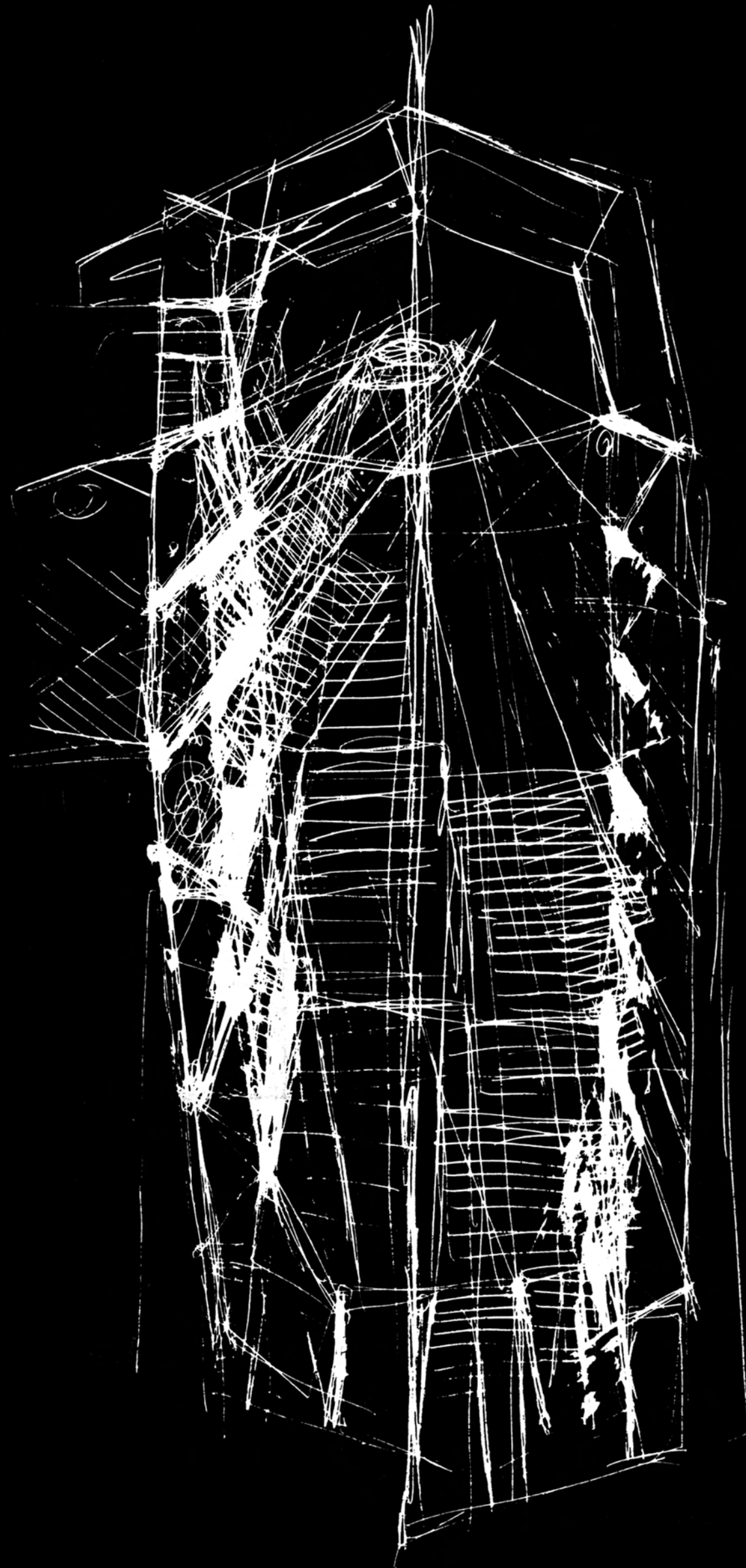
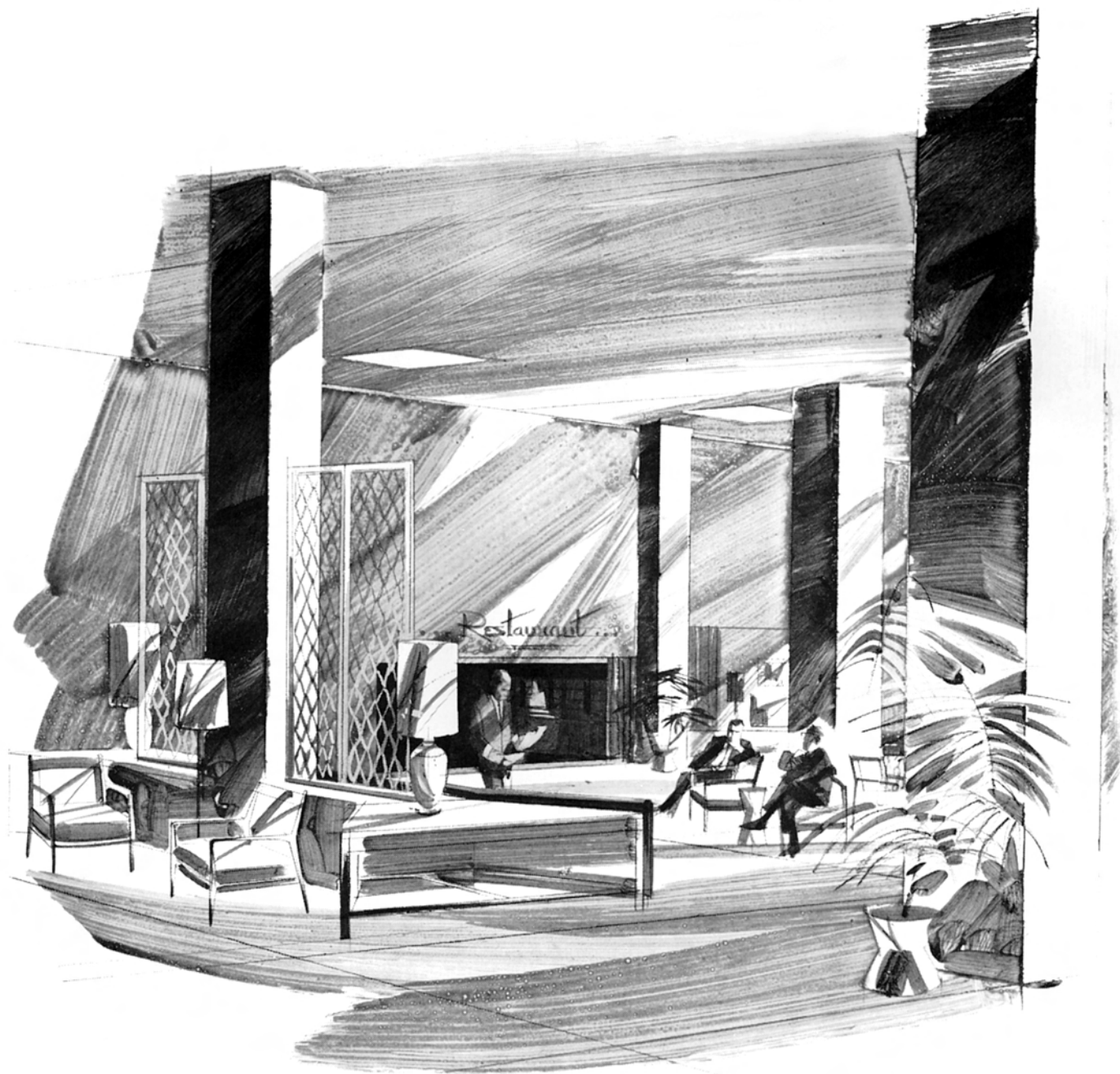






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art

DORE ASHTON

ONE WEEK IN THE LIFE OF THE MEGALOPOLIS

The first Whitney Annual in the new building: bigger, perhaps, but not better. They managed to glut the place with the work of about 148 sculptors, with 66 printmakers tagging along. The great public rooms this new building boasts were not great enough, although they are certainly public enough. Modern museum craft likes to think that it has advanced beyond the days of the 19th-century salon, where everything was hung in tiers of three or four, and little could be seen. But the Whitney installation rivals any salon for its crowded indifference to the individual piece.

In the 19th century, artists in New York use to joke about National Academy annuals. Have you seen this year's annual? No, I saw it last year. Much of the Whitney's catholic selection has been seen, perhaps not last year, but last month or last week. But that is in keeping with the intention which seems to be to summarize in a prolix way just about anything that has appeared recently on the scene. It is hopeless to argue that mediocrity juxtaposed with brilliance results in a cancellation of brilliance. The democratic principle in omnibus exhibitions rules out esthetic judgments.

What, in this jostling crowd of images, can possibly survive other than a feeling that many people are busy in the arts, and isn't that nice? If the polling mentality of institutions were ever altered, the well-conditioned public would be at a loss. If for instance, instead of exhibiting mammoth pieces by Ronald Bladen and Tony Smith together with dozens of others, all fighting for their place in the sun, the Whitney had isolated them, giving them the necessary extension space for viewing, undoubtedly the viewers would feel cheated.

Lebensraum for works of art is no longer conceivable, apparently. Still, the American artist deludes himself into thinking that he stands for a private art, an art that germinates in the silence of his thoughts and remains inviolable under any circumstances. The blurry definition of American individualism becomes more and more paradoxical.

The deeply grooved patterns of thinking about Western individualism are not easily reshaped. On Channel 13, our well-meaning civilized educational television station, I was educated by readings and translations from the works of Yevtushenko. The poet appeared, appropriately dressed as a Russian bohemian, and declaimed his narrative poems—rather pleasing, not very brilliant narratives inflected here and there with the voice of Mayakovsky. Yevtushenko declaims very well. It is obvious that his poetry is written in the balladic tradition, to be heard rather than seen, and to be presented dramatically, rather than read for nuances.

During the intermission a group of American poets interviewed him. They were intent on getting Yevtushenko to admit that, in the end, writing poetry is a very private affair. All the arguments that have crowded Western criticism with justifications for the poet's circumstantial isolation were deftly inserted by the Americans. Wallace Stevens was quoted, T.S. Eliot invoked. But Yevtushenko resisted. To all the measured, erudite questions of his Western colleagues, he answered politely from his own experience. And his experience he summarized with an account of a reading in a Siberian city, one of the outposts where a huge dam was being built. Mothers took their children out of nurseries in the afternoon, he explained, with visible emotion, and when he appeared before the vast multitude of worker-listeners, the children were held up. (Shades of Tsarist times when children were brought to see the Tsar, to have something to remember all their lives.) That is his experience.

The American poets, of course, spoke from their own experience. It would be unthinkable that Stanley Kunitz, for instance, would appear at the Ford Motor Plant, and be awesomely received by

the multitude, or that he would remain in the memories of children who would tell their grandchildren of the great day at the Ford Plant when they saw and heard the great poet. The Western poet would feel profoundly uncomfortable under such circumstances anyway.

But he has no objection to the gradual assimilation proposed by the mass media. He wants his large public, but he wants it at one remove. The American artist on the whole expects to have it both ways. He clings to his proud individualistic heritage, while coqueting with the masses. The artists who lend themselves to huge, indiscriminately assembled exhibitions deplore the fate of their brothers in the East, without realizing that they themselves have been institutionalized to a dangerous degree.

The next day I went to a typical bourgeois Western affair, a preview of Richard Lindner's exhibition at the Cordier & Ekstrom Gallery. Lindner, at this point, is in the curious position of having been recognized and idolized by the very society he is so savagely indicting. In his garishly illuminated new paintings, the miniskirted, masked and emasculating females are more aggressive than ever, while his dandyish, longhaired male leads are less assuming than ever. The cold eroticism, mechanized to the most polished degree, that Lindner can infuse in his paintings, is all too accurate.

I suppose if I were a Russian catapulted into the midst of the chattering, cold-eyed crowd at that *vernissage*, I would shudder at the bourgeois decadence. A second look at some of the girls with their carefully arranged costumes, their faces made up into masked blanks, made me more charitable. They were certainly young and who knows, they may yearn honorably for the truth of existence. Only they are immersed in this hectic adventure that Lindner has characterized so well in his paintings of rock and roll culture, his parody of Vogue fashions, his side-remarks about the lack of human contact. (Several of his paintings implicate the telephone—that symbol of contact without warmth.) This is not New York high society, though it might well be. The bars are down. Everyone is out in public and, trite as it is to say so, everyone is joylessly alone. It was not a *gemulich* gathering.

A few minutes at the jammed party after the show was enough, and we went to see the Antonioni film, *Blowup*. There, of course, we had to wait in line among the very same youngish, vacant-eyed, caparisoned creatures we had just left. No peasants, these.

Now the Antonioni film, although broadcast as a contemporary chronicle of life in mod London, or in any Western megalopolis, is decidedly a non-naturalistic film. Antonioni is a visual genius, and an esthete to his core. This world he paints—literally, since many of the London views seem to have been specially painted for his shooting—is no world that exists. It is a world refracted through a nervous, brilliant temperament given to elaborate fantasy. But there they were in the film: the same miniskirted girls from the opening, and the same dandies I'd watched on the line. It must be a world, then, of sorts. The separation of the real from the unreal is almost impossible.

I don't think that Antonioni's image of contemporary life, which he presents in almost simplistic terms as a life of vicarious voyeurism devoid of true communion, is to be read as a reflection of the times. Rarely has an artist impressed his own neurasthenic vision so completely and precisely on his work. Whatever vacuities emerge are direct reflections of Antonioni's fantasy. The aimless peregrinations of his photographer protagonist; the restless squirming of mannikins and "real" characters alike, are merely aspects of Antonioni's interior desert. His equality of indifference to the reality of other souls is patent in the way he flashes an image of youthful political demonstrators on the screen, making them as ludicrous and aimless as his photographer and the mod crowd careering about in the initial mummery with which the film opens. (That mummery by way begins well; but, when in the finale Antonioni re-introduces the motif, he breaches the form, parroting Fellini rather too obviously.)

It is in the nature of Antonioni's estheticism to be so overweening that it makes its point. The point of the film is not in the sub-plot

with the ambivalent title—*Blowup*—giving the cue, but rather on the equality of the murder story with the rest of the meaningless story. All of this would be too strongly stylized, too banal and determinedly “modern,” if it were not that Antonioni is a visual genius. His photographic interpretations and ruses take up all the feeling space. He paints to the sitter, but with his own exalted vision.

What is marvelous about the film is the power of Antonioni’s esthetic drive. It makes his camera an agile brush that dashes here and there, setting up his visual premises, and then sensitively filling up his canvas. Color symbolism is more advanced in this film than in *The Red Desert*. It does not appear in on-and-off sequences, as it did rather symmetrically in the *Red Desert* (changing colors of the shop; the fruit vendor painted ashen gray, etc.) but in musical sequences of *da capos* and fugues of incredible, subtle beauty. Fortunately, Antonioni’s passion for pure visual beauty happens to coincide with his motif. The mannikins and sexually mechanical characters in his film suit his purpose, as Lindner’s sirens suit his. Since value for Antonioni resides exclusively in the manipulation of image and color, the absence of real-life values, sexual and otherwise, is a minor matter.

How awkward, then, that a generation of youngsters see the world as he makes it, and attempt to live it that way. What London is that, anyway? London, like New York, must be filled with a million private hopes, ethical decisions, earnest students and tender sentiments. Antonioni’s pure vision is an abstraction of a high order. What, then, are these walking, living refugees from his film doing amongst us? Are they merely props in some ghastly melodrama of a one-dimensional world? Here the separation of art and life is much to be desired.

Between the lucid heights of Antonioni’s art and the touching amateurism of certain young artists in New York is a virtually unbridgeable chasm. This week in the life of my megalopolis had its contrasts. Toward the end of the week, Artists and Writers Protest staged a moving demonstration. They took a sound truck, adorned with a genuine political caricature of Johnson and Ladybird by Allen D’Arcangelo, and went through the city with a troupe of younger poets and mimes. At selected street corners (licensed of course by the police) they halted and poets took the microphone. They read or declaimed their own verses, or the verses of past dissenters such as John Milton, and looked into the eyes of the small crowds that assembled. Some of the poems were naive and crude, others touching, still others fairly professional. The point, though, is that they were attempting to know the experience fruitlessly described by Yevtushenko to our established poets. They sought communion with an audience that was unselected, and they succeeded to a surprising degree. Even the mime troupe, the Pageant Players, looking like fugitives from a Fellini film, effectively touched the audience by virtue of their deep feeling as much as anything. The artistry and mastery were lacking, but sincerity and passionate feeling have a certain momentum of their own.

What a contrast is the press release announcing the large retrospective exhibition at the Jewish Museum of the late Yves Klein! Here, sophistication and first-class showmanship make up for the poverty of vision Klein represented. Driven by a lyrical impulse not unlike Antonioni’s, Klein never succeeded in making the act match the idea. But where he didn’t succeed, the Jewish Museum will. By dint of rhapsodic and elegaic prose, Klein will be made to seem the central pivot of an enormously important movement. In reality, the so-called movement is long since eclipsed and revivalism of this sort is more pitiable than reprehensible. I haven’t yet seen the complete exhibition, but I had seen many of Klein’s *tour de force* antics before his death. Even if I had believed in him as fervently as his apologists (Pierre Restany above all) I should have recoiled at the hyperbole proffered by the Museum. According to the publicity office (yes, museums do have publicity offices that behave exactly as all other publicity agencies do) Klein was one of Europe’s most brilliant post-war artists, one of the “prophetic” artists of his generation. He was a “pioneer” in “phenom-

(Continued on page 34)

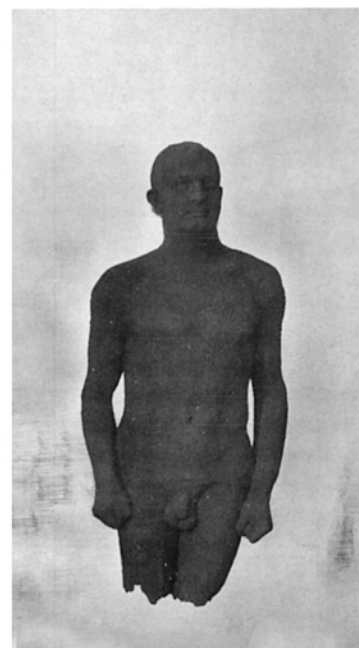


Richard Lindner:
“Rock-Rock,” 70” x
60”, oil, 1966

Richard Lindner: “No,”
70” x 60”, oil, 1966

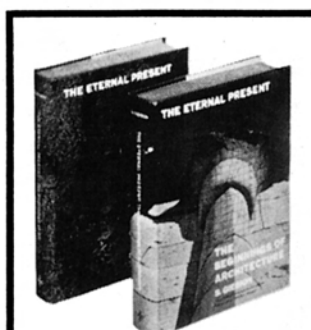
Courtesy Cordier &
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Yves Klein: “Arman,”
portrait relief, 69” high,
bronze painted plaster,
1962. Courtesy The
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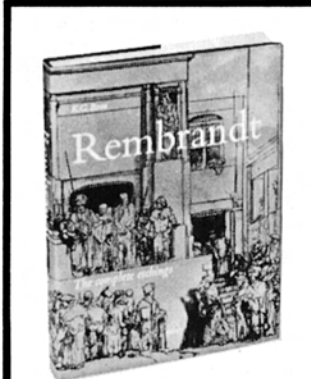
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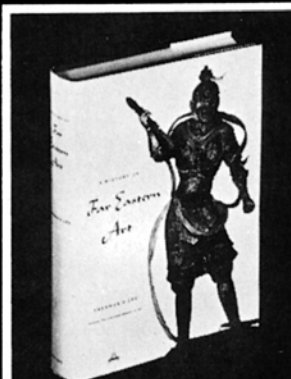
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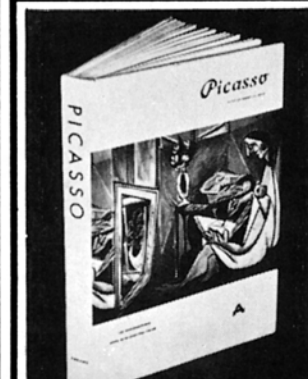
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To those who knew Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Currier or of their magnificently generous and selfless efforts in behalf of a better life for us all, the shock of their recent disappearance was compounded by how little it was noticed, how swiftly they were dismissed. Through the instrumentality of their Taconic Foundation, the Curriers ranged across the problem areas of our increasingly disturbed urban society like a *deus ex machina*. The architectural profession alone, for example, owes the Curriers more than it could ever repay with all its gold medals: the Taconic Foundation was Urban America Inc. which publishes the *Architectural Forum*; Henry Luce, in an ill-timed and -directed moment of thrift, decided that he no longer needed the *Forum*; Stephen Currier, on the other hand, knew that a prolonged crises in urbanization had been reached and that we could not afford not to have a *Forum*.

An eloquent exception to the silence that followed the death of the Curriers was this tribute paid to them by Edward P. Morgan on his news commentary of February 3 over the American Broadcasting Company (KABC Radio in Los Angeles):

Almost everybody wants to make more money but too many people who strike it rich leave a trail of trampled bodies and ideals behind. And then, sour grapes or not, a lot who don't make it automatically equate wealth with evil, sin, reckless living and the exploitation of society.

History brims with the depredations of cruel, selfish captains of industry, the ruthless rascality of the robber barons and their ilk. But perhaps the greatest mistake Karl Marx ever made was to overlook the fact that there is a little avarice in almost all of us. The appetite for tangible gain is a human one; keeping up with the Joneses—or, preferably, passing them on the curves—can have as much motive power as an ideology. There is another truth which Marx missed and a lot of the rest of us are inclined to forget. It is that many men—and women—of wealth have been powerful influences for good. Maybe some are activated by a feeling of guilt over "ill-gotten gains." But there is another breed consisting of people who use money joyously as a tool to build, so to speak, a social structure that lends a little more grace to the landscape of civilization than existed before they came along. Very likely they would have drawn the same plans without a bankroll but it is marvelous how money can help translate a blueprint into an edifice.

Seventeen days ago Mr. and Mrs. Stephen R. Currier were lost on a chartered flight from Puerto Rico to the Virgin Islands. They were virtually unknown to most Americans. But their generosity, commitment and deep, energetic concern for the human race warmed and lit up the lives of countless people so that while the loss of this young couple is a cruel tragedy it is counterbalanced by the glowing fact that they did such an incredible amount of good in such a breathlessly short time. Inevitably, most of the news stories about the missing Curriers zeroed in on their wealth. Audrey Currier, 33, was the daughter of David K. E. Bruce, now U.S. ambassador to Britain, and

granddaughter of Andrew Mellon, Pittsburgh banker and multimillionaire who was Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. Steve Currier, 36, stepson of Edward M. M. Warburg, himself a prominent philanthropist and patron of the arts, was a Harvard dropout who enhanced his own fortune, small by comparison to his wife's with wise investment.

But the real story involves what the Curriers, who leave three small children, did with themselves and their money. They did it so quietly that their immediate families are only now beginning to discover the extent of their activities. They created a private foundation, Taconic, and no tax dodge, it. The young man who never finished Harvard and the girl who finished Radcliffe with honors, used it to help through college students who just missed qualifying for other scholarships. The number of "Taconics," as they are called, on the Harvard campus today would be hard to count. Before Birmingham Police Chief Bull Connor made civil rights a national issue with his dogs and firehoses, Currier was unobtrusively immersing himself in the cause. Through Potomac Institute, financed by the Taconic Foundation, he contributed money to hire expert help in the drafting of civil rights legislation in the mid-60s, so inadequate were Congressional staffs dealing with it. He substantially supported the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and the Southern Regional Council. He went to Harlem, not to "slum" but to try to find answers to social problems. He was instrumental in organizing Urban America, Incorporated, to fight poverty and prejudice in conjunction with governmental efforts. He became enormously and expertly interested in conservation, gave an important private boost to Lady Bird Johnson's beautification program.

Currier designed himself the fabulous home they built in the Virginia hunt country and Audrey Currier did her own interior design and decoration. The magnificent estate, after their children's use of it, will be left to the U.S. government hopefully as a sort of American Chequers where presidents can take important guests for quiet weekends as British prime ministers have done in that famous country place in England.

The Curriers were not of the jet set and they shunned publicity. Indeed protecting their near-anonymity was one of the assignments of Currier's public relations men, though they were far from recluses and once organized with the other Warburg children a huge and hilariously happy weekend party as a wedding anniversary present for Steve's mother and step-father.

Eddie Warburg once encountered a moving passage in a collection of quotations which, he remembers, struck Steve as a creed worth living. It runs like this: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

It would hardly have mattered if Stephen and Audrey Currier had never heard that creed for they lived it anyway.



chimney block and upper part of living room

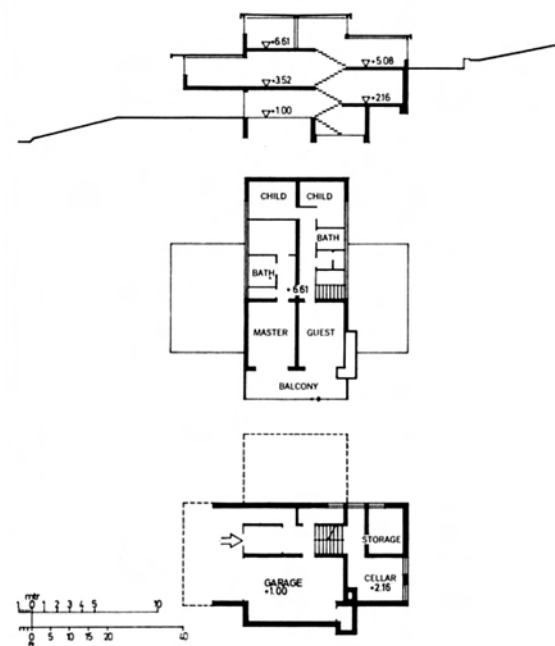


WILHELM STIGLER, ARCHITECT

The site of this concrete and brick house in the Austrian Tyrol is a hill which slopes gently down to the surrounding farm and woodland. The architect has carefully placed the house a little below the crest and stepped it down the slope without disturbing the original form of the hill. The horizontal lines in the elevations are all derived from the module of the stairs, which also bind vertically the two building masses that interpenetrate at right angles.

For privacy the house is closed and aloof on the entrance side to the west, becoming increasingly open as one moves to the south and east. A nearby railroad line eliminated the possibility of wood as a building material because of the threat of fire and all structural parts are of exposed, reinforced concrete with walls of brick covered with insulating wallboard to the inside. The chimney block and retaining walls are of native flagstone.

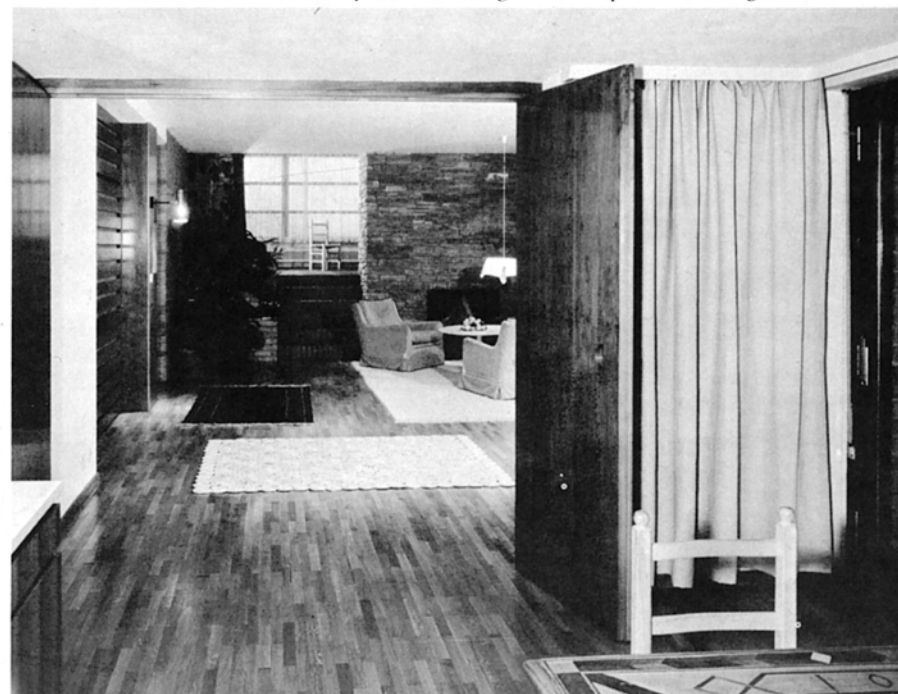
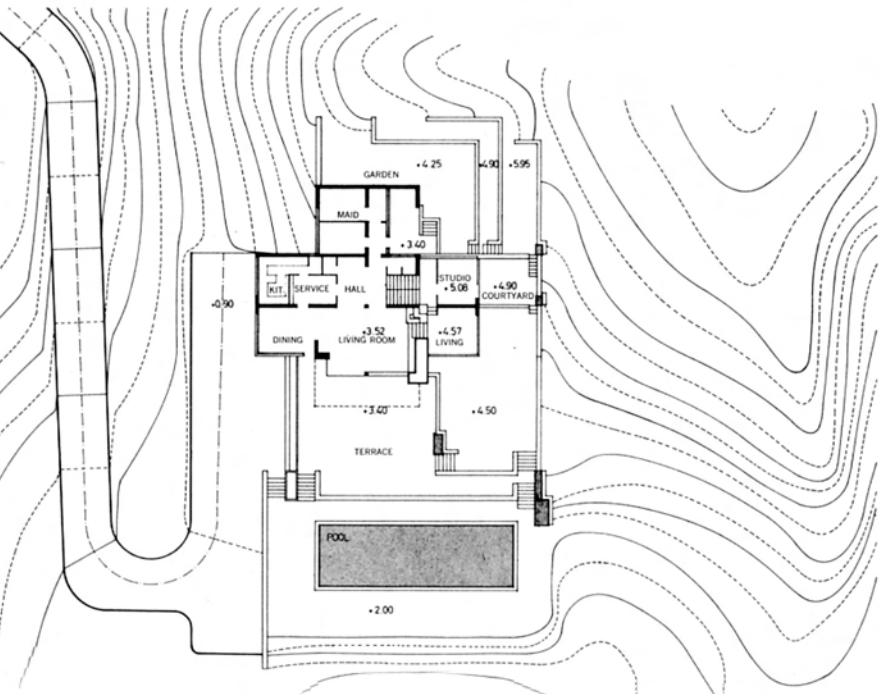
Photos by Pfaundler, Wolfgang Feil





south elevation

view from the dining room to split-level living room



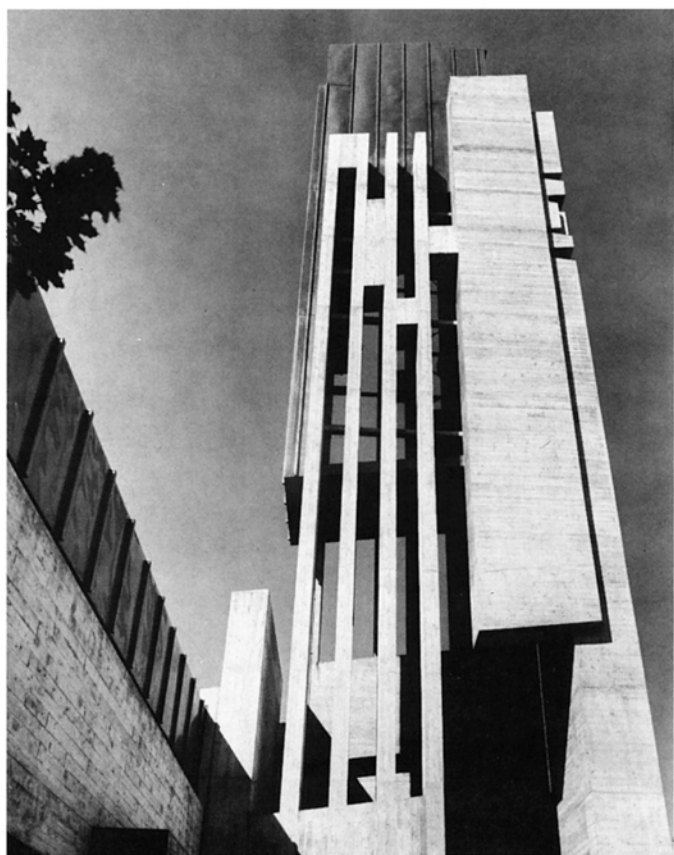
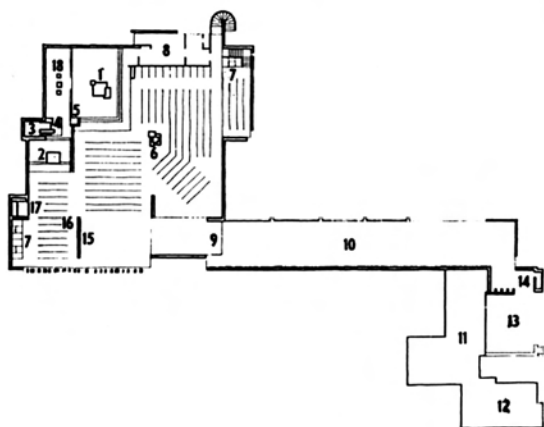


JUSTUS DAHINDEN, ARCHITECT

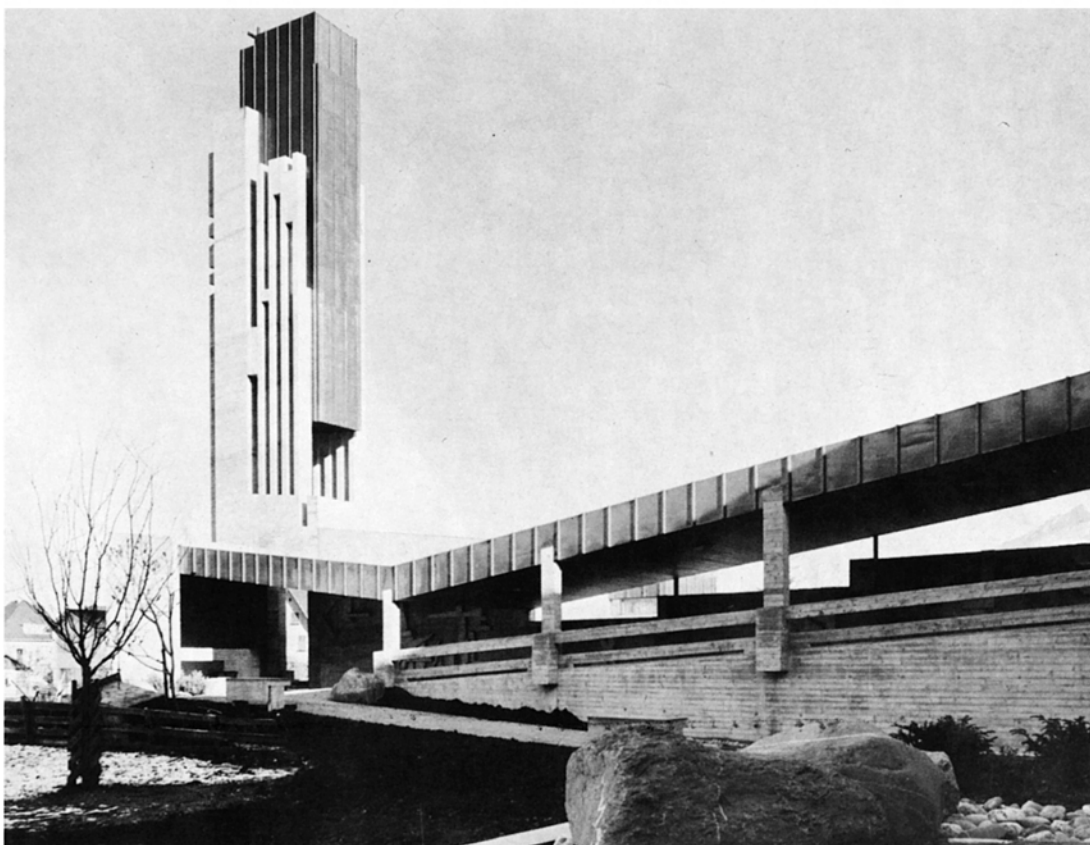
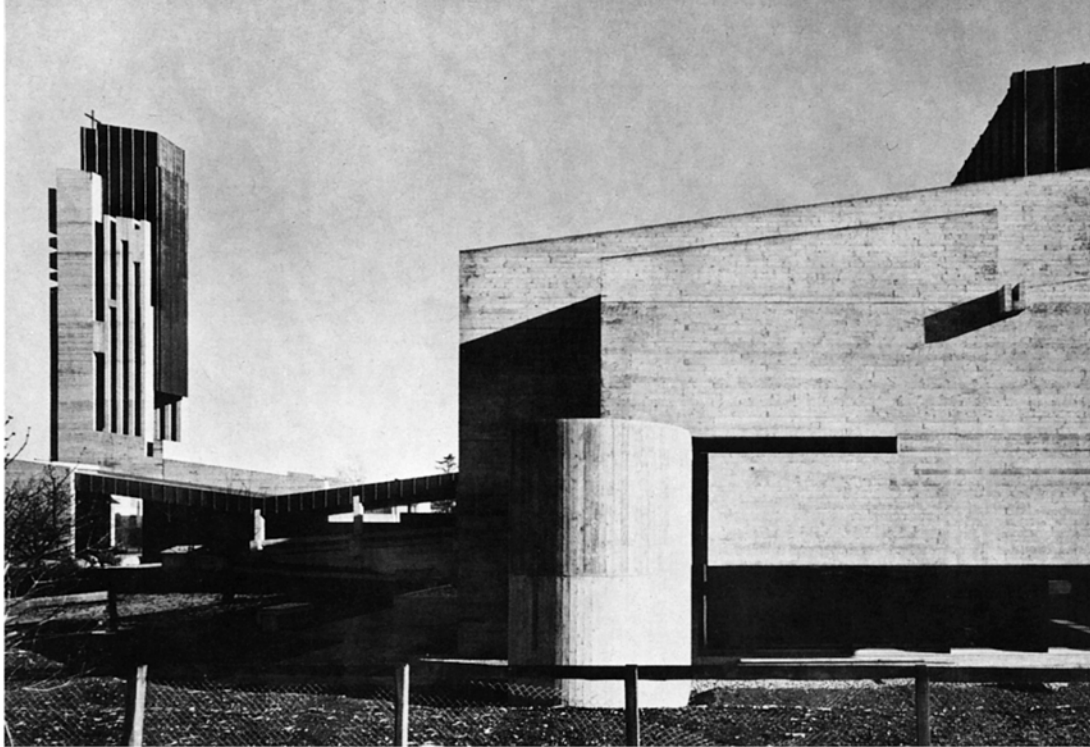
While the work of this young Swiss architect is remarkable for its unusually wide variety of forms and uses of materials from steel and glass to plastic (see *A & A* 11/63, 1/64, 2, 7, 11, 12/65 and 9/66), his churches have in common the steeply pitched roofs and exposed concrete of this Catholic church in Buchs, Switz. It is located in a residential area of the village and serves a congregation of about 500. The plan of the complex—symbolically tripartite—was in large measure dictated by the site: two rectangular lots with only a corner in common. The presbytery is to the front and contains the vicarage and parish hall on the ground floor, classrooms above. The dominating structure of the church is to the rear, and the two elements are connected by the covered Way-of-the-Cross portico which has the 14 Stations of the Cross in bas-relief and ascends to the entry of the slightly elevated church building.

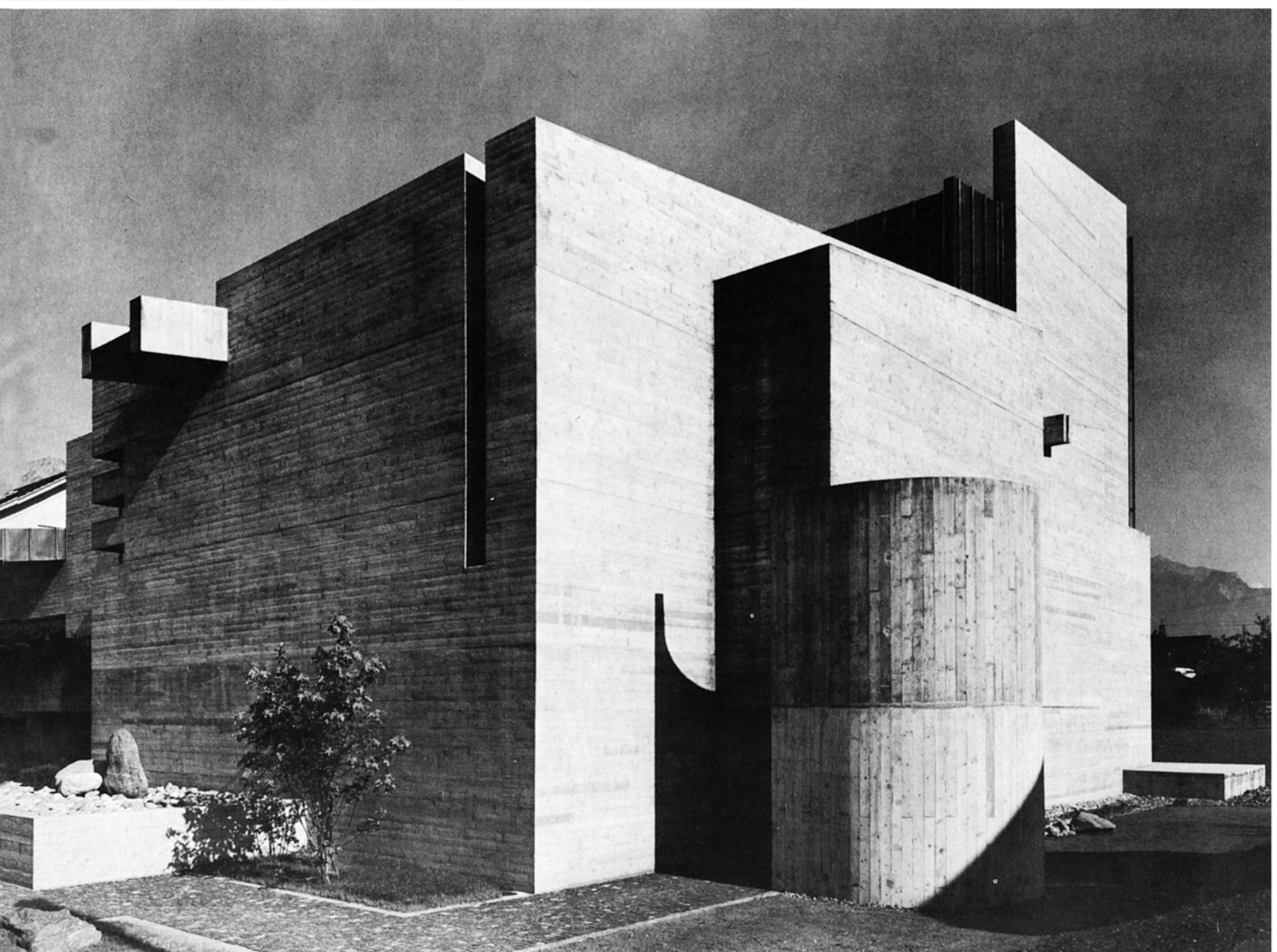
Inside, the main blocks of pews are at right angles bringing the parishioners into closer communication with each other and the altar. The concrete has been left exposed to the interior also, except on the ceiling where it has been covered by larchwood paneling. Grey tinted glass to the rear of the chapel admits natural light.

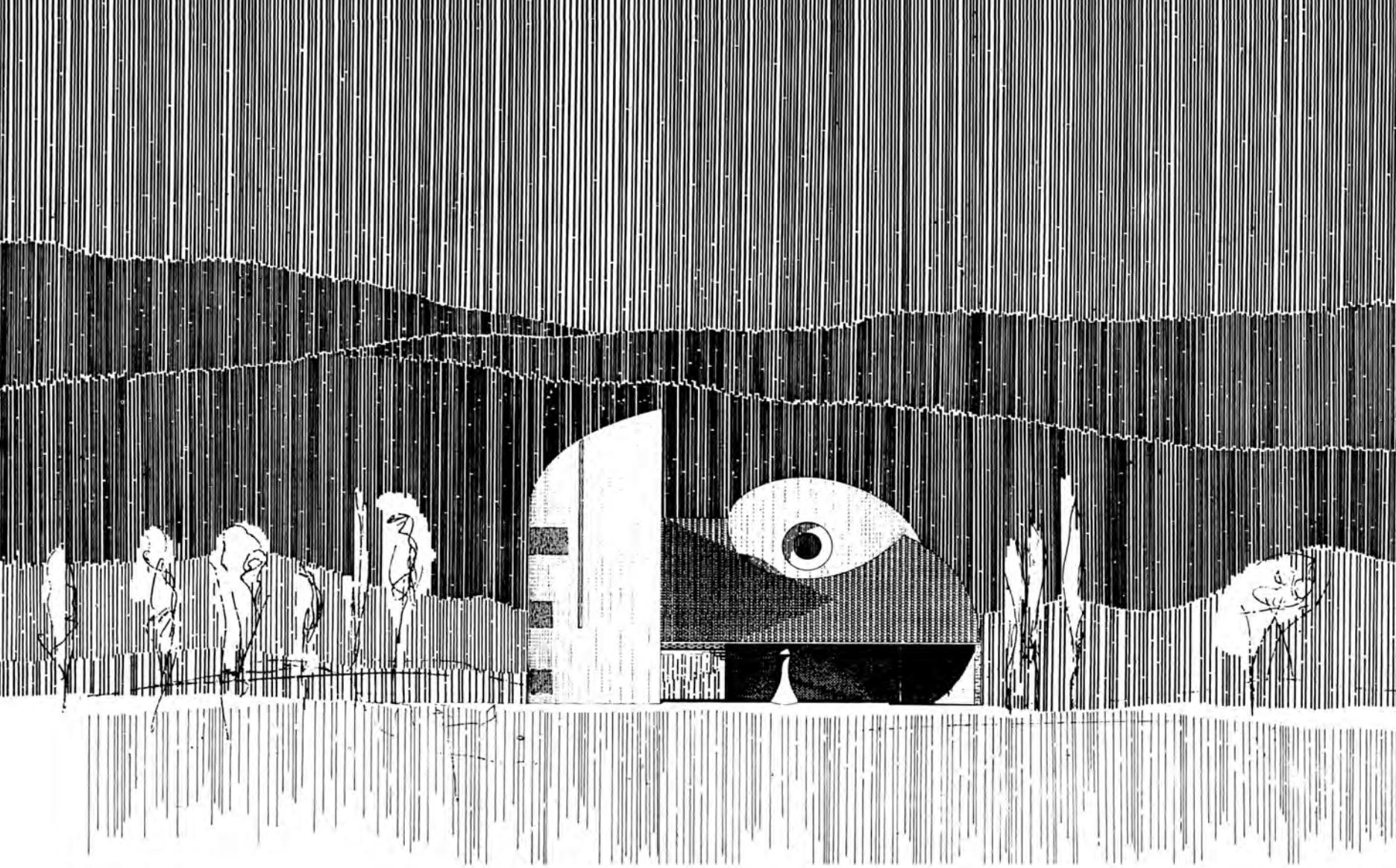
Plan: 1 main altar; 2 altar of the weekday chapel; 3 holy sacrament; 4 tabernacle; 5 pulpit; 6 baptismal font; 7 confessional; 8 vestry; 9 entrance; 10 way of the cross; 11 parish hall; 12 vicarage; 13 court; 14 tower; 15 cloister; 16 weekday chapel; 17 statue.



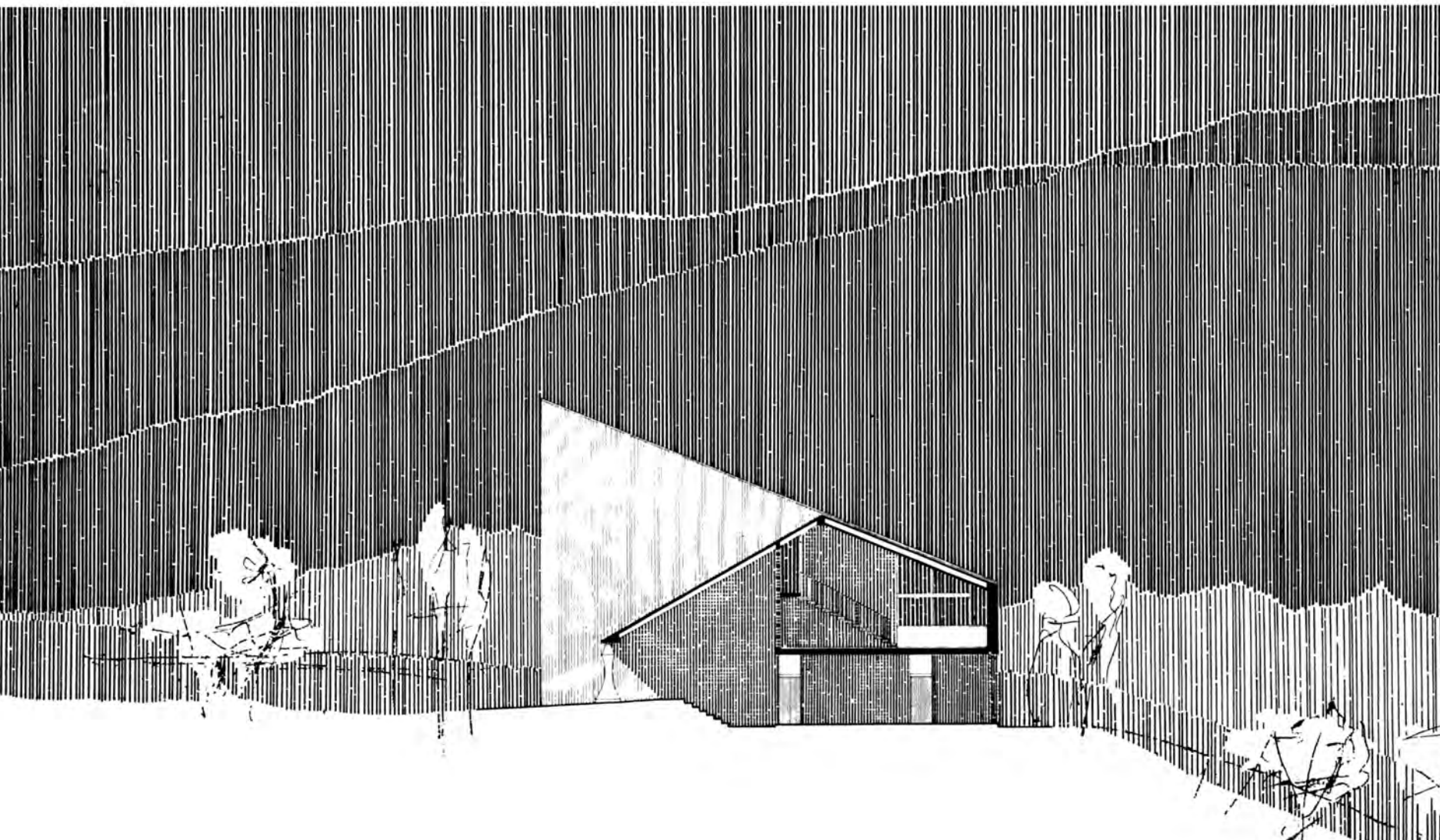
Photos by Puis Rast





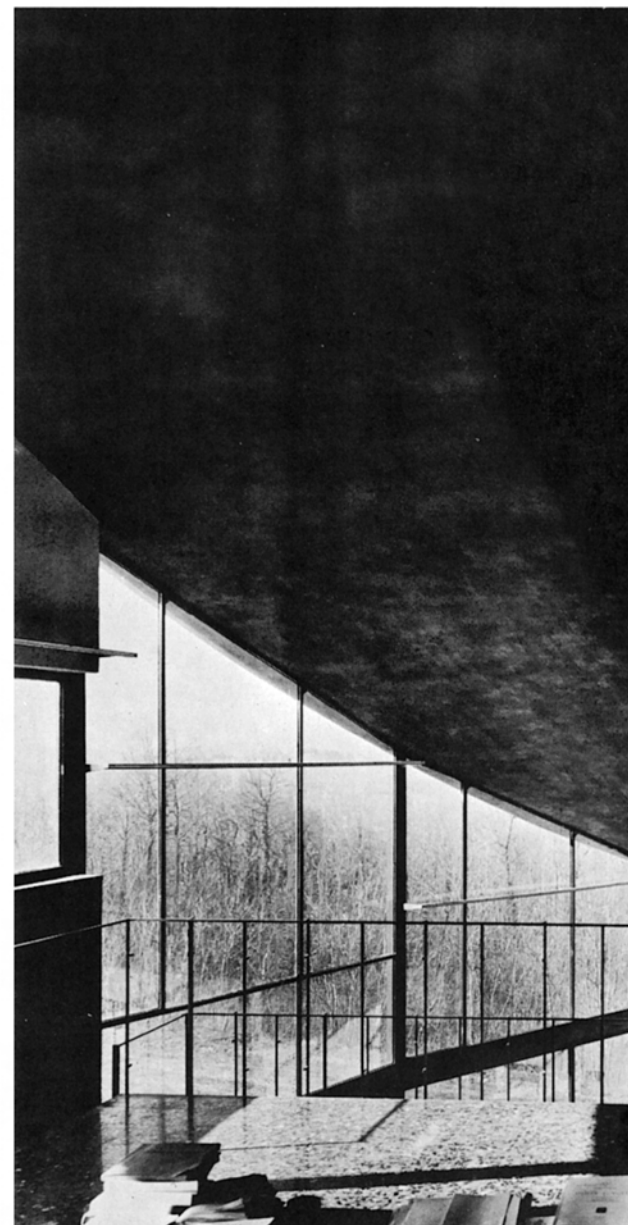
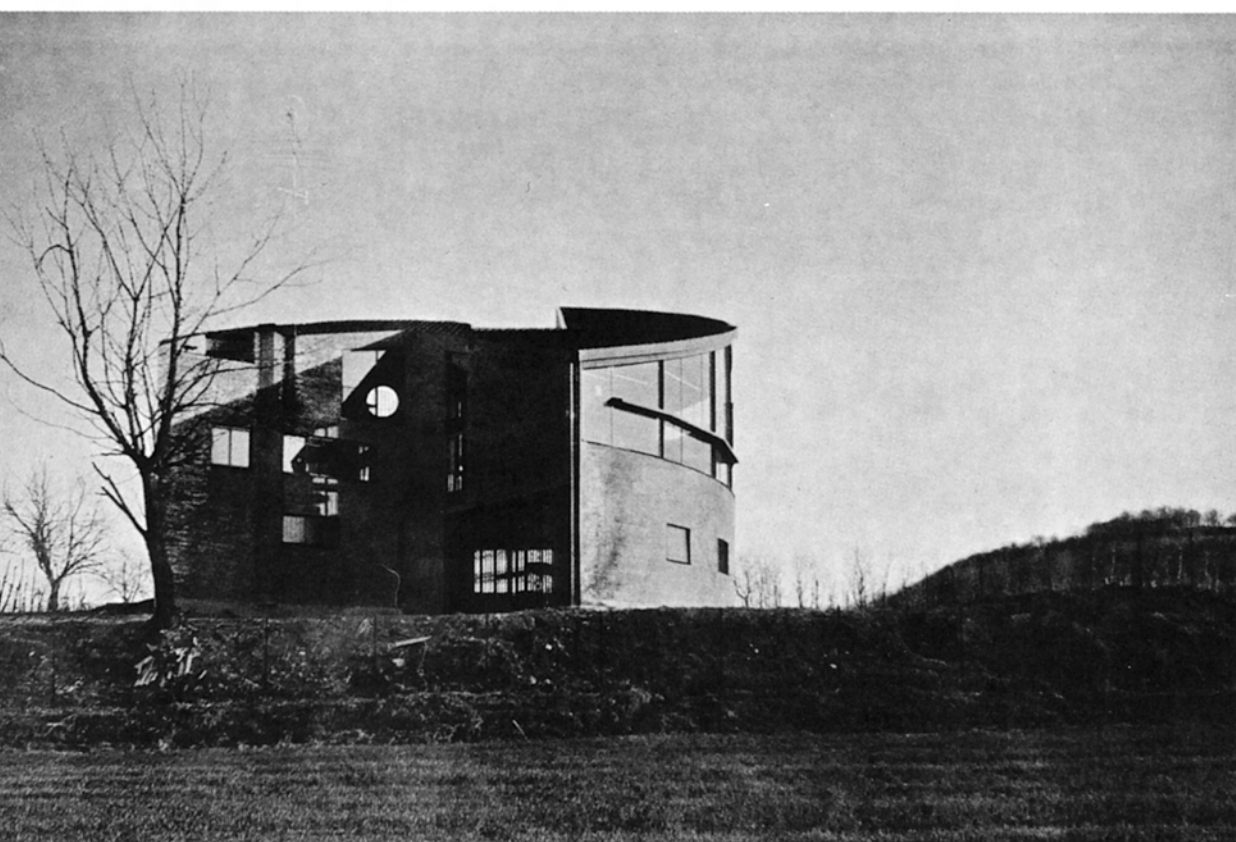


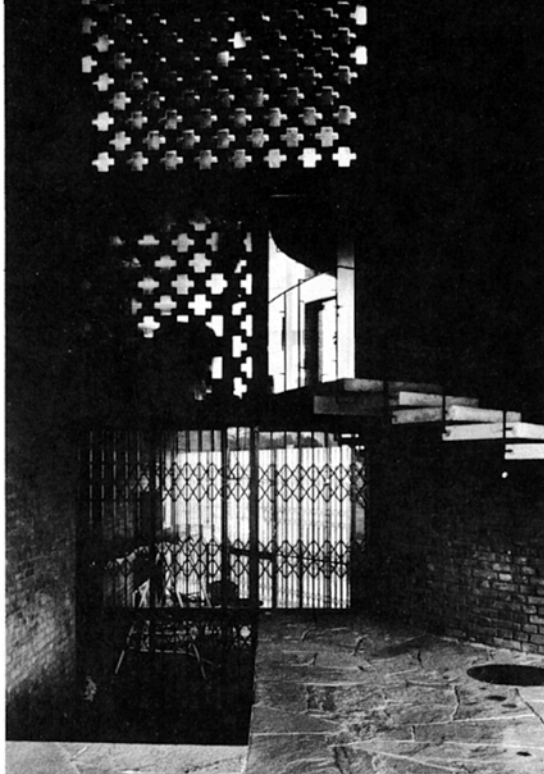
ENRICO CASTIGLIONI, ARCHITECT





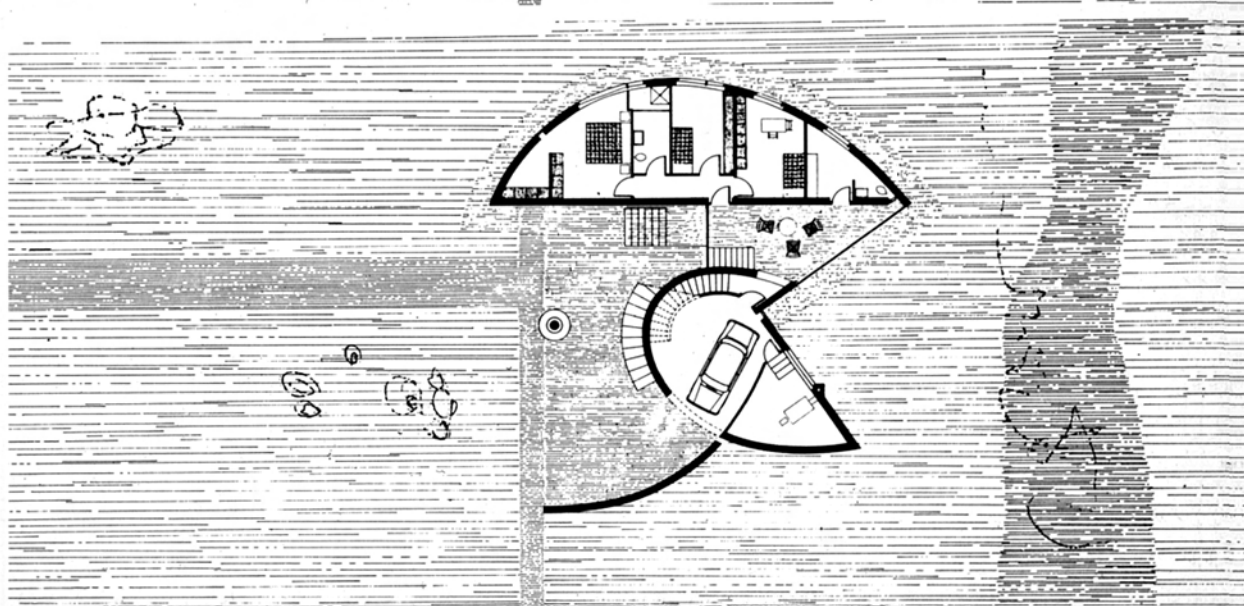
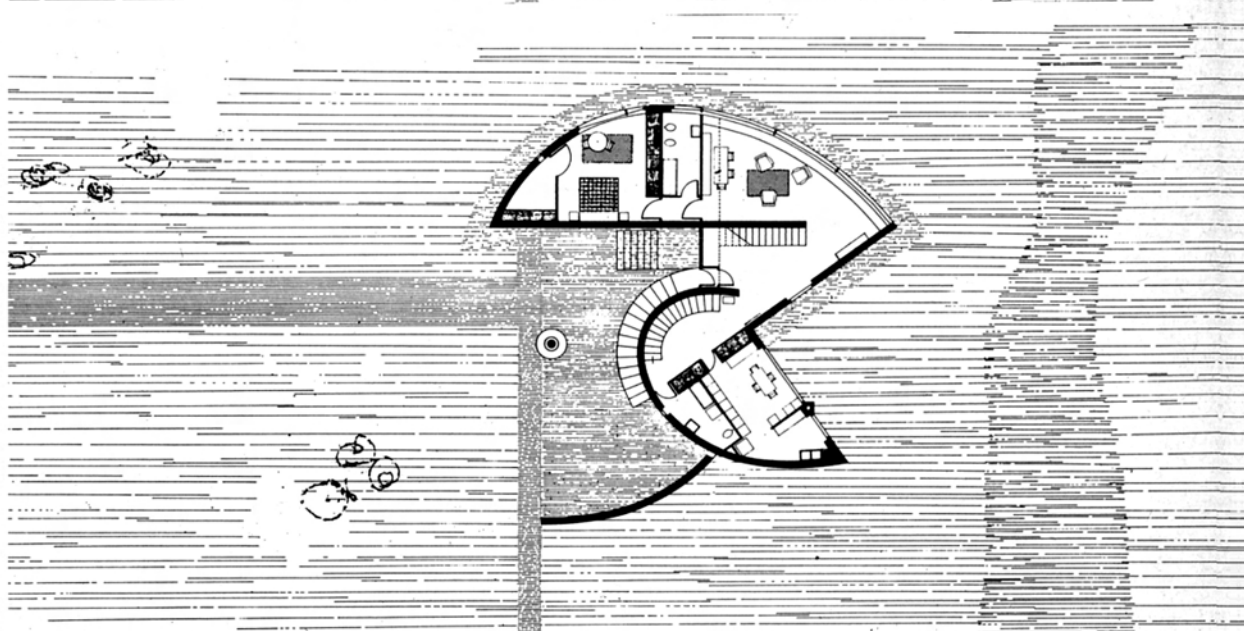
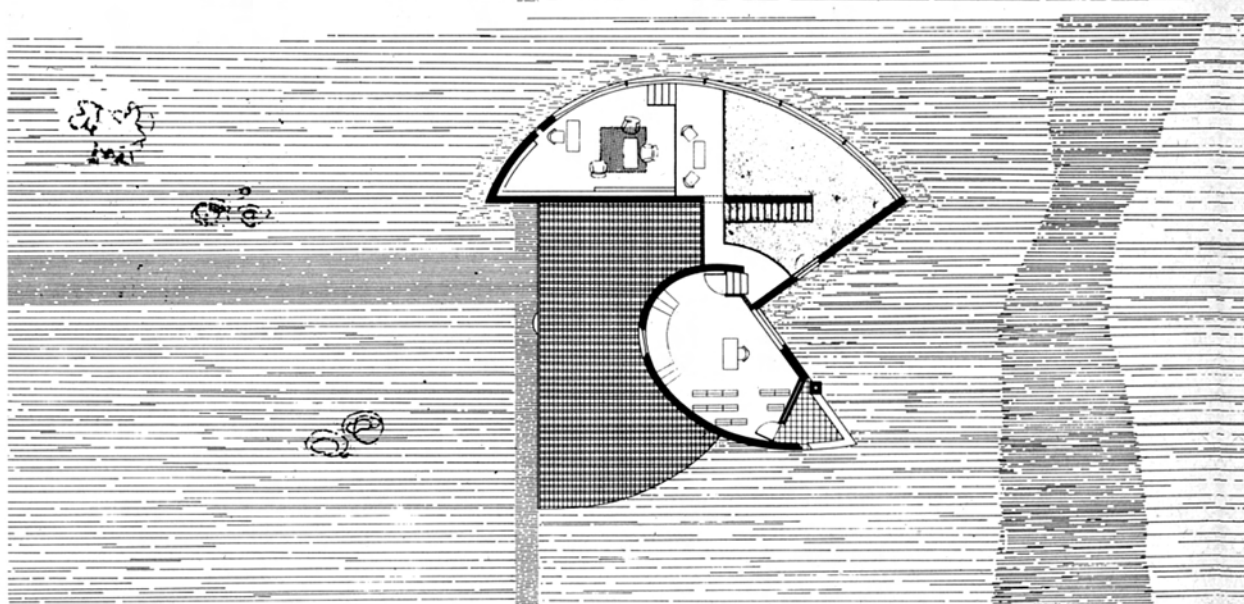
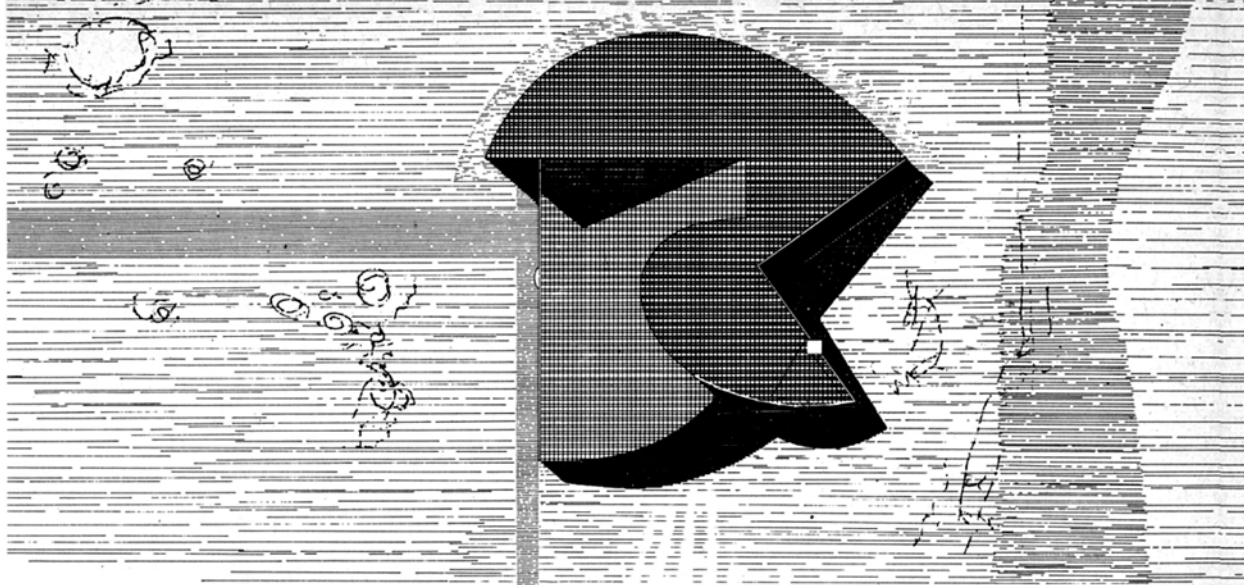
This house stands isolated in the open spaces of the penalpine countryside 35 miles north of Milan, its duality of plan and elevation carefully suited to the Lombardy landscape and the scholar who lives there. On the approach side the house appears as defensive as a keep, all apexes and angles protecting the solitude of the owner; to the rear, on the other hand, it is quiet and open.





The interior is a continuous volume which in plan is seen to be composed of two "lobes" which are at the same time joined and separated by the hinge of the portico and the irregular entry area. A special dark mortar, colored by the addition of ground tile, blends the brick of the walls into each other and with the natural surroundings.

Photos by Casali-Domus



The use of pictorial narrative in relation to architectural space and structure is as old as the pictographs of Altamira's caves. The 130 illustrated columns of Ammon's temple at Karnak, the Parthenon's friezes, the frescoes of San Vitale de Ravenna and the Sistine Chapel are static forerunners of the attempts in our time to discover more dynamic ways to use images. During the 1950s, American universities—especially their architectural departments—experimented with various projection techniques. Charles Eames, for example, used multi-images for the first time in an experiment in communication at UCLA called "A sample lesson for a hypothetical course." It was developed in collaboration with George Nelson and Alexander Girard and presented also at the University of Georgia.

The possibilities in simultaneous projections were also being explored during this period. In 1956, Nathan Shapira, then concluding Commonwealth Fellowship studies at M.I.T., developed there a 1½-hour program using six projectors and four screens in simultaneous or alternate projection, a "visual flow" technique he describes as a kind of "silent music for the eyes." Shapira continued his experiments while teaching at Wesleyan University, and in 1958 he programmed there a "Mexican Evening" exhibition which combined synchronized double images with sound by Richard Winslow and

words by poet Willys Barnstone.

Other efforts at intensifying the visual experience through the use of projected images, include Eames' exhibits at the Seattle and New York fairs.

The SADIPS system illustrated here (Synchronized Automated Double Image Projection System) adds to Le Corbusier's Electronic Poem technique at Brussels—a spectacle of light, color, rhythm, image and sound—the spacial sequence of an observer who moves among the programmed images at an almost urban scale. Vistas of varied distances arousing curiosity and exerting pulls which determine the patterns of the pedestrian are at the essence of urban design. The SADIPS system integrates space and time to such a degree that it could be utilized in the laboratory as an instrument for simulating urban design, offering opportunities for measurement and analysis of reaction to environment at something approaching urban scale.

Meanwhile, as an exhibition technique it is an effective answer to criticism of architectural exhibits such as that voiced recently by the director of Louisville's J.B. Speed Art Museum:

"Exhibitions of architecture are, for most of us not involved in the profession directly, extremely dull. They do not deal with the essence of the whole matter—architecture. You may

have photographs of architecture or models of architecture or dreams of architecture but never architecture itself, and I think the general public has a very difficult and dull time trying to relate these various representations to the actual thing."

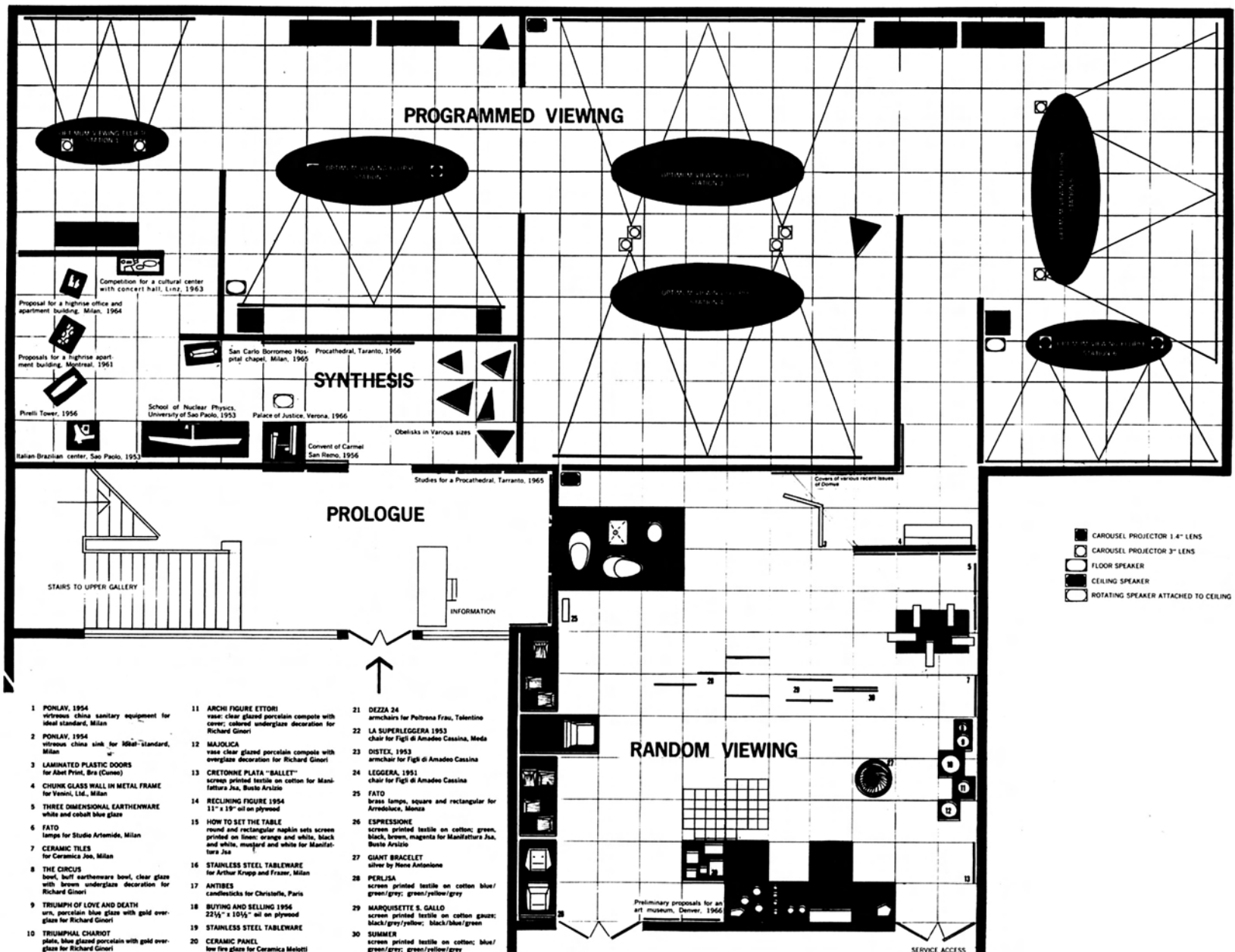
This exhibition at UCLA, "The Expression of Gio Ponti," presented examples of Ponti's work in the fields of architecture, planning, interiors, industrial and graphic design, applied arts, painting and drawing. The exhibit space was divided into four major areas:

Prologue—Recent studies for a procathedral in Taranto, Italy, were shown in natural lighting with a view into the next major area;

Synthesis—Ponti's search for the "forma finita" was illustrated in this section, a chiaroscuro space containing spot-lighted white models and black drawings in a darkened setting, again with a view into the next area;

Programmed Viewing—Also a darkened area in which 12 overhead carousel projectors were programmed to present a flow of 960 images: black and white and color photographs, drawings, text by UCLA Art Gallery director Frederick S. Wight and diagrams, at six stations. Each station projected 80 units of 7½ seconds duration. Station 1 was devoted to drawing, painting, stage design, applied arts; Station 2 furniture, interiors and Ponti's apartment; Sta-

PROGRAMMED EXHIBITION SYSTEM BY NATHAN SHAPIRA



SYNCHRONIZED AUTOMATED DOUBLE IMAGE PROJECTION SYSTEM (SADIPS)®

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

UCLA ART GALLERIES

THE EXPRESSION OF GIO PONTI

STATION 1

STATION 2

STATION 3

STATION 4

STATION 5

LEFT	RIGHT	LEFT	RIGHT	LEFT	RIGHT	LEFT	RIGHT	LEFT	RIGHT
①		①		①		①		①	
②	First expression as a Painter	②	Metal Working Chair for Caplan & Marazzo Co.	②	CHAIRS	②	ARRENZANO VILLA	②	1953. Palace of Justice, Torino
③	EXPRESSION IN PAINTING	③	1956. Furniture design for American Company	③		③	"Let us start by the art of building. A profound new history of architecture"	③	
④	mother Nina wife Julia	④	1955. Furniture design for American Company	④		④		④	
⑤	daughter Lisa	⑤	1955. Furniture design for American Company	⑤		⑤		⑤	
⑥	Wife Julia Double portrait	⑥		⑥	1957. Proposals for Gorrondona House Caracas, Venezuela	⑥	1953. Proposal for School of Business, Sao Paulo, Brazil	⑥	Columbus in China Sanctuary with Maria Negrin Torino, 1966
⑦	EXPRESSION IN SYMBOLS	⑦		⑦		⑦		⑦	
⑧	Universal Portraiture: Four Men, Four Women, Four Places, Four Powers	⑧	1957. Lotus Armchair for Fiat Di Andrea Cassella Manufacturing Company, Milan (Italy)	⑧	ARCHCHAIRS	⑧	ARREZZA VILLA, CARACAS	⑧	
⑨	Luciano Building	⑨	1967. Two Lotus chairs for Fiat Di Andrea Cassella Manufacturing Company	⑨		⑨	Proposals for High-Rise Apartment Building, Montreal, Canada	⑨	Religious art is a matter of religion. Not a matter of art.
⑩		⑩	1966. Small Four Chair for Fiat Di Andrea Cassella Manufacturing Company	⑩		⑩		⑩	
⑪		⑪	1953. Dining armchair for Cassella Furniture Co.	⑪		⑪		⑪	EXPRESSION THROUGH RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY
⑫		⑫	1966. Armchair for Arflex Milan	⑫	RADIOGRAPHY	⑫		⑫	
⑬		⑬		⑬		⑬	1958. Nomazze House, Tehran, Iran	⑬	The Concept of Capitalism, Architect: International (San Remo)
⑭	Frescoes by Piero della Francesca, 1559	⑭		⑭		⑭	1961. Institute of Italian Culture, Letter's Association, San Yulia Watermark, Architect: International	⑭	Expression: Mediterranean walls
⑮	Story of Humankind: child - mother, Adam - Eve, Adam - child, child - death	⑮	1964. Chair for Knoll International, Milan	⑮		⑮		⑮	

ORONA COURT

ORONA COURT, TORINO

CARRELL CONVENT, SAN REMO



1. View of Prologue area. Through the entrance to the Synthesis area in the background can be seen a Ponti hallmark—the obelisk, representing his search for “an impossible equilibrium that succeeds, the exactness of an excess.”

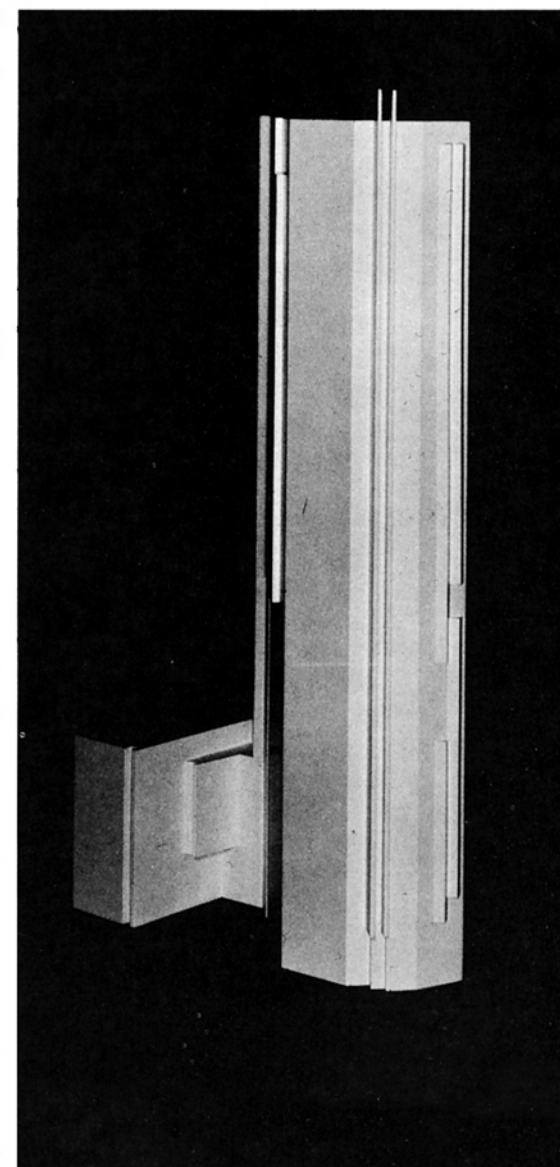
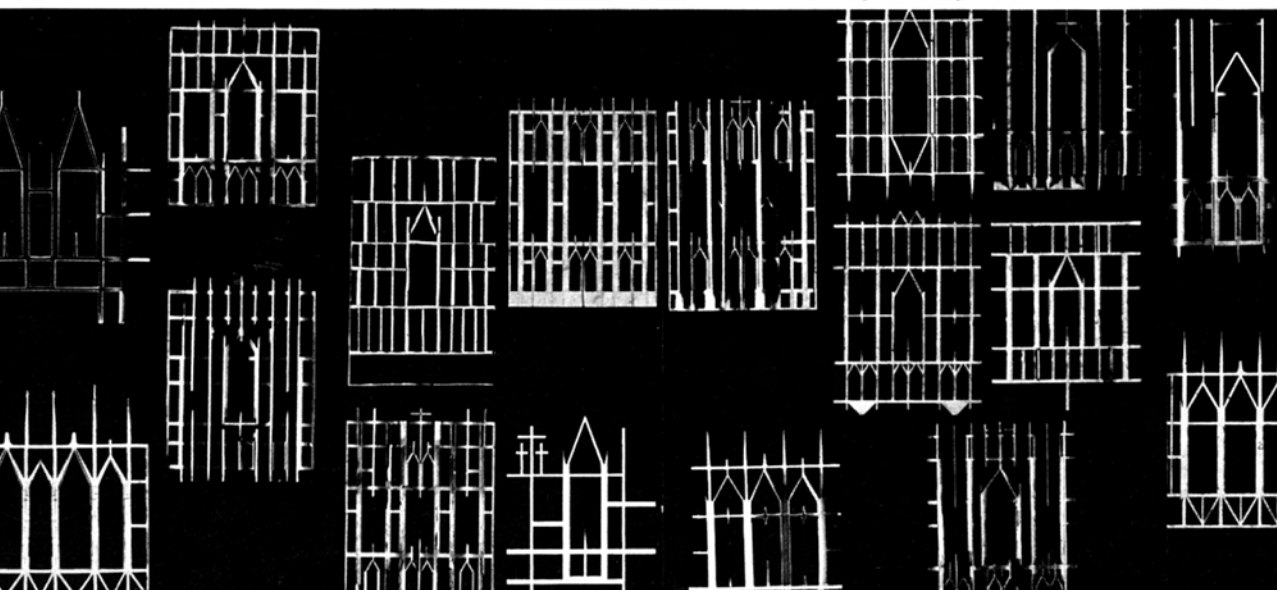
PROLOGUE

SYNTHESIS

18



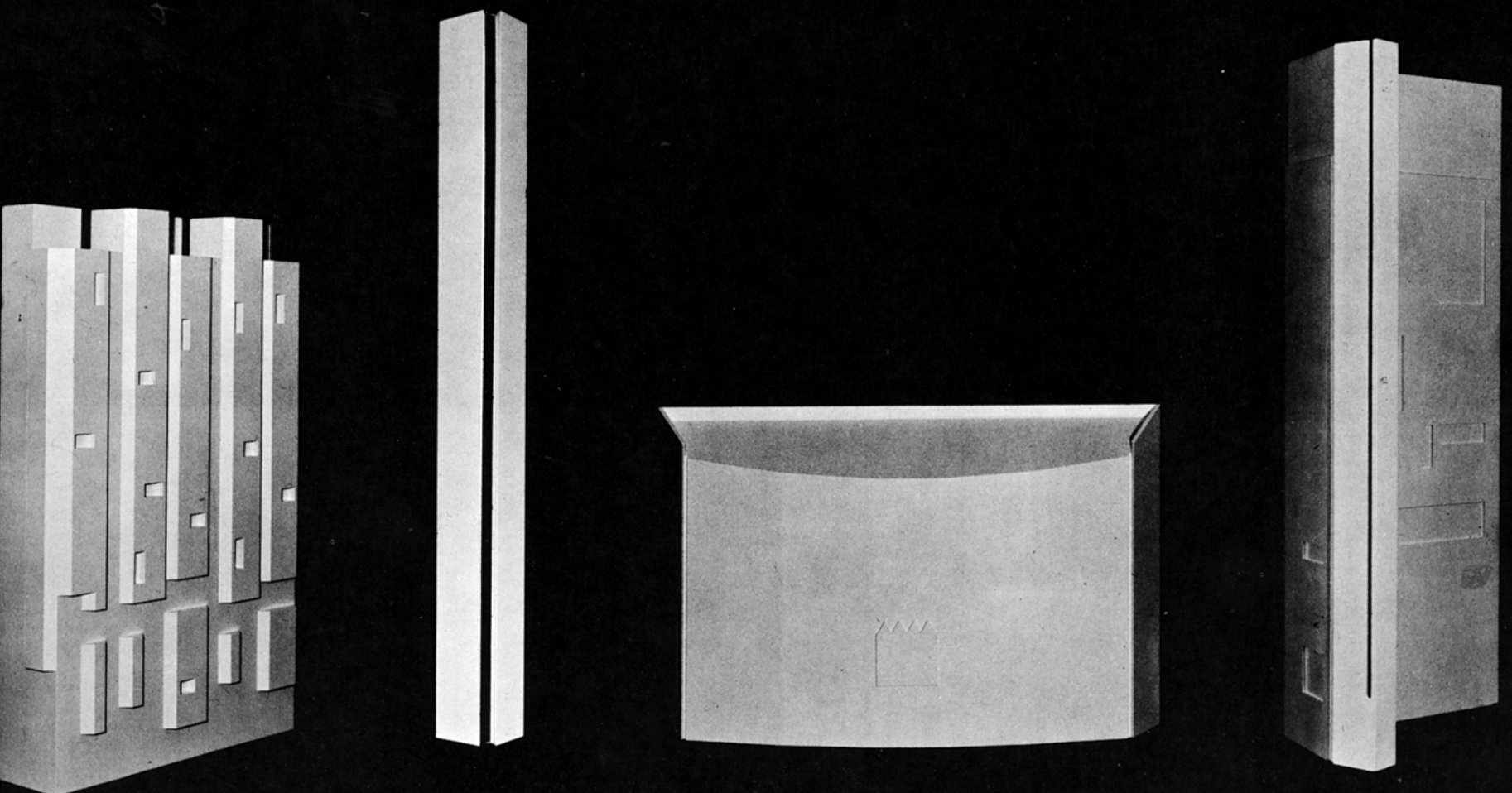
2-5. Studies for the Procathedral in Taranto.

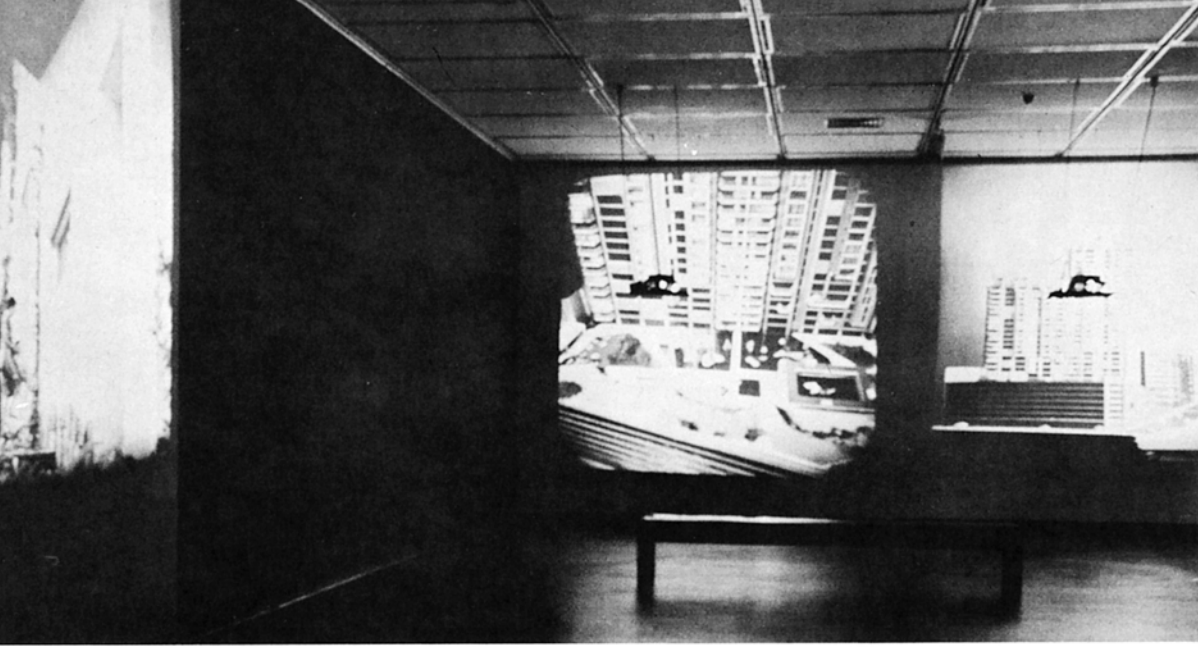




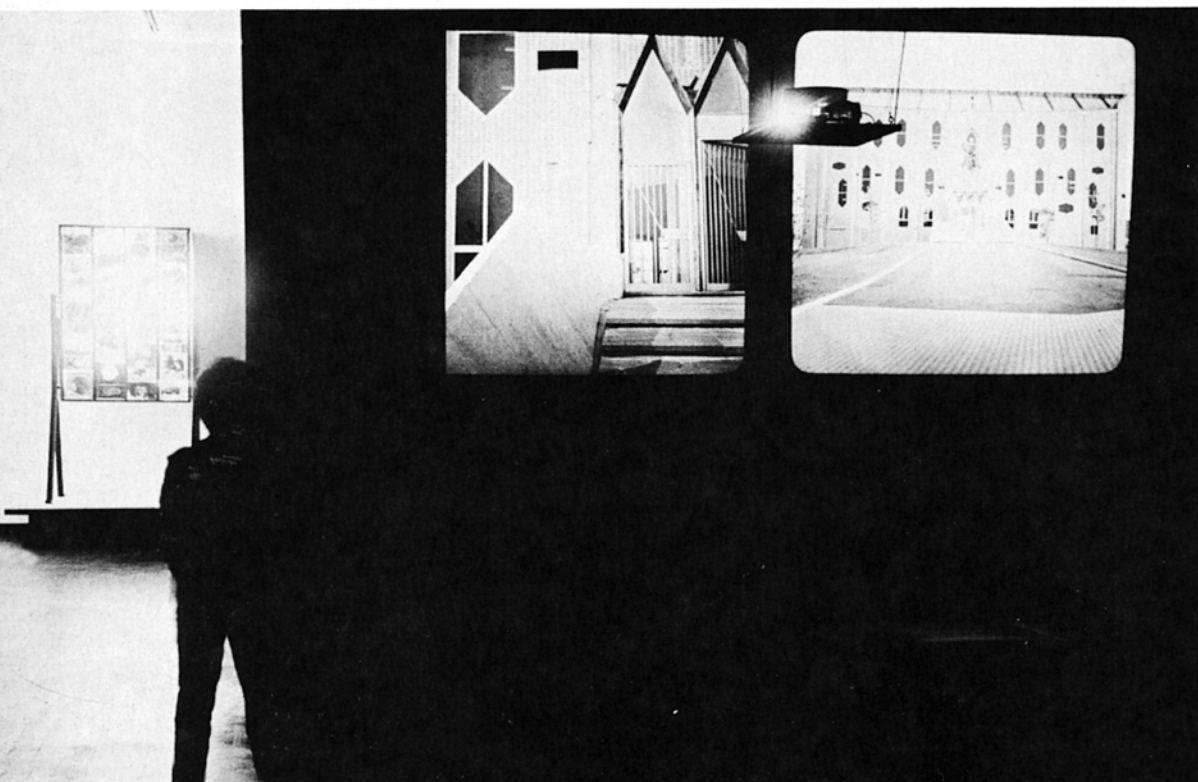
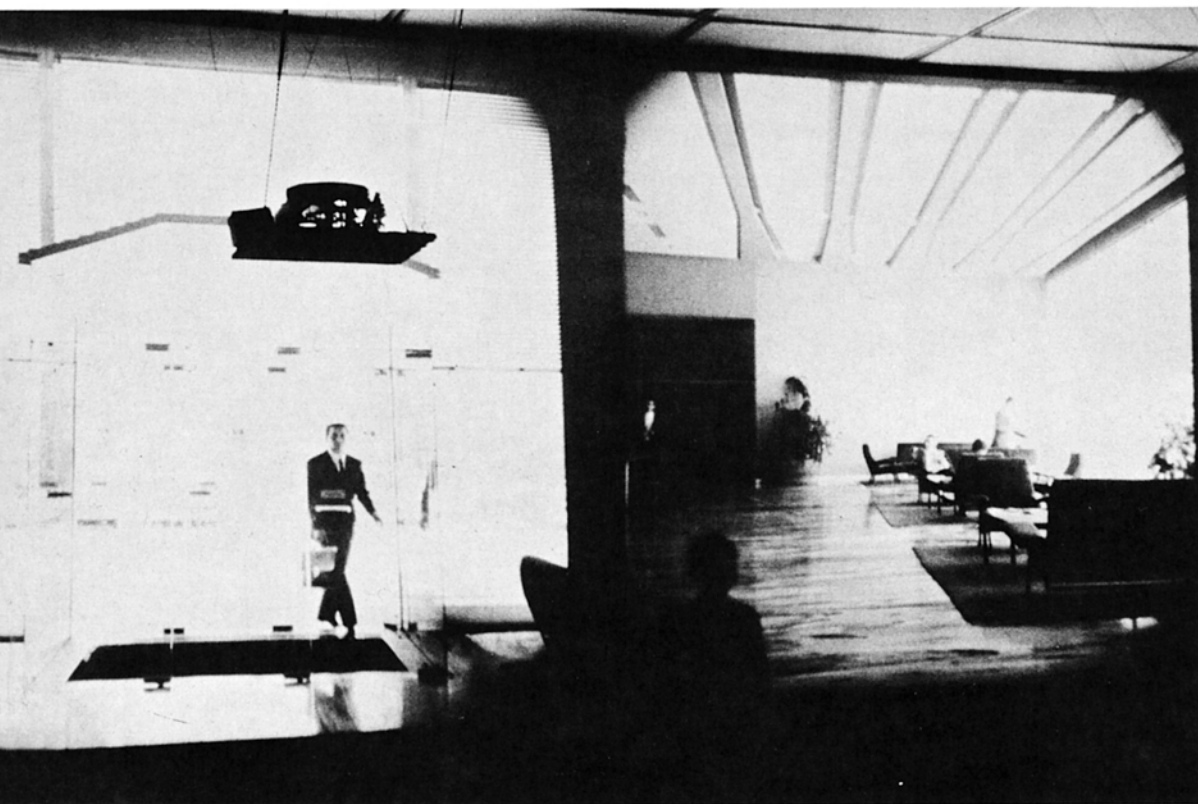
6. Models by Frederick Merrill, representing Ponti's major architectural works (from left to right): the Italian-Brazilian Center (with Luis Contrucci, Alberto Rosselli and Antonio Fornaroli); San Carlo Borromeo Hospital Chapel; Pirelli Tower (with Fornaroli and Rosselli, Valtolina and Dell'Orto, Arturo Danusso and Pier Luigi Nervi; Montreal apartments; Milan highrise office and apartment tower.

7. A skyline of Ponti projects illustrating the direction of his search for "la forma finita": on the wall (from left to right) the Convent of Carmel; Palace of Justice, Verona; below, School of Nuclear Physics, Sao Paolo; back row, Italian-Brazilian Center, Sao Paolo; Pirelli Tower, Milan; apartment building, Montreal; from left, Chapel for San Carlo Borromeo Hospital, Milan; on the wall at right, studies for Taranto Procathedral



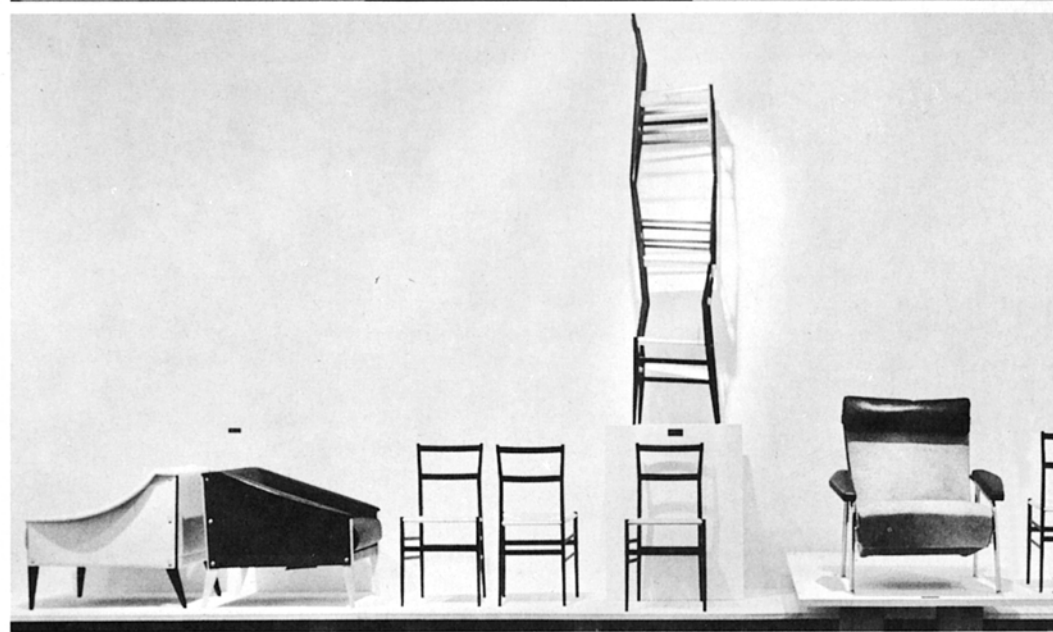
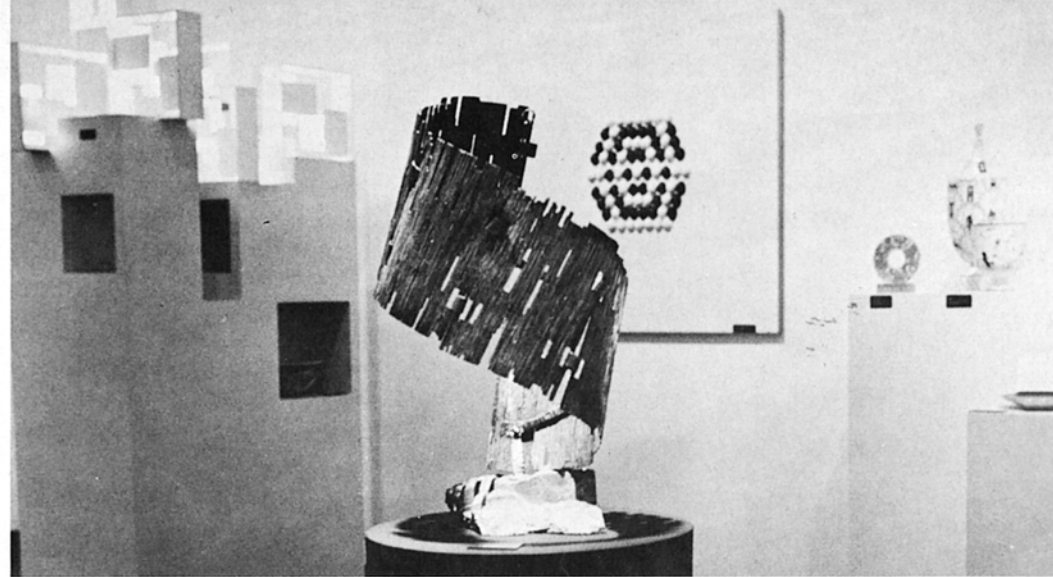


PROGRAMMED VIEWING



RANDOM VIEWING





tion 3 illustrated a sequence of houses ranging from the small scale house to large villas in Venezuela; Station 4 covered lighting and industrial design as well as a number of office and commercial buildings in Milan, Hong-Kong, Eindhoven; Station 5 showed the Pirelli Building and the development of the idea in some buildings and projects which preceded or followed the Pirelli Building; finally Station 6 illustrated Ponti's religious architecture from the Convent of Carmel in San Remo, to San Francesco in Milan and the most recent Chapel at the San Carlo Borromeo Hospital in Milan.

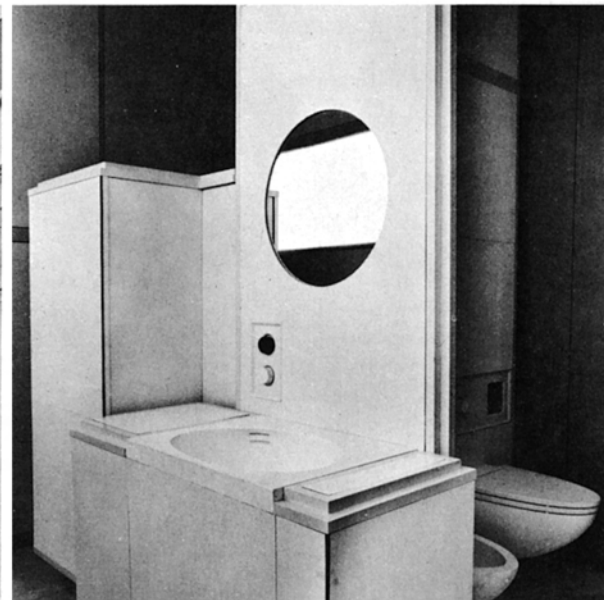
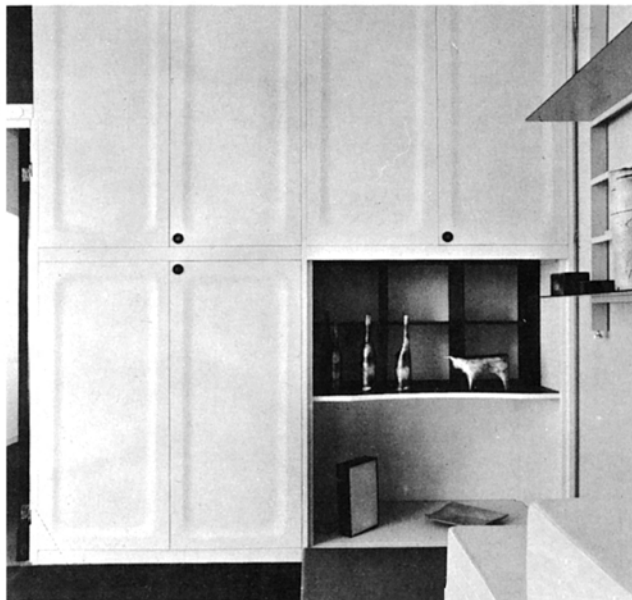
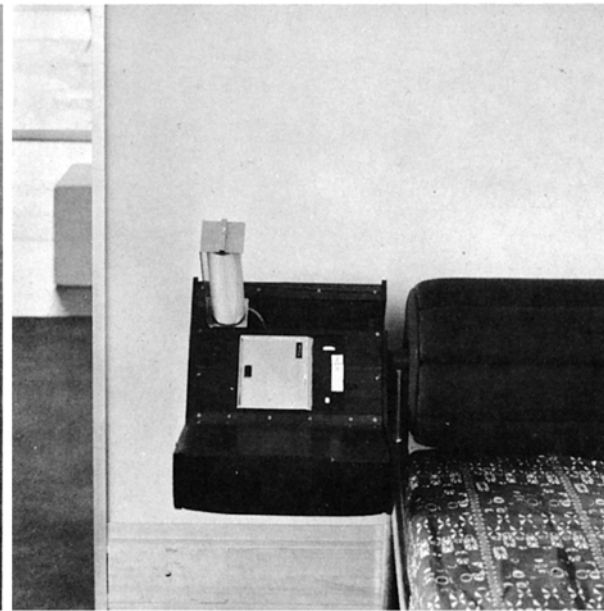
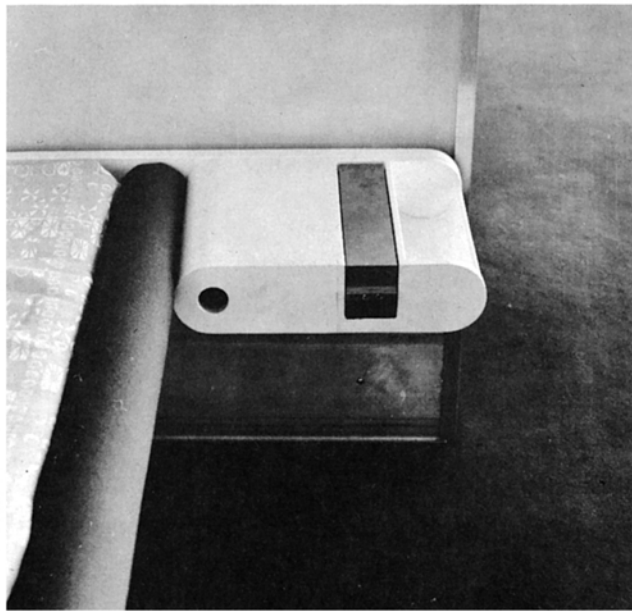
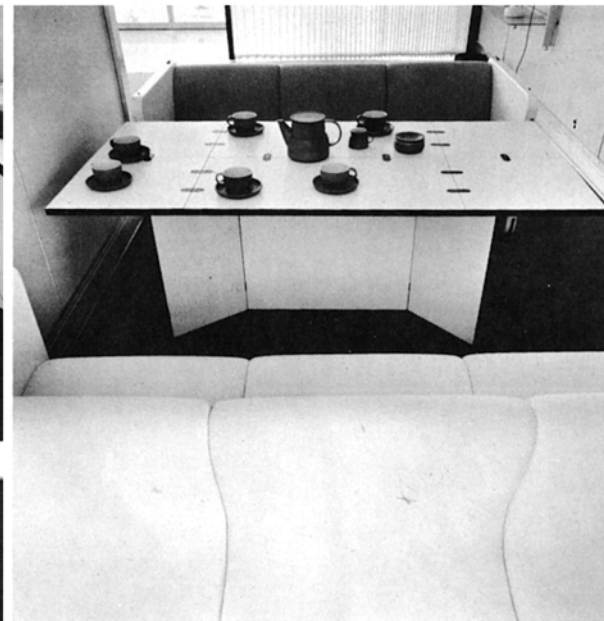
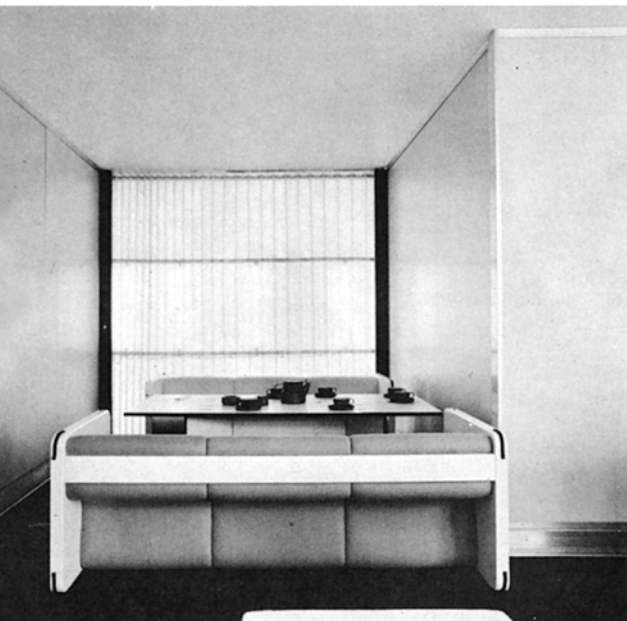
Tests and experiments with UCLA students led to the discovery of the optimum viewing ellipse area of best angle and distance from observer to the screen. Photographs are by Gio Ponti, Ballo, Casali, Danesin, Farabola, Gasparini, Ornati, Porta, Publifoto, Shapira, Sundahl and Tenbroeck;

Random Viewing. Significant examples of Ponti's designs for industrial production and the applied arts were displayed in the random viewing area, bathed in a generous warm light suggesting the architect's Mediterranean heritage.

Throughout all of the exhibit areas speakers carried a "Cantata Pontiana" by Robert Tussler. The sound, traveling from speaker to speaker, was geared to the 7½-second rhythm of the projectors, increasing the sense of movement and space.

The exhibition will be presented at several museums in the U.S. and to facilitate travel and adaptation to different spaces, all horizontal and vertical display supports were designed to a 3½' by 3½' module. Technical installation and production was by Jack Carter.

Photos by Nathan Shapira

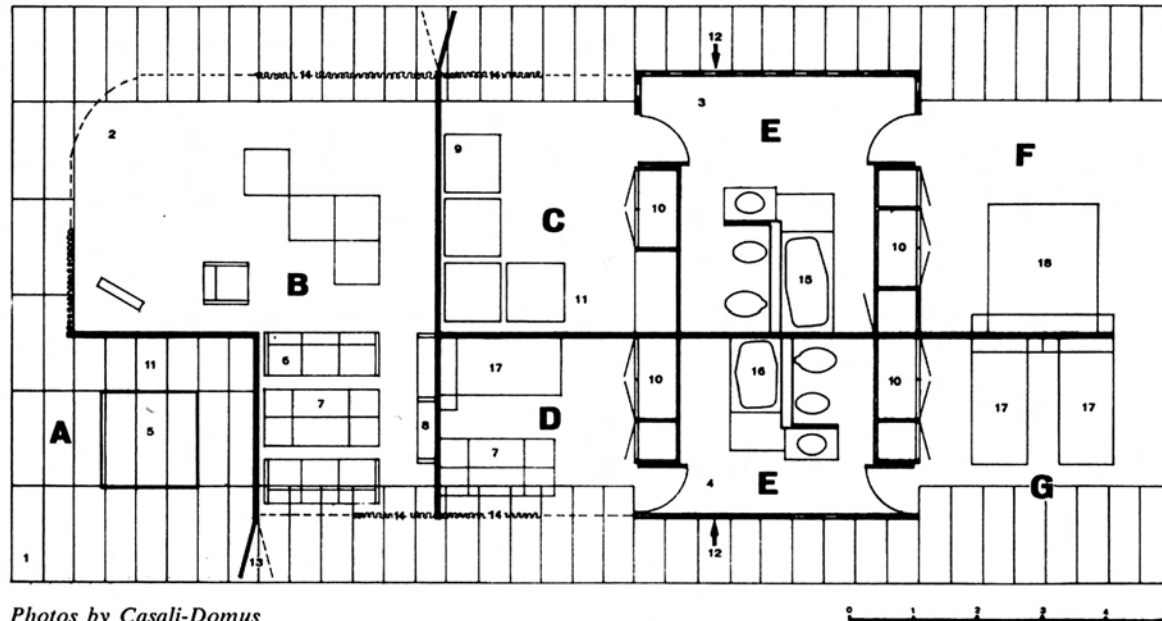


EXPERIMENTAL APARTMENT BY DOMUSRICERCA

An organization for research and experiments in residential design has been established by three Italian firms—the publishers of the architectural journal *Domus* and two furniture manufacturing companies, Arflex and Boffi. This apartment for a family of four or five is the first completed project. It is comprised of a living-dining area, study, three bedrooms (two family and one guest room), two baths and kitchen totaling approximately 1200 square feet (162 square meters). All rooms open or can be opened by means of movable walls onto the perimeter connecting halls (included in the 1200 square feet and apparently not to be shared by adjoining apartments).

Furniture, bathroom and kitchen fixtures and equipment, even the various kinds of folding partition-walls are prototypes designed for industrial production. The plastic, accordion-fold partitions (number 14 in floor plan) contain fluorescent illumination which provides diffused lighting; switches are mounted on the partitions' upright supports.

In the living room, the "bobbin" type chair and



- A kitchen
- B living-dining
- C study
- D guest room
- E baths
- F master bedroom
- G children's bedroom

- 1 steel flooring
- 2 felt carpeting
- 3 carpeting
- 4 laminated plastic flooring
- 5 kitchen unit
- 6 "bobbin" divan
- 7 folding table
- 8 suspended bookcase
- 9 foam rubber seating cushions
- 10 cupboard wall
- 11 movable wall (non-modular)
- 12 movable wall (modular)
- 13 door
- 14 luminous folding partitions
- 15 bath (existing fixtures)
- 16 bath (new prototype fixtures)
- 17 beds
- 18 master bed

Photos by Casali-Domus

divans can be rotated on their horizontal axes to provide seating at three different heights, low, dining height and bar height. The laminated plastic table folds from a rectangular dining table accommodating eight into a bar counter or square table for two.

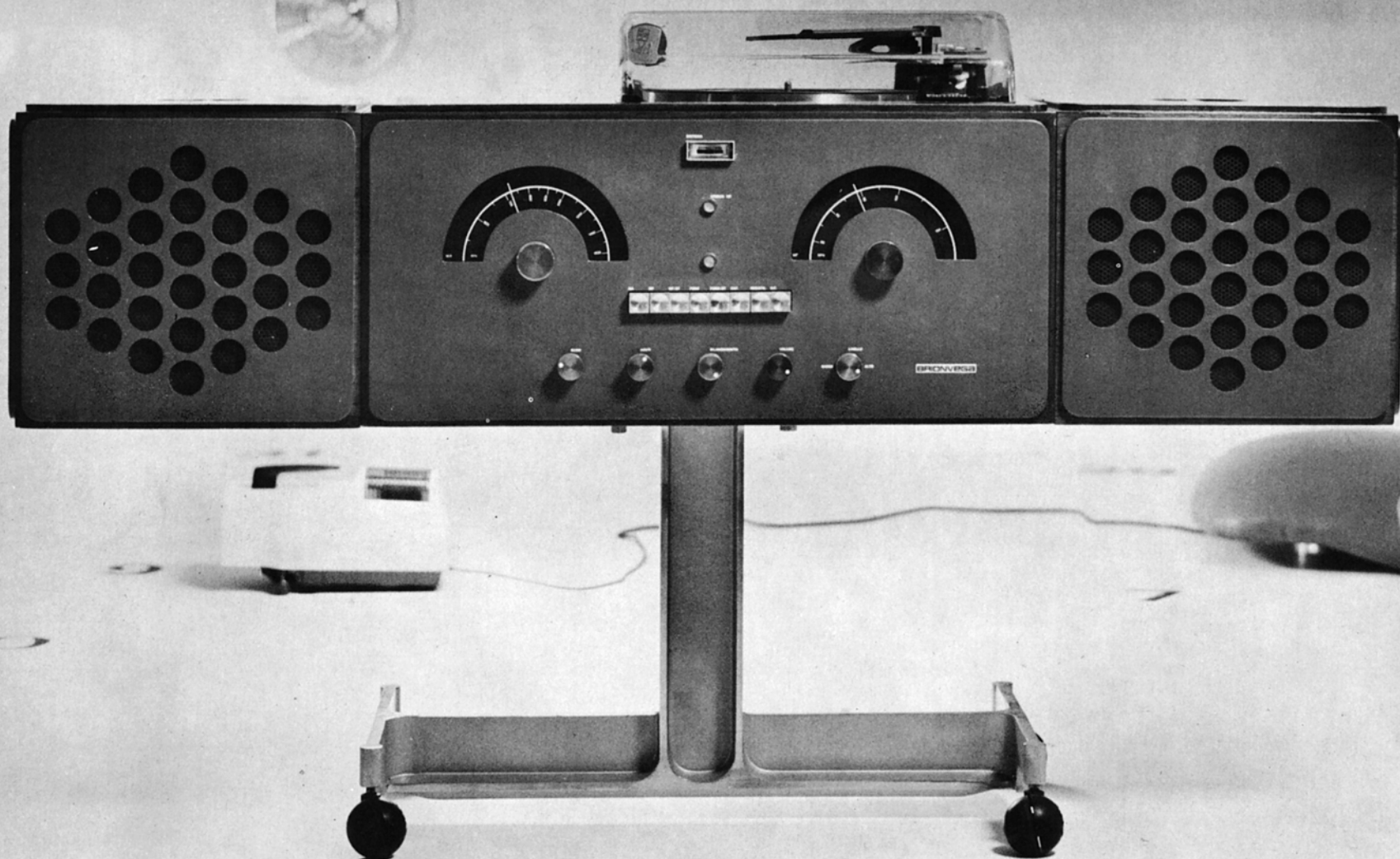
In the kitchen, refrigerator, oven, stove, grill, sink and dishwasher are part of a central stainless steel unit. Cupboards, vent fan, plate rack and luminescent panels are a separate suspended fixtures.

A central unit in the bathrooms contains tub, lav and WC areas all screened from each other and placed around the plumbing wall, which also carries lighting panels, taps and controls. The bidet and toilet project from the wall free of the floor for ease of cleaning.

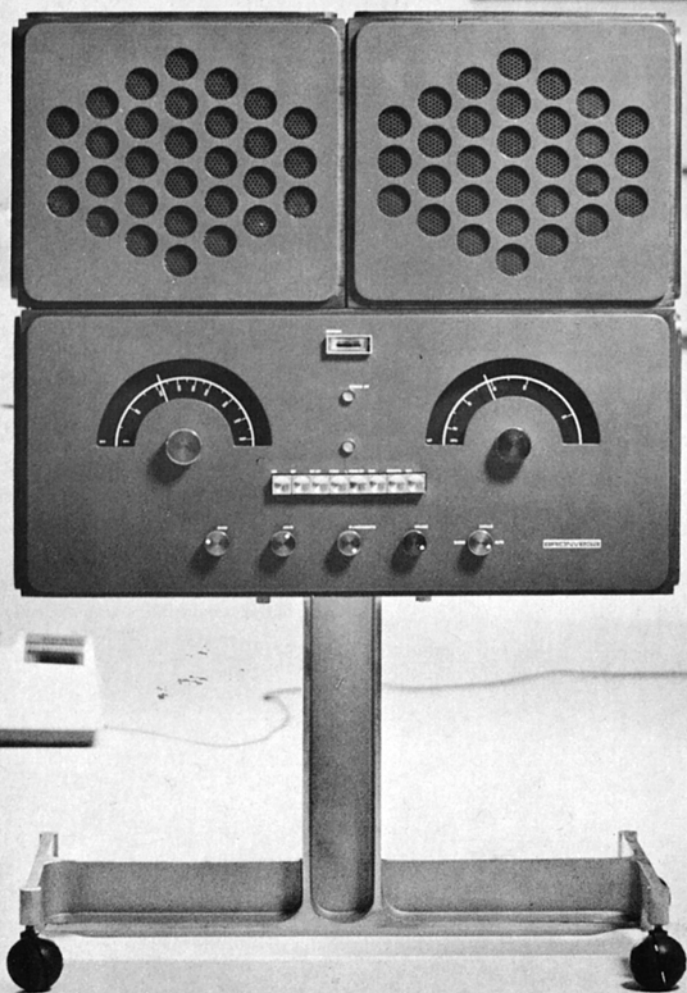
In the master bedroom, two cylindrical night stands attached to the bed headboard contain lamps, a radio, telephone, electrical switches, etc. The wardrobe walls are of laminated plastic.

Domusricerca designers of this project were Cesare Casati, Joe Colombo, Giulio Confalonieri, Enzo Hybsch, Luigi Massoni and Emanuele Ponzio.



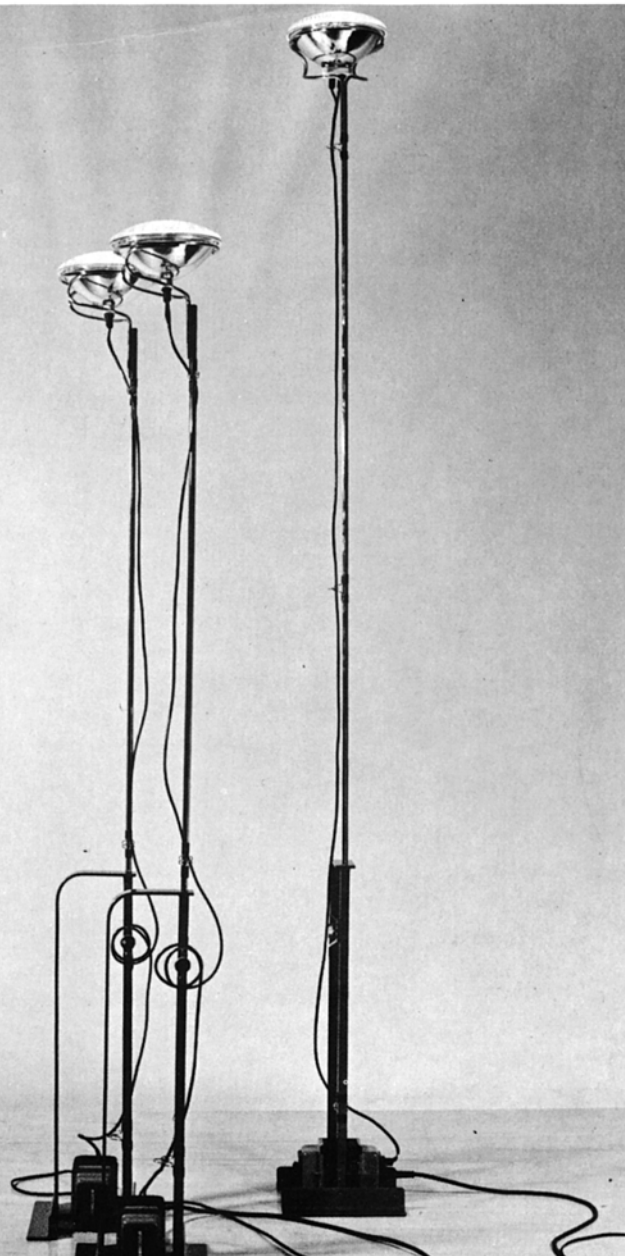


23



1

2 3



Nowhere today is the industrial design picture less blurred and the commitment to integrity of form more total than in Italy (which is not to say there is not a proportion of bad work there). While, as Tomas Maldonado has said, it is doubtful that a "good design environment" would necessarily result from a sum total of good design objects it is no excuse for the pretentiousness and incoherency of what so often passes for industrial and furniture design here. These examples of recent designs by the Castiglioni brothers show, in photograph at least, an admirable simplicity of structure and a characteristic softening—sometimes playfully so—of the chryselline forms from north of the Alps, a pleasant latinizing of the geometric-functional.

Stereophonic AM-FM radio-phonograph (1) with movable speakers which can be placed on top of the central body (2) containing radio and record player or removed and spaced when necessary for better stereo effect. The cabinet is of varnished wood the support is aluminum. Manufactured by Brion Vega, Milan. "Toio" lamp (3) has lacquered metal base with a set screw for varying the height of the chrome metal (fishing rod?) stem. The 300-watt (auto?) sealed beam light operates off a transformer in the base which also acts as a counter-weight. Minimum height is 5½', maximum 6½'. Manufactured by Flos, Nave (Brescia).

"Taccia" lamp (4, 5, 6) has a cylindrical base of chromed metal containing the bulb and covered with a scalloped insulating ring. A reflecting disc of aluminum is supported by an inclined glass bell which can rotate to direct the flow of light. Manufactured by Flos.

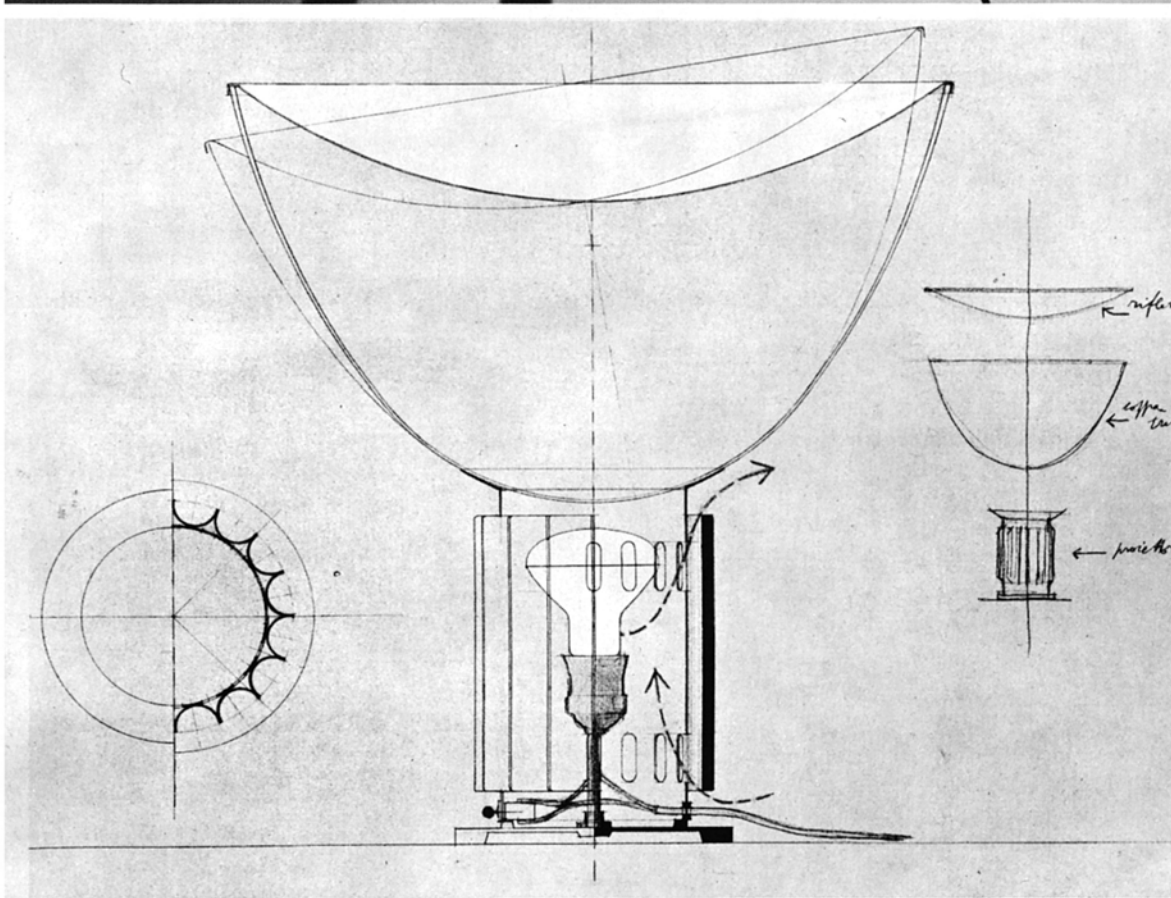
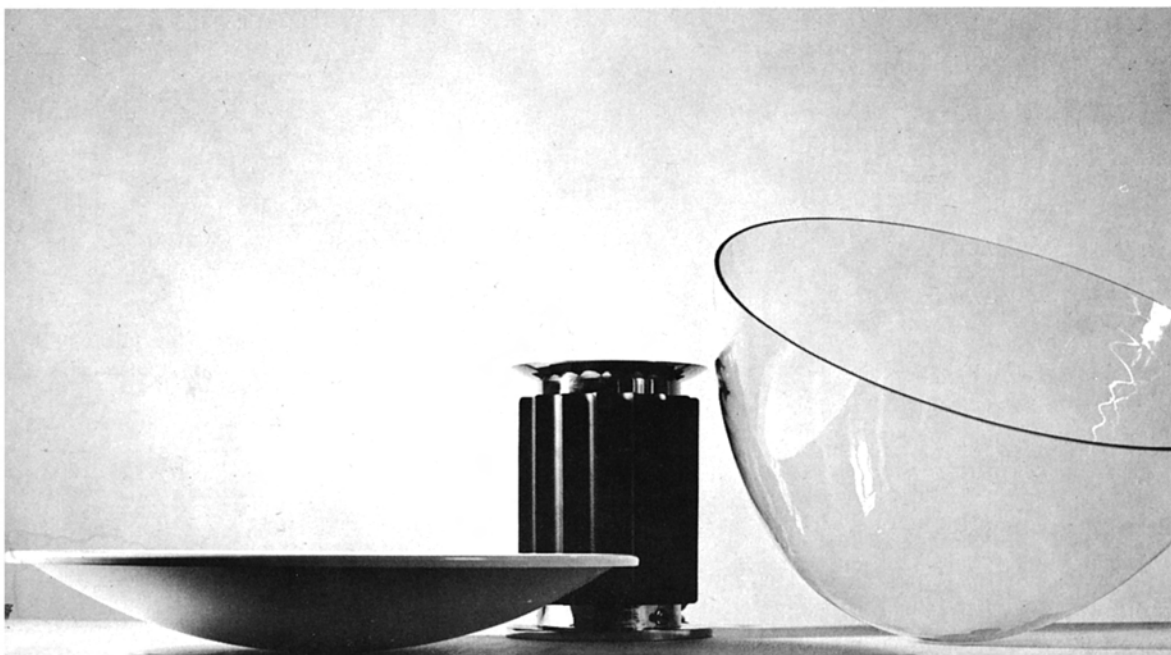
"Arch" lamp (7) has a white marble block base and a telescoping stainless steel stem. The movable reflector is chromed aluminum. Crown of the arch is 8' 3" from the floor. Manufactured by Gavina, Bologna.

Photos by Aldo Ballo

7



6





8

26 "Snaluca" armchair (8,9) is completely demountable and composed of upholstered formed metal elements joined by bolts; wood leg pieces which screw into the side elements. The form and dimensions of the chair were dictated solely by the results of a series of comfort tests of existing chairs (transportation seat-

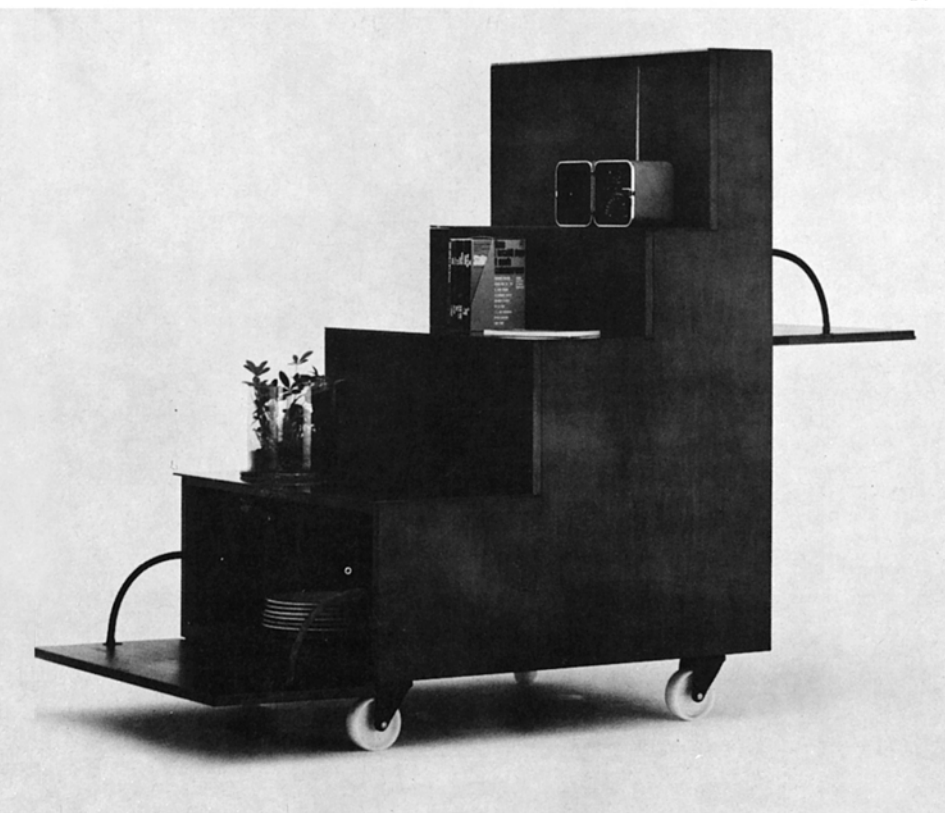
ing included). Concern over reactions of consumer or critic were not a consideration. Manufactured by Gavina, Bologna. Photo by Casali. "Cacciavite (Screwdriver)" table (12,13) is approximately 20" x 25" and birch with black varnish. Hemispherical blocks at the corners are threaded to accept the supports which have

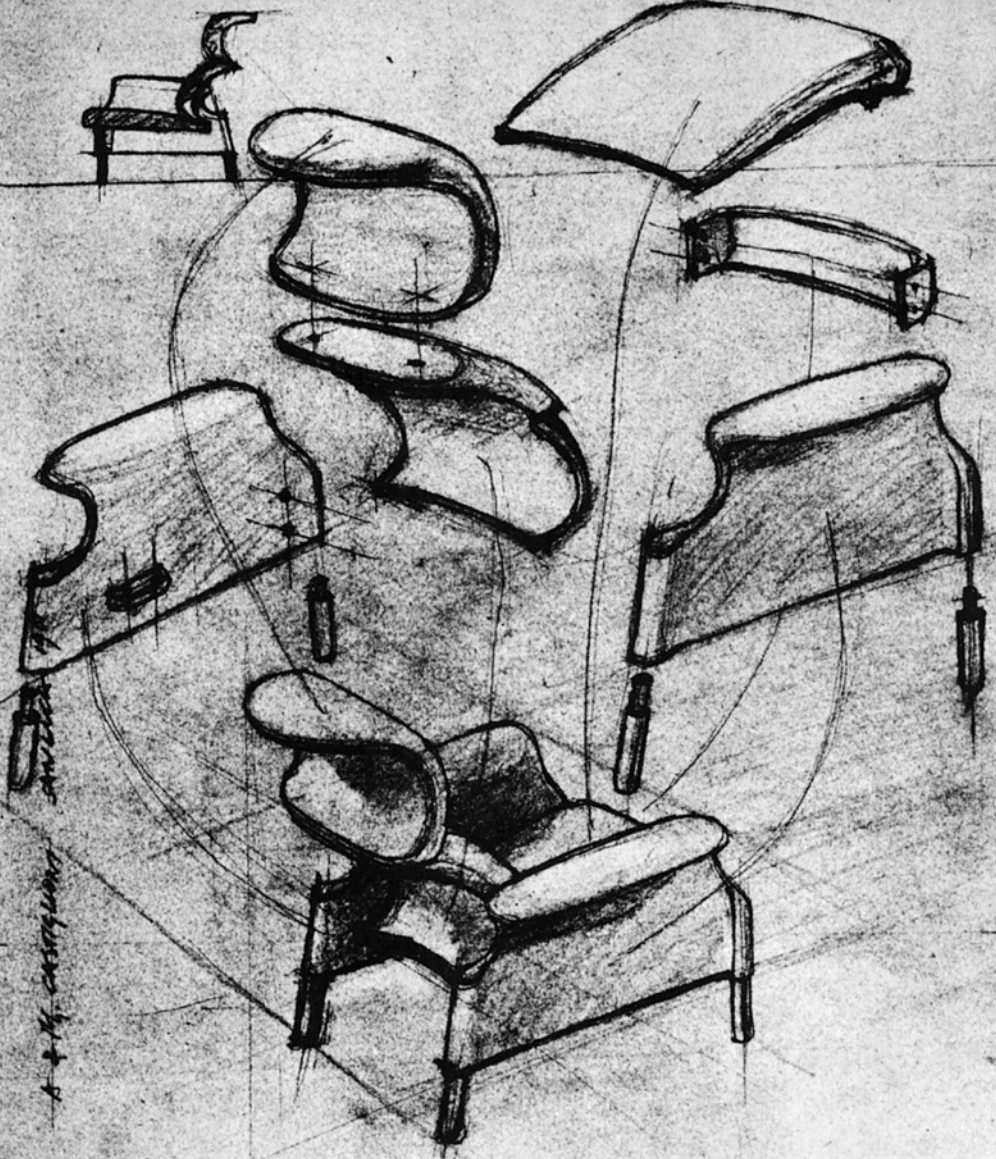
a hexagonal section for ease in assembling. Manufactured by Bernini.

"Sciuko" lamp (15) is lacquered metal with a movable support which permits hanging mounting on wall and ceiling and table use. Manufactured by Flos.

Wood shelves (14) are supported by thin wire

10 11



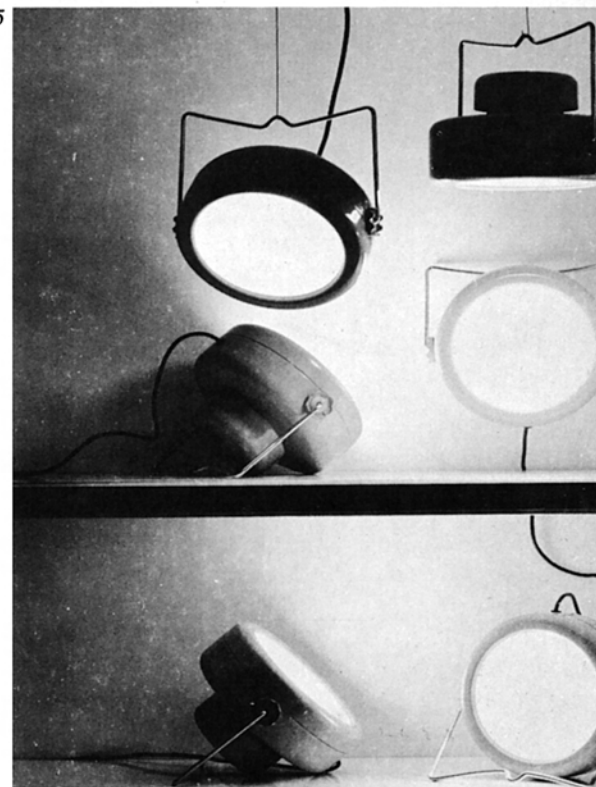
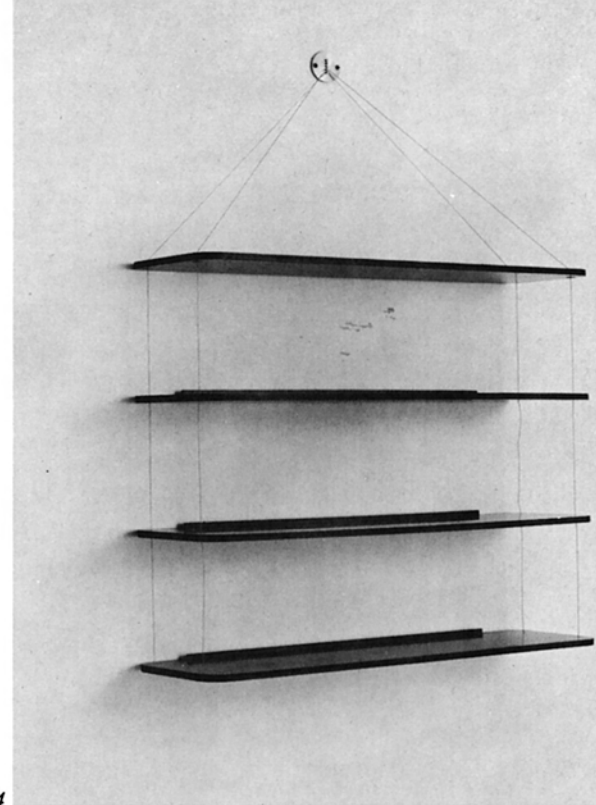


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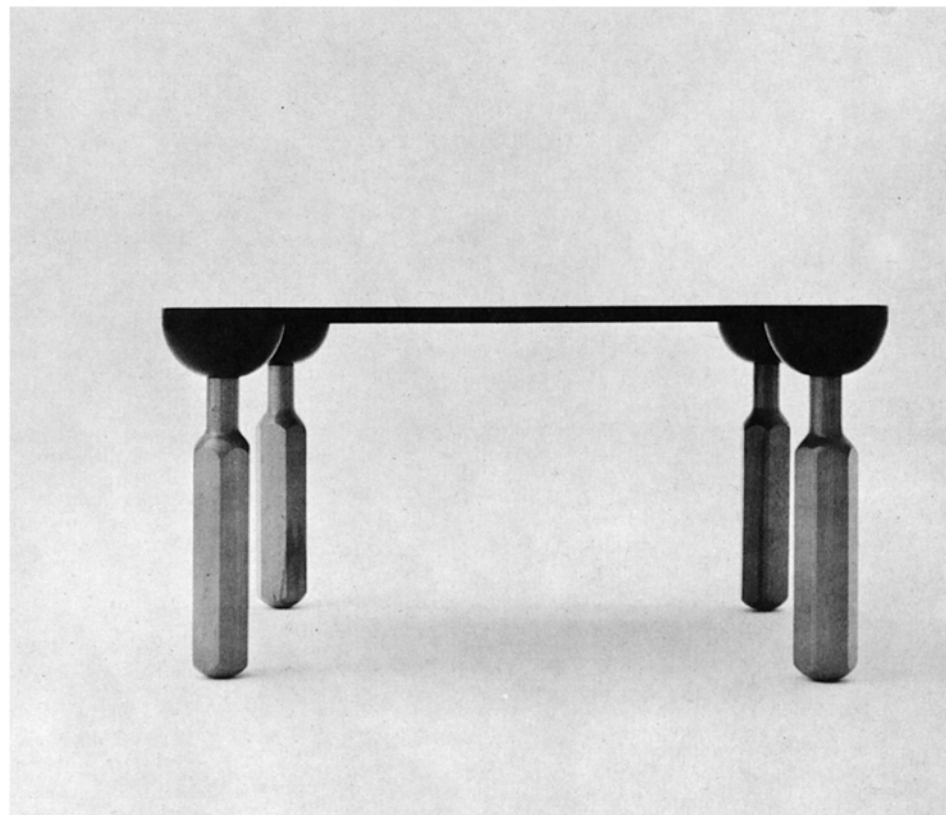
cables attached to a brass wall plate. Manufactured by Bernini.

"Rampa" (10, 11) is a movable storage and display cabinet and writing desk which can also serve as a portable bar. It comes in two heights, approximately 30" or 40". Manufactured by Bernini.

14
15



12 13

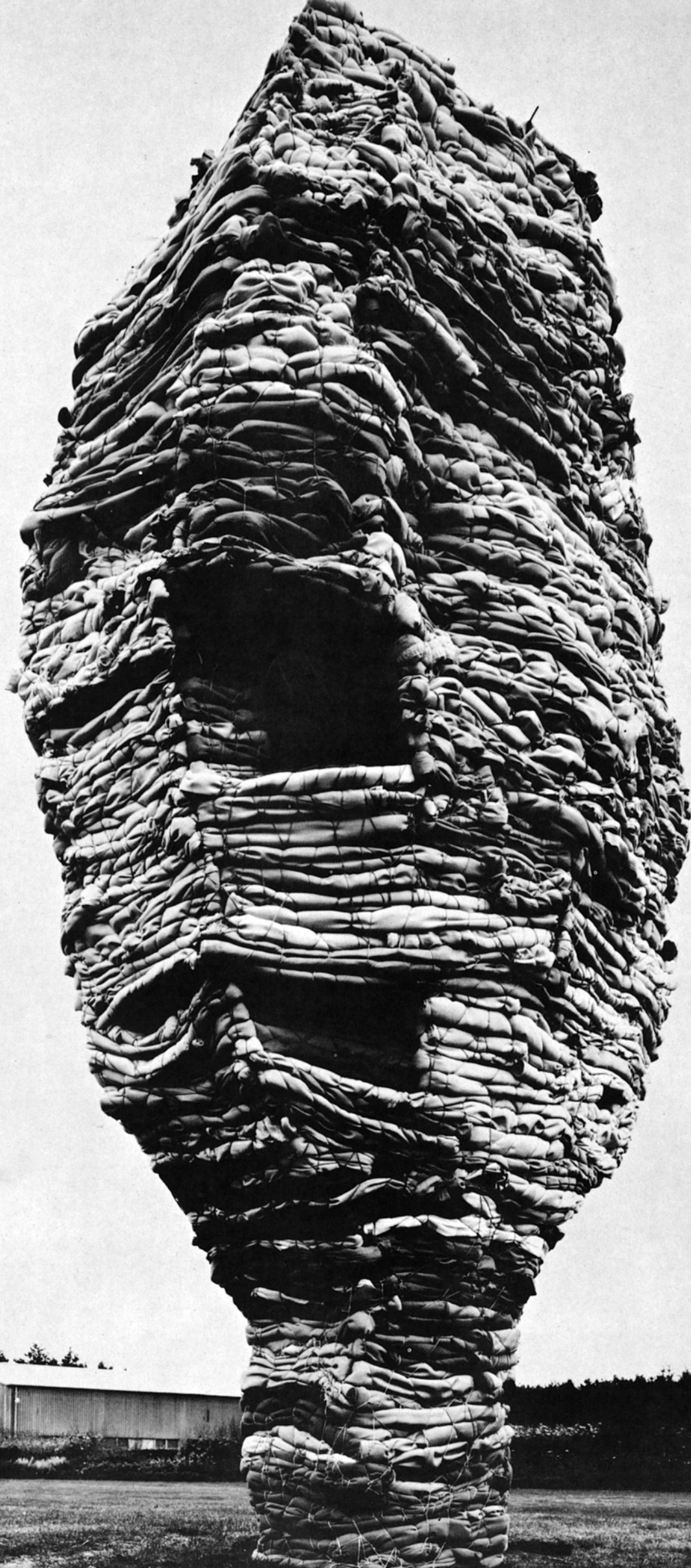


SCULPTURE BY J. J. BELJON

Dutch sculptor Beljon continues to seek to give expression to new or by-passed areas of our cultures. At the 1965 International Sculpture Symposium in Long Beach, Calif., he worked at an architectural scale in raw concrete; with these cloth and rattan pieces done in Holland, he appears to be turning his back on contemporary methodology and materials in order to counterpoise our tendency to abandon too quickly the old for the new. As at Long Beach, this new work is not museum or gallery art, but sculpture for the landscape—not only in scale but because he has utilized sun, wind and rain as elements of the design.

The cloth sculptures, while conceived by Beljon, were realized with the help of a team of his students and, Beljon notes, enriched by their contribution. Belgian art critic K. N. Elno writes that "all of those sculptures in textiles are highly fascinating... Some are lovely, others invite to meditation. There is music in all of them. The eye wanders through Beljon's sculptures as through a landscape. Indeed, Beljon makes landscape with his sculptures and it is always a new and fascinating landscape, combining color, scale, rhythm, space and materials in a most dramatic way."

Photos by Dick Hetjes, Mike Toner



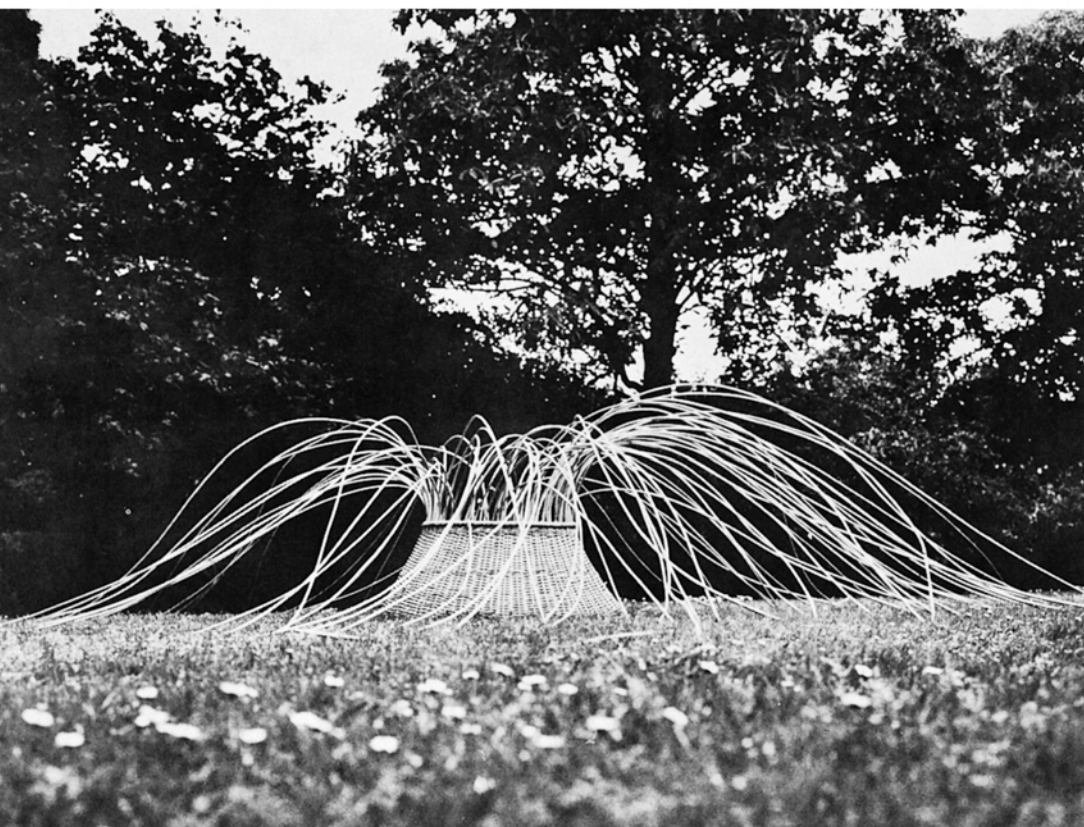


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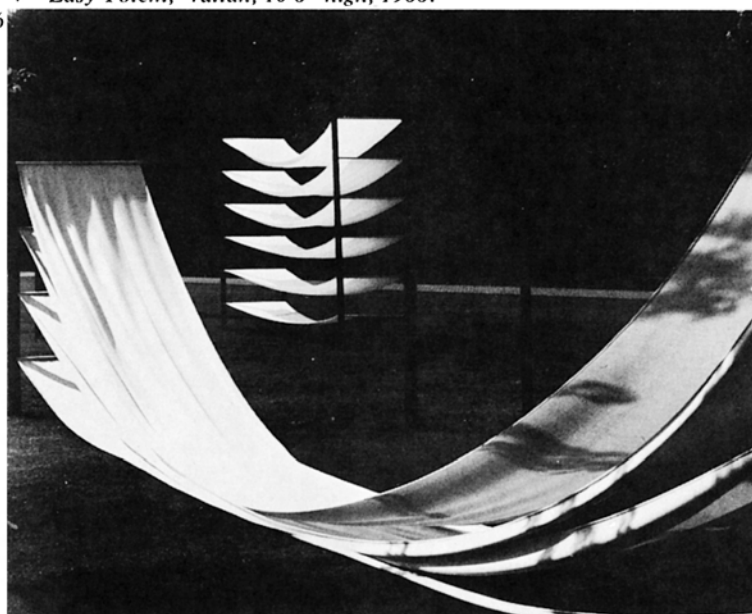


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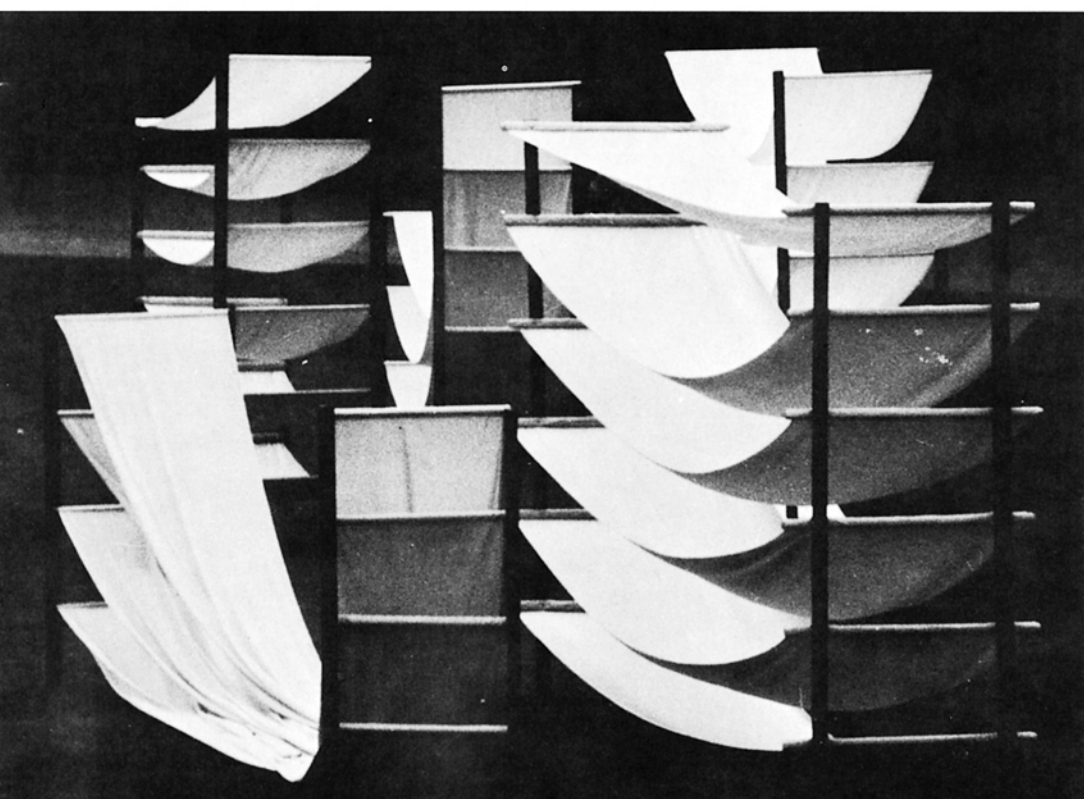
- 1 "Animal Lunaire," textiles, 13', 1966
 2 "Obvious Desire," copper, 9', 1966
 3 "Love Song" rattan, 4', 1966.
 4 "Shanty Town," (detail) textiles, 264' long, 1966.
 5 "Nanny's Birthday," textiles, 13' high, 1966.
 6 "Shanty Town," (detail)
 7 "Easy Totem," rattan, 10'6" high, 1966.



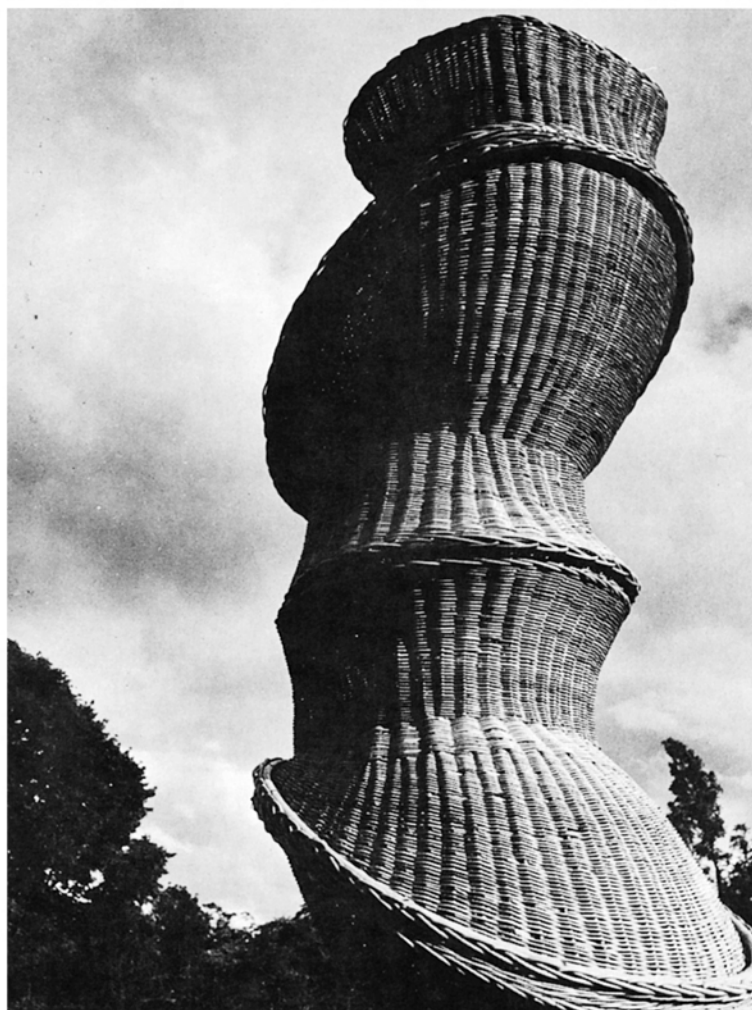
6



7



4



theater

BYRON PUMPHREY

The Center Theater Group, the Hollywood Wing of the Greek Theater Association, and the Pasadena Playhouse are all engaged in fund raising campaigns. Each is seeking from individuals and corporations the tax deductible dollars that will sustain these nonprofit professional theater organizations. One can say that in Los Angeles the new pattern for theater already has been accepted. Theater on a commercial basis, the little that now exists here, has become a peripheral operation and is destined to remain so. It has at last been realized that if theater of substance is to be achieved, private and governmental subsidy is essential. Significantly, two professional theater groups who have achieved national prominence in recent years, the Association of Producing Artists and the National Repertory Theater, also are non-profit companies. What is happening in Los Angeles eventually will happen in New York, though the transition there will be a slow and painful one, a gradual change of structure as a result of increasing economic pressure.

The acceptance of subsidized theater is a radically new development in American life. Since Los Angeles leads the nation in the organizational form theater has taken, a look at what is happening here can highlight some of the problems that have evolved.

Clearly, one of the problems will be the competition for funds. It also seems clear that the availability of funds will be directly related to the social prestige of the organization undertaking to raise them.

The situation is one that has caused James Doolittle, the astute general director of the Hollywood Theater Wing, which operates the Huntington Hartford, acute alarm. Not, I think, without reason.

30 In a flyer distributed with recent theater programs at the Huntington Hartford, the following selected paragraphs explain the gist of Doolittle's position:

"There is fear that the Music Center and its affiliate, the Hollywood Bowl, will have excessive control over all music and theater in the area because of their monumental modern facilities and *access to most of the available subsidy*. [my emphasis]

"The concern is that this favorable position afforded the tenants of the Music Center gives them first choice of the major attractions playing throughout the world, thereby creating a virtual monopoly which would in time eliminate the existence of any other important theater organization in the area.

"The hope is that the many millions of dollars that are now being allocated, and have been over the past years, are distributed for the maximum benefits to the community, and that during the present theater ferment, careful evaluation should be given on the basis of past service and proven abilities, and not on influence or pressure that might be brought to bear."

Doolittle's statement assumes that both the 2,100-seat Ahmanson Theater and the 750-seat Mark Taper Forum Theater will be used by the Center Theater Group to compete with the Huntington Hartford in booking productions. The advantage certainly lies with the Center Theater Group if that should turn out to be its policy. Mainly at issue, actually, is whether the Ahmanson will be used for productions originating in Los Angeles or, as stated in the flyer, for the booking of "the major attractions playing throughout the world. . . ."

Statements regarding the Center Theater Group's use of the Ahmanson take in both positions: ". . . it unquestionably will need to underwrite appearances by world-famous companies and large-scale productions," wrote Cecil Smith in *The Los Angeles Times* of December 11, 1966, indirectly quoting Lew Wasserman, president of the organization. Subsequently, in his story on the Center Theater Group (December 23, 1966) Smith reported: "In plain language, Wasserman said the CTG is a producing theater designed to create the finest dramatic productions possible in and for Los

Angeles. It is not a 'booking' organization to house traveling companies in old Broadway shows and in no sense is either theater a road show house."

These apparently conflicting statements of policy attributed to Wasserman by Smith are not necessarily incompatible since they may be interpreted as constituting the Center Theater Group primarily as a producing organization, but to the extent that the Ahmanson is used to book world famous, or nationally known, companies, it is in direct competition with both the Greek Theater and the Huntington Hartford. It may be recalled, in this connection, that The Grand Kabuki, The Greek Tragedy Theater, and The Comedie Francaise have all appeared at the Greek Theater. Last summer at the Huntington Hartford, Doolittle introduced to Los Angeles theater-goers the finest acting company in America: the Association of Producing Artists. It is a pleasure to report that they will be back again at the Huntington Hartford next summer. In his management of both theaters Doolittle is fully entitled to the claim that he has provided legitimate theater of exceptionally fine quality. He has booked the boxoffice successes of Broadway as well, but some of these were exceptionally fine theater too. A commercial success does not automatically mean an inferior play.

To make Doolittle's situation, not to say predicament, a little clearer, let us recall that he also introduced to Los Angeles the National Repertory Theater. The company has been regularly scheduled at the Huntington Hartford since Doolittle took the theater over in 1964. Using this nationally known company as an example, its operating budget this season is \$1,150,000. Although its boxoffice is good, the estimated deficit is \$400,000, made up through a grant from the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, and 55 other foundations plus some 4,000 individual contributions. The Huntington Hartford seats around 1,000; the Ahmanson Theater seats 2,100. Although a non-profit organization, the National Repertory Theater naturally wants to become as nearly self-sustaining as possible. Given a choice between the Ahmanson and the Huntington Hartford, it could hardly decline the Ahmanson. If it did, the contributing foundations, corporations, and individuals might raise questions about its management.

Doolittle has been able to book major attractions at the Huntington Hartford owing to the contributions of Founder Patrons. About 800 were listed in a recent program. Founder Patrons make contributions of \$100 or more, become entitled to preferential seating, and receive invitations to special previews, rehearsals and to receptions to meet the actors, etc.

The list of Founder Patrons is an impressive one, but will it be as impressive or as large once the Ahmanson Theater and the Mark Taper Forum Theater at the Music Center get their operations well under way? One may as well recognize that while the vitality of theater rests upon the quality of plays and their performance, significant financial support can depend, as with opera, on giving it the attributes of a ritual social function. In a sense, this is true even of the commercial theater of Broadway. My guess would be that Doolittle has more to fear with regard to his subsidy being eroded than from his being able to obtain worthwhile attractions. One can hardly doubt that those to whom theater is primarily a social event are likely to lose little time in changing their allegiance to the theaters at the Music Center.

With regard to city, county, state, or federal subsidy, Doolittle's position is even weaker. According to the report, *The Arts in California*, issued by the California Arts Commission, no funds have been provided for theatrical activities since 1963, at which time \$15,000 went to the support of the Greek Theater. Out of a budget amounting to \$345,000 for the fiscal period 1964-65, more than one-half went to the support of musical activities and \$120,000 to art activities. This, the report notes, is an "obvious imbalance." Doolittle pays the city \$50,000 a year for the Association's lease of the Greek Theater, a sum insufficient, apparently, for its maintenance. In a letter to the City Council, Joseph Barbera, president of the Association, stated that the Association had suffered operational losses of over \$300,000 during the past three

years. "The Greek Theater, as it now stands," he wrote, "has deteriorated to a deplorable state. It is badly in need of major modernization and installation of absolute essentials, such as adequate parking facilities, new lighting and sound equipment, seating, etc. We find it increasingly impractical to operate this theater in its present condition without incurring a sizeable deficit."

Significantly, his letter referred to "the crushing and ever-increasing competition from the magnificent, new, multi-million dollar, municipally supported Music Center." It is estimated that improvement of Greek Theater facilities would cost \$711,000. City Administrative Officer C. Erwin Piper has recommended that the Recreation and Park Commission assign the "highest priority" to the program.

With regard to subsidy, both public and private, it seems to me that Doolittle's position would be much stronger today had he carried through his intention, first announced in 1963, of forming a resident company, or at least doing a substantial number of independent productions. He was much too timid in choosing the second course open to him. What he called his first independent production was Harold Clurman's re-staging of *Incident at Vichy* by Arthur Miller at the Huntington Hartford. Clurman originally had directed the play at Lincoln Center. In my view, however, his first independent production was Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie* starring Carrol ("Baby Doll") Baker as Anna. The play was directed by Miss Baker's husband, Jack Garfein. Artistically, perhaps also commercially, it was a disaster (A & A July '66). However, his second production, a revival of Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*, though it did not fully achieve the quality of Williams' drama, was a creditable effort (A & A Aug. '66). The cast consisted of Ben Piazza as the poet-narrator; Ann Sothorn as Amanda; Piper Laurie as Laura; and James Olson as the Gentleman Caller. But Doolittle has ventured no further in this direction since producing *The Glass Menagerie* last season. Apparently he prefers the security of booking plays and/or companies whose records are well known. He is on safe ground here since he has had years of experience in estimating how well his audience will respond to a particular attraction. And even though, occasionally, the selection may not be a boxoffice success, at least he assumes no risk of its not being acceptable theater. He is dealing in a known product.

It may pay Doolittle to consider using the Hollywood Theater Wing to establish the kind of cooperative endeavor that made the Theater Group of UCLA such a success. If University Extension could successfully launch a series of professional productions by asking for, and obtaining, the cooperation of creative people in theater, film, and television, why could not Doolittle do the same? Although Doolittle cannot hope to compete with Mrs. Dorothy Chandler in the exercise of political, economic, and social power, it is possible that he could offer the Center theaters some strong competition at the artistic level. This might mean choosing an artistic director, and would certainly mean accepting the guidance and advice of those brought in to constitute the producing arm of the Hollywood Theater Wing. Bearing in mind that the former UCLA Theater Group met all of its operating expenses except during its final year when production costs rose, such an approach seems economically feasible. It does not preclude Doolittle from booking other productions. By alternating original productions with booked shows, he could avoid the pressure of having to have another production originating with the Hollywood Theater Wing ready to follow the play being staged.

By adopting this course, Doolittle could use the Huntington Hartford to compete more effectively with both the large Ahmanson Theater and the Mark Taper Forum Theater. The latter seats 750, 250 less than the Hartford. Not only would he have, then, a more flexible operation, but one that would place him in position to obtain subsidies from both federal and foundation sources. Neither would be interested in subsidizing an organization whose primary function is to book shows, however excellent the choices made. Both, however, are on the look-out, and ready to assist, profes-

sional theater groups who can show a record of achieving good theater. The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities as well as private foundations are especially interested in new playwrights and the production of new plays by writers already established.

The question is whether Doolittle is flexible enough to play the role demanded by the new situation he faces. Having achieved success as an impresario, can he rise to the present occasion and become a creative producer? Can he assemble and cooperate effectively with knowledgeable, creative people who call Hollywood home? If he can do these things, he need not fear the Music Center. The prestige attendant upon artistic success would produce dollar support.

In view of the contribution Doolittle already has made to the culture of the city, he would be well within his rights to ask the county and city to provide initial funds for undertaking a program of this kind. A bold, creative program is the only adequate answer to the "monumental modern facilities" of the Music Center.

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music

PETER YATES

THE NEW ART AGAIN: GAMES WITHOUT RULES

"Of all the works of Modern Art 'The Large Glass' of Marcel Duchamp remains the least susceptible to explanation. Significantly, Duchamp is an ardent addict of games, whether rectangular or witty." (This and several subsequent quotations are from Nicolas Calas' statement printed in the brochure of *Games Without Rules*, an exhibit of objects I visited in New York).

The "Large Glass" of Duchamp was not in the exhibition and is not a game. It consists of two large sheets of glass pressed together and suspended; pressed between them are several objects. This may excite some to wonder and others to explanation. It incited me only to walk around and look through it, wondering how flat and trite the inventive urge became during the generation after what Roger Shattuck calls "The Banquet Years." Albert Camus described this as the last generation of "The Dandy"—not decadent and would-be Satanic like its predecessor but innocent and indigent. That generation ended with Erik Satie, supplanted even before his death by the esthetic propaganda of "the Six." It transmitted esthetic vitality to America through Gertrude Stein. The members of the innocent generation were victimized by the peculiarities of their talents; the members of the succeeding generation, like Jean Cocteau, let their peculiarities support them. Cocteau stayed in the play to the end, a professional aware of the odds, who knew how to husband and exploit his chips. Duchamp, tiring of the play, withdrew, chips in pocket, to meditate the game of art through the game of chess. The bohemian community of indigent artists disappeared from Paris. The Salon and the dealer triumphed. Art became big money business.

Calas again: "I am taking my cue from Wittgenstein: 'It is imaginable,' he says, 'that two people should play chess in a world in which otherwise no games existed; and even that they should begin a game of chess—and then be interrupted.'"

Marcel Duchamp and John Cage nowadays play chess about once a week, Cage learning from Duchamp, a happy historical vignette. Apart, a personal communion.

Except to move from Paris, where the game was interrupted, to New York, where it continues, Duchamp has stayed outside the esthetic vogue he initiated. He did not create it; that was the work of the earlier generations. Duchamp took it over and made it fashionable. He is a transmitter. I don't say this to be negative; the vogue, taken up by still another generation in America, has saturated the market with new talent.

Calas asserts: "The broad application of the theory of games to a variety of fields of human endeavor takes place at a time when interest in art as play is out of fashion." This is nonsense; game and play as justifications of art activity have never been more in fashion—or joyless—than during these last years. They permeate all fields of art endeavor.

"Toys are scattered in the room. How good it is from time to time to remember that we are still children and can play in the nurseries of that wonderland we call art. Let us try and invent games without rules and forget rivalries and the distinction between winners and losers." The art he speaks of is not for children; it is the adult, sophisticated pretence at being childlike which causes children to run shrieking or stubbornly, silently resist. Chess carries in its pieces its origin in rivalry and warfare: king, queen, bishops—the conspirators and diplomats; knights, castles, pawns—the fighting soldiers. James R. Newman writes of mathematical games: "There is no point in asking what the game means; it is essential only that it be consistent and played according to the rules . . . The pure logic of games has little to do with the erratic wanderings of nature." Chess, well played, is the least erratic of games. Children's games have strict rules, often enforced by adults. Children invent strict

rules to play by even when immediately some forget them. Erratic play without rules is not a game. A good artist violates the rules because he knows that art is more than a game.

Cannot one think of a game in which the players change the rules with each play? Or each play changes the rules according to the play? Of course! That is a logical asceticism of yet stricter inventive discipline, sought today by a few artists in music, dance, and so-called "Happening."

Cage took me to the Fischbach gallery to see *Games Without Rules*. It was raining. (What was raining?) He left me at the door while he parked the car. He wasn't gone long; by the time he returned I had made my way around and seen the show, work of 26 artists. Any modest manufacturer of children's toys would have been more inventive. One didn't really play with the things, one looked and poked at them. Games fashioned for gawking, they were adult playthings. I had missed only the contribution by Joe Jones. That was in an inner room, and they took me to it.

A small, square, black-covered pocket-pool table, the game to be played with steel ball-bearings about an inch in diameter. Near the table several small musical instruments: a keyboard instrument, a toy saxophone, a mandolin, a tiny set of traps. Nobody seemed to know how to make the thing work. The proprietor assembled the steel balls under his hand and rolled them on the table, while we looked and gawked: nothing happened. Then the keyboard instrument commenced sounding, slender leather whips from rotating arms flicking the strings, a pleasant sweetness. A bystander produced two short cues. Two of us started shooting the balls, and the instruments one by one responded. They responded to the game, not the demonstration, the gawking. The saxophone blatted; more thin whips sounded the mandolin; various means animated the traps. The steel balls, going through the pockets, descended to the interior of the table with delightful thumps. Children would have enjoyed it, but it was an adult game. Joe Jones had made an object which was not merely a game, objective, or like Jean Tinguely's contribution, a clumsily responding automaton, which would scarcely entertain a child. Jones's game while you play it plays a game with you. Jones's game symbolizes, in my appreciation, the original intention of Duchamp's mode of art.

But to attend Duchamp's mode now, as we saw it a while ago at an exhibition presented by the Pasadena Art Institute, one must bring to each object the correlative historical imagination, because whatever happens is good now only as it is to be expected. Anyone can tell you how you should respond. It was like watching a series of film clips of historic Rose Bowl games, the big runs, the scoring moments.

Do I have to believe because it is the current fashion to believe that all this lives again? I have doubted that since I first heard of the immolation of Jean Tinguely's mobile-immobile in the Sculpture Garden of the Museum of Modern Art. A clumsy manipulatable ostentation. Fashion took it up immediately, on television, in the pages of *The New Yorker*, the interest sliding down somewhat after another mobile-immobile, televised in the Arizona desert, failed to work. Like Howard Hughes and his plywood flying machine. A vogue doesn't die easily, so long as it pricks fashionable curiosity and the fashion pays and nobody, really, can be offended. Dullness is the invariable criterion of the up-to-date, insulated. The dealer, the foresighted collector compete, investing in low prices. The smart public, inured to boredom in all its pursuits, insulated by boredom, indifferently follows the lead. Have you seen . . . ? cocktail conversation! Money is spent. The defenders of the current boredom, being in the money, an insulating idiom, pervert reason to defend their critical positions. Outside, somewhere, a new artist is preparing a new rationale. The alert dealer, the perceptive investor are watching him.

A genuine work of art stands against fashion, talked about, rejected, praised, for a while unassimilable. A rock in the stream of fashion. Duchamp is himself his work of art. One can lead to a work of art, point to it, locate and place it. One can also, in some circumstances, try to explain it.

At the present time, explanation has been officially rejected. I

agree. If a work has no message (or "the medium is the message"), nothing needs to be explained. Nevertheless the "cool," objective artist tries to justify himself—as here, borrowing the prophetic mode used by Cage in 1937. Listen to Kenneth King in *The New Art*.

"The explosion of the cinema and television as well as the other communications networks puts a new perspective on theater."

King stumbled over his cliché. Perspective, new or old, is one of the rejected non-entities he shouldn't wish to have around.

King tries again: "When improvisation is used within a field of fragmented (specialized) literal variables, the result is a *trans-literal* and *trans-technical* effect, because the way the variables are assembled changes with each performance, as does the structure between the form and content. In this way indeterminate points of view or interpretations are viable rather than eliminated. Thus performing is structured like a game with unspecific results. In this way the range is open, public, and plural rather than specific and private."

Reduce this to a plain image. Every time you go to the beach the scene, although composed of similar objects, will be different. You can look and gossip as you please. It's like a game because the same sort of people are doing similar things. Bodies are exposed and the kissing isn't private. You sit apart from it, like an old lady who can't go in swimming. Via cinema or television you are still more out of it. Does this *explosion* put a *new perspective on theater*?

Gregory Battcock, editor of *The New Art*, has this to say: "... the films of Andy Warhol are the best illustration of the concept popularized by Marshall McLuhan that the medium is the message. The deliberate recognition of the message-medium idea may partially explain why it is seemingly unnecessary to see a Warhol film ... But not to see a Warhol film is, in effect, to deny its time element, and this element is, in itself, too important to be discarded. A real and total involvement in this new film art seems to be effected only by a 'sitting through' of the film. (Napping, talking, 'turning-on' permitted)."

In other words, you owe it to yourself to see this thing, however dull and boring; just the passing of time sitting there involves you in it. You can sleep, pass out or bring your knitting.

A sales program for the networks: Travel by air-conditioned motel bedrooms: a vacation by television. Like going somewhere to see the movies shown on the plane.

Leo Steinberg on Paul Brach: "Can it be painted, this ineffable metaphysical One? Not by leaving the picture blank, for that simply leaves the canvas an object in a worldful of objects ... The color was not picked for charm but for efficiency. It evolved in trial and error as the best value to make the painted surface ambiguously solid and void ... And this is the painter's irony: to reap uncertainty from the centered symmetry of parallels, circles, and squares.

"But they need the good will that accepts them on their own terms as totalities ... " Whatever you think, if you're a good joe you'll like it.

A few pages over, Cage and Jasper Johns have already rejected *focus*—"centered symmetry." "A=B. A is B. A represents B (do what I do, do what I say)." It is not the business of a painting to tell you how to see it. Why should nearly all paintings be rectangular and exhibited like postage stamps pasted to a bare wall? Because the painting enclosure conforms to the rectangular wall-space we expect. But every attempt to break the rectangular enclosure, which, if unframed, is presumed to be invisible, glares pretentiousness. Exception can be made of the smooth circle or the oval. In a rectangular gallery the "shaped painting" is monstrous. Some artists like it for that reason. One can conceive a shaped space in which the shaped painting would be at ease.

I have until now avoided the "free speech," the "no censorship," or pornographic element. For an artist whose grasp of the world includes pornography, all right; if pornography is the only grasp, all wrong. We have known persons for whom indiscriminate filth

is the sole means of speech. "Nor can there be any misunderstanding about the literal meaning of Whitman's defecation film," Nicolas Calas writes, this time in *The New Art*. "... Certain critics refrained from adverse comment on the movie lest they be accused of narrowmindedness. It recalls the mother who does not scold her child when he defecates in her lap because she learned from her psychiatrist that the infant's act must be seen in terms of a gift to her." If we're sitting like the old lady on the beach and see, amid the random activity, a child openly pissing, shall we, rushing to scold him, fill our shoes with sand! Seeing the same via motion picture or television we wonder at the maker's motives: esthetic necessity or emotionalism exhibitionism? Researching our own silences we know the answer. Others are glad to have it done for them. It might have esthetic place in a humorous or dramatic context.

When everyone is making a great fuss over very little, like two ladies on the beach debating whether to scold the child for pissing, some other happening will soon turn their attention. Thomas B. Hess comments that "it won't take anything so big as a world war to ruin the New York school."

Allen Leepa restores us to more serious considerations. "To be alive, art must create." [Pouting Andy Warhol declares he doesn't wish to be creative.] "By discussing the content of what the artist does within the context of how he does it, the critic can help clarify how, why, and what the artist is saying about the times in which man lives. Man is helped to see himself." This violates Susan Sontag's interdict against "interpretation" and against "content"; it presumes that the medium is something less than the message; and it is pragmatic. Do Monet's great canvases of water lilies tell anything about "the times in which man lives" or help man "see himself"? Leepa comes right back: "But criticism that does not help or reveal the meanings the artist is creating fails in its responsibilities." Let us look for the meanings in the pool of water lilies.

Max Kozloff carries on in this direction. "I study intention because there is no other way of determining the nature of the object and, more important still, no other way of ascertaining the terms of the dialogue between myself and that object." So I'm still looking at those water lilies or, perhaps, a row of Monet's haystacks. Do I need to explain, to "get" them, that Monet was painting them at different times of day in different light? That's information—gossip.

My colleague Dore Ashton makes more sense. "The internal experiences of the mind, and the kind of imagery it invents and casts into works of art, are clearly self-generating, at least to some degree. The simple feedback principle which works so well in computing machines, and for certain art and literary critics when they apply it, is highly inadequate to the understanding of the originating quality of the imagination."

"All in all," Marcel Duchamp concludes, "the creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act. This becomes even more obvious when posterity gives its final verdict and sometimes rehabilitates forgotten artists."

Art is difficult and inexplicable because it happens; when it is deliberately made difficult or inexplicable, it is doubtful art; when it ceases to be difficult and anyone feels competent to explain it, art becomes academic and ceases to happen in that way; it becomes then in a new way inexplicable and difficult.

I have tried in two successive articles to convey by collage and commentary some echo of the reverberating uproar which passes for critical and esthetic reasoning in the present New York scene. The confines are narrow, however contradictory the opinions. We shall do well not to be afraid of the infallibilities, the loud noises, the clamoring of contradictory inherited metaphysics, not to be bluff-bludgeoned into agreeing that we see what we do not see. Somewhere at the center is a core of *common sense*, in the exact meaning of the two words. Tagged with our dates it will survive as the art of our immediate time.

Most evident that, although many write of game or play, there is

no slight saving humor, innocence, outgoing fun, much reasoning but less enjoyment, and an irrationality of ugliness expounded by affirming negatives. The world of New York art is drastically cut off from nature, as victimized by trademarked uniformity in style, by abstract form or formlessness, as in conformity to non-representation, non-subjectivity, and trademarked medium. The subject must not be a subject but the individually sublimated excuse for whatever happens. It is art tense with an internal ugliness forced upon it by the city; fearful of individuality which might be overlooked, though anxious for an originality which can appear a substitute for identity; desperately productive while the market lasts and aware it may not last, that it will go on to some other gradation of originality; isolated in a loneliness too large for the bohemian community, however desperate, of the great creative years in Paris.

I may be seeing the condition blacker than it is. I hope so. The condition of New York art is spreading rapidly beyond New York, and wherever it appears it is replacing vision. "Only the modern city offers the mind the terrain in which it can be conscious of itself"—Hegel, by way of Camus' *Notebook V*, translated to English. One might now say rather: "... the multiplying confinement in which the mind becomes conscious of being conscious of itself—the Freudian myth of truth." Yet the purpose of this art, we are told repeatedly, is to make us aware of ordinary, everyday things. I don't need Roy Lichtenstein to remind me to observe the comic strip. I see his work as that of a powerful graphic artist banally bound by the impulse of a message.

The distinction between art for itself and art reproduced for commercial distribution was all too evident when I saw the originals of Robert Rauschenberg's illustrations for Dante's *Inferno* at the Museum of Modern Art and compared them with what I remember of the set of Abrams prints. In the reproduction the glow of the art is lost. Too many of these artists are only reproducing the selfed image.

34

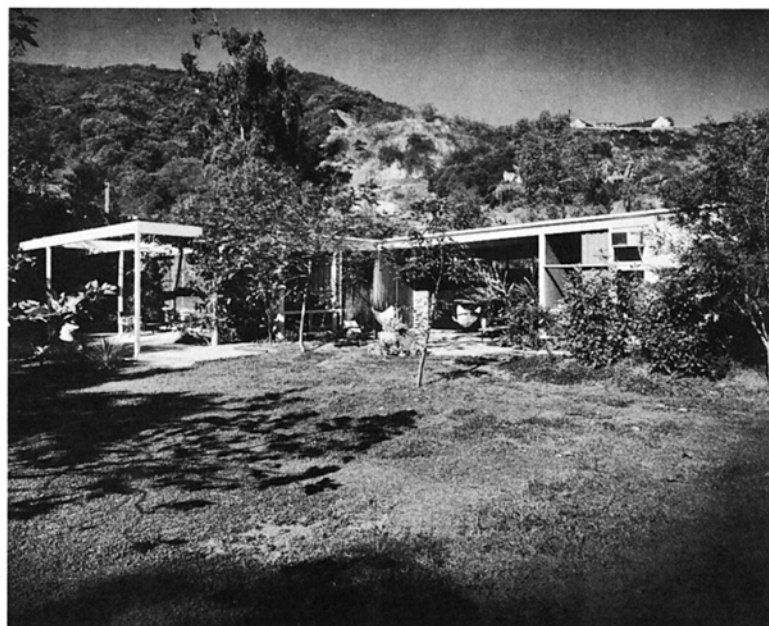
ART—DORE ASHTON

ena as different as the current monochrome painting and chromatic sculpture, happenings and the interest in light and movement."

Curator Kynaston McShine is quoted as saying that Klein's life was a symbolic poetic act, that he stands uniquely and "complexly" in contemporary art, that he was one of those "romantic and visionary artists who reminds us that art does not have to be 'rational' but that it can be hermetic and mystical."

Since the burden of artistic proof is thrust onto Klein's life, rather than his individual works, the Museum opens the way to an area of criticism that must be social rather than esthetic. I will wager that the work itself will look rather paltry when installed, whereas the rhetoric we may expect from Restany and McShine will be all the more eloquent.

This "symbolic, poetic act" fits very nicely into France of the post-war fifties—the France of the Algerian war, of Green Berets, and just such ritualistic cultism as led Klein to become a member of the Order of Saint Sebastian. His aristocratic exploits must have titillated the young intellectuals who were busy disowning Sartre and rediscovering Gurdjieff, Celine, Montherlant and Malaparte. Klein's "hermeticism" must have pleased the university set that had become involved with arcane theories of alchemy and conservative (to say the least) social theory. Klein's commitment, after all, was in the Wildean tradition. He put his art into his life, and he did it with a publicist's instinct. Although he sometimes claimed the French Revolution as the source of his esthetics, Klein was remote from the ideals traditionally associated with the Revolution. He lived in the jet-set, in the rarefied air which brought him into contact with dealers, rich men, bourgeois satellites and celebrities. His "poetic act" had dubious undertones, but I am certain the Museum will overlook them in the interest of "art." We shall see.



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