

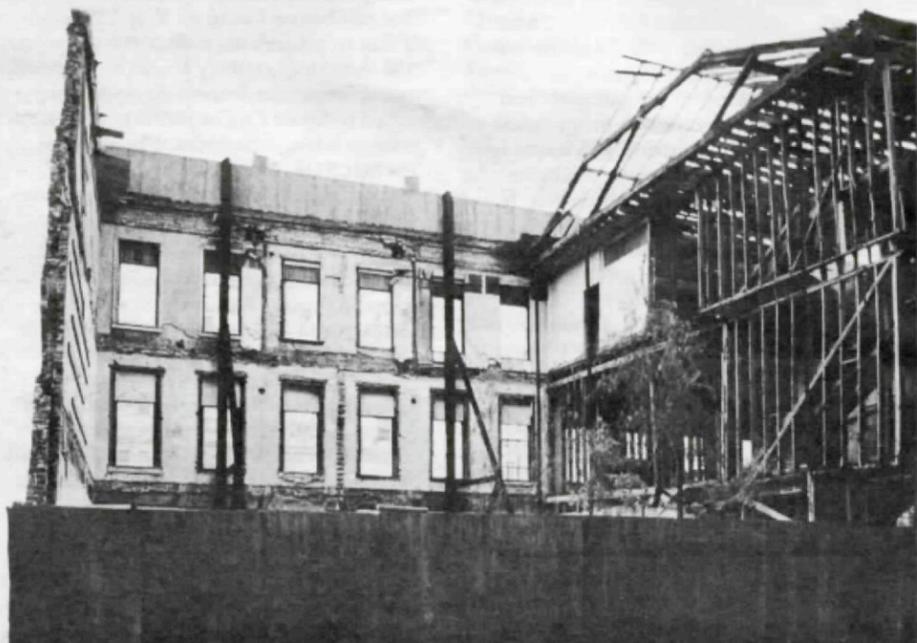
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## Pillot Building Rescued



*Pillot Building (Photo by Paul Hester)*

The Pillot Building, important in the historical and architectural development of Houston, will see new life during 1986 after a long period of decline and several close brushes with destruction.

Constructed opposite Courthouse Square during the Civil War era, the structure is one of the oldest commercial buildings in Houston. The Pillot Building was acquired by Harris County in 1975. After unsuccessful attempts to destroy it for construction of the Harris County Administration Building, the County Commissioners Court allowed the building to reach so advanced a state of deterioration that in 1982, the roof, the south wall, and the interior fabric were dismantled, leaving only three of the four exterior walls intact. Then, in 1984, Harris County applied for permits to demolish the building, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a State Archeological Landmark. As occurred during previous attempts to demolish, this action was protested by community and professional organizations, individual citizens, and in a more organized way by the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance. The Texas Antiquities Committee refused the request for a demolition permit in January 1985, and created a panel to oversee the search for possible developers. This panel was composed of representatives of the Texas Historical Commission, the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance, and of the offices of the Harris County Judge, Engineer, and Attorney. After several Houston

developers expressed interest, the panel drafted a ground lease for the "footprint," that is, the exterior perimeter of the building, for a 50-year term. This agreement will allow the structure to be preserved and returned to active use by a developer with no expenditure of public funds.

During August 1985, the Harris County Commissioners Court accepted the highest bid from the City Partnership, Ltd. of Houston, which retained Barry Moore Architects to design an architectural restoration and reconstruction of the partially demolished building. The lease between the county and the developer was signed during September, and in November a schematic presentation of proposed architectural work was made to the Texas Historical Commission, in accordance with the terms of the lease. The proposal calls for restoration of the façades to their original appearance, retention of the original three-floor design, rebuilding of the interior structure in steel, and the addition of a new service core along the south rear wall.

City Partnership, Ltd. is pursuing leases in the hospitality industry, planning for a restaurant on one-half of the ground floor and a private club to use the remaining space in the structure. It expects to execute leases early in 1986, and public announcements will be forthcoming.

*Michael E. Wilson*



*Pillot Building in 1869 (Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library)*

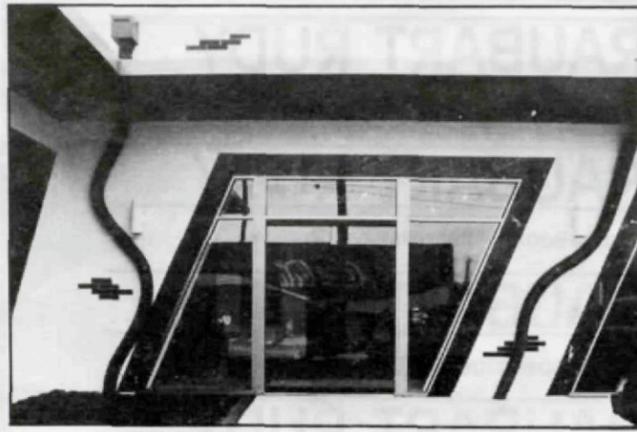
# The Zephyr, Inside and Out

In terms of its streamlined sophistication and kinesthetic appeal, Arquitectonica's latest building in Houston is hard to match. Both categories might be more appropriate in discussing a product of industrial design rather than a building, but the svelte aplomb embodied in the building's simple, strong, and systematic lines is, nevertheless, reminiscent of a manufactured sleekness. The consequential naming of the building "The Zephyr," after the first of a series of powerful, streamlined, self-propelled trains of the late 1930s is, therefore, justified.

The diminutive building, originally a warehouse, has been transformed into a "Center for Art, Fashion, and Design," and is located on Colquitt Street at Lake Street. Seen against the neutral backdrop of white-washed brick, the building's unique fenestration, which is by far its most prominent feature, achieves maximum effect. Abandoning the customary orthogonal arrangement of openings, Arquitectonica opts, instead, for 14 large, equally sized parallelogram-shaped voids, comprising both doors and windows. This slight geometrical deviation is drastically effective in conveying the illusion of movement. Each opening is delineated with a generous band of verde antique marble, and the standard aluminum frames have been spray-painted gold. Together with the metallic gold overhang, these materials affect a moderne opulence. In sharp contrast to the rigorous seriality of the façade are the functioning, fire-engine red drain pipes which sinuously wind their way down the face of the building to the sidewalk, where expansion joints have been set on the diagonal, echoing the

angle of the openings. Clusters of flat-black ceramic tile, facetiously simulating rustication and seemingly agitated by the effect of the "speeding" building, are dispersed about its exterior surfaces.

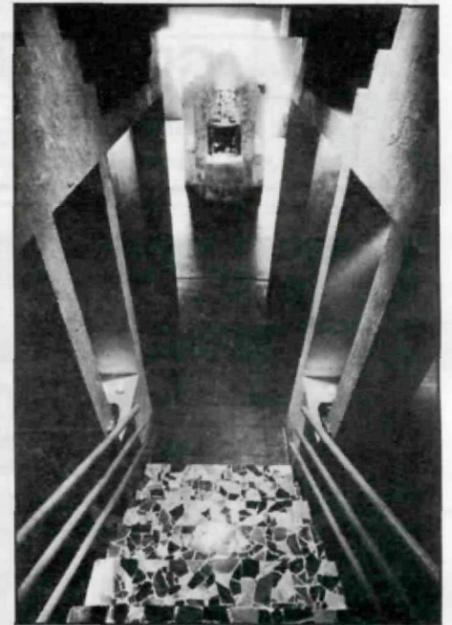
Five galleries, with strong avante-garde inclinations, currently occupy the premises. These are: Davis/McClain, Perception, Trinkets, Exvoto, and Atelier. The interiors of the first three, designed by Howard Barnstone, Robert Pahnke, and owner Kathy Wetmore, respectively, are similar in that they are appropriately and reassuringly unobtrusive. Their pristine interiors allow works, ranging from sculpture to ceramics to jewelry, to be seen to their best advantage. On the other hand, Exvoto's interior, designed by architect Yahya Fuizi, is considerably more charged. For Exvoto's recent exhibition entitled "Angels, Virgins, and Madonnas," the walls of the gallery were painted a brooding grey and the ceiling accoutrements (ducts and structure) a navy blue. Spots of gold paint adorn the dark and barren concrete floor. In the middle of the room is a large, freestanding altar-like structure upon which objects pertaining to the exhibition are displayed. A few steps behind it is a straight flight of stairs framed by a symbolic arched entryway, dramatizing the short ascent that terminates in a display surrounded by mirrored mosaics. The staircase itself is faced with these same mosaics, which are the work of Erin Adams. Altogether, the effect is quite primordial. For an upcoming exhibition of nude and erotic photographs which purports to develop an offbeat and provocative perspective on the human form and sexuality, the decor will alter accordingly.



Arquitectonica designed one lease space in the building, that of Atelier's. The conventional, rectangular-shaped room is made to exude a warmth reminiscent of a plant nursery. The walls, bathed in a rose Zolatone tint (a process whereby a polychromatic coating, consisting of a combination of separate pigmented particles, is applied to a wall surface) are the primary cause of this appealing and thoroughly pleasant effect. Likewise, the grey carpet is interwoven with fibers of numerous colors achieving a rich, subtle, dimensional effect. The engaging simplicity of this space befits the nature of the gallery, which carries children's media (as well as a substantial selection of compact discs). There is a delicate resonance between the galleries and the building they occupy. Thoroughly urbane, yet exotic at the same time, both building and galleries appear mutually complementary.

Arquitectonica's uncompromising deftness and purposeful theatrics continue to make its buildings easily recognizable and unflinchingly provocative. The Zephyr is no exception, and though devoid (perhaps thankfully) of Arquitectonica's distinctly torrid palette, it nevertheless demands a response from us and is likely to enjoy a well-deserved *succès de scandale!*

Wolde-Gbiorghis Ayele



Top: *The Zephyr*, 1985, *Arquitectonica*, architect, detail of typical bay. Above: *Exvoto*, 1985, *Yahya Fuizi*, architect, interior detail (Photos by Paul Hester)

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**Visions of Houston**

The 1985 Houston Chapter of the American Institute of Architects' annual Urban Design Symposium, cosponsored by the Houston Economic Development Council and the Linbeck Construction Company, was held 22 November 1985. The theme, "Visions for Houston," focused on the interrelated issues of quality of life and economic development; setting goals for the future; taking new initiatives in comprehensive city planning, transportation, and infrastructure improvements; and formulating an effective economic development strategy.

Mayor Frank Cooksey of Austin, a former Houstonian, provided some Lincoln-esque advice to the city's decision-makers. Cooksey pointed out that quality-of-life issues do affect economic vitality and the ability to rebound from recession. Houston should and can improve its quality-of-life amenities. The city must begin a serious, comprehensive planning process, with the land-use controls and coordination procedures necessary to enforce the plan. Cooksey suggested that Houston's assets - basic economic opportunities in space commercialization; trade and the Port of Houston expansion; energy and petrochemicals; agriculture; and medical technology - should be actively promoted. Cooksey urged that the city upgrade the quality of higher education in Houston, especially at the University of Houston. Finally, Cooksey said that transportation and improvement of public services and infrastructure are critical to the future of Houston, and that the city should capitalize on the benefits of linking Houston and Galveston with a high-speed rail line.

Other speakers discussed city-wide urban systems. Efraim S. Garcia, director of Planning and Development, spoke on his proposed Compendium of Plans; John King, chairman of the board of the Metropolitan Transit Authority, described urban planning and design opportunities that will reshape Houston's public infrastructure; and Don Moyer, president of the Houston Economic Development Council, described strategic economic development planning now under way at HEDC. Walter Mischer, Jr. presented an 11-point proposal calling for a private-sector "super-group" to determine basic goals, interagency coordination, a comprehensive planning approach, and economic development initiatives for the city. Houston City Councilmember George Greanias called for a strong public-private partnership to define a future vision for

Houston and the means to achieve that vision by 2000. He stressed that the city government is a critical factor in this process. Mayor Kathryn J. Whitmire spoke of past accomplishments and future initiatives in planning, capital improvements programming, and building the city's infrastructure.

What does all of this add up to? It was generally agreed that now is the time to act. Not only must a vision for Houston be defined but the means to achieve it by 2000 have to be determined. Houston should initiate a program similar to "Goals for Dallas" and San Antonio's "Target '90" to define the city's priority requirements and design programs that can ensure their realization.

Although there was lack of agreement on several key issues, including the need for additional development standards and controls, the role the MTA should play in defining the form of the city, stronger leadership from the public sector, the need of a broad program of urban beautification, and the role of the private sector in initiating city planning, "Visions for Houston" made believers out of a lot of skeptical people. There was an encouraging consensus among the speakers and audience reflecting a strong desire for dramatic improvement in the quality of the urban environment in Houston.

Peter H. Brown

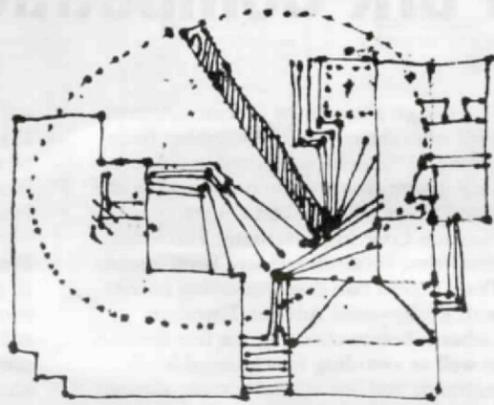
**Diverse Works:  
Fourth Ward**

Diverse Works opened a major, month-long exhibition "Architecture and Culture: Fourth Ward" on 25 January which focused on the history, architecture, traditions, and people of the oldest black community in Houston. Organized by Neil Printz, with Diverse Works staff members Charles Gallagher, Michael Peranteau, and Caroline Huber, the exhibition featured historical documents and images of the community - which began in 1865 as the place where emancipated slaves congregated in Houston - from the Houston Metropolitan Research Center and numerous private collections. Contributing to the exhibition were photographers Paul Hester, Sally Gall, Geoff Winningham, Phyllis Moore, Doe Doherty, Earlie Hudnall, and Rob Ziebell and artists John Biggers, Vanzant Driver, Jack Massing, Elizabeth Ward, and Naomi Polk. Inshik Lee produced an engaging series of shadow-box models and Doug Sprunt a series of analytical drawings describing characteristic house types

found in Fourth Ward, and Peterson Littenberg Architects displayed drawings of its plan for the rehabilitation of Lake West public housing in Dallas.

In addition to a lively opening (featuring U.S. Congressman Mickey Leland, Carolyn Farb, a truly diverse crowd, and the choir of Mount Horeb Missionary Baptist Church, which shook the heavy-timbered frame of Diverse Works's gallery in the old W. L. Foley department store near Market Square with pulsating Gospel music), a series of special events occurred during the course of the exhibition. These were intended to increase public awareness of the value of preserving Fourth Ward and the adjacent Allen Parkway Village from destruction and redevelopment.

# Moving In: Moore in Austin



Right: Moore Houses, 1985, Charles W. Moore, architect, diagrammatic sketch plan of existing house and new addition (Courtesy Charles W. Moore). Below: Moore House, living room (Photo by Scott Poole)



If Charles W. Moore's new home in Austin is less witty and overtly allusive than some of his earlier work, it is no less impure. Designed in collaboration with Arthur Andersson, this courtyard complex of two houses and a studio is a weave of the old and new that revels in both the denial of expectation and in the adjacency of dissimilar things.

The exterior of the house and studio complex is unpretentious, reflecting Moore's fascination with ordinary materials and their capacity to recall familiar imagery. This prosaic exterior, suggestive of ranch houses and barns, hardly reveals the high level of energy and intensity found in the interior spaces.

An ellipse superimposed on the site establishes an order between the public realms of the two houses and the courtyard. As the ellipse passes through Moore's remodeling of the existing house built in 1936, tension develops between the rectilinear enclosure of the house and the curve of the ellipse. This detached layer of wall, described by two-foot-wide pilasters, creates multiple layers of enclosure that are enhanced by dramatic effects of scale, light, and color.

These intimate leftover spaces simultaneously modify light and serve as repositories for a fraction of Moore's expansive collection of books and folk-art objects. The diminutive scale of these objects increases the apparent size of the modest living room, already widened and

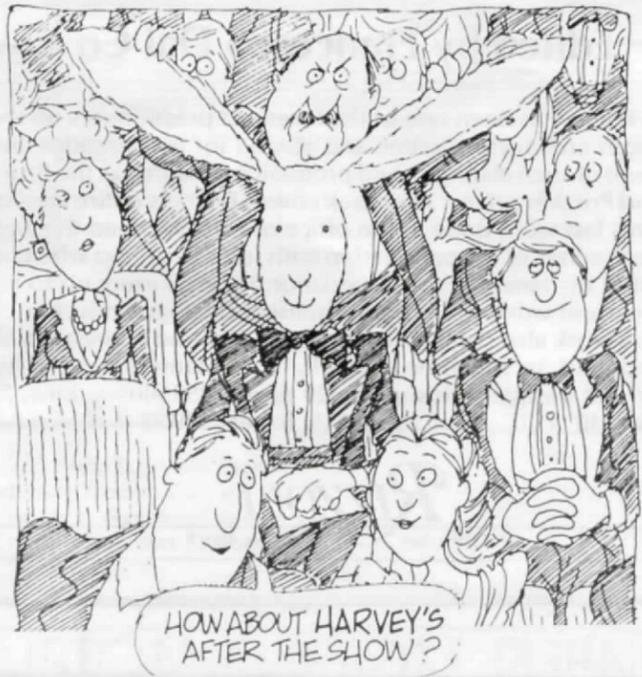
deepened by light that washes the space from a large-scale window facing the courtyard. Another acquired object, a Kilim, serves both as a floor covering and as a source of inspiration for the rich colors of the already animated room.

Andersson's house also borrows from the secret life of objects, juxtaposing an 18th-century portal from Ireland with the otherwise abstract space of his living room, increasing through contrast the scale and texture of the space. Here the geometry of the ellipse is overlaid on new construction in the form of a faceted living-room wall that is defined by two skylight cannons and a wall of windows which face the courtyard, reinforcing the dialogue with Moore's house.

The clear, light, abstract space of the studio reflects more the restraint of Andersson's new house than the exuberant vocabulary of volumes in Moore's remodeled house. Unlike the two houses, however, the studio defers to more practical considerations, but nevertheless uses light, like the houses, to define the unity of the space.

Though metaphors characteristic of Moore's species of eclecticism abound, local events are underplayed, creating a balance between the particularities of the two houses and the integrity of the overall order.

Scott Poole



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Edited by Francesco Dal Co

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## First-Stage Winners Chosen for Park Competition

Five design projects for Sesquicentennial Park were chosen on 20 December from among 119 entries submitted in a nationwide design competition organized by the Rice Design Alliance and Central Houston Civic Improvement. Ten judges (five from Houston and five from outside Texas) spent two days evaluating entries with Professional Advisor Theodore Liebman before choosing the five finalists as well as awarding four honorable mentions and one special commendation.

The winners, who will compete against each other in a second round, are Charles Tapley Associates and Charles Moore Architects; SIR, Inc. and Bruce Webb, in association with Kirksey-Meyers Architects; Guy Hagstette, John Lemr,

and Robert Liner; and, from outside Texas, Victor Caliendo Architects of New York and Roberts Associates/Dean Abbot and Robert Sena of San Francisco.

The second round of judging by the same 10 jurors will occur in April and the winning project will be built during 1986 and 1987 as Houston's major Sesquicentennial project. Once the final judging occurs, the premiated projects, as well as selected non-premiated entries, will be exhibited publicly. The Rice Design Alliance also will produce a publication to document the competition, the first open architectural competition for a major project ever held in Houston.

## Spring Architecture Events

### Rice Design Alliance

The Rice Design Alliance has in progress a series of lectures, organized by Drexel Turner and Richard Keating, called "The City: Memory and Invention." Speakers include Kurt Forster on Schinkel's Berlin (5 March), Eduard Sekler on Turn-of-the-century Vienna (12 March), David Van Zanten on Haussmann's Paris (19 March), and Alex Krieger on Burnham's America (24 March). All lectures are held at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and begin at 8 PM. Admission charged; reservations suggested.

To celebrate the completion of the Architecture Building at the University of Houston, the RDA will stage a benefit gala there on Wednesday, 26 March. Burdette Keeland and Mrs. Stewart G. Masterson are organizing the event. Tickets are \$100 per person; reservations required.

On 31 May the RDA will commence a six-day architectural tour of Savannah and Charleston. Barrie Scardino and John Lingley of IES Travel Group are organizing the tour, which is limited to 40 people. Reservations required by 15 March.

The Rice Design Alliance's Annual Meeting will be held in May, time and location to be announced.

For information on any of these activities, telephone the Rice Design Alliance at 713/527-6297.

### Farish Gallery

Currently on display at the Farish Gallery is an exhibition organized by Drexel Turner for the gallery, "Paul Hester: Photographs of Texas Monuments,"

which runs through 19 March. From 24 March until 19 April "Antonio Sant Elia: Italian Futurist Drawings" will be shown. This exhibition was organized by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and contains over 70 drawings. The Farish Gallery is located in Anderson Hall on the campus of Rice University. It is open daily during exhibitions from noon until 5 PM. Admission free. For information, telephone 713/527-4864.

**School of Architecture, Rice University**  
The concluding lectures by J. B. Jackson, Craig Francis Cullinan Visiting Professor at Rice University, occur at 8 PM on Monday, 10 March, and Monday, 17 March, at Sewall Hall, Room 301, on the campus of Rice University. Jackson's topic is "Vernacular Landscape." Admission free.

### Center for the Study of American Architecture

The Center for the Study of American Architecture at The University of Texas at Austin will stage its third symposium on Thursday and Friday, 24-25 April, at Jessen Auditorium on the university campus. The topic is "New Regionalism: Tradition, Adaptation, Invention." Participants include Robert A. M. Stern, Kenneth Frampton, Taft Architects, Ricardo Legoretta, Charles W. Moore, Lawrence W. Speck, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and UT Architecture Dean Hal Box. Pre-registration fee is \$15 for all three sessions. For information, telephone the center at 512/471-1922.

Due in the fall are the third volume of the center's journal, *CENTER*, and an exhibition to be held at the university's Archer M. Huntington Gallery on "New Architecture For Texas."

## Young Architects Forum

Young Architects Forum, in collaboration with Diverse Works, planned a string of events this spring to make visible the invisible city and reintegrate latent psychic and physical fragments into Houston's urban character. In conjunction with Diverse Works's "Architecture and Culture: The Fourth Ward" exhibition, the forum sponsored a city-wide Design Charrette on 22 February entitled "Transformations: Neighborhoods in Transition or Jeopardy?" Ad-hoc teams of architects and artists spent a weekend envisioning ways to sustain the Fourth Ward's cultural and architectural integrity. The schemes were juried by a panel which included Steven K. Peterson, Diane Y. Ghirardo, City Councilman George

Greanias, John Hansen and Michael Underhill.

Although the effects of an event of this type are difficult to assess in the short term, the Young Architects Forum is to be applauded for elevating vision to an art.

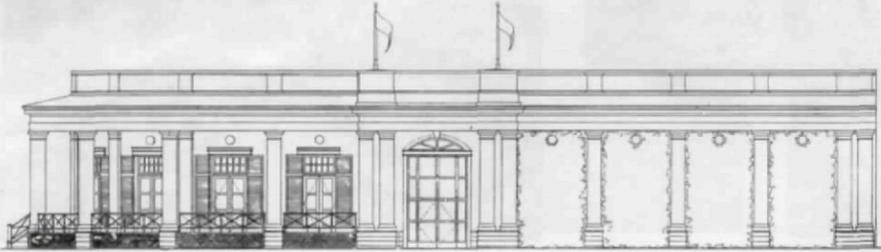
In the coming weeks the forum will present a lecture series called "Four From Texas," featuring young and articulate Texas architects from outside Houston. For more information, telephone the office of the Houston Chapter AIA at 713/622-2081.

Jan O'Brien

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*Hard Rock Cafe, 1985, Tigerman Fugman McCurry, architects, (above) drawing of front elevation, (left) drawing of side elevation (Courtesy Tigerman Fugman McCurry)*

## Soft Image for Hard Rock

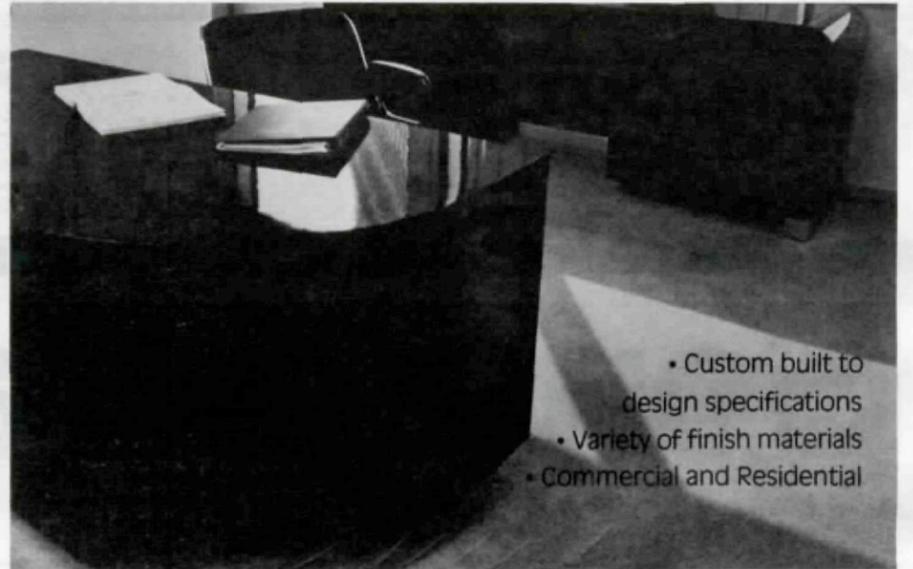
What do London, New York, Chicago, L.A., Honolulu, and Houston have in common? A love of great home cooking and rock and roll, according to Peter Morton, owner of the Hard Rock Café opening this September on Kirby Drive. Founded in 1971 in London, the "Smithsonian of Rock and Roll" is big business, and not a cookie-cutter chain. Each building is a separately commissioned work; Houston's was designed by Stanley Tigerman of Tigerman Fugman McCurry with Ray Bailey Architects as associate architect.

The rather staid, very "southern," classically ordered exterior with its veranda and shuttered French doors seems an unlikely home for Elvis Presley's cape and Z.Z. Top's guitar, but Mr. Morton is willing to bet that aging baby boomers prefer their nostalgia mixed with mahogany. He also is placing his money on Tigerman, who is designing the Chicago and Honolulu restaurants as well.

*Jan O'Brien*

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