



Library Directions/ A Newsletter of the University of Washington Libraries

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Allen Library Opens

Architecture is frozen music.
—Goethe

by Mary Whiting

The Kenneth S. Allen Library officially opened on October 1, 1990, to shouts of bravo from students, faculty and the architectural community. With his "composition," Edward Larrabee Barnes set the tone for other expressive architectural possibilities on the University campus.

The seven-story library houses the Natural Sciences Library, the Special Collections and Preservation Division, the Manuscripts and University Archives Division, and the Libraries Administration. Ample study areas are provided and sufficient stack space now allows the main collection to be shelved continuously without an interruption in call number order.

Barnes maintains a granitic and formal control over the library's exterior: rectangular and triangular wings, towers, and vertical buttresses topped with finials chiseled into pyramids of stone. Elements of existing campus Collegiate Tudor Gothic style are preserved: limestone parapets, brick facades, terra cotta panels, green slate roof. But there is also a syncopated rhythm at work in this rational plan. Geometric shapes and forms familiar to the Pacific Northwest such as "basket weave" are achieved with four sculpted terra cotta brick designs in five patterns.

As pedestrians walk through the eighty-foot high Arcade, they are greeted by a completely redesigned HUB yard which has been transformed into a new campus open space. Many new plants, including several historic specimen trees, create an area of quiet beauty in the International Grove and the Grieg Garden.

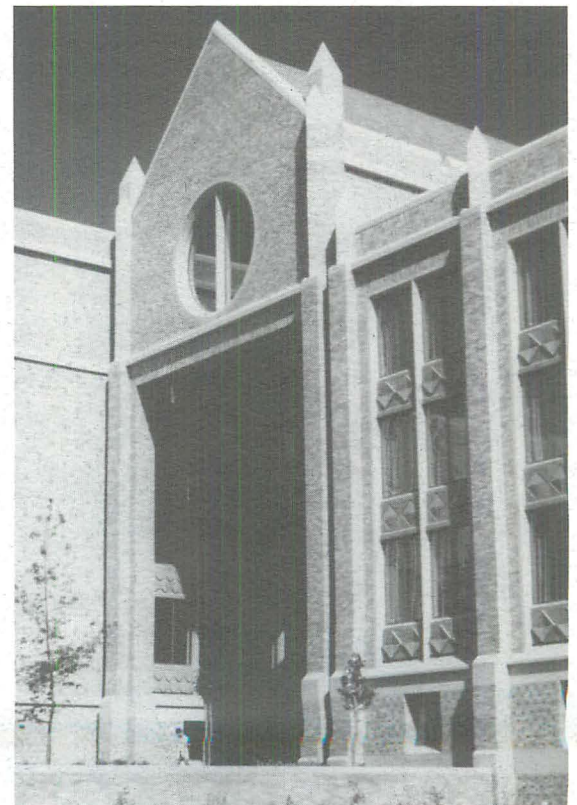
Louis Armstrong said, "music is good or bad . . . you got to have balance." The unambiguous and forceful rhythm of the library's exterior is effectively set off by the freedom of its interior. A reverence for space and light is evident throughout. Abundant glass surrounds areas of user seating, inviting contemplation of regions beyond. Chandeliers, designed to represent "circles of light" are suspended from the ceilings. Cool tones of white and teal are warmed by burgundy upholstery and cherry wood furnishings.

Unique interior features include a two-story lobby with a grand staircase leading to the library's exhibition balcony. On the fourth floor is the Arcade Room, a conference area graced by a stone fireplace, an ocular window fourteen feet in diameter, and a high-peaked ceiling fashioned from Western hemlock.

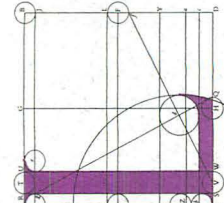
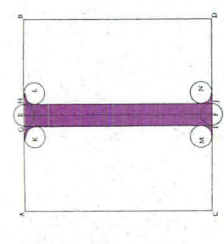
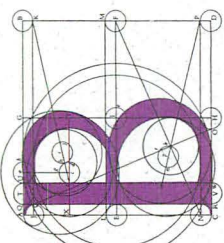
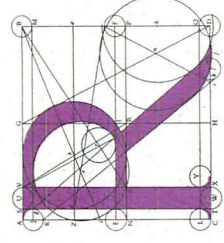
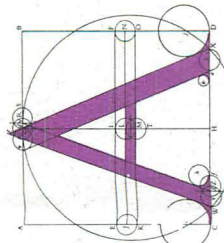
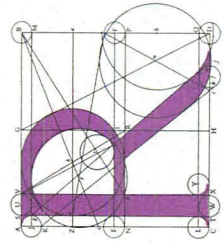
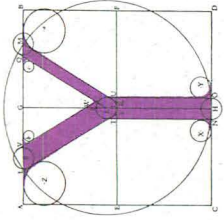
A symphonic performance requires various talented artists to achieve success. Helping Edward Larrabee Barnes/John M.Y. Lee & Partners, New York, orchestrate this "masterplan" were: Design Associate Daniel L. Casey and architect Michael Barratt; Associate Architects and Engineers, TRA, Seattle; Landscape Architect, Hanna/Olin, Ltd., Philadelphia; Lighting Consultant, Fisher/Marantz, New York; Interior Design, Marlene J. Lambert, Seattle, along with Barnes/Lee; and contractor, M.A. Mortenson Company, Bellevue, WA.

Construction was managed on behalf of the University of Washington by Janet Donelson, Senior Architect, and administered by Scott Rusch, Construction Supervisor.

Mary Whiting is a Library Specialist I and a member of the Publications Committee.



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Laying the Foundations . . .

by Carolyn Mateer

A formidable challenge greeted the architect who would eventually design a new library for the University of Washington campus. The attempt to achieve a cohesive union of two existing and connecting disparate styles on a campus which had strayed from its original Collegiate Gothic intent presented an architectural dilemma not easily solved.

When the addition to Suzzallo was first conceived as a solution to the serious overcrowding of a building long regarded as beautiful but not especially functional, it was necessary early on to work with the campus Architectural Commission. Planning for the structure involved not only a difficult construction match but a need to merge successfully with the surrounding environment, including buildings and landscaping.

Many people played a role in planning for the construction of the new library. The Architectural Commission, created in 1951 to review all campus planning and design matters, was a principal player. Candidates for campus architectural contracts traditionally present examples of their previous work and make a presentation to the Commission detailing their unique qualifications for the task ahead.

The Architectural Commission in its early years reflected trends of the time, evident for example, in the design of the 1962 addition to Suzzallo which only nominally refers to its predecessors, the 1926 and 1937 wings. In the decades following World War II, designs were based on simple geometric forms lacking decoration or ornament. The buildings on the University campus erected in the sixties and seventies reflect prevailing philosophical concepts, with varying degrees of success. In the eighties, architecture began to exhibit more traditional approaches so that decorative details began to emerge as architects sought more appealing designs which were not so utilitarian.

On the morning when Edward Larrabee Barnes met with the Architectural Commission, he had already spent the early hours watching the sun rise over Suzzallo, its gargoyles and finials, and had developed a clear sense of the building he would create. The UW would have a new library responsive to the needs of a technological age yet clearly retaining the attractive elements of Collegiate Gothic

style already existing on a campus Barnes greatly admired.

Barnes' vision of the need corresponded with Merle N. Boylan's (Director of Libraries, 1977–1988) desire for a building designed to function well into the twenty-first century, and the Architectural Commission's desire for a building reflecting the best of traditional values on campus. Boylan, who has since retired, worked with the Libraries' Space Committee for over five years in planning library needs for the future.

In the Beginning . . .

by Lynne Rhoads

The library of the University of Washington began with donated books and was so small that for some time it was housed in one bookcase. In 1867, the collection contained about 150 books and the library has been described by a legislative committee investigating the University as being small and of little value.

By 1880, however, the library had been given a room of its own and contained about 400 bound volumes and 300 pamphlets. With the growth of the student body and of programs of study offered by the University, the library also grew. In 1893 the collection numbered about 4,000 volumes and the upper hall of the University Building had been



The Library when it was housed in the former Washington State Building of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Building. (1909)

partitioned off and added to the library room in order to house this increase.

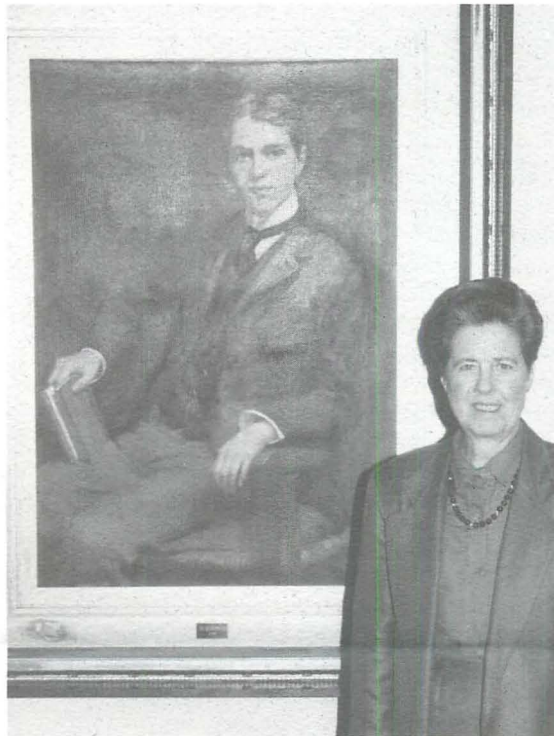
The library moved into the third floor of the new University Building (later named Denny Hall) on the present campus in September, 1895. The collection at that time contained about 4,500 bound volumes and a large number of unbound volumes and pamphlets. By 1902 the collection had grown to about 18,000 volumes, and because the weight of volumes and of the stacks which housed them was causing structural difficulties in the building, the library was moved to the basement. It occupied a somewhat smaller space there, which was more difficult to access, dimly lit and poorly ventilated. The ventilation problem was compounded by the fact that the library shared the basement with the chemistry laboratories.

In 1905 the Board of Regents asked the legislature for \$85,000 to build a separate library building. This was not granted and in 1907 the library was moved upstairs into the assembly hall, which was converted to a library and reading room. One balcony held 200 chairs for readers, and during the 1907 Christmas vacation a second balcony was constructed to provide shelving space for about 5,000 volumes of the 32,000 volume collection.

Conditions continued to be crowded, but no library building was authorized by the legislature, perhaps because the coming Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, which was to be held on the University campus, was expected to construct buildings that could later be used by the University. When the Exposition closed on October 16, 1909, twenty buildings were given to the University. The handsome and solidly constructed Washington State Building became the library. It had been used to hold receptions, banquets, balls, etc., for visiting dignitaries and had good lighting and ventilation, adequate heating and space for expansion. Its major drawback was that it was not fire proof; but in the subsequent biennium a fire-proof stacks annex (later used as the High Energy Physics Laboratory) was built. When the library moved into the new building during the 1909 Christmas holidays the collection numbered about 40,000 volumes. The Annex was expected to accommodate growth for about ten years.

Planning began in 1912 for a new and large library building, which future generations would know as the Henry Suzzallo Library.

Lynne Rhoads is the Libraries Historian.



Betty Wagner, Head of the Architecture-Urban Planning Library, with a portrait of Carl Gould

Architecture-Urban Planning Library, Looking Back

by Betty Wagner

Close proximity to and active involvement with its academic setting have been characteristic of the Architecture-Urban Planning Library since its founding at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Only an architectural department would be able to accept gracefully the many locations that the School of Architecture and Urban Planning and its library would experience in the years before Gould Hall came into being. Originally the Department of Architecture was housed behind the stage in old Meany Hall (now demolished). From there it went to temporary barracks behind Denny Hall, still known to students and faculty of that era as "the shack." In 1937 the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibition Building west of old Meany Hall was turned over to the Department. Later it was moved to Physiology Hall which became Architecture Hall, and finally, in 1971 to its present home in Gould.

During all of these years, the Library kept pace with the growing department, despite the many

temporary locations and a modest budget for books. During the library's "shack days" books were kept in a fire proof vault at night and brought out for use each morning.

Carl F. Gould, appointed in 1914 as the first head of the Department of Architecture, supervised the development of a departmental library in the early years. Gould's papers and letters, housed in University Archives, chronicle his continued interest in the Library. In 1916, Gould cited the lack of a proper library as a particular shortcoming and by 1922 was requesting a library assistant to work several hours a week. Two years later, in a letter to the Board of Regents, Gould mentions inadequate shelving as the library problem—and thus began the recurrence of a familiar theme, which followed the library in its various moves with the Department.

In 1928 the Department became the School of Architecture, and the College of Architecture and Urban Planning in 1957. Changes in status were accompanied by evolving and expanding academic programs. These in turn shaped the library's collection. As new degrees were added, the library broadened its collections sphere accordingly to include materials on an ever widening spectrum of the built environment. Within degree programs, thematic options, such as urban design, historic preservation, and interior design, opened new career and research windows for students and faculty of the College and with them came new areas of collection focus for the library.

The library today includes 33,000 cataloged volumes, 7,600 microfiche sheets and 330 currently received serials. It is the product of the incremental process of adding resources to support teaching and research within specified disciplines. The library is unique and valuable because it brings together the practical and the aesthetic aspects of a constantly changing discipline. Its wares includes books, a few rare and very old; periodicals from a broad spectrum of countries; reports from planning agencies and consultants; atlases, codes, standards; dictionaries; encyclopedias; bibliographies; periodical indexes and environmental impact statements. Its focus is primarily the present rather than the past because the disciplines served are devoted to educating students to plan, design and build the cities, communities, landscapes and buildings of the future.

Betty Wagner is Head, Architecture and Urban Planning Library.

Present at the Creation:
**An Interview with
Edward Larrabee Barnes
and Daniel L. Casey**

A building must have a strong idea that is architectural rather than sculptural or painterly—one that is related to the activity in the building. The idea should be something that can be drawn on a napkin or an envelope.

—Edward Larrabee Barnes, quoted in Paul Heyer, *Architects on Architecture* (Walker, 1966)

Though it was not a napkin but a sketch pad on which Edward Larrabee Barnes expressed his concept of the Allen Library before the Campus Architectural Commission in 1987, the clarity of his idea so impressed the group that Barnes was the overwhelming choice as project architect.

A 1942 graduate of Harvard, where he studied under Marcel Bruer in the Graduate School of Design, Barnes has worked in his own New York City based practice since 1949. Among his buildings and design projects are a master plan and major buildings for the State University of New York at Potsdam and Purchase; the IBM World Trade/Americas Far East Headquarters, Mount Pleasant, New York; and a number of museums, including the Dallas Art Museum and most recently, the Armand Hammer Museum in Los Angeles.

Daniel L. Casey joined the firm of Edward Larrabee Barnes/John M.Y. Lee & Partners in 1973, after graduating from the University of Texas in 1970 and serving as a VISTA volunteer. A Design Associate of the firm since 1985, Casey is responsible for overseeing projects from start to finish.

The son of a sculptor, he is an expert on terra cotta, a striking design feature of the Allen Library and other buildings on campus.

Ed Barnes and Dan Casey were interviewed separately by telephone in October by Linda di Biase.

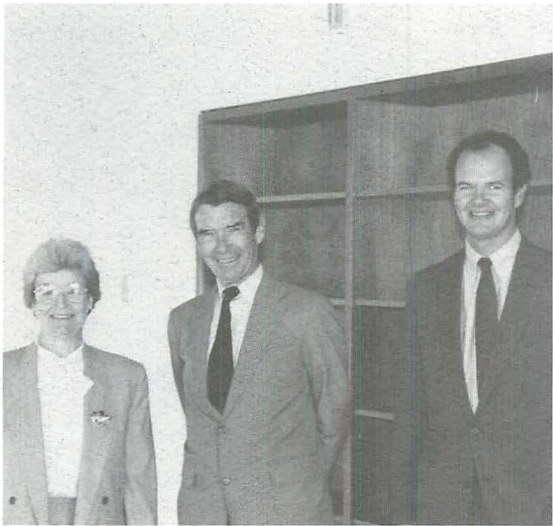
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Libraries Publications Committee

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**Mary Whiting, Lynne Rhoads, Betty Wagner,
Linda D. Biase, Richard Engeman, Carolyn Mateer**

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Edward Larrabee Barnes, shown with Betty G. Bengtson, Director of University Libraries, and Daniel L. Casey, Design Associate

LD: WOULD YOU TELL ME SOMETHING OF YOUR DEVELOPMENT AS AN ARCHITECT?

ELB: Like many architects, I started with domestic architecture. Over time, I went from houses to schools, then larger academic buildings, offices and museums. I still like to keep involved in small projects, and our firm does a fair number of those.

DC: While I've been with the firm I've covered the whole range of building types. In the last ten or twelve years I've been in the position of running projects. As it happens, most of my experience here has been in cultural and campus architecture—art museums, libraries, university buildings. I've always been interested in all aspects of design and have tried to participate in the full range rather than specialize in any one thing. However, I've tended to be most involved in two areas of design—the siting of buildings and the exterior design.

LD: DO YOU HAVE A PHILOSOPHY OF ARCHITECTURE?

ELB: I'm a modernist. My approach to design is from the inside out. A building's function and interior circulation patterns are very important.

DC: I try to keep an open mind with each new project. I try to absorb what's important about it and about the site and let those things influence me. I think you have to begin with a simple, strong idea but it has to be developed—that's why I enjoy the design process so much.

LD: WHAT ARE THE SPECIAL CHALLENGES THAT A LIBRARY POSES TO AN ARCHITECT?

ELB: Above all, libraries must be flexible and able to accommodate many uses at the same time and over a period of time. It's a challenge to design a building that will continue to work when stacks are moved, and other furniture and equipment changed.

DC: Libraries have to do a lot of things. They have to be storehouses, but they also have to be people places. The library is a learning center, and technology is a big part of libraries now. Everyone expects to be able to walk in with his or her laptop computer and plug it in and take off. A lot of the study carrels in Allen have that possibility.

LD: WHAT ARE THE SPECIAL CHALLENGES OF THE ALLEN LIBRARY?

ELB: The collision of axes was very challenging. If the building had continued to follow the axis of the Suzzallo addition it would have been very harsh. We needed to keep internal circulation patterns in mind as well as campus circulation. That's why the arcade was so important and why we needed two major entrances to the library.

Another challenge was the review stage. There were times when we despaired of ever being able to build the building. Everyone is sensitive when trees are to be removed. Nevertheless, such reviews are very important—you only have to look at some of the buildings from the 50's to see the brutal impact they have had on tender spots.

DC: The main thing was the siting. The library is in a very important part of the campus geographically, where the two campus grids come together. The old Suzzallo facade was supposed to have resolved that, and it worked in the front, but nothing had ever been done in the back. We were interested in having the HUB yard as a counterpoint to Red Square—a place that was more soft and green, while also having some framing and edges and crispness. We also tried to keep the connection between one side of the campus and the other, and the only way to do that was to have a hole in the building—a kind of covered street, which is the arcade.

The fact that it was an addition and had to connect on every floor was also a challenge. In our building we had to accommodate sprinklers, air-conditioning and the latest wire cabling above the ceiling. It was difficult to join our floors with the 1963 addi-

tion and still get everything in, but we managed to do it.

LD: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE RESULT?

ELB: I'm proud of a number of things; for instance, that the three elements of the interior—the entrance, the modular core, and the special, “romantic” spaces (The Arcade and Tower Conference Rooms)—work as they do. The contextual aspect—how the building fits with the campus—is something else I'm proud of. I'm pleased with the way that library solves the problem of the collision of axes. And there are small things—for example, I was very happy with the effect of the intersection of the East Tower with the North Wing of Allen as you walk down the Arcade—it's very medieval.

DC: I think the way this building has become a sort of catalyst to connect the surrounding parts of the campus and to make a new outdoor open space is something I'm proud of. It resolved the problem of the heart of the campus, and if you improve the center of something, the edges are improved. It acts as a hub with fingers out to other buildings in the way of paths, landscapes, or views that make the whole center of campus a nicer place.

LD: IS AN ARCHITECT EVER SURPRISED BY THE RESULT ONCE A BUILDING IS COMPLETED?

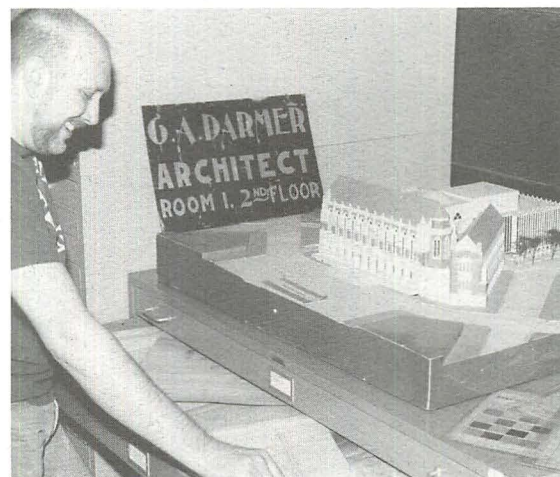
ELB: Oh, yes. For instance in this project, I wasn't sure how the bricks would turn out from the samples, but they were better than I hoped—and really beautiful. The quality of the natural light is another thing. I was afraid the interiors would be dark, but they're not.

DC: Because I watch the process so closely and see it every step of the way, there are no big surprises, but there is a sense of anticipation and confirmation and delight when you see things built up.

LD: WHAT'S NEXT?

DC: I'm working with Ed and John Lee right now on a project at the National University of Singapore. It's a campus of about 16,000 and has a reputation as the Cambridge of that part of the world. We're doing three things for them: a master plan, 700 units of housing for faculty and staff, and a performing and visual arts center. It's a project that will probably take a number of years.

Linda di Biase is Assistant Collection Development Librarian and Head, Philosophy Library.



Richard Engeman, Photographs and Graphics Librarian, with some of the architectural materials found in the Special Collections and Preservations Division

Preserving the Past—The Architectural Records Collection

by Richard Engeman

Resembling a Martian spaceship, with three short legs on a cylindrical top and green rays emanating from every side, the earliest study for what has become the Space Needle is an interesting example of the architectural imagination in free form. As constructed, the Space Needle remains on three legs, each extending more than 500 feet skyward; the green rays remain a part of the artist's imagination.

The Special Collections and Preservation Division of the University Libraries holds many similarly interesting examples of early architectural drawings and photographs.

Preliminary designs of several dozen regional architects and architectural firms can be found there; related business records and personal papers exist for many of these collections also, and are held nearby in the Manuscripts and University Archives Division.

Architecture in the Puget Sound region does not have a lengthy history. The earliest records in the Special Collections holdings date from the late nineteenth century. Among these materials, however, is a detailed set of plans and elevations for the Pioneer Building of 1889, the best-known work of architect Elmer Fisher and the central building of Seattle's Pioneer Square historic district. The collection also includes plans, elevations, and renderings by C.A. Darmer, a clever Tacoma designer

who worked at the turn of the last century. Darmer's work ranged from small cottages and flats to office buildings and breweries, and included the residence of pioneer writer Ezra Meeker, which is now a museum.

The architectural records collection now numbers more than 34,000 sheets and is particularly strong in representing regional architecture and the practitioners of the so-called "Northwest" style. Characterized by extensive use of native materials, especially wood, the Northwest style is also known for sensitive siting, landscaping using native plants, and allusions to Japanese architecture.

The collection also includes work by landscape architects and engineering firms, and is supplemented by an extensive collection of photographs. Particularly noteworthy is the Dearborn Massar collection of regional architectural photographs, 1943–1963, which emphasizes the work of architects associated with the Northwest style.

Collecting is an ongoing process, a recent acquisition being the records of architect Ibsen Nelsen, noted for his residential work and for the soaring new Museum of Flight, a glass palace celebrating the history of aviation. These irreplaceable records are valuable resources for students of architectural history, historic preservation, landscape architecture, planning, geography and sociology.

Richard Engeman is the Photographs and Graphics Librarian.

From the Bookshelves

by Carolyn Mateer

Charles Dickens' Pecksniff (in *Martin Chuzzlewit*) was an architect who "could build a church . . . by squinting at a piece of paper." Although Pecksniff was a colorful and memorable fraud, it seems true that architects, practicing what has been referred to as "the noblest art of all arts," are capable of envisioning great edifices where only earth or common mortar now exist, or on blank sheets of paper.

Because our structures speak more prominently of our mores and our civilization than any other art form, the architect and his craft frequently appear in prose, fiction and even poetry as representative of a particular epoch or period.

Since the first printed book on architecture (Leone Battista Alberti's *De re Aedificatoria*) appeared in

1485, books about architects and architecture have helped to enlighten us about the world we live in and the visual ways in which we externalize our values.

The frequent appearance of the architect as a fictional character, and the many instances where architecture has been a topic worthy of exploration in the novel, prepare us to better understand the imaginative process underlying the planning and construction of the shelters humankind creates.

Although Dickens' Pecksniff is portrayed as humorous and less than admirable, many works of fiction depict the architect as an idealist, struggling to maintain integrity in a compromised and self-aggrandizing world. John Galsworthy's young architect, Philip Bosinney, is shown as one of the few men of principle in Galsworthy's cynical trilogy on British upper class life, *The Forsyte Saga*.

Probably the best fictional depiction, and the most poignant portrayal of an architect in literature, appears in Heinrich Boll's *Billiards at Half-Past Nine*, where Boll tells of the Faehmel family of architects, including a father who has spent his life building an abbey designed for the ages which his son, a demolition expert in World War II, destroys.

Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Marble Faun* may be the first instance of a travel guide to architectural monuments thinly disguised as a work of fiction. First published in 1860, Hawthorne's work was frequently used by the 19th century voyager as an introduction to the classical structures and art of Rome and Florence, and is a paean to the creative heritage of the past.

In Thomas Friedman's superb new study of the Middle East, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, (winner of the National Book Award, 1989) he tells a brief but moving anecdote about Nabil Tabbara, a professor of architecture at the American University in Beirut. Tabbara, in his anguish at the destruction of that once beautiful city described as "the Paris of the Middle East," took leave from his architectural duties to sketch and photograph what remained in order to have a "crumb of memory" of lost splendor before it vanished completely.

Perhaps because architecture forces visual confrontation, it also invites strong verbal confrontation. In the 19th century, John Ruskin wrote a number of volumes of architectural criticism, (*The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, etc.), tying architecture to an ethical and moral imperative. Many others have

since tried to impose standards and precedents on the art form Sir Christopher Wren described as "the ornament of a country."

Modern architecture has received more accolades and more verbal abuse than perhaps any other art form. We may not understand architecture but we know what we like. When Tom Wolfe published his work of architectural criticism, *From Bauhaus to Our House* in 1981, one reviewer said that it seemed Wolfe felt that "modern architecture was put on earth simply to irk him." Nicholas Pevsner, who has also written extensively on architecture, recommends that all cities be levelled every fifty years to permit re-examination and reconstruction, a theory Prince Charles of Britain finds acceptable, as he launches his campaign for an examination of what he considers execrable British public build-

ing in *A Vision of Britain: a Personal View of Architecture*.

Some architects have been expressive in print as well as in bricks and mortar. Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and Frank Lloyd Wright are among those who have conveyed their philosophies on the significance of architecture in works that not only express their convictions but are also eminently readable. Charles Jencks, in books such as *Architecture Today* (1988) summarizes contemporary trends in lay person's terms.

Our instinctive response to great art and architecture comes from the backgrounds we bring to it; backgrounds that can be enriched through verbal as well as visual expression.

Carolyn Mateer is Library Development Officer.

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