

# Citelines

## Raiford Stripling Honored by Texas A&M

Raiford Stripling, the 72-year-old San Augustine architect best known for his restoration and preservation work, was honored at a symposium held in San Antonio on 10 September called "Texas: A Sense of Place, A Spirit of Independence." The symposium was sponsored by Texas A&M University, the University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures, the Texas Committee for the Humanities, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Stripling, who is registered as Texas Architect No. 198, directed the restoration of Mission Espíritu Santo and of Presidio La Bahía in Goliad, of Fort Parker in Mexia, and of numerous structures in San Augustine, Austin, Beaumont, Galveston, and Waco.

The symposium, organized by Gordon Echols, a professor in the A&M School of Environmental Design, was divided into three parts: a photographic exhibition documenting Stripling's major projects; a 30-minute video tape on Stripling, narrated by Amy Freeman Lee, San Antonio artist and philosopher; and a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Lee. Participating in the discussion were Raiford Stripling, Austin architect Robert Coffee, and Austin architect and architectural historian Eugene George.

In remarks made prior to the symposium, Stripling stepped outside his role as celebrated preservationist to pay a debt he owed to the women of Texas. They are, he said, the leaders of historic preservation and architectural restoration in Texas and have constituted the majority of his clients over the years. With tenacity and an independent spirit, and despite unfavorable odds, a number of women, acting individually or collectively, have preserved many historic sites within the state.

Lee set a witty philosophical pace for the panel members. She posed questions that addressed the roles of preservation and restoration today. The panel concurred on the suggestion that the preservation of an historic site, whether it be a whole town or a single structure, perpetuates the events and people connected with it. Destruction severs the thread tying the past to the present. This thread provides a link, renewing the sense of place and independence that is the legacy of the frontier to the present, and it can continue to do so.

At a dinner following the symposium, it was announced that Michael McCullar, formerly associate editor of *Texas Architect*, will write a biography of Raiford Stripling to be published by the Texas A&M University Press. The book is tentatively scheduled for publication in mid-1985.

Sally S. Victor

## The Texas Embassy — What Price History?

A significant assault on historic structures in Texas, currently underway, has been gaining momentum steadily. It is a project called the Texas Embassy and it is advertised as a massive, statewide effort at historic preservation.

The Texas Embassy is spearheaded by former television personality Guich Koock of Fredericksburg. Its purpose, detailed in a promotional brochure *Texas Embassy Preserves Texas, 1836-1936*, is to create a "Living Museum" that will be a "permanent historical preservation area" for endangered Texas structures. What is envisioned is a Lone Star version of Colonial Williamsburg, Greenfield Village, or Old Sturbridge Village, populated with 100 historically and architecturally significant Texas buildings constructed between 1836 and 1936. These will be trucked-in from towns throughout the state and arranged around the 1886 Blanco County Courthouse, which Koock hopes to transport from Blanco to a 1,000-acre site (of undetermined location) somewhere between Blanco and Johnson City in the Hill Country. Koock has received the approbation of such luminaries as Willie Nelson, Darrell Royal, and the Texas Legislature. He also has secured \$9 million in pledges to carry out the Texas

## High-rise Apartment Planned for San Antonio's RiverWalk

Arrow Associates, the architecture and urban-design firm organized by Cyrus Wagner, currently has in design a 19-story condominium apartment tower, to be called The Riverton, for downtown San Antonio. Located at West Market and Navarro streets, the building will also face the RiverWalk just across the San Antonio River from La Villita.

Arrow's design takes careful account of the building's urban situation. A six-story base contains river- and street-level retail space beneath five floors of parking. On the river side of the base, however, apartment units displace parking. A 13-story tower, containing the majority of the building's 106 apartment units, rises above the base. The tower is stepped in plan on all four sides and has a picturesque skyline profile. The big scale and simple massing of the base is intended to relate to such surrounding low-rise buildings as the small, but monumental, Public Library (1930, Herbert S. Green, architect). The setback massing of the tower responds to the presence nearby of such downtown landmarks as the Smith-Young Tower (1929, Atlee B. Ayres and Robert M. Ayres, architects) and the Alamo National Bank Building (1930, Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, architects).

According to Gregory Warwick, a principal in the Arrow firm, The Riverton will be of reinforced-concrete construction, faced with brick and glazed tile. Construction is scheduled to begin in May 1984. Southport Development Company is developing the project, which will be the first high-rise residential building to be constructed in downtown San Antonio.

Embassy, which he plans to inaugurate in 1986, the year of Texas's sesquicentennial.

However, the Texas Embassy has encountered considerable opposition from individuals and organizations actively involved in historic preservation. The reasons are not difficult to understand. Although the Embassy staff professes to be interested in rescuing endangered buildings that would disappear were it not for the project, in reality it has assembled what is referred to as a "laundry list" of other types of structures that it would like to move and reconstruct at the Embassy. These include buildings that are donated to the Embassy, those that the Embassy staff would particularly like to have, examples of generic types, and structures that are dedicated State Landmarks. A computer print-out reveals some of these to be the KJT Dance Hall in Fayette County, the Red River Fire House in Red River, and buildings from San Ygnacio, a community near Laredo that only recently recovered from assaults by the Texas Tech Ranching Heritage Center.

A second problem inherent in the project is that some of what the Embassy staff proposes to do is illegal. Article 6145 of Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes expressly prohibits the moving of structures protected by the Antiquities Code of Texas, among which are county courthouses and, possibly, buildings around courthouse squares. Despite this fact, Koock has convinced the State Bar Association to endorse the moving and restoration of the Blanco County Courthouse, although to date the association has refused to underwrite the project.

The recent thrust of preservation activity in Texas, as in the rest of the country, has been to restore and reuse buildings in place. This practice stems from the recognition that a specific relationship exists between buildings and the places where they were designed and constructed. The Texas Embassy fails to recognize that relationship and has ignored the impact that the removal of landmark buildings will have on rural Texas communities. Raising money and consciousness to protect the state's vulnerable historic resources is a commendable, indeed urgently needed, activity. But to pluck the best remaining historic buildings out of their surroundings in order to create a 1920s type of one-of-everything Pioneer Village is a travesty.

Martha Doty Freeman



## Big Cité Beat

Speculation on what might have caused the damage that **Hurricane Alicia** inflicted on the curtain walls of two of downtown Houston's flashier new buildings is rife. One Houston architect is confident that he knows the answer, however: "That's just what happens when you put a green one next to a pink one."

**Helmut Jahn** kicked off the **Houston Design Center's** series of public lectures by celebrated designers on 23 August before a packed house in Greenway Plaza. Climaxing the talk was Jahn's presentation of the multiple alternatives he developed for the design of the Southwest Center, which, like the Houston Design Center, is being built by Century Development Corporation. Although the 82-story Southwest Center will be Jahn's first Houston building, it will be the Murphy firm's second. In 1938, for a model house building program sponsored by *Life* magazine, Shaw, Naess and Murphy designed a house built at 2241 Stanmore Drive in the River Oaks courts, occupied originally by Adele Boettcher Neuhaus. It is 80 stories shorter than the Southwest Center.



Life House #8 (Neuhaus House), Houston, 1938, Shaw, Naess and Murphy, architects (River Oaks Magazine, 1941)

**All Strung Out** Public art types were more than a little taken aback when, on 27 April, Russo Properties, Inc., announced that it would erect on the plaza of its Lyric Centre Office Building in downtown Houston a 36-foot-high work of sculpture by veteran Houston painter David Adickes. Called "Virtuoso," the piece depicts an upstanding cello being bowed by one disembodied hand and fingered by another, with a disembodied head, mustachioed and curlicued, at the tip of the stem, very much like a bronze figurine by Paul Fairley called "Abstract Cello," which is two feet high.

"Virtuoso" will be constructed of steel surfaced with polished white "cultured" marble. It will be integrally lit and (natch) play recorded cello music during lunch.

The art community's collective eyebrows were raised, but no unkind remarks have been forthcoming, at least not publicly. In the company of downtown's corporate art elite—monumental public sculpture by Miro, Oldenburg, Hepworth, and Dubuffet are the most conspicuous—"Virtuoso" is, well, not a very sophisticated addition. In search of public art that was humorous, accessible, and non-esoteric, Russo Properties' art mavens have settled for the merely corny and derivative. "Virtuoso" was unveiled in October.



Maquette of Virtuoso, 1983, David Adickes, sculptor (Russo Properties, Inc.)

# Citelines



Three Fountains Apartments, 2200 Fountainview looking north (Photo by Paul Hester)

## Panoramic Photographs on View at the Houston Public Library

Old Houstonians are often heard to say that they cannot find their way around Houston anymore. The city continues to spread in all directions. Indeed, it has grown so fast that even those who have been here for only two years have witnessed the transformation of the skyline; the newest postcards are soon obsolete. The Houston Metropolitan Research Center's photographic exhibition, "Houston-In-The-Round," explores this process of vital and sometimes disorienting change.

The show, made up of giant prints of Houston scenes from the 1920s to the present, is on view at the Julia

Ideson Building of the Central Library from 12 September to 24 October. Organized by photographers Curtis Bean and Paul Hester, with Houston author Douglas Milburn, the exhibition includes prints from the Research Center's collection of photographs made by the Schlueter Studio and the Litterst Commercial Photo Company.

These commercial photographers, in the second and third decades of the century, employed a CIRKUT camera to take panoramic pictures of everything and anything people cared to document. Frank J. Schlueter and the Littersts photographed the Houston

skyline, large gatherings of people, railroad trains, industrial plants, oil fields, construction sites, groups of workers, great events — in short, the everyday life that made up the activities of the city, both monumental and intimate. While many of the pictures are documentary in nature, the extremely large format negatives (which are sometimes eight inches high by six feet long) are always able to capture a specific moment: the particular expression of an individual face even in a crowd. The familiarity present within the large-scale view or vast event gives these photographs a palpability that is never sentimental or cute. Photographs that were thought of until recently

## Is There Life After Dark?

Houston may soon have a theater district downtown. Joe Russo, the founder of the Theater District Association and developer of the new 26-story Lyric Centre Office Building (Darrell Comeaux Architects and Richard Fitzgerald and Partners, architects) in the center of the proposed district, wants the association to help provide the security and amenities that would re-establish that most endangered of species, the Houston pedestrian, on city sidewalks after five o'clock. By concentrating a revival of nightlife in the area bounded by Congress, Milam, Capitol and Buffalo Bayou (an area containing the Alley Theater, the new Alley Theater Center, Jones Hall, the Albert Thomas Convention Center, and the imminent Wortham Theater Center), the Theater District Association hopes to give this area a special theatrical character—and give theater patrons a reason not to run for their cars at the close of each performance.

The Theater District Association (to be composed of local art, business, and civic leaders, so far unnamed) has a preliminary two-year budget of \$250,000. Eighty percent is proposed to come from business and private contributions, another 20% from arts groups. Russo Properties, Inc., is offering 50% of the private fund-

ing for the first two-year period, plus free office space for the group. After two years, Joe Russo plans to hand over the reins to the association's board of directors.

Houston's rival, Dallas, has been working on a similar proposal since 1976. Where it had no facilities before, it now has an art museum by Edward Larrabee Barnes and the design for a symphony hall by I.M. Pei and Partners. Perhaps more important, it has guidelines prepared by Dallas's City Planning Department that include emphasizing the district's central street as a boulevard oriented to pedestrians, with public spaces for art displays and ground-floor levels of buildings devoted to retail stores and restaurants. No such goals have been proposed to clarify ways in which future buildings would contribute to the character of Houston's district.

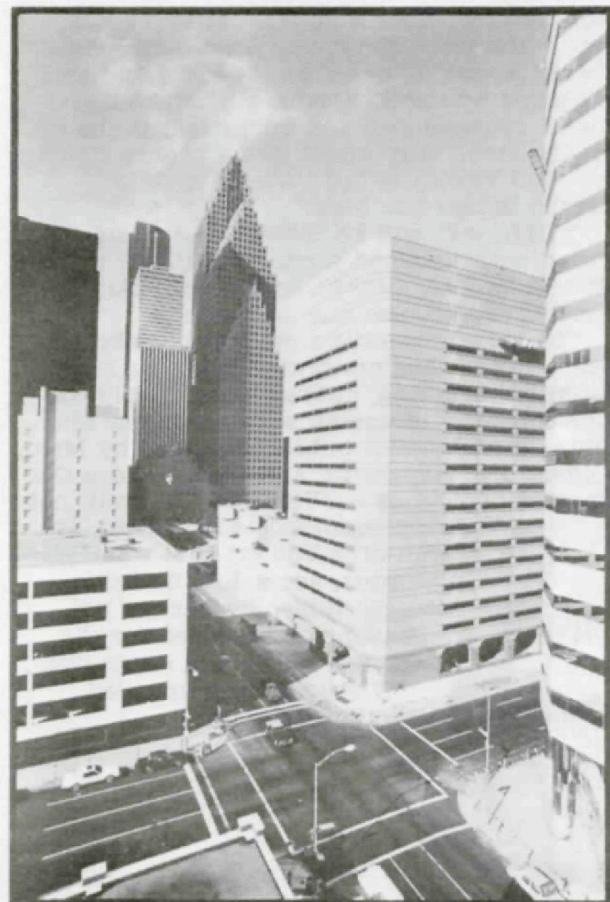
In addition to theater and commerce, the scope of the district could be broadened to include the visual arts: galleries or downtown branches of the Contemporary Arts or Fine Arts museums. Russo has been approached with the idea of including a children's museum in his Lyric Centre Building, a possibility about which he is enthusiastic. Street vendors have been proposed, although this would require special dispensation from City Council, since such activity is legally prohibited. A special cleaning crew, suggested by Russo, could alleviate at least part of the litter such commerce generates. Russo is also suggesting a

special security force—in costume—that would patrol the area from 5 P.M. until 2 A.M., augmenting regular service by the Houston Police Department.

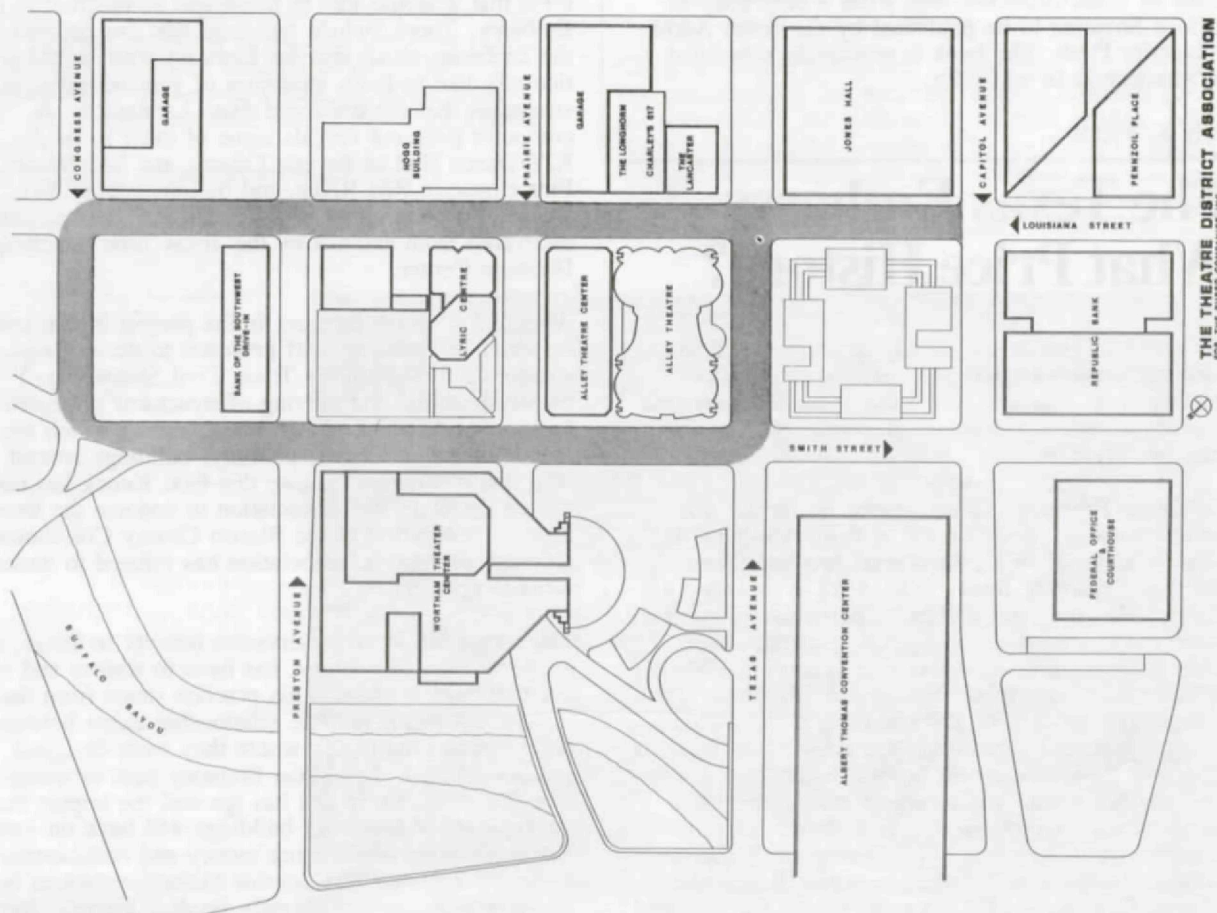
Even universally appealing images are surprisingly difficult to translate to reality. Since most of the land required for street amenities is city-owned, the city would have to approve all installations, and the responsibility for future maintenance might well fall on taxpayers. While Mayor Whitmire's appointment of Efraim García as Director of City Planning has infused new life into a city department that for 20 years was moribund, it is still unclear that the City of Houston has the willingness or competence to commit to such long range public-private ventures. One of the chief reasons that such ventures have not been proposed in the past is fear that the city would be unable to bear its share of the responsibility.

If this is to be the case no longer, then Houston has a rare opportunity to capitalize on the foresight of one of its developers. A sense of security, coupled with places to stroll to, street-level shops and restaurants, plus more places to pause—benches, shade trees, and fountains—could make the downtown theater district a pedestrian gathering place, one that would give the air-conditioned Galleria a run for its money.

Janet O'Brien

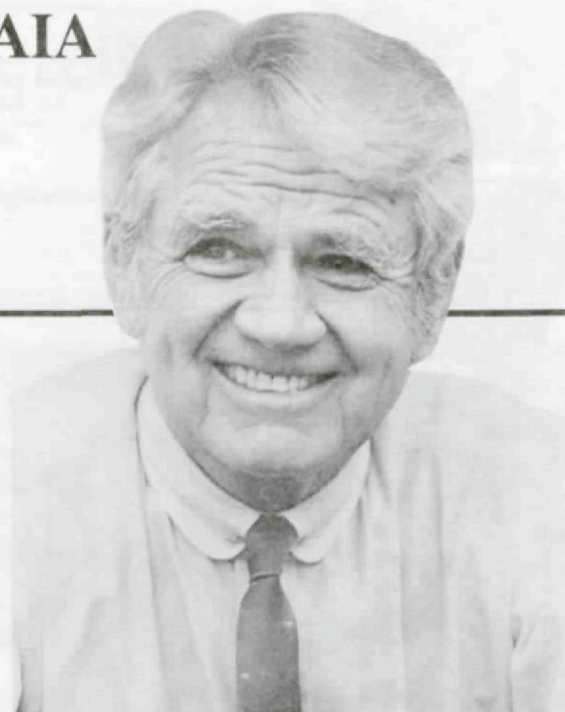


View in proposed Theater District (Photo by Paul Hester)



Map of proposed Theater District (The Russo Companies, Inc.)

## William Wayne Caudill, FAIA 1914-1983



William Wayne Caudill (CRS/Caudill Rowlett Scott)

as literal testaments of another era now are seen to have qualities of composition and measure that make them art.

More recently, Hester and Bean have been experimenting with the CIRKUT camera, and the results of their work are also part of the exhibition. Curtis Bean has taken as his point of departure the camera's ability to record large-scale gatherings, such as marathons. Paul Hester has spent his energy exploring the documentary capacity of the camera, at times recreating, yet at the same time updating by method and moment, the older work.

The direct comparisons of the Houston of Schlueter and the Littersts with that of Bean and Hester speak to the mammoth dimensions of this city's growth and to the epic and artful nature of the medium. This is a show not to be missed.

John Kaliski

## Slovic- Oakwood Mall

Following his joint appointment with Ligia Ravé as Henry Luce Professor of Architecture and Society at Tulane University last January, David Scott Slovic has opened a branch of his new Philadelphia practice in New Orleans. In production now is his first Louisiana commission, the remodeling of 60,000 square feet of public space in Oakwood Mall, a shopping center in Gretna owned by the Rouse Company. Anticipated completion dates for the two-phase operation are in April and summer 1984.

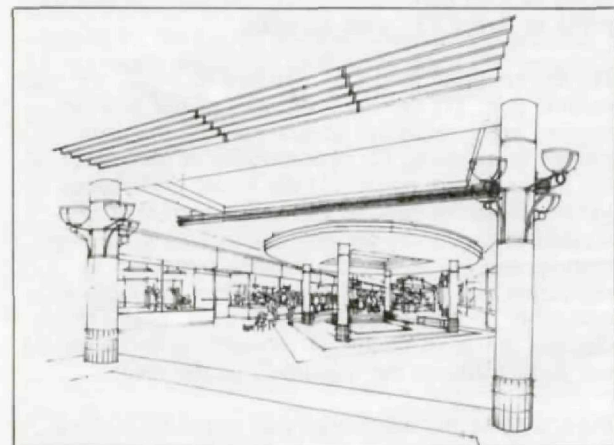
Within the constraints imposed by such a project, Slovic and associates Philip Buckley, John Roth, Burkart Stelzer, and Serge Nalbantian have sought to give the cruciform-plan mall spaces a positive image, treating them as "an interior urban design," according to Slovic.

Existing canopies at major entrances are to be reworked. Paving patterns in tile will be coordinated with modifications to the ceiling and the use of neon lighting to create what Slovic describes as a spatial "sequencing" of the heretofore bland, linear passages. Structural columns will be reclad in tile and plaster and equipped with industrial fixtures containing indirect lighting.

At the intersection of the four arms, a specially programmed fountain, set in a sunken pool in the center of a tile, granite, and bronze floor "compass," is planned beneath an existing skylight. New subcenters will be located in each of the radiating passages. One of these, in an arm of the mall that proved unattractive to tenants, will become a Food Court, featuring a new skylit court, individualized column facings, and redirected access to parking.

Image re-do's of shopping malls are not the most promising of architectural commissions. Slovic has handled this one with imagination and tact, bringing to the suburbs an architectural hint of Mummies-cum-Mardi-Gras delight.

Stephen Fox



Perspective of special mall bay, Oakwood Mall, Gretna, Louisiana (David Slovic Architecture and Urban Design)

Bill Caudill was an extraordinary man and an extraordinary architect.

He had enormous talents and personal strengths. He was an educator, a writer, a dynamic lecturer, a strong leader, a motivator of people, a lover of ideas, a quintessential conceptualizer, an advocate for change, an iconoclast, a researcher, a designer, a philosopher, a master at understanding human dynamics, an individual with an enormous drive to achieve excellence.

His accomplishments during his 69 years are significant and all the more noteworthy since, as a shy young man with a speech impediment, he believed that if he became an architect, he could then work quietly in the studio and never have any public exposure. Little did he know how public his productive life would be.

Bill attended Oklahoma State University, where he studied under a Beaux-Arts curriculum, then chose The Massachusetts Institute of Technology for graduate work. While at MIT he wrote the first of his 11 books, *Space for Teaching*. It was a revolutionary thesis that combined new attitudes toward education with architectural form. He went full circle in his career: He started his professional life as the Director of Research at Texas A&M University, and at the time of his death was Director of Research for CRS Group.

Bill helped establish an international design firm on the principle of "architecture by team." He instilled a sense of continuity by fostering talent and allowing leadership to emerge. He helped build a firm whose culture, character, and purpose reflect his own values. He was particularly proud of the 300 design awards displayed at CRS—he called it "our ego wall." He was delighted when CRS received the AIA Firm Award for Achieving Design Excellence through Collaboration. He served as president, then chairman, of CRS/Caudill Rowlett Scott, and served on the board of directors of CRS Group. The statement that we ran CRS like a school (CRS alumni now practice throughout the world) and the Rice University School of Architecture like a firm gave him deep satisfaction. He took great pride in the achievements of his firm, its alumni, and his many students and faculty.

As the Director of the School of Architecture at Rice for nine years, he believed the purposes of education were:

1. To instill a sense of self-motivation and passion that is essential to our art.
2. To expose students and faculty to diverse ideas.
3. To develop skills—conceptual, graphic, and verbal.
4. To seek through self-understanding one's unique strengths.
5. To impart knowledge and understanding of the history and culture of architecture.
6. To develop, articulate, and publish new theory.

Bill served frequently on design juries. He was a member of the U.S. State Department Design Commission, and served on the Design Committee for the University of Washington in Seattle. He was on the board of directors of Herman Miller, Inc., and the American Institute of Architects. He served on the AIA Design Commission, and was elected to the College of Fellows of the AIA for his contributions in design. In 1978 he received the Texas Society of Architects' Llewelyn Pitts Award. He was also given a Gold Medal by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. Recently, his native state of Oklahoma elected him to the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, the first architect so honored.

A visiting design critic at Princeton University as well as a lecturer at every major architectural school in the nation, he presented hundreds of electrifying speeches on his philosophy of design and education. He wrote more than 80 articles and research reports. At the time of his death he was working on the manuscript for his last book, *Memos: Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong*.

Bill Caudill embraced the idea of collaboration and design for an industrialized society extolled by the Bauhaus. But he advocated an inclusive rather than an exclusive approach to architecture. His philosophy of architecture was one of balance, as he believed all great architecture—past, present, and future—must have equilibrium between form, function, economy, and time.

In CRS' designs, he always sought the generic qualities of form—be it plastic, skeletal, or planar—as well as generic concepts, because he hoped that our inventions would lead to prototypical solutions. He understood human dynamics better than any architect who practiced from the mid 1950s to the 1980s. In both education and practice he encouraged students and colleagues to "strengthen your strengths—be your unique self." He invented the "squatters" process of on-site interaction with clients and users of the architecture to be created. He fostered architectural programming as both a distinct new discipline and an integral part of the design process.

Bill was a generous man with the most precious gift—time. He always gave his time to help others; he gave counsel and advice to students, faculty, colleagues, and new acquaintances. He was a wonderful listener and willingly shared his experience.

The most important things in Bill's life were *ideas* and *people*. Architecture was the medium through which his love was realized. He was like a magnifying glass placed in the dispersed rays of the sun to create a focus—even a fire. His effect on those around him was catalytic. He helped them to accomplish more than they might have achieved individually.

Bill viewed architecture as essentially anthropocentric; human experience and values are its central motivating forces. His definition of architecture helps explain the kind of man he was: deeply moral, humanistic, and philosophical. "Architecture is a personable, enjoyable, necessary experience. A person perceives and appreciates space and form from three distinctly different but related attitudes: from the physical, from the emotional, and from the intellectual. The architecture experience evokes a response which fulfills physical, emotional, and intellectual needs, effecting an enjoyable interaction between the person and the building." This was the basis for his lifelong commitment to the art of conceiving architecture for people.

A rare and colorful personality, he was a legend in his time. He was an inspirational leader. Bill had a unique style; he communicated significant concepts with clarity; he taught us to probe new ideas, new trends, to look forward, to seek out the excitement and challenges of our times. He was the consummate *searcher*.

He boiled things down to their essence. We called him the "great rifle shooter" because he always cut through the fog and found the central underlying issue. When things really became complex or verbose, he would laugh and say, "I would have written you a shorter letter if I had had more time"—in fact, he always extolled the virtues of verbal and visual economy.

I had the rare privilege of working very closely with Bill Caudill for 20 years at CRS and at Rice University. He was a respected colleague and a close friend. Of all those with whom I worked, he had the greatest impact on my career as an architect.

His lasting principles, his superior example of what a person can accomplish in a lifetime, leave a rich and varied personal legacy unmatched in our architectural community. The spirit and humanism of his architecture will survive through the people he touched. This, above all else, is the legacy of Bill Caudill, the meaning of his life, and a testament to his vision.

Paul Kennon