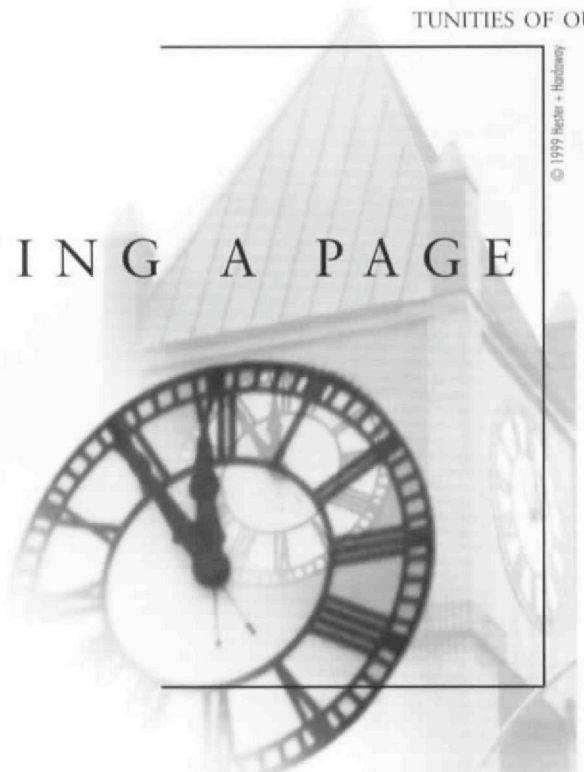
TURNING A PAGE



THIS ISSUE OF *CITE*, APPEARING AS WE TURN THE CORNER INTO Y2K, HAS THE FEEL OF A BOOKMARK — A LARGE ONE THAT MAY CAUSE US TO STOP AND LOOK BACK OVER THE TRIUMPHS AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES OF OUR URBAN PAST, AS WELL AS FORWARD TO WHAT COULD BE.

WE'VE CHOSEN TO USE THIS PAUSE BETWEEN MILLENNIA TO MULL OVER SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAVE TENDED TO SET HOUSTON APART. AMONG THE MORE OBVIOUS DISTINCTIONS IS THE CITY'S INSEPARABLE CONNECTION TO WATER, AND HOW THAT HAS SHAPED ITS GROWTH AND FORMED ITS CHARACTER. WE ALSO LOOK AT THE VARIOUS NICKNAMES THAT, OVER THE YEARS, HOUSTONIANS HAVE GIVEN THEIR HOMETOWN IN AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE THAT CHARACTER. TO NAME SOMETHING PROPERLY, AFTER ALL, IS TO CAPTURE ITS ESSENCE, AND IF WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE CITY'S NAMES, PERHAPS WE CAN ALSO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE CITY ITSELF.

OF COURSE, SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING REQUIRES KNOWING WHERE WE CAME FROM, AND TO THAT END WE CAST A BACKWARD GLANCE AT SOME OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF QUALITY AND WONDER THAT THE CITY HAS LET SLIP THROUGH ITS FINGERS. SIMILARLY, WE HAD NOTED SCULPTOR JIM LOVE AND LONGTIME MUSEUM CURATOR ED MAYO REMINISCE ABOUT THAT PERIOD IN THE 1950S AND 1960S WHEN, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, THE HOUSTON ART WORLD WAS EVOLVING FROM A COMMUNITY OF VOLUNTEERS INTO A REALM POPULATED BY PAID PROFESSIONALS.

TO PUT ALL OF THIS INTO A CONTEXT, BEGINNING BELOW AND RUNNING ALONG THE BOTTOM OF THE NEXT FIVE PAGES WE HAVE A 20TH-CENTURY TIMELINE ORGANIZED TO HINT AT THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL EVENTS, HOUSTON CIVIC EVENTS, AND THE ARCHITECTURE WE SEE OR REMEMBER. IT STOPS, AS ALL TIMELINES MUST, IN THE NOW. BUT IT IS EASY TO IMAGINE IT STRETCHING OUT OVER INFINITE FUTURE PAGES.

HAPPY NEW MILLENNIUM, READERS. USE YOUR BOOKMARKS WELL.

BARRY MOORE, *GUEST EDITOR*

TIMELINE

1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1900 1

1900

HOUSTON CIVIC EVENTS

1900 - City Park (Sam Houston Park) opens, first in city
1904 - First sewage treatment plant goes on line
1907 - Courtlandt Place platted
1910 - Groundbreaking at Rice Institue

ARCHITECTURAL EVENTS

1902 - Houston City Hall and Market (demolished)
1904 - Commercial National Bank
1909 - Scanlan Building
1910 - Harrris County Courthouse

NATIONAL EVENTS

1901 - Discovery of oil at Spindletop
1903 - Wright Brothers fly at Kitty Hawk
1905 - Nation's first movie theater built
1908- Henry Ford introduces Model T