

ARCHITECTURE IN SECLUSION

The seclusion of Australia and New Zealand at the bottom of the world away from their relatives and traditional friends and allies is, of course a preoccupation of our Governments in the political and military fields. But I doubt if either of our Governments or the ordinary man in the street of either of our countries, in his daily round of work and television, ever is much concerned for the effect of our seclusion in any social field. Yet the lack of opportunity to exchange ideas with a reasonable choice of soul-mates, the lack of contact with the works or the personalities of the acknowledged world masters - these create vacuums in the fields of most of the arts and advanced technologies, such as architecture. For people with any sort of esoteric, or unpopular, or not-widely-accepted ideas, it is very difficult to build up strength. It's hard enough to get a quorum.

Well, what are we architects doing about our seclusion? Is it an unmitigated misfortune for us, or can we use this isolation and freedom somehow to improve our architecture? These are the sort of questions I want to look at tonight - but first may I remark on something which is probably boring to you. That is your magnificent scenery, your superb landscape. (Of course I had been told to expect something, but still....)

There are lots of different landscapes in the world - soft and hard, sweet and dry. Poets and patriots can find any of them beautiful. Yet deeply ingrained in the European eye and mind is only one real image of landscape beauty. It has been painted often enough. It is the Garden of Eden. Soft, sweet, green, moist, benign, intimate yet always with enormous grandeur always in the background.

Well, I saw bits of the Garden of Eden driving here this morning. In every conceivable way Australia's landscape background is the opposite. It is flat, dry, remote. Australians love it in a strange, respectful, acquired sort of way. We love the majesty of the red

heart, the vast scale of the ranges, the soft greys, ochres and mauves of the almost greenless landscape. We love the Australian myths in which explorers and pioneers and bushrangers are seen battling for democracy, or mastership, in a great loneliness. In the myths the background is always in the foreground; aloof, primeval, forbidding, and yet a potential ally, not the adversary. It has its own kind of savage, subtle beauty; it even has a few little touches of conventional landscape grace around the coast, especially at Sydney Harbour. Yet so little of the Australian background is familiar, or related visually to any other country's landscape, that the early settlers were more often than not repelled by the land. (You will recall that they were not all voluntary migrants). Even as late as 1873 Anthony Trollope in his famous 'Australia and New Zealand', while naturally extolling New Zealand's landscape beauty, had to remark in passing, "It is taken for granted that Australia is ugly". He went on to find some compensating qualities in the Australian bush, and indeed they are there still. Yet the Australian continent has several properties that strain even a lover's aesthetic sensibilities. It is hard to learn to love the droughts and the bush fires and the bush flies. Nature was in a perverse mood when she planned most of Australia, or maybe she had already used up the whole of her quota of conventional beauty for the South Pacific area on New Zealand, and had none left when she came to our great flat continent. Just the same, as a token of goodwill she made Sydney Harbour for Captain Phillip to find, so that later travellers from New Zealand would not get too sudden a shock on arrival.

However, although the natural backgrounds are so strangely dissimilar, the societies which man has built up on each of these lands resemble each other closely and the physical expressions of those two societies are a remarkable match. Popular taste seems identical, both countries are submerged at the plastic-flowers and pastel colour level of civilization.

Certainly there are minor regional stylistic differences between the vernacular buildings of Australia and those of New Zealand, but no greater I think than the regional differences across Australia. From the beginning, in colonial homesteads, through Victorian birthday Gothic, Edwardian neo-classicism, and the slow developments towards a valid 20th century idiom, the two countries have moved along parallel roads, making most of the big jumps pretty well simultaneously. Nevertheless they are not quite the same. May I say that from the little I have seen so far I judge that the man-made side of New Zealand looks rather ugly. I hope you take this as a compliment. You see, the man-made side of Australia is absolutely hideous, and if we look squarely at nearly every country in the modern world there are precious few built-up square miles that can justifiably resent being called repulsive.

I am not talking of the serious architecture done by such people as represented at this Conference, but we all know that that sort of architecture is an esoteric interest of ours that hardly affects the public street. As well there are the numberless buildings that were built without any pretensions to architecture, which never knew an architect, or wanted to: that bald little flats, (these in Melbourne's inner suburb that is made of nothing but non-architected flats), villas, factories, warehouses, shops, hoardings. Then there is all the enormous paraphernalia of the modern streetscape: the wires, poles and vents, the advertisements and admonitions. Even in the centre of cities architecture, serious or not, accounts for barely more than half the visual impact, and its contribution diminishes as one moves out, until it has almost disappeared on the fringe of the outer suburbs.

Australia and New Zealand, worlds apart in natural background and yet brothers in the anthropological and sociological senses, are really twin case-studies in popular visual phenomena. I wish I knew New Zealand better - I wish we all could get together more frequently to build up the numbers between us - but already I find that the

vernacular is almost identical. The little builders' houses, the shops, and routine factories make me feel all too uncomfortably at home. Yet I have also found that your serious architecture and Australia's are developing differently.

On the Pop front, I suspect that no-one would be far out if he spoke of New Zealand and applied his conclusions to Australia as well. No so in the serious field, as I hope to make clear. Yet I can only talk about Australia, and hope that, even if you find no relevance in what I say to your problems, it may interest you to see how different we are. Yet even as I stress the differences I have to admit to myself that we are closer together in architecture than either of us is to Canada.

The relationship of these three countries is already very interesting on the sociological plane and could perhaps be interesting one day politically. We could all do with each other's support. New Zealand and Australia of course share a large part of their history with Canada and there are social peculiarities shared by the three which bring all very close together. For instance, an aggressive

e . Have you ever considered, for example, that there are only 4 countries in the world where a man drives in the front seat beside the taxi-driver, so as to avoid suspicions of being a counter-revolutionary or worse. They are New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the Soviet Union. Yet in the matter of building Canada has a quality which separates it from us two by a gulf wider than the Pacific. In Australia, and I think I can safely say in New Zealand too, there is a fairly grey climate for building. In Canada, always climatically contrary to us, the building climate is bright and the mood is optimistic. I mean a social and economic attitude rather than an architectural one. Australia is still a land of inertia. We know this almost proudly as our ability to compromise and avoid extremes of any kind. But, to put it less kindly, it shows our timidity and lack of dynamism. Whereas Canada likes to think big, we are wary of bigness. It may be the French in Canada;

it may be the influence of their mighty neighbour; it may be the bracing, fearsome climate. They think not only big, but are more inclined than we to encourage originality and imagination. These qualities are not outlawed at home but they must be kept strictly within recognizable bounds. Enlightened eclecticism is the rule of our progress, and diffidence is the dominant characteristic of our pragmatic, poor man's affluent society. (Terms like 'affluent society' are thrown about Australia with abandon, because we try to mould ourselves in the image of America rather than England). However, unlike the U.S.A., our affluence is kept for private pleasures; the public street sees little or none of it. Thus in Melbourne still the wires of trams where all other cities its size are trying to tackle the problem of modern traffic with modern methods. Thus half a dozen mini-sky-scrappers where Canada would build one real one - like the beautiful Place Victoria in Montreal. (I have to admit that this was not done with Canadian money nor with a Canadian architect, but by Italians; Nervi designed the marvellously bold structure. Yet Canada allowed it to be built, and Canadians built it.) Big capital is chronically short in Australia but even when foreign money is available and bold schemes are proposed there are always the world's most conservative building regulations or pessimistic municipal councillors waiting to cut them back to the familiar size. This is exactly what happened to the cylindrical skyscraper planned by the Dutch-based Lend-Lease Company in Sydney, (the tall one left of centre). Designed by Harry Seidler with a little help, co-incidentally, from the same Nervi who did Place Victoria, Australia Square was planned to go 60 storeys and would have been the tallest reinforced concrete building in the world. But Australia's city fathers, and I suspect New Zealand's, do not like superlatives like 'tallest', which thrill the backbone of Canadian mayors. Australia Square was cut down by Sydney to 45 storeys, to be beaten by Place Victoria and finish second - just another fragment of the fragmented skyline of Sydney. Most of our cities, though busily building, are

thus fragmented. There is not one really bold scheme among them, with the possible exception of Perth, which I will return to later. Elsewhere there is appalling inertia in freeway construction despite our being proudly 3rd or 4th from the top in the world car-ownership list. We have lots of big, fast, shiny cars bogged down bumper to bumper on two-lane roads - a notable reversal of conditions here. Nowhere is there a sign of any great urban reconstruction schemes of the kind that mark the downtown areas of many American and Canadian cities. The prevailing Australian atmosphere is overcast with caution. The one creative scheme, the notable exception in Australia to the rule, was the Sydney Opera House - until 1965. And look what happened to it!

Within the campus of a university every building must be designed by a different architect. This is the equalitarian, democratic way. It is done partly to avoid arguments and professional jealousy, but also it is done to avoid a bold architectural commitment. It avoids the supposed monotony of a single architectural conception. Thus most of our newest, planned universities are made to look as quickly as possible as piecemeal as our oldest, unplanned ones. That is deliberate popular policy. Canada by contrast has men in responsible positions who are young enough in mind and spirit to accept bold solutions to planning problems. Certainly the occasion of Expo 67 in Montreal is extraordinary and one cannot take the architectural phantasmagoria that has happened there as in any way typical, yet even so Habitat 67 is a brave building. This is to remain after the Expo, a permanent monument to the daring spirit of Canada at this time - even if it has been reduced from its originally planned size of 200 housing units to 158. Moshe Safdie, its architect, was only four years out of McGill University and aged only 26 when he talked three governments - municipal, provincial and federal - into building it. (The importance of it is not its newness as an idea but the fact that it has been built.) But even more remarkable and relevant to us is Scarborough College near Toronto. In contrast

to the democratic mish-mash of most of our new universities, here is a new one built as one thing by one architect, a single extraordinarily bold statement of bone-crushing strength and unequivocal commitment: and "indoor campus".

It is sometimes said that here in our isolation at the bottom of the globe we do not have the professional sophistication, the architectural know-how, the ideas and the acumen to do anything at once so fashionable and so convincing as this. Yet here is the answer to that assertion. Scarborough's architect was a Sydney-born Sydney-trained, Sydney-mannered young man, John Andrews. He wouldn't get away with this sort of thing at home.

I do not want to make too much of this 'climate' in which we Australian architects who stay at home have to operate. We all know that an architect worth his salt makes his own climate as he works, to a certain extent. He trains each client with every sketch plan, as much as he can. Yet there are limits to this. We all know it takes two to make good architecture; a receptive client as well as a convinced architect. I learned this afternoon that your clients are good clients - in Christchurch anyway - more receptive and sophisticated than ours. Even so, you could probably do with more of them. I am not tendering the lack of good clients as an excuse, but I think it ~~is~~ must be borne in mind always when asking why architecture in this corner of the globe falls somewhere short of perfection.

Now, to speak of differences - and speaking of Australian architecture only: much of it at this time is just not very with-it. In fact one might say that the overall picture is plain old-fashioned. It may be quite up-to-date in practical matters of technique and structure, but it remains now, in the jet and telly age, every bit as far behind the styles of the times as it was last century. The great style-fashions like that initiated in Europe by LeCorbusier or the one started more recently by Louis Kahn in the U.S.A., take as long to reach the antipodes as the Gothic Revival or the International Style did, and rather longer than Art Louveau or Queen Anne took. Thus 'brut' concrete remains generally unacceptable, the ribbed,

chipped surface for stripped concrete introduced by Paul Rudolph and known facetiously as 'knitted concrete' is yet to appear, the top-heavy look is practically unknown and windows remain as popular as ever. Australian architects are not as unsophisticated as this sounds. They are mostly men of the world, well travelled and all that, but they have enough professional problems on their minds to draw their attention away from a low-pressure area, and the creation of vital architecture is one such area. The intellectual climate in design, not just in architecture but in the fields of industrial design, graphics, and so on is drowsy. Nothing like the vastly stimulating idea which you have here, of architects describing or confessing their own recent works has ever been tried at home. (I intend to propose it...I wonder if it will be supported.) It is the most stimulating idea I've struck in years. (It's true that architects in Australia recognize each other regularly in two or three annual awards, but the motivation behind these tends to be public-relational. A boost to architectural practice all round is anticipated from all the attendant publicity. And it is all rather half-hearted. There is lots of fine professional bonhomie and brotherhood, but no clear or consistent sense of a movement, let alone a sense of direction towards tomorrow.

You might say that this is inevitable in our underpopulated and isolated country, but the situation is not reflected in all other walks of life. Australian artists and Australian scientists in some fields, especially medicine and radio-astronomy, share a certain sense of wordly adventure. Also, more relevantly, Australian architecture once did have a sense of adventure, and quite recently. To tell you about it I will have to go briefly into the history of 20th century architecture at home.

It began in Melbourne. At the turn of the century there was an inventive, rebellious, extroverted architect named Harold Desbrowe Annear who, one can safely say, was the first native-born to produce

original architecture. His first house for himself and his bride in 1901 was sensationally original if open planning and spatial effects. In 1918 and 1919 he built what we can call, without stretching the term too far the first functionalist or International Style buildings in this part of the world. They were in the fashionable inner suburbs, houses for rich clients, and though they clearly owe a lot to Adolf Loos, Desbrowe Annear apparently arrive at this style almost independently. He never travelled outside Australia.

At about the tsame time there worked in Melbourne a rather antic Art Nouveau man named Robert Haddon. He was not in the same class a s a pioneer of the modern movement, but he helped to pave the ground for what was to follow. (This: Haddon's 4th Vic. Bldg, 1912). Desbrowe Annear and Haddon were not only avant garde. The more notable thing is that they were also about the most socially successful and fashionable architects in Melbourne during their time; the first two decades of the century.

And then came Walter Burley Griffin - licking his wounds from his encounter with Australian bureaucracy in Canberra, he came to Melbourne in 1916, three years after his arrival in Australia from Chicago to take up Directorship of the construction of the capital city. It was just chance that he stayed in Australia, and in Melbourne. He might have returned to the U.S.A., but by the time he had decided to cut all ties with Canberra his own country as well as Australia were at war. For various reasons he stayed in Melbourne and there he built the most ambitious and imaginative buildings of his world-wide (and increasingly world-famous) career.

There were others before 1930, and so it was that when Australia could put off no longer recognition of the international revolution of modern architecture, Melbourne was the scene of the first engagements. The year was 1934. It can be pin-pointed to the centenary celebrations of the city. Seabrook and Fildes, a very young firm,

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won a competition for the Melbourne Girls' High School with this rather Dudok-styled design, Roy Grounds and Geoffrey Mewton built numerous houses uncompromisingly modern - and received prizes and acclaim for them. Edward F. Billson, Best Overent - there were enough of them in the five years before World War II began to make a distinct and exciting regional movement based on vitality and originality in the International modern idiom. If not terribly original, the Melbourne School was at least a fight back to basic building goodness, and as such adventurous and iconoclastic in a way most uncharacteristic of Melbourne society generally in her later years. No other Australian city experienced anything remotely resembling the sheer excitement of the newness of the work of the men I have mentioned. There was nothing like it for at least five years in Sydney and not for some 14 years elsewhere, thanks to the 2nd war. And when that war was over the excitement continued in Melbourne. For nearly ten years afterwards, until the mid 1950's, the architectural atmosphere was charged with a rebellious passion for adventure hardly less fervent than that passion of the Utopians of Germany after 1919 - another war and another side away. It was a time of experimental success and failure, and perhaps it was the only time in Australia's history when we were not old-fashioned, when visiting architects from the northern hemisphere could find evidence of ideas which they had never seen at home.

What was happening in Melbourne at this time was not reflected anywhere else in Australia. In Sydney there were still really only two men who were contributing ideas. (I am still talking of the early 1950's.) Sydney had the conservatively modern Sydney Archer and the Gropius-Brener-trained Harry Seidler, with practically no-one else, and no background of progressive architecture. The Melbourne school, by comparison, was a movement consolidated by the weight of Griffin, Haddon, Annear, Billson, Grounds, and a thin generation of other pioneers behind it. It seemed to have impetus and direction and the promise that the architectural art was swinging forward, or

maybe stumbling forward, ahead of the other arts and technologies for the first time in the history of Australia.

Whatever happened to that promise?

It subsided in Melbourne exactly ten years ago, in 1957, after a final fling around the time of preparation for the Olympic Games. The two climactic buildings of the period are on opposite sides of the Yarra River at Swan Street Bridge: The Olympic Pools Buildings and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl - symbolically, palaces of sport and popular culture respectively. These buildings had in common tensile construction and Bill Irwin, an engineer with the courage of his architects' convictions. As well they had the essential ingredients of the Melbourne school; a great structural-functional idea carried out with an enforced austerity and a voluntarily cavalier technique; basic building reality and be damned to the effete preoccupation with detail. Shortly after them the Melbourne movement passed out under the weight of two or three new annual layers of graduates freed from the anxieties and stimulations of the post-war period. It was this new breed of Australian graduate, with more training and worldly-wisdom, which came forward during the next ten years when the centre of architectural creativity swung to Sydney.

The Melbourne school was forward-looking, daring all and damning all aesthetic rules. I remember Peter McIntyre, as the architect of a big home design show at the Exhibition building, in the days before these became commercial and hopeless, deliberately mixing his colours to offend. Violent puce and oranges (now a fashionable combination, but hideous at that time) were juxtaposed to jar the visitor into recognition that a revolution was under way. The Sydney school was no less dedicated or serious-minded but it was of quite different character: conservative and aesthetic. The Sydney school, which also began with domestic work, as all architectural movements do, had no time for looking wistfully to a reluctant technological future which kept retreating beyond one's grasp. It looked back, hoping to find what was best in the recent

past and hoping to re-do this even better. Something of value that it was able to rediscover in the uninspiring local vernacular was a native cunning with brickwork and carpentry. The Sydney school adapted these qualities of technique to a sophisticated architecture of strongly conceived forms. It grew up quickly in the work of Ken Woolley, Peter Hall and Russell Jack, and several others including the impressive volume of consistent State Government public works done under E. H. Farmer, who added a little stripped concrete to the palette. Before long however the conceptual basis predictably was watered down by followers until all that was left were the rough dark clinker bricks and the brown creosoted off-saw timber, a tamed Australian Romantic kind of brutalism. Nevertheless there was quite enough of this, and it was quite presentable enough, to constitute the nearest thing to a regional style seen in Australia for more than a century. To use a term popular at the time, it was a grassroots movement. Its language could be understood by the spec. builder, not to mention the student of architecture. It was not quite capable of transplanting itself intact into the urban heart of Sydney, however. There naked constructional materials remained the rarest of sights and veneering continued to be the chief occupation of many architects. The State Offices and the Water Board buildings nevertheless maintained the direct geometrical strength and something of the erector-set rationale of the Sydney movement. (Meanwhile in his city offices Harry Seidler continued his own professional development almost as far removed from the others as when he first went out singlehanded from the Breuer camp to do battle with the municipal philistines. This is Seidler's Lend-Lease House. There is no nonsense about Harry's work - a fundamental neo-Bauhaus look that won't be seduced by all the visual intrigues of today.) The Melbourne school had subscribed to the philosophy that to stand still and cease experimenting was asking to be swept away into an intellectual stormwater drain. The Sydney school knows no such compulsive progressive drive. It was even responsible for reviving the material that was

once most despised by youth: the ubiquitous roof of suburbia, the Marseilles-pattern tile. To come back to this strange one - it is the most beautiful example and the climax to date of the Sydney school. Now, is it modern? Is it Australian? It is Ian McKay's Sulman award-winning C.B. Alexander Presbyterian Agriculture College. It has been tremendously popular and influential. So here we see the style revelling in subtle romantic allusions to times or places unspecifically remote. Such gradual retrogression - rummaging deeper and deeper in the drawers of history - is inevitable once you shy away from today. Yet in its everyday application the Sydney school's technique is more pointedly reminiscent. It recalls something of California, especially Ernest Kump's nostalgic California. This may be purely coincidental - the two sides of the Pacific independently arriving at about the same conclusion - although it is apparent that travelling Australian architects are frequently most highly impressed by Californian work and its relevance to ours. The present Sydney school has in fact much in common superficially with, if you can remember it, - I noticed it was a rage in Christchurch, even to 'Los Angeles' - the Californian Bungalow style of the 1920's: the same dark stain rugged, ragged clinker bricks and pebble-dash stonework and earthy colouring and nutty-crunchy textures.

Yet, despite its being the most consistent movement to appear for a century or so, the Sydney school is still not a wholly satisfying answer to our search. Beautiful as it can be, the Sydney school's anti-technological reaction is sometimes too pointed. Its lack of dedication to the present dulls its own chances of enjoying much of a future.

While Sydney became the centre of creativity other parts of Australia were not necessarily asleep. The most remarkable waker of the 1960's was in fact, Perth. The unexpected and almost unlimited mineral finds in the vast West Australian outback were reflected in an unfamiliar air of confidence along St. George's Terrace, that translated well into architecture. This was

something entirely different from the boom conditions of, say, Surfers' Paradise which bring out the worst side of the most popular architects. Perth insisted that it was experiencing not a boom, which could burst, but the beginning of a new era of prosperity with foundations solidly based in the underground discoveries. The architecture was inclined to match this feeling with much less showiness than all that new wealth might have led one to expect. Even the commercial buildings of Perth and suburbs had a perceptibly more restrained demeanour than was usual; for one thing there was a tendency to greyness which was so remarkable after all the brittle colouring of the east as to lead one to believe that another regional style was in the making. But, if so, it was still too young to be counted on.

All over Australia in these late years of the 1960 decade fine architecture is being built, more undoubtedly than at any time before, but nearly always it is lonely, insulated from anything visually sympathetic by square miles of mess. It is not nearly enough. What we are looking for - the great majority of us with any interest in our country's cultivation - is something as coherently and characteristically Australian as a country storage shed or the view of Alice Springs from the air but which at the same time uses the technology of this half of the twentieth century to solve the new problems which confront us. Some may see the answer in a homestead form - verandah posts and so on - mass-produced of post-tensioned fibreglass interlocking elements. Only purists would quarrel with this; much fairly harmless nostalgic amusement may be enjoyed along such a line. Yet it is by no means the satisfying conclusion to the search. It implies that architecture follows emotional form which we know is false. Architecture follows functional needs as well as structural resources, however deviously and with whatever sly, secret motives. So when we say we want an Australian style we mean only that we want a genuine style that is appropriate for the special set of conditions that are

Australian - and that are different from New Zealand's or Canada's or anyone else's.

Can Australia exploit the peculiar qualities I have already mentioned - the unsophisticated freedom from involvement with international fads, the general, genuine, submerged desire for something we can call our own, even the caution - can we exploit them in the interests of better architecture?

LIGHTS

This afternoon we heard, in the next room, a little fragment of the Great Debate which splits today the international architectural scene outside our window, influencing us indirectly but not involving us. (This world of architecture outside has of course passed through the period of the great shapes which produced the Sydney Opera House, and it supports numerous small debates as well - yet now one debate predominates.) The subject of the great debate is, as we heard this afternoon, concepts versus computers; if, if you like Expressionism versus Technology; or, 'Can the expressive qualities of architecture justify a departure from strictly functional-structural rationalism?'

The Sydney Opera House creates so much interest in the northern hemisphere. It is the most irrational and Expressionist building anyone ever contemplated. It is an old debate which we have heard before but now it is reaching a climax. This is because the impersonal black galzed skyscraper needles and slabs, sometimes literally designed by computers - at least in part - like Skidmore, Owings and Merrill's hundred-storey obelisk under construction in Chicago, are getting too big to ignore, while the Expressionism of others like Kahn, Rudolph, Johansen, Stirling, Lasdun - not to mention Yamasaki, Johnson, and the Japanese - challenges the commuter with human concepts and visions. The debate is complicated by discussion on the merits of the technique or attitude commonly known as the New Brutalist, which is of course a brave name for second-hand Le Corbusier, but in its pure original form means

purely rational building - a short of anti-expressive architecture somewhere makes a third point of a philosophical triangle.

Characteristically we in Australia are experiencing in solid buildings none of these extreme things. Any Australian building that looks bland enough to have been designed by a computer is likely to have some ingratiating contrasts of colour or texture introduced to relieve the monotony, while most other buildings drop into a compromised category of formalism that falls rather short of full-dress Expressionism. We have no New Brutalism; Le Corbusier has had less influence in Australia than anywhere else in the world. Much less than New Zealand.

Despite every critical thing I have said - and we Australian architects have heard much more cruelly critical things said about our architecture by many people ranging from frustrated sculptors to Governors-General - I believe that there is a solid body of serious, progressive architectural thought in Australia that could transform the situation if it were less amorphous and had a consolidated presence and voice. This would be the voice of basic, vital architecture, which is not, of course, the same thing as the voice of the Institute. (Our Institute, like every other one, must represent fairly everyone in the profession whether they believe in architecture or not.) But I have in mind the majority of sensitive men and women trained since World War II, and a smaller proportion of those who grew up before the war, all of whom ostensibly and sincerely subscribe to what may still be called most simply the modern movement. Irrespective of Formalism, Romanticism, Machine Nostalgia (or the Plug in neurosis), - irrespective of all the international fads and the local fluctuations in vulgar taste these people hold inviolate a code of integrity and goodness in architecture, essentially the same code as the one that bound the rebels of Melbourne in the 1930's, which was the same one that motivated the pioneers of modern design around the turn of the century. It is something that promises convincing, uncontrived buildings: building that looks real

five years later when the fever of design is gone. It is ingrained in the 20th century and, as we all know well, it goes something like this:

Fulfil the function of the building within itself and within society / respect the nature of materials and structural realities / press technology and methodology into ever higher efficiency / renounce all historic allusions and irrelevant beautification / give the building strong expression - but of itself, not of the architect's ego. And if you think it sound dull, the final rule tells how delight and interest can be kept alive and growing within the code; by the exercise of imagination and ever closer analysis in studying requirements and possibilities in the programme. To advocate that code is not to cry for the stars or for a return to the way the Bauhaus or any other of the pioneers interpreted the message. The code merely encourages responsibility and integrity and simplicity. It does not relieve the architect of the task of imaginative creating, but it does give him a solid foundation and discipline for his ideas. And ideas with discipline and integrity are, of course, all that Australian architecture needs to snap out of the old-fashioned or second-hand routine, to regain a sense of confidence and self-sufficiency, to come out of seclusion and join the world. The difficulties in the way of putting this code into effect have been formidable and lots of us have grown tired; others of us have never tried hard enough. Yet still there are very many Australian architects believing earnestly in the code, give or take a word or two, waiting for the real opportunity with the really enlightened client to come along. The trouble is that he may never come, at this rate. All over the world enlightened clients are rare enough, and in underpopulated Australia there is more need than in other countries to try to cultivate in the community more understanding of and sympathy with the basic architectural code. Somehow we have to train more clients. Somehow we have to make clients even out of

seemingly hopeless material like the people who build awful cottages in the sight of the Remarkable Mountains. We have to meet them more than half-way economically, but we have to meet them and make them clients. In explaining to ourselves the phenomenon of so much poor, dead architecture around us today, we architects are inclined to accept as an interpretation of recent history the proposition that the 20th century design revolution came to us about 1950 but was a bit of a fizzle; Functionalism turned out to be a false god and all the rest of the dogma had disappointing results. Half-heartedly we wait for some better philosophy to turn up: Form, Romance, Humanism, Plug-ins? We argue the Great Debate - competence v. concepts - as if one or other was dispensable. Yet when we are strict in applying the code both are necessary and fall into their place. The truth is that the revolution of 20th century design still has not come, not to Australia and not to many other countries. Looking back now it is easy enough to see what happened at home. The forces of revolution that were boiling up in Melbourne before World War II were diverted and dissipated after the apparently easy successes of contemporary design against pseudo-historical nonsense in the first decade after the war. Suddenly about 1955 it looked as if the revolution had succeeded and a rational architectural millenium had practically arrived. But really all that happened was a modernisation of some building techniques combined with the adoption of another decorative period style. Certainly it was a fairly recent period. It was the International Style, barely a quarter of a century old, with Australian fruit dressings. And although the dressings varied it was just as much a superficial, decorative style as Spanish Mission, which was the last one to pass through. It is still the style of the bulk of architecture in this part of the Pacific. This vulgar hybrid won, and the revolution for a 20th century architecture of integrity was frustrated.

So now, some twelve years later, it is high time to revive the revolution, to lose patience with the poverty of so much of our architectural scene, and to show some determination to build a more real and consistent architecture based on that shelved morality which we know to be valid. Manifestoes and marches, exhibitions and pamphleteering are out of fashion, yet it is a situation which might have produced all these a generation ago. The believers in all design fields will have to find some way of getting together to build up a consolidated strength if they are not prepared to continue wallowing contentedly in a cultural backwater. Speaking of Australia, it's not that our architects are inferior, but the climate is too comfortable. The list of one-time believers who have reverted is growing too long. What we need in our seclusion is some substitute for the creative friction which architects overseas endure. We have to be put on our mettle more often. We have to get back somehow to the feeling of purity, strength and realism, the good, basic, honest building which we had back at the revolution a third of a century ago. We have to regain our faith in simplicity, which is at the heart of all architectural goodness but doesn't necessarily mean a white stucco wall. Goodness is not dullness. Imagination is not ruled out by the code. And don't worry about imagination anyway. It looks after itself. It pushes forward no matter what computers it has to push aside. Just beware of substitutes for imagination.

No architectural movement grows more simple with age. It starts out simple and, like people, it keeps putting on redundant weight; which usually means trickiness and ego-centricity. At home now we have to fight again, back to basic things, to the real thing, the ten-fingered grasp of reality as Louis Sullivan used to say. If I have one message for you from Australia tonight it is: try to learn by the experience of Melbourne, which started earlier and got bored with the code sooner.

I have been speaking about Australia and I don't know if you will find any parallels with the New Zealand situation - I've probably got it wrong, but I detect already similarities between Melbourne and Christchurch on the one hand, with Sydney compared to Auckland and Wellington rolled up into one. Even if that's wrong, I suspect anyway that most of you will have your own reasons for feeling that the architectural millenium has not arrived yet here, either. Yet we all must have faith that vital, basic architecture, the real thing, will come to be the norm in our two secluded countries. It must and will come somehow. Yet if it is eventually imported, as all our earlier decorative styles were, it might turn out to be disappointingly anonymous: English here, American at home - or maybe if it takes long enough it will be Chinese, or Indonesian... But if it is our own, an original and responsible contribution to the world-wide theme, then it will look peculiarly like ourselves, without a doubt. In Australia we will colour it with our pride, diffidence, busybodiness, and our various other perverse social characteristics. New New Zealand you will colour it with your social characteristics incubated here in your seclusion; you will colour it New Zealand.

The real thing in modern architecture will come one day, to us both. And if good building is important to Australia - for the social, intellectual and artistic reasons we all know - then it is even more important to New Zealand. You have all those reasons and have as well these most glorious qualities of landscape. Here in a site like Queenstown's the confrontation of the manmade and the natural is even more violent than in my country. Architecture cannot be so impertinent for much longer. It's not fair to nature. it's not honest to God.