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Gala Events

1989 The Rice Design Alliance presented its third annual gala in a downtown bank lobby once occupied by Inter-First Bank. The "Rive Gauche" theme celebrated the bicentennial of the French Revolution and the end of Houston's economic reversal of several years back. The good times rolled on Saturday, 4 November, in the lobby of the 1100 Louisiana Building. Organized by chairman William E. Boswell and cochairmen Frank F. Douglas and Adele Howell, the evening raised over \$35,000 to fund RDA programs. President Edith L. Archer presented the RDA's first annual Award for Design Excellence to developer Gerald D. Hines for his commitment to design excellence in buildings that have reshaped the face of Houston.

The Rice Design Alliance thanks the underwriters, contributors, and tireless volunteers who made the evening such an outstanding event.

1990 Mark your calendars for the 1990 Rice Design Alliance gala, to be held Saturday evening, 3 November, honoring George Mitchell, developer of The Woodlands and a leader in the renaissance of historic Galveston. For further information or to volunteer to help, please call the RDA office at 524-6297.

RDA President Edith L. Archer presents Gerald D. Hines with the first annual RDA Award for Design Excellence.



Phyllis Hand

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Big Cité Beat

☛ Bush league: Native beaters hunting a site for the **George Bush Presidential Library** settled on Hermann Park briefly this winter before it became clear that no one else was game. Speculation now centers on the fringes of the Rice University campus.

☛ Musey rooms: **Venturi Rauch and Scott Brown** has been retained to prepare a master plan for the expansion of the **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**. The firm is also engaged in preliminary design of the **Children's Museum of Houston**, to be built near Hermann Park.

☛ Hands solo: **John Burgee**, sans P. J., has devised a forest of water columns for a new fountain on the former site of the **Shamrock Hilton Hotel**. The plaza will be paved in real stone, not sham; the water will run clear, not green.

☛ Short haul: **Metro** is back on track with plans for a two-line, 22-mile transit starter system that covers much of the same ground the previous connector did, plus the University of Houston and the Fourth Ward, where **Andres Duany** and **Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk** are said to be preparing plans for the **Founder's Park** redevelopment project, sponsored by American General Corporation and Cullen Center.

☛ Tall tale: Oilman/developer **George Mitchell** has acquired the downtown block that was to have been the site of **Helmut Jahn's** 82-story **Southwest Tower** (*Cite*, Spring-Summer 1984), the design of which was later downsized and built in Philadelphia. At last report, Jahn is still on the case, preparing an entirely new scheme.

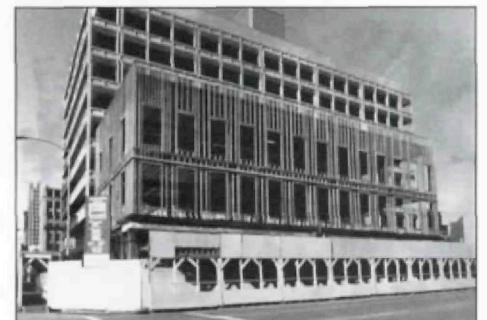
☛ Citelike: The Houston chapter of the American Institute of Architects presented *Cite* with a Citation (what else?) of Honor at its annual meeting last month. Also honored were chapter stalwarts **Hermon Lloyd, Harvin C. Moore, S. I. Morris, George Pierce, Sally Walsh, and Willie Peña**; educator/architect **Nonya Grenader**; historian par excellence **Stephen Fox**; artist **Jim Love**; furniture craftsman **Bill Hight**; and up-and-coming architect **Natalye Appel**. Design awards went to **Cisneros Underhill; Gensler and Associates/Architects; the Office of Architecture + Design; and TeamHOU**.

☛ Decline and fall: Revealed in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* (April 1986), under the heading "Landscape of Decline": "**West University Place**, in Harris County, was established in 1917 as a community of wealthy country homes around Rice University. Its population fell

from 17,074 in 1950 to 12,010 in 1980." Could this be the same neo-Georgian bastion of Yuppiedom on 50-foot lots that *Cite* visited in Winter 1986 (pp. 14-16)?

☛ Market price: Construction of the first phase of **Market Square Park** will begin this summer. Four-fifths of the \$675,000 budget is now in hand, including grants from the Brown, Wortham, Menil, Fondren, Hamman, and Cockrell foundations.

☛ Preservation Houston style: Having fiddled while the 1857 **Pilot Building** succumbed to a terminal case of deferred maintenance, the Harris County commissioners have now caused it to be rebuilt better than old, except for an ornamental series of columns attached to its first-floor front that were retained from the original.



Paul Hester

The 1990 1857 Pilot Building.