

Cite Backs Track

EDITORIAL

For nearly a decade, *Cite* has chronicled the Metropolitan Transit Authority's planning for a rail system, first with a special issue on an ill-advised proposal for an elevated segment downtown (Fall 1982) and later with reports on the general configuration of a light-rail system connector (Fall 1987) and the consideration of specific rail technologies for the connector (Spring-Summer 1989).

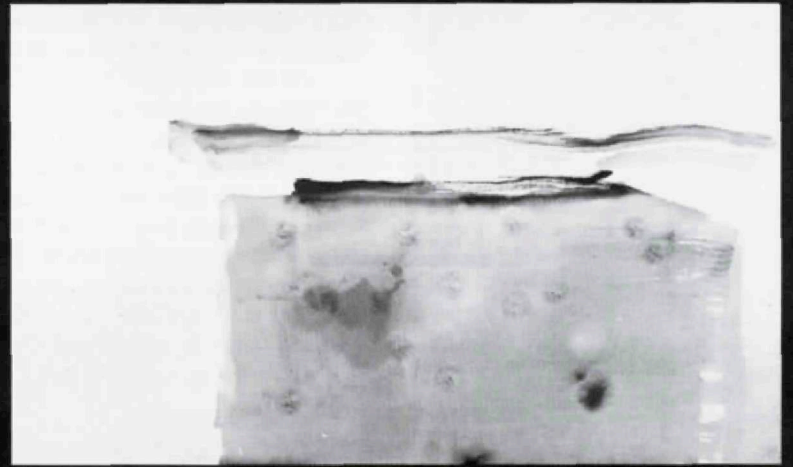
Just as planning seemed virtually complete, Robert C. Lanier, appointed last year as chairman of the Metro board of directors by Mayor Kathryn J. Whitmire, appears to be dismantling the agency's commitment to build the first increment of the rail system, approved by a public referendum in January 1988. Lanier, a former chairman of the Texas Highway Commission, is concerned that projections for initial ridership may be overstated and that rail may not be cost effective for Houston, at least in the near term. Now he has suspended plans for the system connector pending further review by a new series of consultants. Several business leaders have criticized Lanier's backtracking, spurring the chairman to announce that he will resign his volunteer position after the Metro board acts on the results of the most recent restudy. Lanier's fellow board members, most of whom were instrumental in devising the rail plan, have remained silent.

The system connector, projected for completion by the year 2000, was planned in a deliberate, somewhat protracted fashion that benefited from a previous generation of rail plans devised in the early 1970s. It was prepared and presented by Metro, publicly debated among special-interest groups (from grassroots to chamber of commerce), modified in consultation with elected officials, and finally approved by popular vote.

A mass transit system is a monumental public works project that could significantly enhance the city's future form, logistical efficiency, and air quality. As it is currently drawn, the rail line will create a hub linking Houston's dominant work centers – downtown, the Texas Medical Center, Greenway Plaza, and the Galleria – from which lines can be extended to the east, west, and north to create a viable regional rail network. Inner-city neighborhoods stand to benefit immediately from the access provided by stations along the hub rail lines, while the system would penetrate, once and for all, the city's most congested destination points.

The Metro board of directors should stand by its by now amply considered plan to build the system connector as the first installment of a regional rail transit network. To do less is to jeopardize Houston's already belated acceptance of rail as an attractive, efficient alternative to the automobile – an alternative conducive to both continued growth and a better quality of life. **H**

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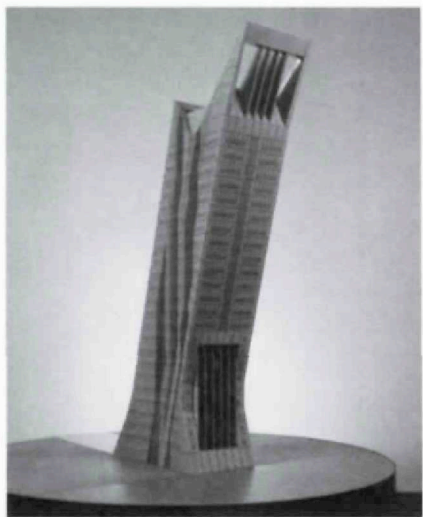
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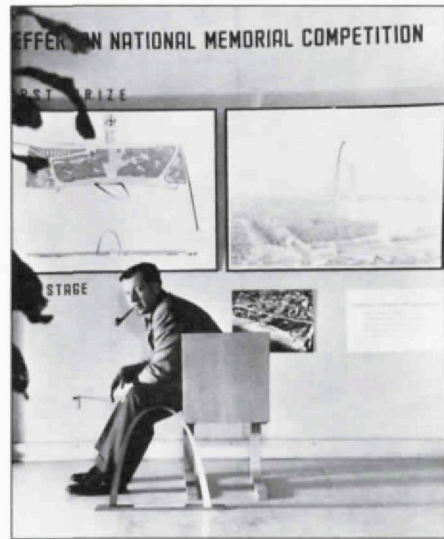
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Fall Architectural Events

Rice Design Alliance

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

Fall Lecture Series — "The Saarinen Legacy," a six-part lecture series that will examine the remarkable work of Eero Saarinen and his followers. All lectures will be held at 8 p.m., Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Series tickets are \$20 RDA and MFA members; \$15 students with proper identification; others \$30. Single tickets are \$5 RDA and MFA members, \$3 students, \$6 others, and are usually available at the Main Street entrance to the museum, 7:45 p.m. on the evening of each lecture.



Photograph by Leslie Gill, courtesy of Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates

Eero Saarinen.

4 Oct — Peter C. Papademetriou, "Eero Saarinen."

11 Oct — Kevin Roche

18 Oct — Gunnar Birkerts

25 Oct — Marilyn and John Neuhart, "Charles Eames."

1 Nov — Paul Kennon

9 Nov — Cesar Pelli

The series is made possible by a generous grant from Gerald D. Hines Interests and by support from Conoco Inc., a Du Pont company; Continental Airlines; the Cultural Arts Council of Houston; and Herman Miller Inc. For reservations and information, telephone the Rice Design Alliance, 713/524-6297.

4 Nov — Third Annual RDA Gala

"Rive Gauche: An RDA Soirée" will be held in the 1100 Louisiana Building from 8 p.m. until 12 midnight. Honoree **Gerald D. Hines** will accept the RDA Award for his commitment to design excellence in buildings that have reshaped the face of Houston. The evening will include dinner, dancing, a silent auction, and a haute couture fashion show presented by Tootsies. The "Rive Gauche" theme celebrates the design, architecture, art, music, and literature of Paris in the 1920s, and guests are asked to wear formal dress or period costume.

The gala is being organized by co-chairmen William E. Boswell, Jr., Frank F. Douglas, and Adele Howell. Architects and designers will create candelabras to illuminate the dinner tables, and guests will dance to music by the Cary Richards Orchestra. Supper will be prepared by Byron Franklin Catering. Auction chairman Lynn Bock reports that among the items available in the silent auction will be a Philippe Starck "Richard III" lounge chair donated by International Contract Furnishings; a black Cab



Rhett Butler

Charles Moore's grammatically ornamented moosehead allée at the Farish Gallery.

armchair (413) by Mario Bellini from Atelier International, Ltd.; two round-trip Continental Airlines tickets to anywhere in the U.S., courtesy of Travel Enterprises; a Louis Vuitton duffel bag from Neiman Marcus Town & Country; and a ride on the Goodyear airship *America*.

Benefactors and underwriters of "Rive Gauche" include Baker & Botts; Brochsteins Inc.; CRS Serrine, Inc.; Dr. Patrick R. Davidson and Leslie Barry Davidson; Gensler & Associates/Architects; Gerald D. Hines Interests; Innova; Helen and Paul Kennon; Ellen and Matthew Simmons; and Vinson & Elkins. Benefactor tables are \$2,000. Underwriter and sponsor tickets are also available. Single tickets are \$100 each; tickets must be purchased in advance. Please call the RDA office, 713/524-6297, for ticket information and reservations.

Farish Gallery

M. D. Anderson Hall, Rice University
 713/527-4864; noon-5 p.m., seven days a week.

6 Sept-21 Nov — "Charles W. Moore: Buildings and Projects, 1949-1988." Retrospective of the career of the eminent Postmodernist, organized by the Williams College Museum of Art. Sponsored in part by a grant from Gerald D. Hines Interests.

School of Architecture Rice University

713/527-4864

Fall Lecture Series — All lectures in 301 Sewall Hall unless otherwise noted.

6 Oct — "Words, Buildings, Machines," by Wesley Jones, principal, Holt Hinshaw Pfau Jones, San Francisco, 7:30 p.m.

12 Oct — Rand Carter, Hamilton College, 7:30 p.m.

23 Oct — Michael Dennis, Harvard University, 8 p.m.

30 Oct, 6 Nov — Colin Rowe, Cullinan Visiting Professor, 7:30 p.m.

13 Nov — Colin Rowe, 124 Herring Hall, 7:30 p.m.

20 Nov — Colin Rowe (call for place and time).

6 Dec — Peter Eisenmann (call for place and time).

College of Architecture University of Houston

713/749-1187

Fall Lectures — Speakers include

Joseph Paul Kleihues, professor of design and urban design at the University of Dortmund and director of planning for the new building areas of the international building exhibit in Berlin; **Thom Mayne** of Morphosis Architects, Santa Monica, California; and **John Hejduk**, dean, Cooper Union School of Architecture, New York. Please call the College of Architecture for dates and times; admission free.

School of Architecture University of Texas at Austin

512/471-1922

Fall Lecture Series — All lectures held

in Jessen Auditorium at 4:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

9 Oct — "Ornament Is Dead. *Long Live Ornament*," by Kent Bloomer, professor of architecture, Yale University.

19-20 Oct — Symposium: "On Craft and Building." 1-5 p.m. Thursday and 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday.

23 Oct — "The Architecture of Douglas Cardinal," by Douglas Cardinal, architect, Ottawa, Ontario.

15 Nov — "Landscapes for Mexico," by Mario Schjetnan Garduno, landscape architect, Grupo de Diseño Urbano, Mexico City.

For exhibition schedules or for further information, contact the School of Architecture.

Kennon, Balfour Join Rice School of Architecture

Paul Kennon, design principal of the architecture group at CRSS, has been appointed dean of the Rice School of Architecture. Kennon succeeds former dean O. Jack Mitchell, who will continue to teach architecture at Rice.

Kennon received his M.A. in architecture from Cranbrook Academy of Art, where he was awarded the Eliel Saarinen Memorial Fellowship for graduate study. He worked with Eero Saarinen's firm from 1957 to 1964 as senior designer on Saarinen's later projects. In 1964 Kennon became associate professor of architecture at Rice and was named associate director of the school in 1966. Kennon left in 1967 to join the firm of Caudill Rowlett Scott, which later became CRSS. Major projects designed under his supervision include the ARCO Petroleum District Office Building, Houston; the IBM Building, Clear Lake City; the Indiana Bell Switching Center, Columbus, Indiana; the Fodrea School, Columbus, Indiana; the University of Iowa Arena, Iowa City, Iowa; the Chrysler Technical Center, Auburn Hills, Michigan; the Herman Miller, Inc., Seating Plant, Holland, Michigan; and the Paul Kennon House, Tokyo, Japan.

Kennon was named to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1976. He was Davenport Professor of Architecture at Yale in 1984 and is a member of the AIA national committee on design. He also served as a member of the board of directors of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York from 1981 to 1985 and as a Ford Foundation resident adviser in Santiago, Chile, from 1964 to 1966. His design work has been recognized by awards from the American Institute of Architects and *Progressive Architecture*. Kennon will continue as design principal at CRSS.

Alan Balfour has been named associate dean of the School of Architecture. He comes to Rice from the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he established the graduate program in architecture in 1978 and served as its first director.

Balfour completed undergraduate studies in architecture at the Edinburgh College of Art and graduate studies at Princeton University. He practiced in London and New York before joining Arthur D. Little, Inc., in Cambridge, Massachusetts. From 1973 to 1976, while teaching at MIT, he directed a study of architectural education for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. He is author of *Portsmouth: Architecture as Theater* (McGraw Hill, 1978); and a forthcoming monograph, *Berlin: Leipziger Platz*. He is currently at work on a study of Rome in the fifth century. Balfour has also served on the editorial board of the *Journal of Architectural Education* and as chairman of the magazine *Art Papers*, published in Atlanta. ■

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