

Big Cité Beat

Hot Off the Press: Lumen Books has published *For An Architecture of Reality* by Austin architect **Michael Benedikt**, **Mary Carolyn Hollers George** is putting finishing touches on the first volume of her long-awaited book on **O'Neil Ford**, and the **Fort Worth Chapter of the American Institute of Architects** is poised to bring out **Judith Singer's** *Cowtown Moderne*; both of the latter are to be published by Texas A&M University Press. UT-Austin's **Center for the Study of American Architecture** has produced the third issue of *Center*, on *New Regionalism*, edited by Lawrence W. Speck and Wayne Attoe.

Brain Drain: The **Houston Brain-Drain** has turned into an outgoing tidal wave. Kissing Houston good-bye this spring and summer were architect and *Cite* contributor **Jan O'Brien** and hubby **Craig Hartman** (posted to SOM/DC), architect **Alan Hirschfield** (to practice with Toronto architect Julian Jacobs and teach at the University of Toronto), legendary art maven **Esther de Vécsey** (Pacific Institute of Religion, Berkeley), photographer **Jacques de Selliers** (home to Brussels), landscape architect **Frances F. Chamberlain** (UT-Austin), architect and *Cite* contributor **Andrew Bartle** (New York), artist **Laura Foster** and architect hubby **Ben Nicholson** (Chicago), architect **William Taylor** (SCI-Arch, Santa Monica), historian **Mark Schneider**, and architect **Michael Underhill** (to become chairman of architecture at Iowa State University). Hasta luego.

To replace *Texas Homes*, the ten-year-old Dallas-based monthly that was closed down in May along with its companion publication, ten-year-old *Houston City Magazine* (just as it was beginning to get good), *Texas Monthly* will introduce *Domain* in December. This will be a quarterly supplement to *Texas Monthly*, available only to subscribers, concentrating on design, art, travel, and food. Editor **Catherine Chadwick** promises that it will be "art-driven" and high-style.

Young Architects: *Progressive Architecture* devoted its July issue to 16 up-and-coming talents, including Texans **Alamo Architects** (San Antonio), **Craig Wakefield Grund** (Austin), **Carlos Jiménez** (Houston), **Joe Mashburn** (College Station), and sometime-Houstonian **Neal I. Payton** (Washington D.C.). The work of Texas architects **Howard Barnstone**, **Hal Box**, **Lawrence W. Speck**, and **William F. Stern** is prominently featured in the recently published book *American Houses* by Philip Langdon (Steward Tabori & Chang, 1987).

The Decorative Center of Houston and *Houston Home and Garden* magazine have announced the first annual **Wendy Haskell Meyer Student Design Competition**. The competition is open to all Houston-area interior design and architectural students. The Huntingdon condominium complex has agreed to be the 1987 underwriter, providing floorplans and design criteria. Final submission deadline for completed projects is 4 December 1987, with an awards ceremony scheduled for 21

Cite alive—still—at 5. This nineteenth issue marks the fifth anniversary of *Cite*, the Rice Design Alliance's review of architecture and design in Houston.

January 1988 at The Decorative Center. For further information or written materials, call Siri Roark at The Decorative Center, 713/961-9292.

The **American Institute of Architects** presented its annual 25 Year Award to the **Bavinger House** in Norman, Oklahoma by **Bruce Goff**, childhood home of Houston architect **Bill Bavinger**. AIA members elected **Benjamin E. Brewer, Jr.** first vice president of the institute at their June convention. Closer to home, the **Alley Theatre** named its Arena Stage in honor of longtime supporter **Hugo V. Neuhaus, Jr.**, shortly before his death on 21 July. **Frank Lloyd Wright's** only Houston building, the 1955 Thaxton House at 12020 Tall Oaks in Bunker Hill Village, has been colonialized. **Texas A&M University** has established the multi-

disciplinary **Center for Historic Resources**, with Gordon Echols as director and Joan Rabins as assistant.

The Houston skyline will come alive during the **Landmarks on Parade** procession celebrating the opening of the George R. Brown Convention Center on 26 September at 8 PM on the center's grounds. The parade, which will include more than 1,500 parading high school band members and 300 flag-bearers, will feature 28 marching landmarks designed by architects from local firms, including **Lloyd Jones Fillpot and Associates, Inc.**, **Morris Architects**, **CBM Engineers**, **Walter P. Moore & Associates** with **W.S. Bellows Construction**, **3D/International**, and the **SWA Group**. The landmarks include buildings (Hermann Hospital, Jones Hall, Lovett Hall, City Hall, the Astrodome), skylines (City Post Oak, Houston Center), monuments (San Jacinto Monument), and events (Rendez-Vous Houston, Houston freeways), and will be worn by actors from Checkmate Theatricals. Many of the marching landmarks will be joined by costumed employees who work at the
(Continued on page 4)

Citelines

Look Both Ways



Houston Municipal Air Terminal (Joseph Finger, architect) as it appeared shortly after its opening in 1940. The Air Terminal was Houston's port of entry until a new terminal, now called Hobby Airport, was built in 1954.

In a forward-looking celebration the City of Houston Department of Aviation has dedicated a new runway at Houston Intercontinental Airport and produced a design for a new Terminal D. Yet equally as impressive is the Aviation Department's look back to its genesis. The department will mark a half-century of service by preserving the Houston Municipal Airport Terminal (1937-1940). The city's first municipal airport, on the site now known as William P. Hobby Airport, was served by the four-story Modernistic terminal building designed by Houston architect Joseph Finger.

In this its fiftieth year, the Houston Municipal Airport Terminal will enjoy a \$200,000 exterior restoration. The exterior will be restored to near-original appearance (original colors are khaki tan and gray, not the current white and coral-pink scheme). The control tower, which was added soon after the building's completion, will be retained. The International Terminal, a one-story extension of the building which gives the current structure an L-shape, will be modified. A portion of this addition will

be demolished, separating the extension from the original terminal. Work inside the building will be limited to cleaning, safety lighting, and stabilization of decaying ceiling plaster.

Barry Moore Architects, Inc. is reviewing contract documents for the project. The restoration will accomplish more than arresting deterioration, which is in itself a laudable goal. Preservation of the exterior of the building will leave only the task of interior rehabilitation when a new use for the long-abandoned building is selected. Meanwhile, the terminal will attract the attention it deserves as a significant piece of Houston's architectural heritage.

The restoration plans were reviewed by the City of Houston Archeological and Historical Commission. Commissioner V. Nia Dorian-Becnel praised the Aviation Department for taking the initiative in securing the building, rather than continuing to allow the historic building to deteriorate.

Mike Davis

big cité beats*(Continued from page 3)*

featured facility or company. Several of the structures will have audio capabilities and internal lighting.



Rice students adorn the Merry Prankster bus, March 1967.

J.H. Bryan and unnamed co-conspirators are seeking to rescue **Ken Kesey's Merry Prankster bus**, which lies a-mouldering (and a-rusting) on Kesey's farm in Pleasant Hill, Oregon. The bus, with its destination marquee reading "Further," crisscrossed America during the '60s, with Neal Cassady sometimes at the wheel, stopping in Houston to visit writer Larry McMurtry, then at Rice. The would-be preservationists hope to have the bus restored and moved to the Smithsonian Institution.

Architect and University of Houston associate professor **Peter J. Zweig** took an honorable mention in the West Hollywood Civic Center Competition.

A \$3 million grant from the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation will fund the new **Sasakawa International Center for Space Architecture** at the University of Houston. Under the direction of architecture professor **Larry Bell**, the center will work on projects supporting the peaceful use of space and space technology.

Fall Architecture Events

Rice Design Alliance

P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas
77251-1892, 713/524-6297

7-8 Nov - Annual Home Tour: Broadacres. Homes in this tree-lined neighborhood along North and South boulevards will be open to RDA members only.

Fall Lecture Series - "Lessons From Space." A four-part lecture series addressing man's environment in outer space, including space stations, the moon, the planets, and beyond. For reservations and information about both events, telephone the Rice Design Alliance.

Farish Gallery

M.D. Anderson Hall, Rice University,
713/527-4870

24 Aug-11 Oct - Exhibition: "Frank Lloyd Wright and the Johnson Wax Building." Models, drawings, furniture, and photographs organized by the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University. Introduced with a lecture **2 Sept** by Jonathan Lipman, 7:30 PM, Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; reception 8:30 PM Farish Gallery.

School of Architecture, Rice University

713/527-4870
14 Sept-16 Nov - Fall Evening Lecture Series, at 8 PM in Sewall Hall, Room 301, Rice University campus; admission free.

21 Sept - Taft Architects, "Recent Work."

28 Sept - Peter Papademetriou, "On Becoming a Modern Architect: Eero Saarinen's Evolution."

30 Sept - Xavier Navarro, "Paintings and Buildings."

5 Oct - Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefavre, "Critical Classicism."

8 Oct - Judith Wolin, "Mnemotopia."

19 Oct - Carollee Pelos and Jean-Louis Bourgeois, "Magnificent Mud."

26 Oct - Michael Sorkin, "Postures of Criticism."

2 Nov - Alex Krieger, "On Boston: Past Futures and Recent Prospects."

9 Nov - Andres Duany and Elizabeth Ptater-Zyberk, "Recent Work."

16 Nov - Mary McLeod, "The Politics of Le Corbusier."

21 Oct - Lecture by Robert Irwin, a leading Southern California artist and Craig Francis Cullinan Visiting Professor in Fine Arts, Architecture, and Urban Planning for 1987-1988, "The Nature of Abstract Art," 7 PM, Sewall Hall, Room 301, Rice University campus; admission free.

College of Architecture, University of Houston

713/749-1187

23 Sept-11 Nov - Fall Lecture Series, Wednesdays at 2:30 PM unless otherwise specified, College of Architecture Auditorium, University of Houston campus; admission free.

23 Sept - Ronald C. Filson, "Boston Artist Housing and Other Projects."

30 Sept - Judy Urrutia, "Process and Content."

14 Oct - Andrew Perez, "The Work of Andrew Perez and Associates."

28 Oct - Robert Renfro, "Current Work."

6 Nov, Friday - Kenneth Frampton.

11 Nov - Simone Swan, "Hassan Fathy."

Greater Houston Preservation Alliance

16 Sept - Guided walking tour of the Main Street/Market Square Historic

District; tours usually scheduled the third Wednesday of every month; group tours available upon request. Fee is \$1; meet at noon at the corner of Preston and Milam. For more information, call Barthel Truxillo at 713/861-6236.

29-30 Oct - Public conference, "Main Street/Market Square Historic District: Developing a Revitalization Strategy." Co-sponsored by the RDA, DiverseWorks, Houston Archeological and Historical Commission, Houston Chapter/AIA, and CSI. For registration information, call the GHPA at 713/236-5000.

Houston Chapter, American Institute of Architects

20 Greenway Plaza, Suite 246, Houston, Texas 77046-2002, 713/622-2081

Beginning **20 Sept**, every third Sunday of the month - Guided walking tours.

28 Sept - Annual Design Awards Reception, 6:30 PM at Stages Theater; \$10 AIA members, \$15 nonmembers
23 Oct - Urban Design Symposium. Registration begins at 7:30 AM; fee includes lunch.

13-15 Nov - Texas Society of Architects Annual Convention, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston, Texas. Call the AIA, Houston Chapter office for more information.

13-15 Nov - "Reclaiming Downtown Houston," design charette sponsored by the **Young Architects Forum**. Architecture schools in Texas are invited to send a team of students and faculty/young professional advisors to participate in a design charette to be held during the T.S.A. annual convention. The purpose of the charette is to focus attention on a marginal area of downtown



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Houston as part of a city-wide effort to re-define and recover its oldest urban fabric. Related speakers and discussions will be held throughout the fall at meetings of the Young Architects Forum. For information, contact Natalye Appel, 713/227-3803, or the Houston Chapter, AIA, 713/622-2081.

Waterfront Festival

24 October - Historic Allen's Landing, sponsored by the Buffalo Bayou Coalition, Central Houston, Inc., and American Express. 8 AM-12 noon, Splash for Trash, a clean-up along both banks of the bayou from Louisiana to San Jacinto in conjunction with the Sierra Club's wildlife habitat demonstration. 12 noon, reenactment of the Allen brothers' landing by the Texas Historic Army in historic garb. Other special events planned at the University of Houston/Downtown campus, including an exhibition entitled "Buffalo Bayou: Past, Present, Future."

Department of Architecture, Texas A&M University

409/845-7851

23 Sept-2 Dec - Fall lecture series. All lectures held at 7 PM in the College of Architecture, Room 105; free.
23 Sept - Carlos Jiménez, "Recent Work."
7 Oct - Victor Dover, "Image Transformation."
14 Oct - Neil Denari, "Recent Work."
21 Oct - Jean-Louis Bourgeois and Carollee Pelos, "Spectacular Vernacular: Adobe Architecture in West Africa and Southwest Asia."
28 Oct - Michael Sorkin
4 Nov - Elizabeth Diller, "Recent Work."
11 Nov - Andres Duany, "Recent Work."

2 Dec - Lars Lerup, "Planned Assault."

22-24 Oct - Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, Southwest regional meeting. Call 409/845-1015 for more information.

8-9 Oct - Computer Media '87, first annual symposium on design information management; registration fee \$75 until 28 Sept, \$100 thereafter. For more information call Fred Seals, 409/845-5691.

School of Architecture, University of Texas at Austin

512/471-1922

12-16 Oct - Edwin A. Schneider Centennial Lectures in Technology. Mon, Wed, Fri at 4 PM, Jessen Auditorium.

23 Oct - Jean-Louis Bourgeois and Carollee Pelos, "Spectacular Vernacular: Adobe Architecture in West Africa and Southwest Asia," 4 PM, Jessen Auditorium.

28 Oct - George Andrews, "Mayan Architecture," 4 PM, Jessen Auditorium.

13 Nov-11 Dec - Exhibition: "New Trends in Modern Architecture." Battle Hall Library Reading Room; 512/471-1844 for information.

22 Jan-4 March - Exhibition: "Ornamental Architecture Reborn: A New Terra-Cotta Vocabulary." Battle Hall Library Reading Room.

The Evils of Archi-Speak

It was hearing the phrase "Iterational Inspection" applied as architectural theory that triggered the overload. I was overcome. I am better now.

My personal archi-speak crisis reads like the tempting of a timid soul into the netherworld of the occult or drugs or urban design. I dabbled at archi-speak in the beginning. You know, "We are replacing buildings of a livable, pedestrian scale with auto-accessed monoliths which spring like spores from the creeping web of freeways." Or: "The vocabulary with which this architect is speaking seems aesthetically lacking." Or, the telltale: "That City Beautiful Movement wasn't a half-bad idea." All too quickly I found myself saying these things - with no remorse.

Eventually, all of the clinical signs of complete dependency upon archi-speak became evident. Chief among them, the dreaded anthropomorphic reference. The colossus had come to life. Buildings became beings. They spoke to me. Blank walls were obviously a stone-cold shoulder thrust out at me. Structures were solicitous. They were warm and friendly. Their scale was inviting. They were thoughtful of me as a pedestrian. Some buildings enticed me with voluptuous shapes. Some tricked me with smiling façades which lured me into schizophrenic interiors.

Buildings had their own problems, too. Some couldn't decide to whom they wished to address their statement. Others were obviously uncomfortable with their personal style or were subjected to ridicule because of their flamboyance.

I found myself among the glassy-eyed who stood around staring at office buildings, waiting to be spoken to. My coffee-table architecture book habit was wrecking my financial security and my slide collection was dreaded near and far.

Not that I ever resisted, but I still believe I might have been OK if modernism had stood its ground. *From Bauhaus to Our House* might have saved me. The final blow was postmodernism. I got my first

taste of it in graduate school when I accidentally walked into the wrong lecture hall. In a torrent of archi-speak the lecturer was warning the impressionable young architects-to-be of the dangers of jumbled piles of historical references splashed with polychrome. The chastity of Pennzoil Place was at stake, he said. A slide of Michael Graves's Portland Building flashed on the screen. A pretty box tied with a po-mo bow.

I was hooked. Lecture series after overpriced collector's book after slide carousel. The lethal combination of living buildings (many were now lauded as "smart" and "interactive") with a seemingly endless repartee of historical reference was pleasure to the point of pain.

And then it happened: the Southern California House Style is alive and well in the welds of a Houston museum's gray façade; Greene and Greene was just a fluke and not noteworthy; the skeleton of a fish can inspire a law school building; emerging architects have rediscovered the concept of Iterational Inspection. Pop Psychology meets Po-Mo Architecture. I.M. Pei are you OK?

Overload.

I am recovering now - stable. I'm on speaking terms with my skyline. Privately, I want to reach out to my architect friends and ask what they see on the conceptual horizon - but I fear the archi-answer.

Mike Davis

The only thing to fear is fear itself.

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FIGHT FOR CITE

The Rice Design Alliance held its first gala benefit, **Fight for Cite**, on Saturday, 27 June, at the Houston Boxing Association, 5470 Newcastle at Glenmont. Josephine Abercrombie, HBA owner and vice-chairman of Rice University's Board of Governors, was the honorary chairman. John P. Stainback, development director of Barker Interests and Decoma Venture, and Babette Fraser Warren were co-chairmen. The event was a tremendous success, raising over \$22,000 for RDA and *Cite* magazine.

The black-tie evening began with cocktails and tours of the state-of-the-art training facility. Ouisie's Table, with Jim Jamail and Sons Food Market, provided a superb dinner for the 300 guests. Several three-round demonstration boxing matches were put on by HBA boxers. A three-round "white-collar" match followed, with New York oilman, Jim Sterling, versus Houston architect, Tom Harris. Dancing in the ring to music provided by deejays Robert Morris and Scott Cluthe lasted until midnight.

Two round-trip, first-class tickets to Tahiti were donated by Continental Airlines for the door prize. Wilson Business Products was the winner. Sandra Strong, contract sales manager for Wilson's, accepted the prize and will be visiting the island next year.

The Rice Design Alliance would like to thank all of the people who worked so hard to make the evening a success.



Josephine Abercrombie, Fight for Cite honorary chairman, with Victorian boxing squirrels presented by the RDA



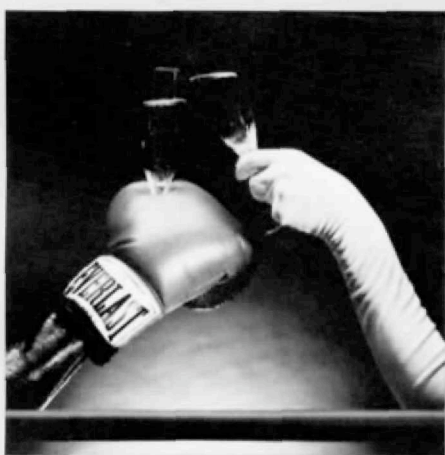
From left to right: Architects Kurt Aichler, Robert L. Civitello and Josiah R. Baker designed the environment with Bill Boswell of 3D/International



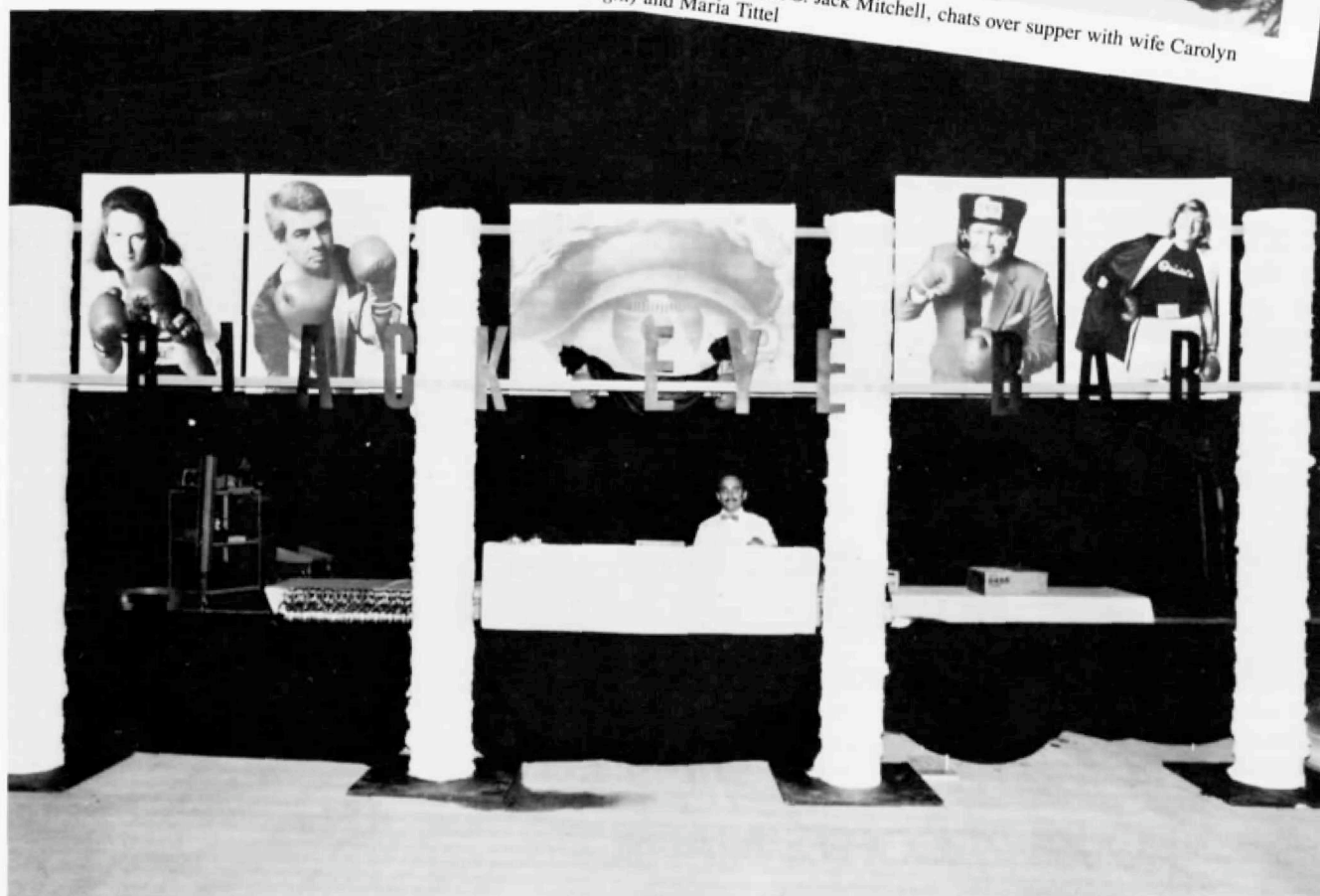
Architect Danny Samuels visits with RDA president, Elizabeth Glassman; Austin architect Carrie Shoemake in background



Rice Architecture Dean O. Jack Mitchell, chats over supper with wife Carolyn (right) and Maria Tittel



Ellis Venter



The Black-Eye Bar

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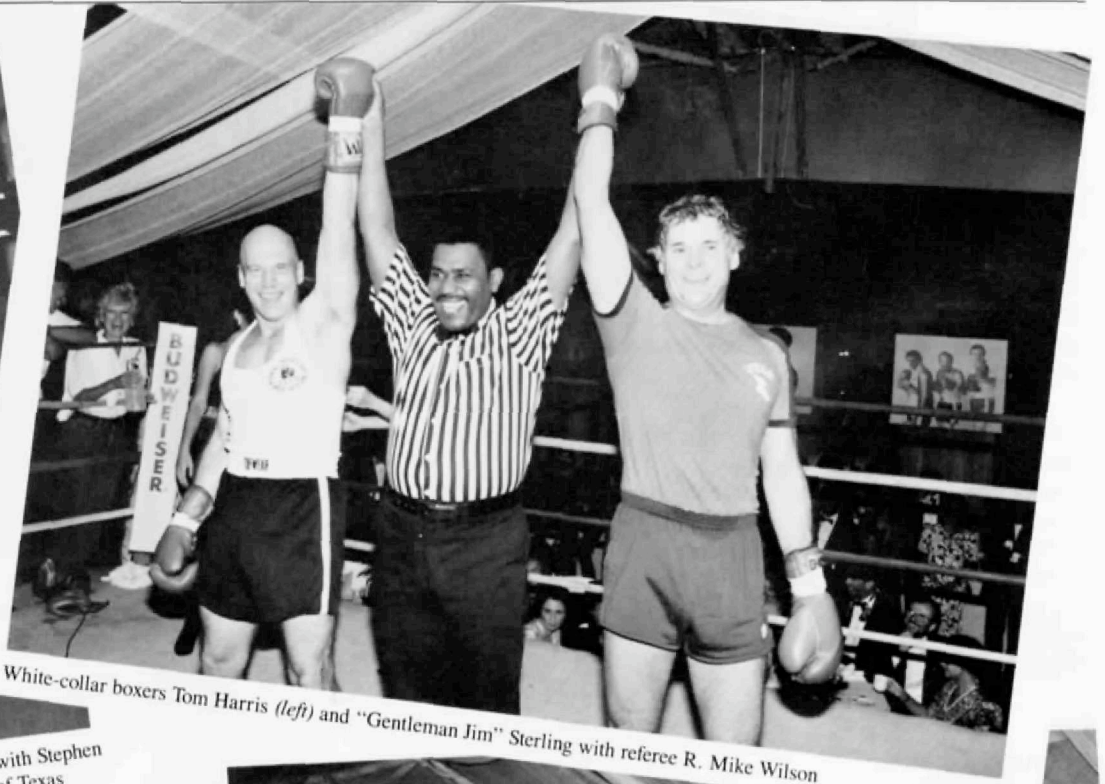


Restauranteur Elouise Cooper

Ellis Vener



Linda Sylvan, managing editor of Cite, with Stephen Fox, fellow, the Anchorage Foundation of Texas



White-collar boxers Tom Harris (left) and "Gentleman Jim" Sterling with referee R. Mike Wilson



Babette Fraser Warren (left) and John P. Stainback, Fight For Cite co-chairmen, with RDA executive director, Barbara Cochran



New York architect Charles Rudolph dances with Houston Post art critic Susan Chadwick



Peter Boesel and friend look on while Ron Pephens tries out the speedbag



Dancing in the ring: (left to right) Dr. Woody Ferris, fundraiser Carolyn Farb, architect Jim Furr with wife Jo, and landscape architect Sheila Condon with friend

Photographs by Peter Yenne

In a Children's Garden



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© 1987 Paul Heister, Houston

On a quiet Houston street, an ordinary looking house offers refuge to women fleeing their homes and the men who have beaten and abused them. They leave with their children and very little else.

Craig Oettinger, a volunteer at this shelter run by the Houston Area Women's Center, decided that the children there needed an arena of their own. Acting as initiator and coordinator, he contacted architect Spencer W. Parsons, and together the two men transformed a

small, under-used yard into an outdoor room that combines the features of a creative playground and an urban garden. The space, which is used by as many as 20 children at once, is a 15-by-55-foot shoe box. The small size of the project was no indication of the complexity of the ideas the men brought to bear on its design. Safety was a primary concern, so the garden needed to be constructed to encourage activities that would not endanger the children.

Parsons sought a broader reference for his project. He says, "I was reminded throughout the effort of a statement by Marianne Moore regarding the responsibility of modern poets, '...they should invent imaginary gardens with real

toads in them.'" What he designed was a garden for children with real playthings in it.

Selecting materials and forms belonging to the lexicon of gardens – pine bark, wood decking, different patterns of wooden trellises, a pergola, trees, flowering ivy, wooden benches, and potted plants – the architect chose three elements as the focus of different sections: a swing in the decked area, a climbing tower in the section for older children, and an arbor to separate them.

Perimeter walls were raised to the 8-foot maximum height allowed by city code. At one end of the fence, a grid image of a building, with turrets at either end and a half-moon and star for the sky, is a substitute for the niche or wall sculpture in enclosed, formal gardens of the past. Here, L-shaped corner benches offer "sociable" seating for adults. The deck-covered half of the playground contains a swing, a seesaw, and a sandbox, but in a telescoped area. The swing, suspended from a simple pipe frame, is in the center, its space demarcated by a large circular cutout in the deck. The sandbox,

A pergola and planter partitions the backyard playground for the children sheltered by the Houston Area Women's Center. Spencer W. Parsons, architect

a square area where children may sit on the wood deck and dangle their feet over its edge, disappears when its cover is in place.

Off the deck, children have more to explore. On a ground covered with pine bark stands a gridded cube containing various levels and rails, a slide, and a firefighter's pole. The details of its handrails refer to the circle in the decked area. The sides made of wooden slats offer a climb up to a platform. Against the back wall rests a ladder-like climbing toy. Using the last possible corner, Parsons slipped in a clubhouse against the fence. Its lattice ceiling slopes from 6 to 4-1/2 feet, offering the young residents a private room.

The centerpiece for the yard is a pergola which differentiates the play areas. Constructed of 5-inch-diameter steel columns covered with high-gloss paint, this "screen" redefines an old and revered piece of garden furnishing and introduces an element of garden history.

Parsons describes the client, Craig Oettinger, as his "partner and alter ego." "Much of what is there is due to his enlightened understanding if it was not his own idea," says Parsons. Oettinger was impressed by the architect's response to the particular needs of the shelter's young residents. Both wanted a bright spot for kids caught in a horrible moment in their lives. In times of social chaos, altered institutions, and changing families, Voltaire's advice seems to be appropriate. "Tis well said," replied Candide, "but we must cultivate our gardens."

Linda Popkin

Design proposal for Galveston Trolley stops, Ochsner Associates, architect and urban designer

Trolley Trauma

It may be the fact that more than \$10 million is being spent to pamper tourists and not to patch potholes that has made the Galveston Trolley Project the subject of local controversy. The argument does not center as much upon the technology, alignment, or impact of the proposed system as it does upon politics. Whatever the reason, this tourist project has sparked a chain reaction of voter initiatives.

The Police Officers Association was the first to act. Members gathered signatures on a petition calling for a referendum limiting the Galveston City Council's power to create mass transit systems (i.e., the trolley). The voters approved the referendum, but city council had already let the contracts for the trolley. Legal opinions said that because the trolley system was begun before the referendum, no voter approval was required. Council proceeded with the trolley construction. In response, We the People, a grass-roots organization formed around the trolley issue, gathered signatures on another petition forcing an election to recall the mayor and certain members of city council. This initiative failed and the elected officials who let contracts for the trolley project remain in office to watch over construction.

While the local political battles rage, tracks are being laid for the trolley. Four steel-wheeled, self-propelled, turn-of-the-

century-looking vehicles will serve a 4.5-mile route connecting the Strand, downtown, with the Seawall and Moody Convention Center. Tracks are being placed flush with the pavement along 25th Street (Rosenberg Avenue) as well as along the Strand, Post Office Street, and Mechanic Street. A loop formed by Avenue P, 21st Street, Seawall Boulevard, and 25th Street will serve the beachfront. Tracks will be placed on the inland side of Seawall Boulevard. Stops are planned at two- or three-block intervals with terminals located at the Center for Transportation and Commerce in the Sante Fe Building and at the Moody Convention Center. When completed in April 1988, a trip from the Strand to the Seawall will take about 15 minutes and cost 40 cents.

The Galveston Trolley was one of three transit recommendations proposed in the *Galveston Transportation Study* of 1979. The trolley was proposed as a way of linking the Strand with the beachfront. The study also recommended that rubber-tire trams be placed in service along the Seawall and that Houston-Galveston passenger-train service be reintroduced. The trolley would link both these modes of travel and could be coordinated with Island Transit, Galveston's bus system. This approach, it was said, would provide the best linking of tourist attractions possible outside of a theme park. Each of these transit projects

has subsequently been successfully pursued.

According to Barry M. Goodman Associates, consultants coordinating the transit project, the total estimated capital cost of the trolley is \$10.7 million. Grants to cover costs of constructing the system and acquiring equipment have been received from federal and state sources. Local utility companies have made donations for utility relocations. Supporting grants covering operating costs for the first three years were committed by the Moody Foundation and George P. Mitchell. Annual operating costs are estimated to be approximately \$600,000.

A concern of trolley opponents, aside from what they charge is a lack of citizen control of the project, is identifying who will bear the operating deficit after the first three years. Fare-box revenues, at 40 cents, are projected to cover half the operating costs, leaving an operating deficit of approximately \$300,000 per year. The City of Galveston Park Board of Trustees, which will own and operate the trolley once it is built, projects no operating deficit and even projects a profit of \$100,000 in the first year of operation. Planning consultants did suggest alternative revenue sources should the trolley not prove to be a profit-making venture. The Mayor of Galveston, Jan Coggeshall, has

continually pledged that no city funds will go into the project.

In the meantime, construction advances. Complaints of merchants adjacent to the tracks and construction scheduling along the Seawall are the most loudly voiced complaints. Unfortunately, there appears to be a lack of coordination of urban design projects which the trolley could have linked. Trolley tracks are being installed through the unsuccessful Central Plaza pedestrian mall on Post Office Street in downtown Galveston. No design plan is in place for the mall despite the fact that rail construction is in progress. Any public discussion of the benefits of the trolley encouraging the desired development proposed for 25th Street and Broadway in the Broadway urban design project has gone undocumented. Further, the trolley has a direct impact upon the Seawall. Unfortunately, the design plan for the Seawall never really gelled, leaving nothing for the trolley to enhance.

Public mass transit is a traumatic issue for Texas voters. The political debate that the trolley project has generated has obscured the relevant issues. Whether or not Galvestonians believe that the trolley will promote tourism and reduce local traffic congestion by taking tourists' cars off the streets can only be answered after the trolley begins operation.

Mike Davis