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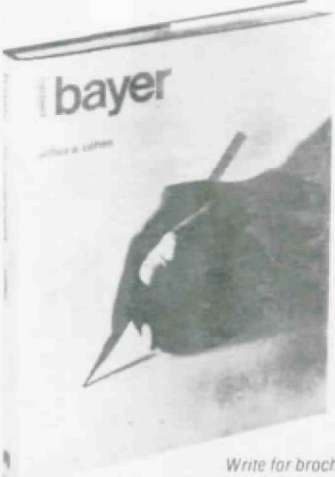
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## CiteLines

### RDA Programs Fall Into Line

The Rice Design Alliance begins its fall 1984 season with the first in a series of five public lectures called "Architects Speak for Themselves." Presented will be Frank Welch, Barbara Littenberg, Hugh Newell Jacobsen, and Daniel Solomon. These will occur on successive Wednesdays between 26 September and 24 October at 8 PM in the Brown Auditorium of The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

On the last weekend in October RDA will stage its annual architectural tour. This year the subject is Executive Suites. Open to the public will be offices featuring the work of some of Houston's most noted interior designers. The tour will be on Saturday and Sunday, 27 and 28 October. A special reception will be held on Friday, 26 October.

The RDA Forum will present a public symposium on the issue of Allen Parkway Village. This is scheduled for Wednesday, 5 December, at 7 PM in the Brown Auditorium of The Museum of Fine Arts.

For ticket information and reservations for any of these events, call the Rice Design Alliance at 713/524-6297.

### Upcoming Architectural Exhibitions

Rice University's Farish Gallery will present an assortment of architectural exhibitions this fall.

Opening the season on 29 August will be "Great Drawings from the Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects," to run until 7 October. Organized by the Drawing Center and circulated by the American Federation of Arts, the exhibition will contain 82 drawings, ranging from the 15th century to the present. Included are works by Palladio, Inigo Jones, Wren, Robert Adam, Shaw, Lutyens, and Stirling. An introductory lecture is scheduled.

Following will be "Renzo Piano: Piece by Piece," to run from 15 October to 10 November. This exhibition, organized by the Italian Institute of Culture, will display Piano's work of the last 20 years. An introductory lecture by Renzo Piano and a guided tour of the Menil Collection Museum construction site will accompany the opening.

From 22 October to 4 November, photos of the winning entries from the 1984 Houston Chapter AIA Design Awards will be shown in the Jury Room, adjacent to the Farish Gallery. The Farish Gallery is located in Anderson Hall on the campus of Rice University. It is open from noon until 5 PM daily. For more information, call the School of Architecture at 713/527-8101.

### AIA Octoberfest

This October the Houston Chapter of the American Institute of Architects will again stage its month-long Celebration of Architecture. Special media events focusing public attention on the city are planned. There will be free Brown Bag lectures on Fridays between 5 October and 2 November at noon at the Central Library on various architectural topics. There also will be a program of architectural tours, to include downtown, River Oaks, and notable Houston churches and synagogues. The culminating event will be the annual convention of the Texas Society of Architects, to run from 1-3 November. For information on any of these events call the Houston Chapter AIA at 713/520-8125.

### Allen Parkway Village Charrette

On 6 and 7 April 1984 teams of students from Rice University, the University of Houston, and Texas A&M University gathered for a challenging one-day design charrette. The design problem was to save and rehabilitate Allen Parkway Village, a 1,000-unit, public-housing complex slated for demolition by the Houston Housing Authority. Organized by Dana Cuff, assistant professor of architecture at Rice, along with historian/critic Diane Ghirardo of Texas A&M, the politically provocative design exercise was intended to aid residents of the beleaguered project in fighting the city housing authority's plan to close the village and relocate its lower-income inhabitants in new housing (that stands little chance of being built) or in existing stock far from the Fourth Ward, the historic black neighborhood that adjoins the project. The charrette brought together an unlikely coalition of sponsors and interested parties, including professors from all three university architecture schools, members of the press, the Allen Parkway Village Residents Association, Fourth Ward political activists, the American Civil Liberties Union (which is representing the residents in a lawsuit against the city), and even the Houston Chapter of the AIA, which acted as cosponsor with the three schools. Houston's architectural community, normally

complacent on issues of social concern, was given a brief display of heady activism.

The 12 teams of three to four students each were asked to produce designs for the open space and exteriors of the buildings in the complex. These had to demonstrate the viability of a low-cost renovation that would allow Allen Parkway Village to remain low-income housing, and thereby also protect the Fourth Ward from large-scale redevelopment. Faculty members from the participating schools acted as guest critics. The culmination of the Saturday charrette was an evening meeting in the Allen Parkway Village community auditorium and an evaluation of the student projects by a distinguished jury, consisting of Houston AIA president Tom McKittrick, Rice architecture dean O. Jack Mitchell, Allen Parkway Residents Association's Lenwood Johnson, and (most notably) Aldo Rossi. Rossi was impressed with the architecture of the village, calling for its preservation, and helped sway the jury in choosing two student projects which made minimal improvements in the site as winners. The two first-place teams, from Rice and the University of Houston, responded to the award in the spirit of the charrette by donating their small cash prizes to the Residents Association to aid their legal efforts.

In mid May the Houston Housing Authority, unswayed by the results of the exercise, made final its decision to demolish the project. With the approval of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the demolition and relocation plans will probably proceed within the year.

### Proposed Historic District Faces Opposition

On 28 July 1984 the Board of Review of the Texas Historical Commission, meeting in Houston, unanimously voted to nominate the 43-block Freedmen's Town Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. The proposal was sponsored by the Freedmen's Town Association, a community group headed by Gladys M. House, a resident of the Fourth Ward. The nomination faces opposition from property owners as well as the City of Houston's newly-renamed Department of Planning and Development. Department director Efraim Garcia wanted a district of no more than 6 blocks, so that the city would not be impeded in clearing the remaining 90 blocks of the Fourth Ward, Houston's oldest black neighborhood, which lies just west of downtown and just south of Allen Parkway Village.

Acting on behalf of the property owners, the city proposes to offer the cleared land to a single developer for a mixed-use project that would include low-income housing only for the elderly. The remainder of the residents of the Fourth Ward, most of whom are renters, would be eligible for relocation assistance to other parts of the city. Because the city hopes to use Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) money to clear the area and install new infrastructure that is a prerequisite to redevelopment, it must justify to the Department of Housing and Urban Development its treatment of the area's historic resources. Nomination of the 43-block district to the National Register by the Board of Review provides official endorsement of the historic significance of the Fourth Ward, complicating the city's effort to secure federal funds to raze it. If listed, the Freedmen's Town Historic District will become Houston's fifth National Register historic district.



Self Portrait by Richard J. Neutra, 1917 (Neutra Archive, UCLA, courtesy Blaffer Gallery)

### Neutra Show at Blaffer

Houston goes Modern again this fall with the opening of "The Architecture of Richard Neutra: From International Style to California Modern." The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition of the work of the Austrian-born Neutra will be shown at the University of Houston's Blaffer Gallery from 9 September to 4 November, concluding an international tour that began in New York then moved to Berlin, Vienna, Barcelona, and Los Angeles. Organized by Arthur Drexler, director of MOMA's Department of Architecture and Design, and Thomas S. Hines, professor of history at the University of California at Los Angeles and Neutra's biographer, the exhibition includes original drawings, photographs, memorabilia, and a spectacular model of Neutra's first, and most famous, building in the U.S., the Health House of 1927-1929.

As a complement to this acclaimed and comprehensive exhibition - reappraising both Neutra and the impact of European Modernism in America - the Blaffer Gallery will join with the University of Houston College of Architecture to present a series of public lectures scheduled for successive Tuesday evenings beginning 2 October in Dudley Hall at the Fine Arts Building on the university's central campus. Addressing various aspects of Modernism will be Marshall Berman, William Jordy, Stephanos Polyzoides, and Charles Gwathmey. For information on this series and other special events connected with the exhibition, contact the Blaffer Gallery at 713/749-1320.



Magnolia Lounge, Dallas (Photo by Peter C. Papademetriou)

## Historic Preservation League to Restore Modern Landmark

Dallas's Historic Preservation League will contribute to the 1986 Texas Sesquicentennial by restoring an International Style landmark. This is the Magnolia Lounge, designed by the Swiss-born New York architect William Lescaze and built at Fair Park for the Texas Centennial Exposition of 1936. Restoration of the lounge, which was the first International Style building in Texas, will complement an \$18 million project to rehabilitate Fair Park, sponsored by the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department. Site of the annual State Fair of Texas since 1887, the park was rebuilt in 1936 for the Centennial Exposition under the direction of Dallas architect George L. Dahl. Its severe, stripped-classical buildings comprise one of the major concentrations of modernistic architecture in the United States.

According to Virginia McAlester, a member of the league's board of directors, Lescaze was selected by the Magnolia Petroleum Company of Dallas to design its corporate pavilion - housing visitor orientation, restrooms, and child-care - on the recommendation of fashion arbiter Stanley Marcus. Mrs. McAlester reports that Dahl's design review committee made Lescaze tone down a preliminary scheme: it was *too* modern. Nonetheless, the building's place within the modernist canon was confirmed when Henry-Russell Hitchcock featured it in his 1936 Museum of Modern Art show on exposition architecture, along with pavilions by Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Gunnar Asplund. In 1947 theatrical entrepreneur Margo Jones opened her Theatre-in-the-Round in the Magnolia Lounge's 120-seat auditorium, producing during her first season there the world premiere of Tennessee Williams's *Summer and Smoke*.

Used intermittently for various purposes after the opening of Frank Lloyd Wright's Dallas Theater Center in 1959, the lounge is suffering the effects of long-term neglect. However, Dallas architects Thomas-Booziotis and Associates have estimated that the building can be restored for \$450,000. The Historic Preservation League hopes to raise the funds to accomplish this by 1986, when the Magnolia Lounge will reopen for the Sesquicentennial as a multi-media center of Dallas history.

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