

# NEWS FROM PEREIRA

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## TWO ARCHITECTS JOIN WILLIAM L. PEREIRA ASSOCIATES

### IN EXPANSION OF FIRM'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Fernand Levin and William R. Tipton have joined the planning and architectural firm of William L. Pereria Associates, Los Angeles, as international specialists in architecture and planning.

LEVIN has nearly 20 years experience in architecture and planning and his principal architecture work has been hotels and commercial (store and shopping center) developments.

Prior to joining the Pereira firm he was an associate of Mercury Consultants in charge of the firm's Paris, France office. In that capacity he participated with the firm in the design and construction of the luxury resort on Kish Island off the Gulf coast of Iran.

During the past 11 years, Levin has worked on projects throughout Europe and the Middle East .

A native of Paris, France, he received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the Pratt Institute. He is a registered architect in the United States and France.

TIPTON has more than 20 years experience in architecture and has coordinated and managed architectural work on a wide range of facilities including recreational, educational, residential, commercial, industrial and communication complexes.

Prior to joining the Pereira firm he was international vice president for Charles Kober Associates where he was responsible for overseeing development of two major projects in Saudi Arabia.

Tipton's experience includes extensive international business development and executive management of large scale projects in Mexico, Kuwait, Iran, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

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Tipton was a co-founder and principal of his own architectural firm and has also served as project director for Daniel, Mann, Johnson, & Mendenhall and director of project development for Archisystems.

A native of Ohio, Tipton received his Bachelor and Master of Architecture degrees from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. He did post graduate work in architecture at Stanford University, Palo Alto, California and the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. He is a registered architect in California.

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# Orderly Succession for the Heirs to L.A.'s King of Architecture

By LEON WHITESON

If any individual can be credited with creating modern architecture in Los Angeles, it would be William Pereira.

A heroic figure at a time when the city was becoming a regional metropolis, Pereira was featured on the cover of Time magazine in 1963 for his work as master planner of Orange County's 93,000-acre Irvine Ranch. When he died in 1985, he had chalked up an Oscar-worthy list of design credits in a practice that spanned more than 50 years.

But in the late 1970s, plagued by health problems, Pereira had begun to cast around for younger architects to breathe fresh life into a practice that had gone stale. Looking beyond the walls of his

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## Commentary

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own office for new talent, he settled on two bright young men: Scott Johnson and William Fain. Johnson was named director of design at Pereira Associates, Fain director of planning. Shortly before his death, Pereira made them major partners in charge of the practice which on June 1 will change its name to Johnson, Fain & Pereira Associates.

How well has the transition worked? And how have Johnson, 37, and Fain, 43, fared in succeeding a figure as influential and flamboyant as Bill Pereira?

In fact, the contrast in styles between Pereira and his successors couldn't be more marked.

A Cesar Romero look-alike with a helmet of white hair and a noble profile, Pereira had star quality and a panoramic, wide-screen approach to architecture and city planning. He came to Los Angeles from his native Chicago to work as both architect and art designer for Paramount Studios, conjuring up special effects for Cecil B. DeMille's "Reap the Wild Wind."

His flair for the flamboyant is evident in the design of San Francisco's needle-like Transamerica Tower and the spindly-legged Theme Restaurant at Los Angeles International Airport. He also devised the master plan for NASA's rocket launching complex

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LARRY BESSEL / Los Angeles Times

Scott Johnson, left, William Fain in front of Fox Plaza.

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PEREIRA ASSOC.

# PEREIRA: Heirs to L.A.'s King of Architecture

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at Cape Canaveral.

Pain and Johnson, on the other hand, are more intellectual than their predecessor, and less charismatic, as befits the city's more sober and corporate era—as well as the practice of architecture.

Evaluations of their work are beginning to surface, and appear mostly favorable. Judging from the response of national architectural magazines, Johnson and Pain have brought a new savvy and sophistication to the Pereira style, in both architecture and urban design, while continuing his concern for the large-scale environment.



Los Angeles Times

The late William Pereira, dean of L.A. architects, in 1983.

Pain's contribution can be seen in the master plans of major urban complexes, from the expansion of the UC Irvine campus (which Pereira originally designed) to the creation of the new city of Ewa on the outskirts of Honolulu.

Pain and Johnson are old friends. They were classmates at UC Berkeley and Harvard Graduate School. Johnson was chief of design for New York City's Johnson/Burge Architects before joining Pereira Associates in the early '80s. Pain and Johnson had worked together earlier on the town plan for Woodland, Tex.

Pain said Pereira knew that his firm was drifting as architecture began shifting its focus.

"The Los Angeles he knew so well, and the Modernist design style that ruled the architectural ideology of his time, were in transition to a more complex era," he said. "Most of the other five major architectural firms that had dominated the L.A. design scene in the post-World War II period—Wilton Becker Associates, Daniel Mann Johnson and Mendenhall, Gruen Associates, the Luckman Partnership and Albert C. Martin and Associates—seemed to be in decline or stuck in a rut. Pereira resolved that the practice that bears his name would never suffer a fatal hardening of the creative arteries."

It was Pain who brought Johnson to Pereira's attention. "I felt Scott had the right combination of originality tempered by a hard-headed understanding of the essentially compromised and collaborative nature of the business of architecture," said Pain.

"I wanted to be a name designer, which I could never have been in Philip Johnson's office," Johnson explained. "Pereira was sympathetic—though there were some managerial problems to be overcome in the succession," he added, referring to the complicated transition of power, first to seven partners, then to chairman Roy G. Schmidt, and finally to Pain and Johnson.

Johnson, who grew up in the Salinas Valley, is enjoying his return to California after his spell in New York City. ("I love the flat, white L.A. light," he said). He settled with his wife, Meg, a gynecologist, and his 2-year-old son, Max, in a house in Hancock Park, a five-minute walk from the firm's Wilshire Boulevard office.

Pain and his wife, Jennifer, a former legislative aide to Arizona Rep. Morris Udall, have two young daughters. Jennifer Pain is a docent at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which was designed by Pereira in the mid-1960s.

William Pain is a member of the board of the Los Angeles chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a trustee of the Los Angeles Library Assn., a member of the Museum of Contemporary Art's Architecture and Design Support Committee, and a nominee to the Mayor's Design Advisory Panel.

Johnson, by his own description, is "a very private workaholic." In his spare time, he does a great deal of drawing as "a tool of thought," researches urban and architectural form—"the shape of things, the color of things"—and enjoys listening to music, which he compares to architecture as "the orchestration of varied elements into a strong formal structure."

They describe their method of running the 70-person Pereira office as "a bivalve approach." Johnson calls Pain "one of the best urban designers in the country, and a splendid contract negotiator." Pain, in turn, points to Johnson's "formal genius."

Few of Pereira's old clients have vanished in the succession, but "we've had to project a whole new energy level to keep the loyalty of our long-time clients, plus pull in new ones," said Pain.

"In the last year or so, since Fox

Plaza was finished, we've had a lot of new commissions. Fox Plaza was our watershed in establishing the credentials of the new Pereira Associates. Now we're busy with a whole range of projects, from the design of the new campus for Otis Parsons School of Design near MacArthur Park to the big new Rincon Center in San Francisco, a winery in the Napa Valley, a 67-acre master plan for Calabasas Park Center, and an urban design study for a 4-mile stretch of the main highway in Indian Wells."

"We are pragmatic visionaries," Johnson added. "Purity of expression is not what we're about—but, then, neither was Pereira, despite the often Hollywood bravura of his architecture."

"I feel we've kept the faith, in our own fashion."

Leon Whitson is a Los Angeles-based architecture writer and critic.