jury on Institute Honors in making the award, was instrumental in developing a whole generation of outstanding architects.

One of the nation's liveliest cultural institutions, Minneapolis' Walker Art Center has achieved recognition for its continuing efforts to support and promote quality design through its program of outstanding exhibits, lectures, and publications. The Center's publication, Design Quarterly, has spread the Center's concerns throughout the country by publishing information about design and architectural trends, often long before they become part of the mainstream.

Founded in 1946 as Everyday Art Quarterly, Design Quarterly changed its name in the 1950's and increasingly became an issue-oriented publication in the 1960's. It reflects the Art Center's growing community concerns, focusing on such problems as restoration of the inner city, mass transit, the effects of school architecture on the learning process, and communicating urban information.

Design Quarterly is the focus of the Art Center's design program and issues of the publication serve as catalogues for the center's design exhibitions. Mildred S. Friedman is editor of Design Quarterly and James E. Johnson is its graphic designer.

Barbara Ward is one of the world's most widely respected authorities on economic and environmental development. Her distinguished career as a writer, lecturer, educator,

(more)

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and molder of public opinion has been marked by the publication of a number of influential books, among them "The International Share-Out," "The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations," "Space Ship Earth," and, most recently, "The Home of Man," the unofficial report of HABITAT, The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

Ward was a moving force behind the organization of HABITAT and her extraordinary efforts earned her the praise of Enrique Penalosa, Secretary-General of HABITAT, who said, "With her dedication and personal energy, and her ability to state her case free of official constraints, she has become the rallying point of a growing movement which demands that the international community reset its priorities and come to grips with the real rather than the cosmetic problems of mankind."

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For further information: Nancy Hallmark, The American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006. Telephone (202) 785-7264.

## G. HOLMES PERKINS

Born October 10, 1904 - Cambridge, Massachusetts  
Exeter 1922; Harvard, A.B. 1926; M. Arch 1929

Taught University of Michigan, 1929-1930;  
Harvard Graduate School of Design 1930-1951, Charles Dyer Norton  
Professor of Regional Planning 1945-1951, and Chairman of the  
Department of Regional Planning;  
Dean of the Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania, 1951-71  
University Professor of Architecture and Urbanism, 1971-  
National Housing Agency 1942-1945; Acting Director of the Urban Development  
Division 1945.  
Consultant to Ministry of Town and Country Planning, Britain, 1946.  
Consultant to the United Nations - 1946, 1955, 1957 and 1959.  
Consultant to the Baltimore Redevelopment Authority, 1960- ; to Worcester (Mass.)  
Redev. Auth. 1965- ; to Cambridge (Mass.) Redev. Auth. 1965- ; to Washington, D.C.  
Land Agency, 1961.

Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.  
Member of American Institute of Planners.  
Chancellor of the College of Fellows, American Institute of Architects, 1964-1966.  
Former Director Citizens' Council on City Planning (Philadelphia).  
Former Member of the Cambridge (Mass.) City Planning Commission.  
Past President of the Philadelphia Housing Association, 1954-1956.  
Chairman, Philadelphia Zoning Advisory Commission, 1956-1958.  
Chairman, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, 1958-1968.

Member Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, 1958-1968.  
Member Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, 1958-1968.  
Member Philadelphia Commission on Higher Education, 1953-1968.  
Member Philadelphia Port Corporation, 1964-1968.  
Trustee Fairmount Park Art Association, 1960.

Editor of the Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 1948-1952.  
Contributor to Woodbury's The Future of Cities and Urban Redevelopment, and  
Hamlin's The Form and Function of 20th Century Architecture;  
author of Comparative Outline of Architectural History;  
Contributor to The Town Planning Review, AIP Journal, AIA Journal  
and Survey Graphic.

Statement by the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in support of the nomination of the architect educator, G. Holmes Perkins

"Over the past 25 years within the contemporary American scene, there has arisen a new design movement with a powerful ideology and a clearly defined design approach. This movement stemming from Philadelphia, heralds a new renaissance that might prove to be at least as important to the course of architectural history as the emergence of the Chicago School in the late 19th Century. Dean Holmes Perkins, as Chairman of the Planning Commission, rebuilt and redefined the University of Pennsylvania's Division of Architecture, making the city the laboratory and an important subject matter of the School."

"The Philadelphia School"  
Jan C. Rowan  
Progressive Architecture  
April, 1961

It was as an educator that the greatest work was done as Holmes Perkins defined the policies and structured the activities of the Philadelphia School, and its faculty during the 1950's and 1960's.

We will try to summarize G. Holmes Perkin's educational contribution. Prior to his coming to the University of Pennsylvania in February, 1951, the School offered programs only in architecture which was so narrowly defined as to exclude urban design, city planning and landscape architecture. His condition for coming was that the University agree to expand its offerings to include a total concern with the man-made environment requiring the creation of new faculties within the School devoted to city planning and landscape architecture. These in their own special way would include regional planning based upon both the social and the natural sciences (ecology). The University in fulfilling its promise gave strong support in the development of all three closely united programs - architecture, city planning, landscape architecture and regional planning. The essence of success lay in the good fortune of recruiting faculty some of whom were already world famous as were Mumford and Kahn, but many made their fame while associated with the School as in the cases of Giurgola, Wallace, McHarg, Geddes, Crane, Qualls, and Meyerson.

A major strength during these formative years lay in the very active participation of the faculty in civic affairs. During this time, Dean Perkins was successively President of the Philadelphia Housing Association, Chairman of the Zoning Advisory Commission which rewrote the thirty-year old zoning code, and later for ten years (1958-68) Chairman of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. Equally active as members of the Boards of the Housing Association, the Citizens Council on City Planning, as advisors to the Redevelopment Authority and as research directors of many official city studies were

Mitchell, Meyerson, Wallace, Andrade, Giurgola, Geddes, McHarg, and Wheaton.

The element of reality permeated all the instruction in the School and was kept alive by the professional involvement of nearly all the faculty. As examples of their success in practice, a few cases must be mentioned.

Kahn was working abroad, as well as, in the United States, and by his work and creative philosophy and devotion to youth attracted a great and dedicated group of students whilst at the same time gave leadership to a diverse and talented faculty.

Wallace built an outstanding urban design firm upon the foundation of his pioneering work in Charles Center and the Inner Harbor in Baltimore. Combining later with McHarg, the firm now is a world-wide leader in regional planning based upon the methods developed in the School by McHarg.

Geddes and Qualls have an almost unique record in competitions. Second prize in the Sidney Opera House, and winners of the Birmingham Civic Center and of the international town planning competition for the expansion of Vienna, Austria.

Crane was urged by Perkins to go to Boston to gain practical experience with the Boston Redevelopment Authority and then returned to form an urban design program uniting the city planning and architectural offerings. Based upon his teaching and outside professional work, he also built a fine firm and went on to become Dean at Rice University.

Bower, first a student and later a teacher, has become equally successful beginning with his success in winning the competition for the International House, Philadelphia.

Giurgola also came to the School almost directly after graduation (as did Crane, Geddes, Qualls, Wallace, McHarg) and made his reputation while teaching.

Research played a crucial educational role in the growth of the school and was in large measure responsible for the phenomenal success of the Ph.D. program in city planning and in architecture, which is the largest in the country. Over thirty-five active candidates are enrolled in architecture and nearly double that number in city planning. In the 1960's the School was engaged in research with annual budgets running from \$400,000 to \$750,000.

Harris produced an economic base study for Philadelphia and was the principal inventor of the new methodology used in the Penn-Jersey transportation study correlating land use and transportation. Proto-typical housing studies and designs were made by Andrade in collaboration with local builders as guidelines for the Eastwick redevelopment. Environmental studies in New Jersey and on the Brandywine were made by Wallace, Strong and McHarg. The Baltimore Housing program underwent a three-year examination by Grigsby. Perhaps the most ambitious undertaking was that of Gutkind, who came to the School on the recommendation of Lewis Mumford, then visiting professor. Gutkind, before

his death, wrote eight volumes of his projected International History of Urban Development, which is without question the finest such history available today.

To support this stupendous effort, Perkins solicited and received grants from three foundations and the National Foundation. The above are only a few of the larger efforts from among several score of research contracts undertaken between 1953-1970.

# UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURE  
INSTITUTE FOR URBAN STUDIES

CITY PLANNING  
INSTITUTE FOR URBAN STUDIES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
INSTITUTE FOR ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

FINE ARTS  
INSTITUTE FOR ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

**N**OWHERE is our cultural heritage more visible than in our cities. These incubators of civilization have been given form and color by architects, landscape architects, city planners, painters and sculptors who throughout the ages have skillfully interpreted society's needs and aspirations. Though each of these professions has a special and arduous discipline of its own, all share an interest in design and a dedication to the social and cultural well-being of the community. The School is dedicated to the proposition that by daily contact of the faculties and students of these professions that each will gain added vitality, develop a mutual respect, and through the habit of collaborative work will meet more effectively the challenge to create a new kind of urban space and architecture which is a true and humane expression of the social and spiritual needs of tomorrow. In our minds education and research become inseparable. In the School, the tireless search of educator, scholar, student and professional for new solutions, new methods and technologies is fostered through the Institute for Urban Studies and the Institute for Architectural Research which together have more than a dozen projects currently underway.

The education of the architect must once again evince a concern with the total urban environment wherein a deep and abiding sympathy with social and spiritual problems can become a major force in the shaping of architectural forms. In times gone by, the architect came to his profession by natural selection from the experience of painting and sculpture, always at a mature age and with an artistic consciousness already well defined. Yesterday a schism existed between the technological view, rooted in the sciences and the imaginative, whose ways of expression derived from an academic vocabulary of forms. Today the realization of the indivisibility of architecture poses the difficult task of developing in an imaginative climate a technological structural sensitivity. Though social demands joined to technical means may be the foundations of architecture, these are not enough for, as Huxley has said, "this leaves out all the upper stories." The search continues therefore for that quality of space and light which can evoke a deeply satisfying and predictable spiritual response in the user and beholder.

The professional programs of the School include all those which are most closely identified with the design of the urban environment. All are graduate. An A.B. degree is the basic prerequisite for admission to the Bachelor of Architecture program as it is for all curricula in the School. In order to graduate in three years, a student must have had as an undergraduate some calculus, physics, two years of the history of art and architecture and a heavy full year's course in basic design. A large majority of students enter with this preparation; however, a minority of about twenty per cent need four years because of lack of preparation in basic design or a combination of other courses.

The Exhibit is arranged to explain the grouping of architectural courses:

#### BACHELOR OF ARCHITECTURE

<i>First Graduate Year</i>		Panels 3, 4 and 5
<i>Second Graduate Year</i>	both terms—Studio	Panels 6, 7 and 8
<i>Third Graduate Year</i>	first term—Studio second term—Thesis	Panels 9, 10 and 11 Panel 12

MASTER IN ARCHITECTURE both terms  
CIVIC DESIGN two years

Panels 13, 14 and 15  
Panels 16 and 17

Students in Civic Design also take a complete program in City Planning as described in that section of the Exhibit.

Faculty recruited by G. Holmes Perkins in the formation of the Philadelphia School

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years at Penn.</u>
Louis I. Kahn	1955-74
Lewis Mumford	1953-57
Robert LeRicolais	1953-76
August B. Komendant	1959-69
Stanislawa Novicki	1951-76
Mario Romanach	1962-76
Ian L. McHarg	1952-76
Robert B. Mitchell (former director Phila. City Planning Commission)	1951-72
Gerald A. P. Carrothers (now Dean - Arch at C.P. - York Univ.)	1961-68
David A. Crane (Dean - Rice University)	1958-72
Erwin A. Gutkind	1958-68
Allan B. Jacobs (Director San Francisco Planning Commission)	1965-67
Romaldo Giurgola (Chairman Dept. Architecture, Columbia)	1954-65
Martin Meyerson (President, University of Pennsylvania)	1952-58
W. L. C. Wheaton (Dean Environ. Design., Berkeley)	1952-66
George W. Qualls	1952-76
Edmund N. Bacon (20 Years Executive Director, Phila. City Planning Commission)	1964-76
John A. Bower, Jr.	1955-76
Peter Shepherd (Dean, Graduate School of Fine Arts, U. of Pennsylvania)	1958-76
Robert L. Geddes (Dean, Princetone University)	1951-65
Britton Harris	1954-76



# WANTING TO BE

BY JAN C. ROWAN

*Last month's first part of the P/A Symposium on the State of Architecture brought out quite clearly the prevalent confusion and aimlessness in today's architectural design philosophy. The sixties, it appears, began without any coherent ideologies and systematic disciplines; instead, a strange free-for-all is the admitted, accepted, and defended design approach. There are indications, however, that among this confusion there is already in existence a new design movement with a powerful ideology and a clearly defined design approach. This movement, stemming from Philadelphia, heralds a new renaissance that might prove to be at least as important to the course of architectural history as the emergence of the Chicago School in the late 19th Century. In this article, P/A's Managing Editor traces, describes, and explains this significant new development in contemporary architecture and refers to it as:*

## THE PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL

"... negation of everything is in itself a form of servitude..."

"Chaos is also a form of servitude. Freedom exists only in a world where what is possible is defined at the same time as what is not possible."

"... the artist's task will not only be to create a world, or to exalt beauty for its own sake, but also to define an attitude."

ALBERT CAMUS, *The Rebel*

"There are some whom Nature has created... with a soul of greatness and a heart of such immeasurable daring that if they do not set themselves to difficult and almost impossible things... they have no peace in their lives."

VASARI, *Lives of the Artists*

We need buildings because we need usable spaces. We need architecture because we need spaces that will evoke an emotional response in those who enter them. It has always been so. This does not mean that "architecture" cannot exist without architects, but it does indicate what should be the primary aim of an architect in his work. And yet, during the last forty years or so, much of architectural thinking, and most architectural writing, criticism, and teaching was on a strange track of glorifying alien gods. Architectural theories and design criteria emerged from within the domains of painting, sculpture, economics, sociology, psychology, naturalism, engineering, and technology. And it is from these that architects drew their inspiration.

Today, when many old issues are no longer valid or have lost their appeal, when the atom has exploded the benevolence of the machine god, and the nihilistic brave new world of "less is more" is dying a natural death on the curtained stretches of New York's Park Avenue, a spiritual vacuum has developed in the profession. This was sharply brought out in last month's first part of the P/A Symposium on the State of Architecture. Experimentation with a multitude of approaches is a valuable mental exercise, but, continued too long, it can only lead to shallow design and to stylism. It cannot produce a meaningful expression with universal validity.

There is an indication, however, that among this "I-am-smarter-than-thou" world of design acrobatics, there exists in Philadelphia a powerful new movement with a powerful gospel.

It is historically true that a profound and lasting idea is usually born, rooted, and then develops because of a set of conditions existing in a particular locality. As one Philadelphia architect puts it: "A profound thought stems from a deep, troubled experience, which in order to be universal is always local, relative to the local instances and problems. That is to say that art is basically local; it grows from a limited milieu where all the components of a general experience are questioned, lived upon, and an answer deeply matured. The local experience bears constant witness to all the things that one does not know. We think because we don't know. Only in this environment do communication and universal understanding

Rome. No architecture was born as a universal apriority. The houses of Greece are similar to those of Naples but quite different from those of the Roman countryside. Yet there are many more miles between Greece and Naples than between Naples and Rome. The story of the Renaissance is one example of local re-elaboration of the classical language."

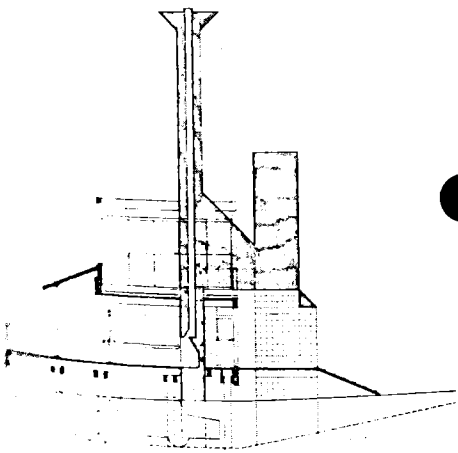
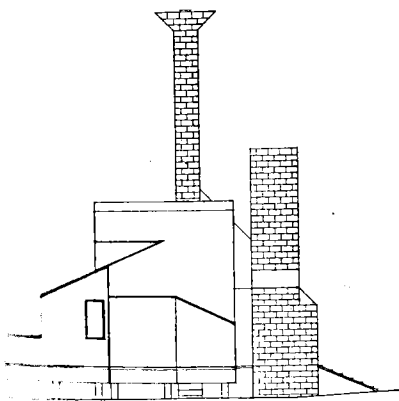
Within the contemporary American scene, Philadelphia does seem to be a place with such troubled experiences and profound thoughts. The glory of Philadelphia's historical past and later industrial expansion faded gradually until the city became a vast conglomerate of run-down traditions, depressed economics, and corrupt governments. This situation started changing about ten years ago when several important influences, acting jointly upon each other, began to raise Philadelphia from its stupor. What resulted finally is a growing vigor of the city and a fertile architectural climate. It is difficult to pinpoint all the influences and all the people responsible for this change, and only some will be mentioned here.

Two able mayors, Clark and Dilworth, raised the political life of the city to a high level. Within this purified political atmosphere, city planning became the rallying point of the reform movement. Consequently, the planners and architects were strong supporters of the mayors, and, in turn, the mayors and the city administration have been supporting all planning efforts through many of their agencies and through the Comprehensive Plan for the city—one of the more important and ambitious projects of recent years. The emphasis of the plan was on the center city as the core of the Philadelphia region. Therefore, the approach was in terms of an urban, strongly architectural, environment. During the same period, Dean Holmes Perkins, who is also Chairman of the Planning Commission, rebuilt and redefined the University of Pennsylvania's Division of Architecture, made the city the laboratory and an important subject matter of the School, and brought together a varied and gifted faculty. Then there are two engineers, Le Ricolais and August Komendant; the former has inspired many with his research into the nature and behavior of materials; the latter has spurred the development of precast concrete construction with the result that there are adventurous fabricators in the area. There are understanding clients and sympathetic contractors. Even construction workmen seem again interested in their work and in their contribution to the new environment. There are many others who care, such as Edmund Bacon, for example, who is Executive Director of the Planning Commission, and who is attempting to establish new directives for architects and planners. As one architect put it: "He is really asking for a new kind of architecture."

Within this congenial atmosphere there is a group of architects that is attempting just that: a new architecture; new in the sense that it attempts once more to be primarily architecture. The spiritual leader

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WEEKEND HOUSE BY ROBERT VENTURI  
*Elevation, section, and photo of model.*



layers. Juxtaposed layers, always contrasting, contribute to the sense of enclosure; buildings often are things in things.

"These enclosing surfaces, structural and protective at the same time, tend to need openings rather than interruptions; the nature and position of holes, determined by the very particular and diverse wants of space and light, material and structure, help make architecture.

"The wants of a program, even with small buildings with simple materials, are diverse and conflicting. I welcome this. The building must do and be many things at once; tensions, ambiguities, and contrasts are results which make architecture; a work of architecture has subplots as well as a plot."

And he explains the form of the Weekend House shown here:

"The form of this house results from the juxtaposition of two different ideas. The house has only two directions: the front oriented toward the sea, and the back for entering; it has no sides, so to speak, and its front is very different from its back. Secondly, the fireplace and chimney are a focus in the center from which generate at first symmetrically, later evolving differently, the outer parts of the house."

One of the people in Philadelphia whose mind is closely attuned to that of Kahn's is Robert Le Ricolais, a French engineer whose discoveries in the field of material behavior deserve better recognition in this country. Some of Le Ricolais' inventions, dating back to the 'twenties, have found world-wide application in building construction. For the last several years he has been conducting an experimental workshop at the University of Pennsylvania's Division of Architecture. Most of his recent

experiments are with pretensioned steel, a material whose possibilities, he thinks, have not yet been exploited. It is interesting to note that his statement on the nature of research is amazingly close to Kahn's statement on the nature of architecture:

"Architectural students with materials, medical students with their first patients—it is the same experience. From this confrontation many marvelous things can happen. But the initial attitude should be of ignorance and humility.

"Experience starts from there; the first certitude to emerge is the discovery of our ignorance and inefficiency to predict the probable behavior of materials and structures. Indeed, things never behave as we assumed they would from the reading of books: what we presumed negligible is not negligible, and the whole theory collapses. Everything is shattered, and we have to start again. Analogies, appearances have deceived us, and half blind we proceed along stumbling steps.

"This inglorious, painful, and slow process is nothing else than the true process of learning—creating our own knowledge and experience instead of annexing somebody else's work. Research is not concerned with gadgets but with theory, much less with invention than with discovery. And research is immense fun, because what we discover at the end is the great unknown: ourselves."

Robert Geddes, another young Philadelphia architect, insists that he and his partners should not be classified as belonging to a "group." And yet there are indications that they are beginning to be strongly influenced by Kahn's approach. This can already be seen in some of the elements of their design; and in the design

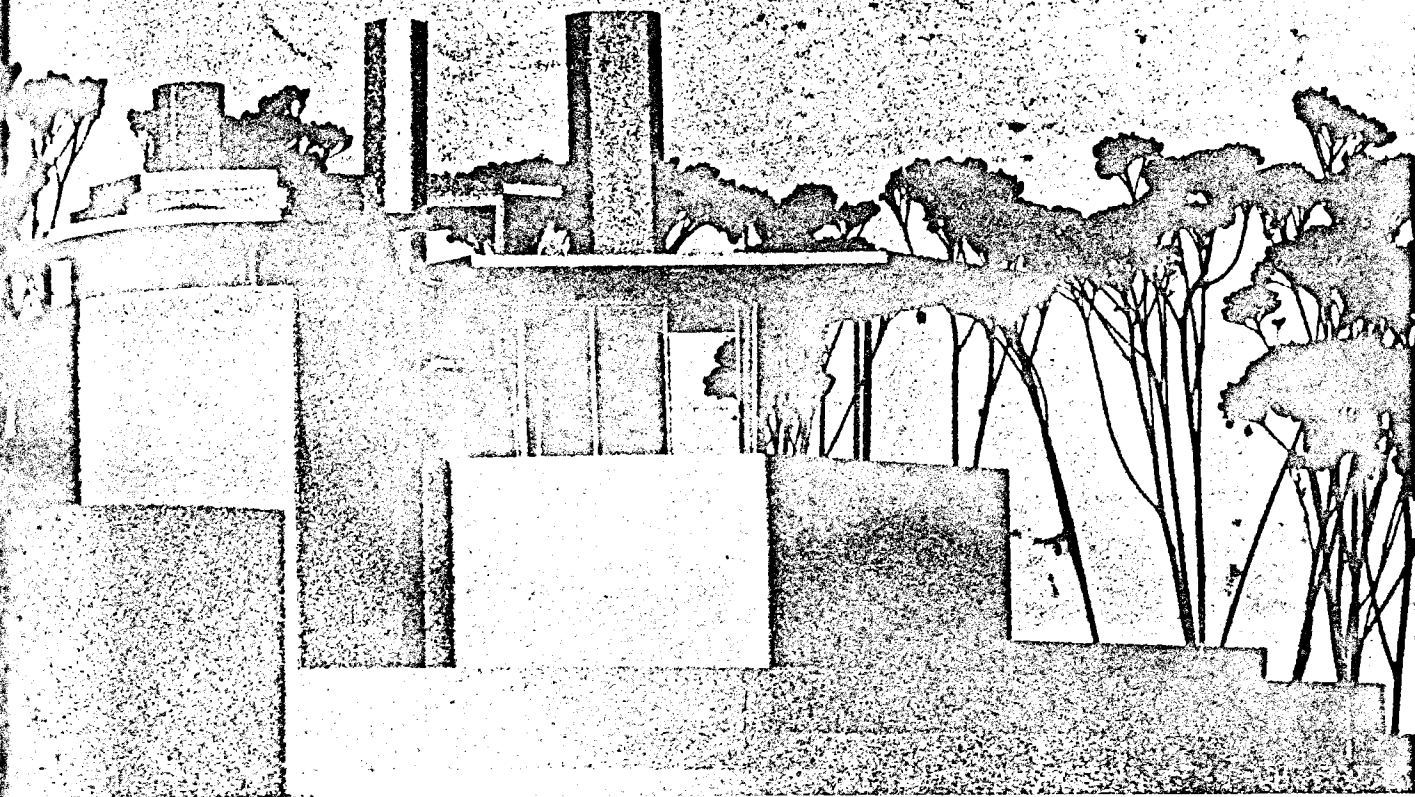
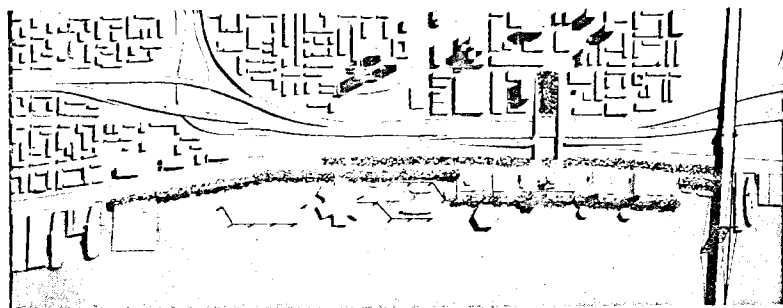


Photo: Lawrence S. Williams, Inc.

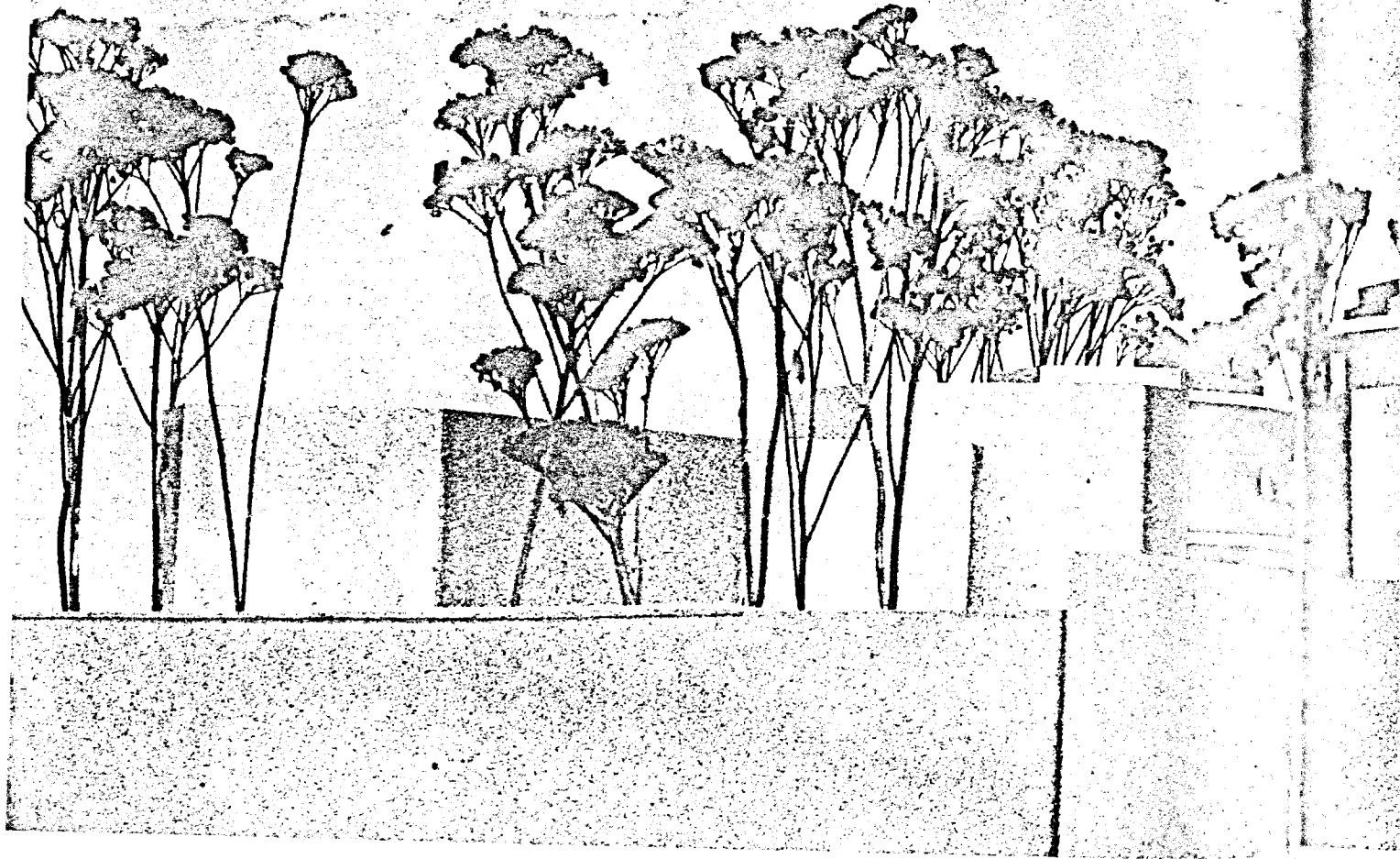


HOUSE AND URBAN SCHEME BY GEDDES-BRECHER-QUALLS-CUNNINGHAM  
*Models of two recent projects: proposed administration and recreation buildings for a section of Philadelphia's waterfront, and a large house.*

ing of building as an element of the city; the meaning of spaces within the building, within the city; the meaning of structures, materials, and mechanical services within the building, within the city. If there seems to be a common concern for concrete technology, for joints, for the integration of mechanical services, for the composition of buildings by the precise linking of components or elements, it is really a vocabulary based upon a still smaller search for the meaning of architecture."

Geddes and his firm are deeply involved in the urban redevelopment of Philadelphia. There again their thinking reflects many of Kahn's ideas: the importance of the city center ("The Cathedral"), emphasis on the differences between the diverse urban functions, and an attempt at giving expression to those functions.

Some of the students in Philadelphia are also strongly influenced by Kahn's approach to design. This can be seen in the student projects shown next. How this approach is used is clearly indicated



for a large house, one of their latest projects (shown here), it seems evident that were it not for Kahn, they would not have dared to depart so drastically from the Harvardian strait jacket in which they were reared. As Geddes says himself:

"Kahn exists on many levels of architecture: his work on the form of the center city; his work on the technology of architecture; his ideas about the nature of spaces; his poetic statements on the meaning of architecture; these are all part of us now."

And in his explanation of the existing "sense of morality in architecture" in Philadelphia, the closeness of his interpretation of the "meaning" and Kahn's concept of the "existence will" is quite obvious:

"The 'sense of morality' is a search for 'meaning.' It is an acceptance of 'making' as an essential aspect of 'meaning,' and it is a search for order that comes from 'meaning.' There is such a search on many levels: the meaning of the city; the mean-

Photos of house: George Pohl

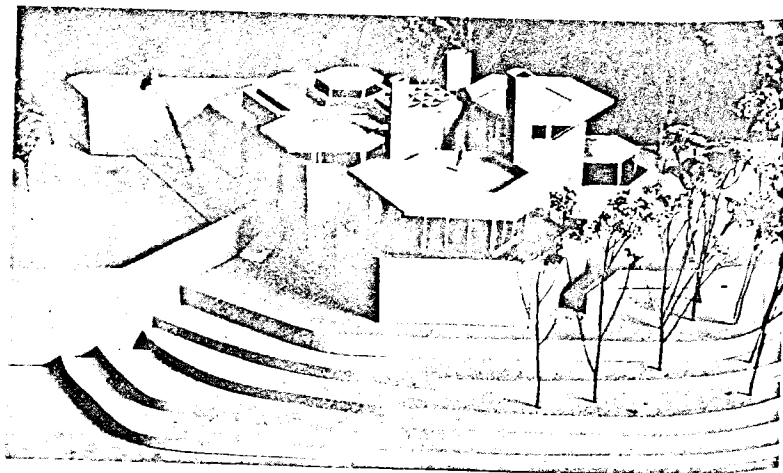


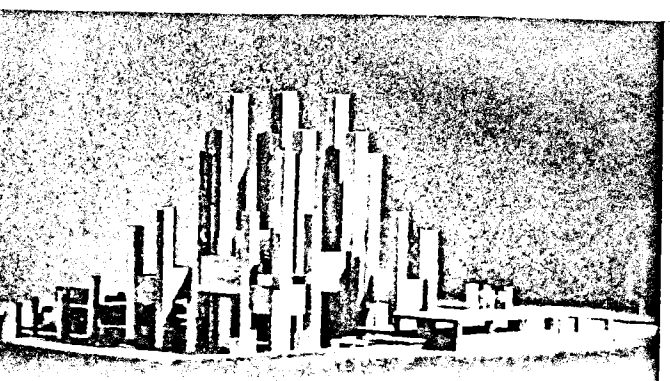
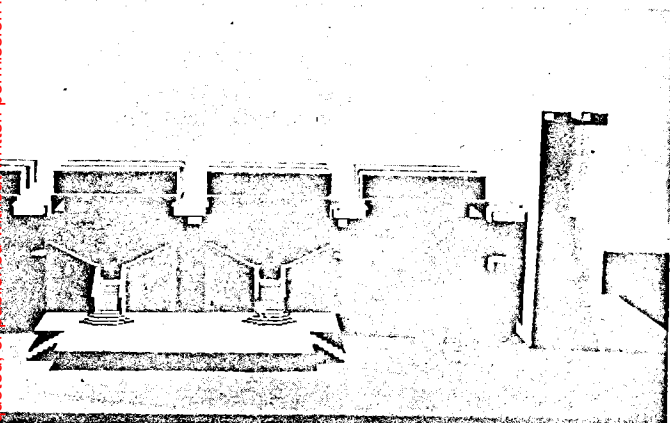
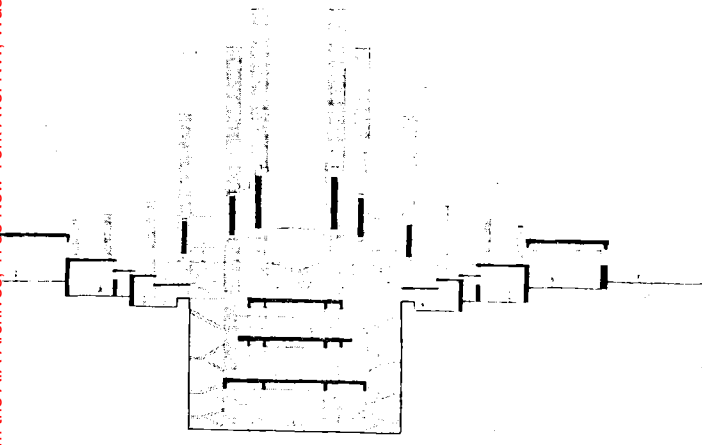
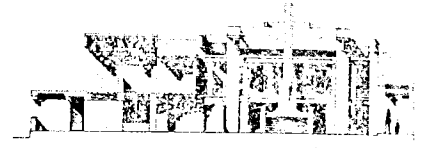
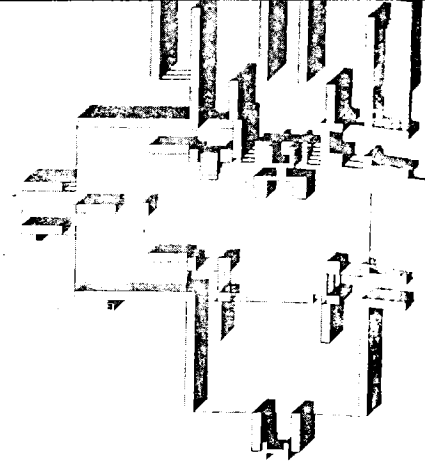
Photo: Lawrence S. Williams, Inc.

HOUS  
Mode  
build

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STUDENT PROJECTS

*Corregidor Bataan Memorial*  
(below) by R. Golder.  
*Addition to school of fine arts* (bottom of page), *house* (right), and *chapel* (across-page) by R. S. Wurman.



fully expressed. Just as nature expresses the difference between moss and a leaf. How beautiful it would be to express that wind forces are playing. The base of this building should be wider than the top. And the columns which are on top should be dancing like fairies. And the columns below should be growing like mad and not have the same dimensions because they are not the same thing. This story, if told truthfully, would make a beautiful tower, even if it is ugly at first."

When analyzing the underlying stream in all the statements quoted in this article, it becomes clear that there is a common denominator. This common denominator can be expressed in terms of a more simple terminology and summarized as a strong differentiation between **concept** and **execution**, and the placing of search for concept in a predominant position and treating execution as having less importance, as something which will come naturally and easily, without any strain or difficulty, because "to know what to do is the secret of it all, and how to do it is a matter of experience and gray hairs."

But living, as we are, in an era of superficiality in all phases of life, in an age of few ideals, in an age of artificial obsolescence and natural plentifulness, and being constantly confronted by the pressure of speculators, promoters, public relations men, and other status-makers and money seekers, and having at one's disposal unlimited choices of materials and structural systems, it is easy, within this glittering and exciting confusion, to fall into the trap of seeking and being satisfied merely with the clever and the exciting, with the shallow and the meaningless.

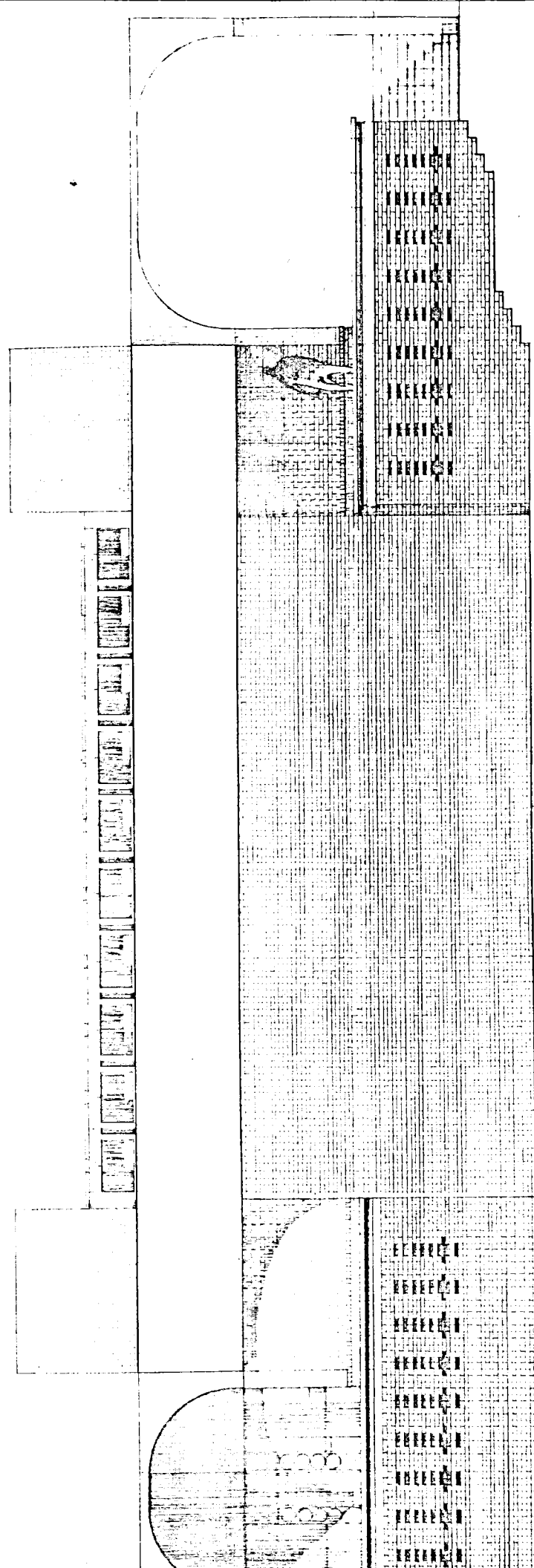
Kahn, through his theory, creates for himself a mental attitude that helps him to sense his position as a designer and enables him to say: "At times I am a poor designer. Another man would consider this the greatest insult, but I don't mind saying it. I know that I always want to do

more than I am able to do. Man is always greater than his works, because man can never fully express his aspirations." Kahn's theory creates an attitude where not only man's limitations, but also the deeper meaning and the purpose of man's activities is constantly in mind and constantly kept in the forefront. His beliefs serve him as a sort of inspirational elixir on which he can draw constantly, at all stages of design. He uses the "wanting to be" concept not only when he is designing the building, but also when he is designing the rooms, the corridors, the stairs, the treads, even the smallest element.

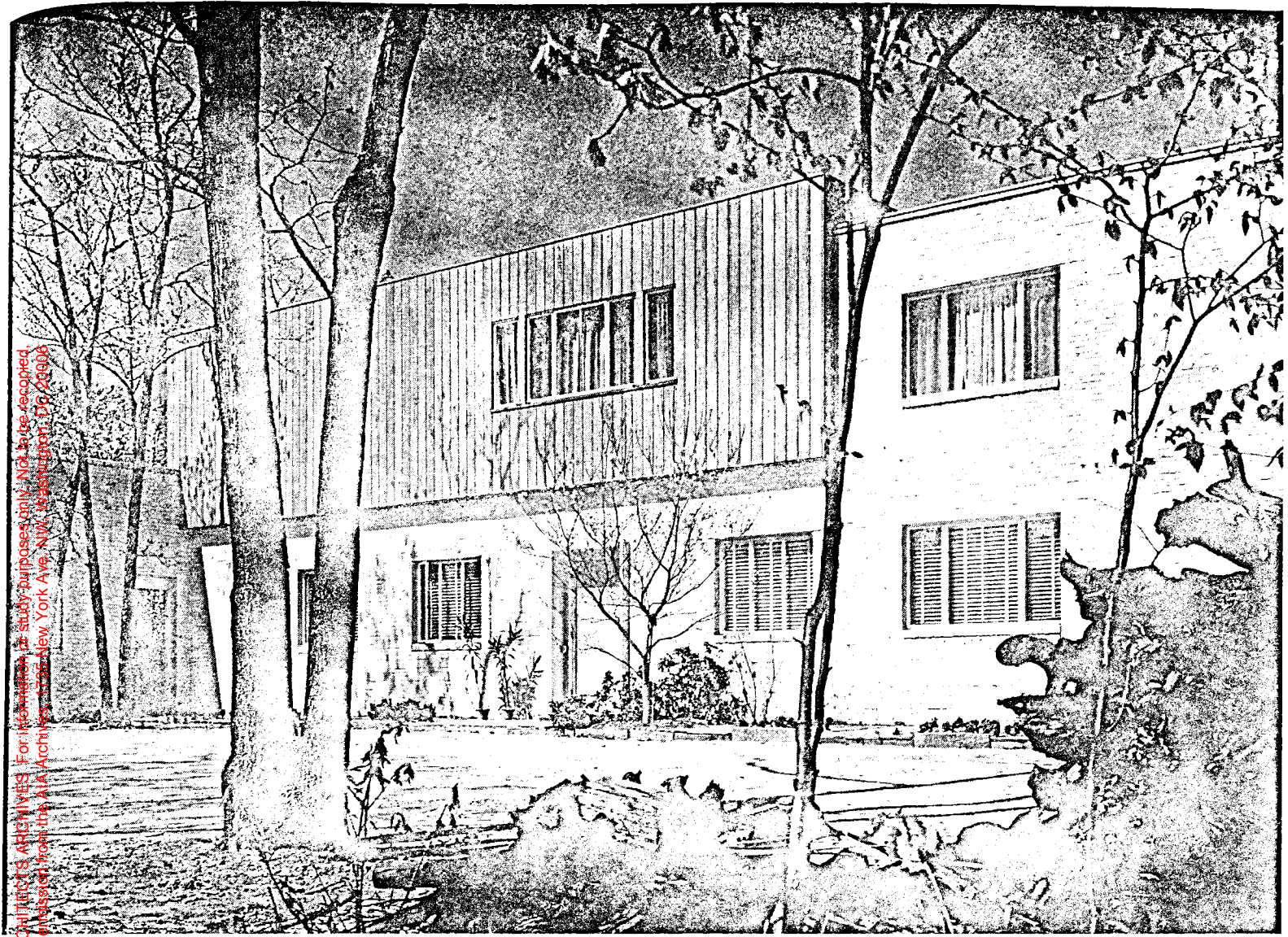
This approach results in buildings that have not only a powerful space and mass concept, but also a bold and personal expression of all the elements and all the details; it frees the designer from the curse of preconceived ideas, fashion following, and nervous copyism; it frees the designer from superficiality, however commonplace, or however brilliant; it clears the way for an architecture where there is no fear of "spoiling" the design when there arises the ever-present problem of changes requested after the original idea has been established. Medieval cathedrals do not suffer from the looseness and irregularity of some of their secondary elements, their stuck-on chapels and towers of different heights. The main mass of the nave has enough power to hold the composition together and to give coherence and expression to the whole. It retains the spirit of the original idea in spite of all the irregularities. And not only that. The nonformalism of minor elements introduces a softer, more romantic environment, better attuned to human scale and human emotional responses. It is the combination of the power of the central idea with the romanticism of secondary ideas that makes us not only admire but also love medieval cathedrals. And it is the same with the architecture of Kahn.

The similarity of architectural expression that is clearly visible in the work of those who think like Kahn, indicates that this approach need not be limited and should not be considered as one man's personal expression, but should be regarded as having a universal validity. From examination of the various projects, it is evident that there are infinite possibilities of individual solutions and expressions inherent in this approach. This heralds an exciting new period in architecture, a new renaissance, which could prove to be as important in the history of architectural development as the emergence of the Chicago School in the late 19th Century. Since this new movement stems from Philadelphia, it can be said that we are witnessing the birth of a new school in architectural thinking, the Philadelphia School.

[Note: All Kahn statements used in this article are from edited transcripts of his speeches and of discussions between Kahn and the author. Quotations about importance of the locality and the nature of a true master are from a statement by Romaldo Giurgola. Freehand sketches illustrating Kahn's design theory and concepts were drawn by Kahn and his studio.]



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Courtesy Architectural Forum

Photo: Paul Davis, George H. Davis Studio

Entrance showing painted brick and cypress boarding.

### HOUSE FOR MRS. G. HOLMES PERKINS, BROOKLINE, 1938

**Family Composition and Requirements.** Two adults, small son, two servants. Family's desire for outdoor living and dining was primary problem of architect. Dining terrace paved in blue stone and open grass terrace to be used for games were the only formally graded areas outside the house, allowing for maximum preservation of natural setting. Greenhouse also to be provided for propagation of house plants to be used during winter months. A studio, detached from the house in order to provide absolute privacy and including a photographic dark room, was also a necessity.

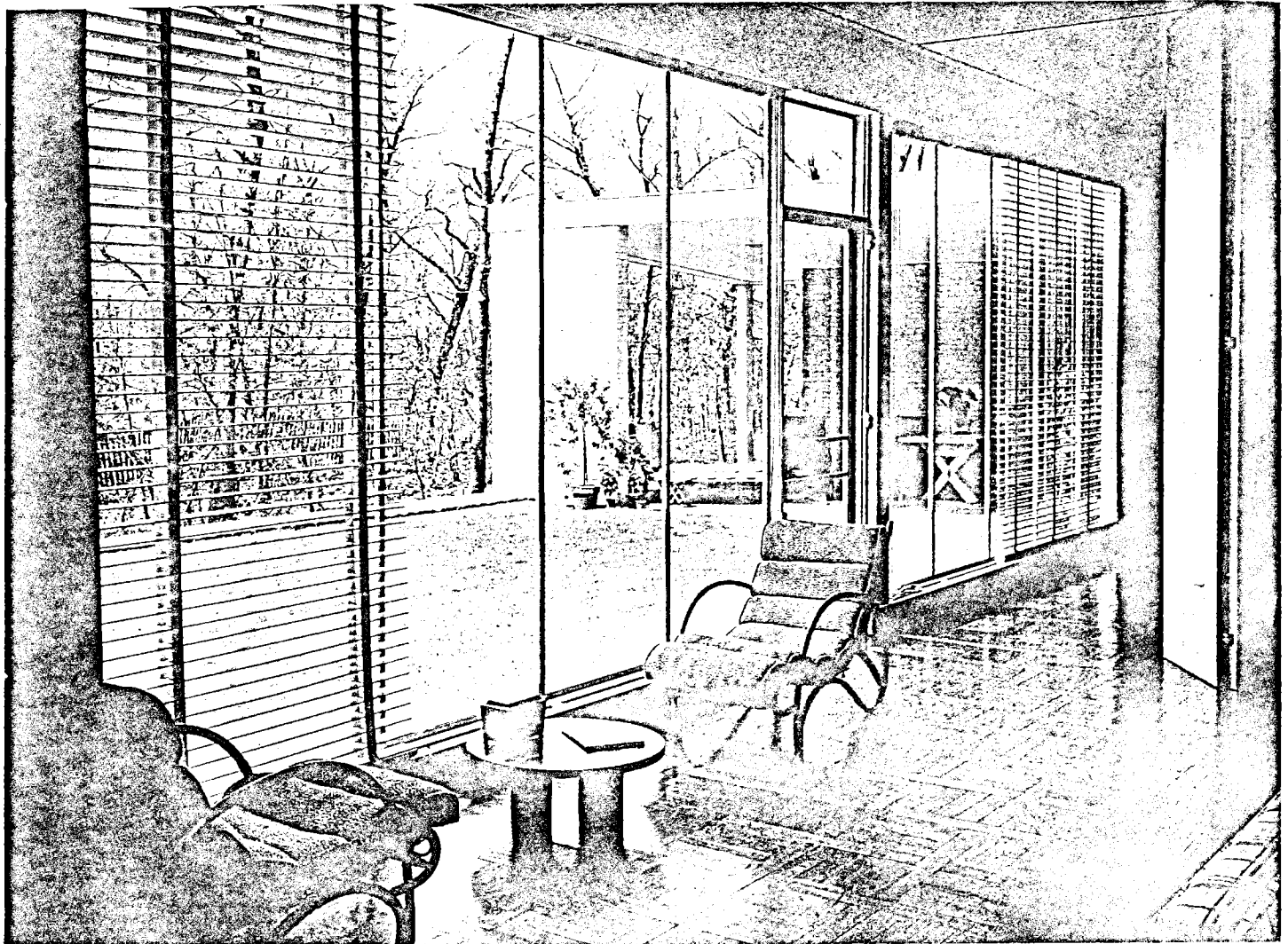
**Site.** Orientation of living and dining areas to south and west to get utmost privacy within the house and in the outdoor terrace areas. Oak woods growing over a solid ledge of pudding stone protects the house from the west sun during summer months but admits sun into living and dining areas throughout winter. Privacy is further assured by a nearly vertical cliff, about 100' to

the west, with a drop of from 30' to 40' which will prevent future building within view of the living area. Because of the solid ledge, the cellar is large enough only for the heating equipment.

**Construction.** Frame and brick bearing walls. Stock parts used are steel casement windows, kitchen cabinets, doors, and plumbing. Heating: dual plant with one heater providing air conditioning in master portion of house; and second heater providing forced hot water system for service portions, studio, greenhouse, and garage and as auxiliary heating system under each of large glass areas to prevent condensation.

**Exterior.** Finish materials of exterior are second-hand face brick and cypress boarding. Terrace over studio and garage covered with wood duck boards.

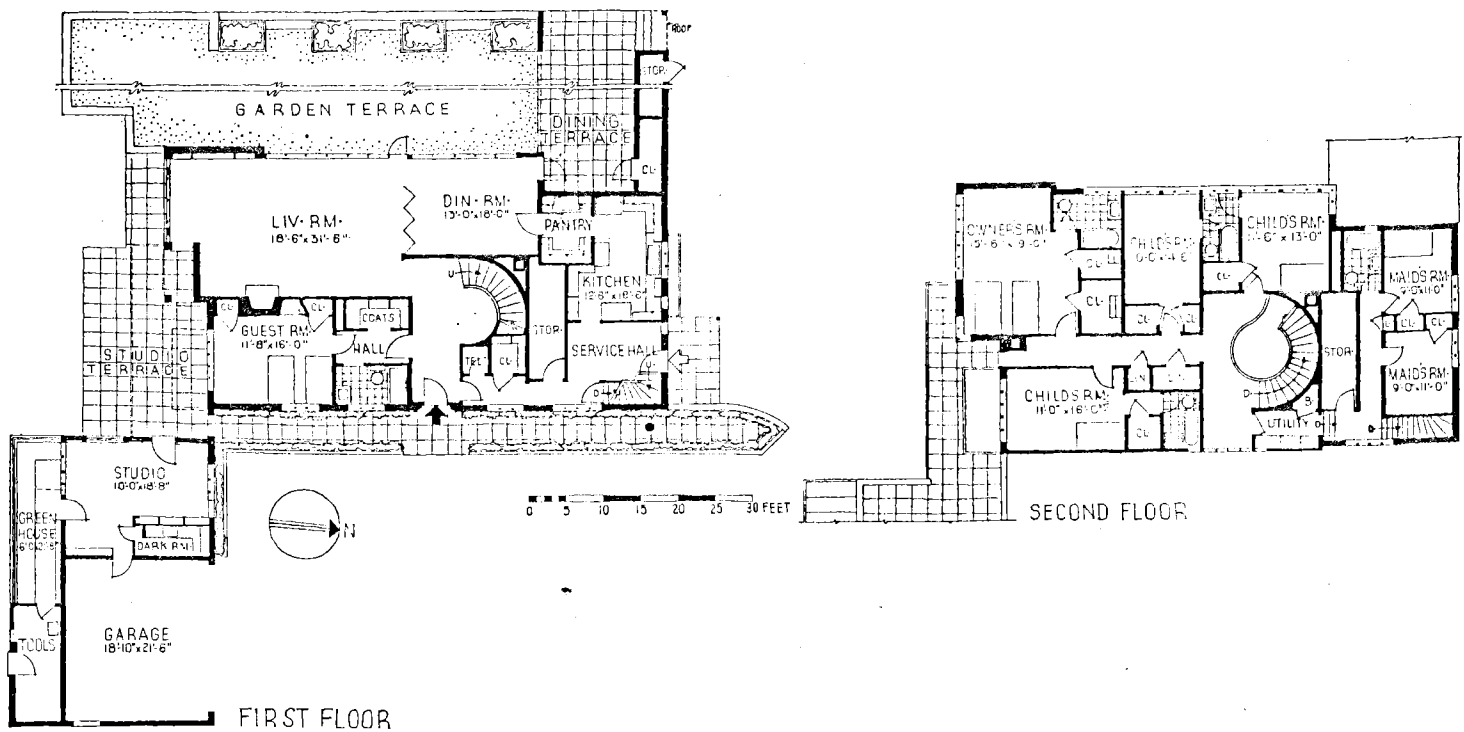
**Interior.** Walls of rock, lath, and plaster, painted, except in bedrooms and bathrooms where wallpaper is used. Floors of living room, dining room, and main hall are walnut parquet. Ceilings of kitchen, pantry and side halls are of acousti-celotex.



Photos: Paul Davis, George H. Davis Studio

Folding door dividing living room and dining room.

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