

WINTER 1951, RALEIGH, N. C. Winter 1951

ONE: 1. THIS FIRST ISSUE OF A STUDENT PUBLICATION OF THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN IS DEDICATED TO **MATTHEW NOWICKI** AND IS CONCERNED PRINCIPALLY WITH HIS LATER WORK INCLUDING AN ESSAY ON ARCHITECTURE, HIS WORK IN NORTH CAROLINA, AND A SELECTION FROM HIS LAST WORK—HIS SKETCHES IN INDIA

IN A SIMPLE AND SINCERE MANNER THE STAFF THANKS STANISLAVA NOWICKI, WHO KNEW HER HUSBAND BEST, FOR HELPING US TO KNOW HIM BETTER.

THE UNACKNOWLEDGED QUOTATIONS ARE FROM MATTHEW NOWICKI MEMORIAL EXHIBITION, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART.

# PROLOGUE BY THE FIRST MAN

I am the First Man.

And because I am first

I am alone.

Do not misunderstand.

I am not the first man to live.

His name was Adam,

Whereas I have many names . . .

Name a poet who sang the song celestial.

And you call my name.

Name a philosopher who saw life's pattern.

And you call my name.

Name a prophet who brought men a new hope.

Name an artist who pictured the ineffable.

Name a scientist who banished the mysteries.

And you call my name.

No, I am not the first man to live; I am the First Man to have an IDEA. That IDEA is new and strange; and because of this, I am alone. The First Man has no way to speak to other men. Neither language nor picture has a symbol for his IDEA. The First Man must create his own symbols. Until they become familiar he knows that the First Man must be alone.

The First Man travels alone . . . reviled or tormented and martyred for his IDEA. Yet, scarcely has the body cooled and the echoes of sadistic laughter ceased than the IDEA has been accepted by the many and become degenerated into a LAW and a FORMULA. But by then, I, the First Man, have a new name and a new IDEA . . . and there is new laughter.

—JAMES L. BRANDT



**"a new kind of modern architect"**



Photo by Ralph Mills





"he was new in that he respected equally engineering innovations and the forms of past architecture"

# MATTHEW NOWICKI

**Lewis Mumford**

His architecture recognized no provinciality of time or place or method: it took the measure of man and sought to bring together the regional and the universal, the mechanical and the personal. Beyond the United Nations, which he served, he saw a united man and prepared a home for his use and delight. Nowicki was graduated from the Polytechnic in Warsaw and in the brief year before the Nazi invasion, he had risen to the top of his profession. Following Plato, he held that architecture was essentially a pedagogical art: the architect was a teacher, a "promoter of new ideas beneficial to the life of man." He himself taught by the best of methods: his loving and lovable example. Though Nowicki was too deeply committed to freedom and democracy to accept the repressive forms of totalitarian communism, he nevertheless became the inevitable choice of Poland for service with United Nations. No member of the distinguished Board of Consultants was better prepared than Nowicki as both architect and designer of cities: few architects anywhere could match him in his adventurousness and gaiety, his open-eyed daring, his fertility of invention, his unflagging discipline, his deep sense of duty, above all, in the humility that is given only to great genius.

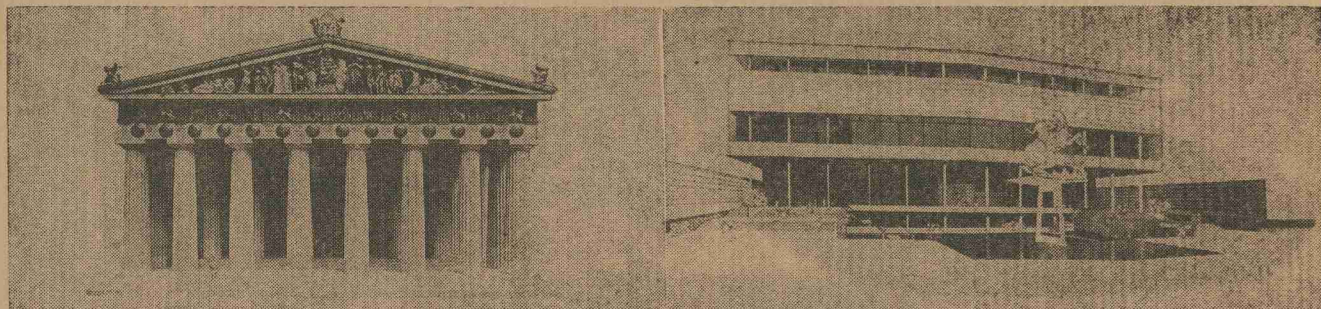
Those who know Matthew Nowicki's work intimately, who can estimate his potentialities as well as his performances, have no doubt that he, more surely than any of his contemporaries, bore within him the seed of a new age. In his designs, spontaneity and discipline, power and love, form and function, mechanical structure and symbol were united. That which he left undone through his death must now call forth the creative efforts of a whole generation.



# "—AND GLADLY TEACH"

## George Qualls

One of Matthew Nowicki's greatest assets as a teacher was his ability to inspire his students by his own example. He gave the impression of a man intent upon completely describing the character of our civilization in terms of architecture. He was eminently capable of the task and his excitement and enthusiasm were contagious. This does not mean that he demanded or expected emulation from his students. It would have been impossible, for Matthew was dynamic, never static. The scope of his genius was too varied for imitation except in principle. Freedom was the key-note of his attitude toward teaching as well as toward design. He respected individual opinions and he encouraged them. But freedom to Matthew was not without restraint. Just as modern man is beginning to realize that he owes a debt to society as well as to himself, so Matthew felt that modern building demanded the modular discipline of our industrial age. Within the framework of that discipline he felt there lay a world of opportunity for the designer. Matthew's teaching was directed toward producing a purity of thought and a clear ex-



pression of structural principle, but never toward the development of a formula. He was primarily interested in creating for his students an awareness of the psychological functions of a building. The physical functions, he felt, could no longer be the determining factors of a design, but should serve as a point of departure in the search for a fresh approach to structure and form. He was convinced that the structural materials available today are still in the infancy of their use with an entire era of sensitive development ahead of them. Matthew saw that development as a growing interest in man's emotional reaction to space rather than a concentration upon his exact spatial needs.





When Matthew sat at a desk to discuss a problem, an entire architectural education could be in the offing. He had the ability of sensing very accurately the spatial relationships of a building while it was still in the form of a rough sketch. Very quickly he could put his finger on the points of weakness of the design and call attention to any inconsistencies of thinking. His discussion would proceed rapidly from a particular detail at hand to a broad treatment of a principle, complete with historical footnotes. Matthew was profoundly aware of our architectural heritage and he saw very clearly the position of modern architecture in relation to great building cultures of the past. The design problems encountered today, he realized, have been dealt with in the past and solved in accordance with the social conditions and technical abilities then existing.



In giving a crit Matthew might become preoccupied with a particular detail of the problem and a classroom lecture would materialize. He would leave the desk and the class would gather around him at the blackboard. I particularly remember one of his discussions on columns. He felt that today a column has almost lost its identity as a sculptural design element. Because of the widespread use of modern building materials such as steel and glass, lightness seems to have become a trademark of the best in contemporary building. Matthew recognized that the sense of a building's lightness or heaviness depends largely upon the proportion of its supporting elements. The massive appearance of a Greek or Roman temple does not result from the supported weight but from the elaborate massiveness of its columns. The economy of material contained in the steel and reinforced concrete columns of today produces a slenderness that seems to deny a sculptural treatment and even invalidates the use of free-standing colonnades. Matthew turned logically from this thought to a discussion of the decorative artists' position in relation to modern architecture. Certainly, today's painters, sculptors, and architects experience little of the sense of collaboration that produced the great buildings of the past. Each artist has a strong sense of his individual artistic freedom which manifests itself in an independence of expression. In the past, when a muralist was confined by the shape of a wall or a niche his forms and figures would express that confinement, but today he is free of such strict architectural restraint and his work has a separate life of its own. The modern sculptor also maintains his individual freedom in creating work that lives with or without a special architectural setting.

With his stress upon a fresh human approach to design, his unceasing interest in the problems of those around him, and with the constant force and effectiveness of his own example, Matthew Nowicki became a turning point in the lives of his students.

"his championship of **FORM** was new for a generation of architects brought up on  
**FUNCTION . . .**"



# ON EXACTITUDE AND FLEXIBILITY

Matthew Nowicki

Sometime ago our design became a style. No matter how ingeniously we dodge the unpleasant issue, it comes at us with full force in thousands of creations of the contemporary designer. Our design is a style, with all the restrictions, disciplines, limitations and blessings that we usually associate with the term. A style in the similarities between designs differing basically in the purpose of their use and destination, subordinating to its demands a refrigerator or a motor car, a factory or a museum. A style which perhaps follows sales, quoting Edgar Kaufman, just as form followed function in the words of Greenough and Renaissance architecture in the work of Palladio followed its antique models. A style as pronounced, as defined, more limited perhaps, and as legitimate for our times as the style of Renaissance has been in its days.

In the growing maturity and self-consciousness of our century, we cannot avoid the recognition of this fact, and we have to realize what it stands for. We can no longer avoid this term "style" simply because it brings to our minds unpleasant memories. We cannot keep on pretending that we solve our problems without a precedent in form. We have to realize that, in the overwhelming majority of modern design, form follows **form** and not **function**. And even when a form results from a functional analysis, this analysis follows a pattern that leads to a discovery of the same function, whether in a factory or a museum. Approached in a certain way an answer to every architectural problem is a flexible space with no reason why one flexible space should be different from another, and many practical reasons why they should be alike.

In saying all this, I am not an advocate of a diversity in design for its own sake. Such a diversity is just confirming the rule of regimentation that always is the result of a style. The more one attempts to escape one's period, the more a part of it one becomes. The constructive diversity that provides strength to an expanding and virile civilization comes through a creative sensitivity to the eternally changing circumstance where "every opportunity stands alone."

This sensitivity is the main source of something for which I have no better word than freshness. Freshness is a physical part of youth, and youth disappears with time. This is the law of life true equally in the case of an individual or a civilization. Freshness can be preserved if the source of it depends not on the physical state of being young, but on the consciousness of its origin. Some individuals preserve this creative freshness in their maturity. Those are the great artists. Some civilizations preserve this freshness for ages and then become great cultures. For although maturity aims at perfection and the stride for perfection must end with an unchanging standard of classical excellence, the consciousness of the source of freshness can provide a magnified scope to this stride. The magnitude of this scope is the measure of ambitions and strength of a civilization, and the prophecy of its future achievements.

Thinking in terms of the contemporary, or should I say modern, period of design, we realize by now that it has passed its early youth. The experiments with form, and the new space concept, the playfulness with "the machine to live in," the machine to look at or the machine to touch, in architecture, painting and sculpture are more remote from us than the time alone would indicate. There was a freshness in those youthful days of the aesthetic revolution, a physical freshness of a beginning. There was a diversity in those days of forms that grew without a direct precedent in form.

I speak of architecture because it incorporates the full field of design. In its changes we can discover those that affected the interior design, the industrial design, problems of organized landscape and others, with or without a separate name. And, it is these changes of the architectural concept that I propose to analyze with the aim of establishing our present position in their chain. From the analysis of these changes I will not develop any law of analogy, nor will I make predictions on what will be the coming change. I propose to define our present position because this is our strategic point of departure for the investigation of the full field of opportunity that lies within our period.



To define our present stage, I shall try to trace it to its origins.

. . . It seems to me that the beginning of modern architecture has its roots in the domestic structure of the late Renaissance. It was then that the problem of human comfort was rediscovered. Functionalism in terms of the importance of good living was introduced along with a number of technical gadgets of which the stove in Fontainebleau was probably a vanguard. Architecture descended from its pedestal of heroism and rapidly started to grow human and even bourgeois. In France after the death of Louis XIV, the despotic "Roi soleil," the private residence "building boom" produced a plan in which areas of different use were defined and located with regard to one another. The plan of this new type differed from its predecessor where a sequence of rectangular, round, oval and otherwise shaped interiors had a changing use, and one ate, slept, or entertained in any of them, according to a passing or a more permanent fancy. This change was not the beginning of functionalism, as architecture always had to satisfy a function, but the beginning of its modern interpretation. Resigning from heroism, architecture diminished its scale, becoming cut to the size of an ordinary man. A good illustration of this change is the comparison between the Palace of Versailles and the Petit Trianon.

In the change of the predominant scale and the introduction of the problems of comfort, we can find the beginning of our architecture. These changes, essential as they were, could not alone produce the new form. Other factors were to complete the picture of the final change. One of them was expressed in 1825 by the German architect, Schinkel, after his visit to the industrialized Manchester in his famous question, "Why not a new style?" The eternal desire of change was responsible for violent shifts of attitude to form through the 19th century. To illustrate this violence and its extremes, I would like to quote two striking and not very well known examples. In the early years of the century, a French archeologist proposed a system of destroying the Gothic cathedrals, considered in the days of the Empire as edifices of barbarism. Cutting a groove at the base of the



limestone columns, then surrounding them with piles of wood and setting fire to them was suggested. The archeologist was convinced that under this treatment the unsavory structure would crumble "in less than ten minutes" relieving civilization of its shameful presence.

A few decades later Ruskin, paving the way for the Pre-Raphaelite movement, wrote in his "Modern Painters" that no public funds should be spent to purchase paintings later than Raphael, as the spirit of art was confined to the medieval period and replaced later by the superficial technology of a craft.

Out of these shifts of sympathies came the consciousness that some basic change in the eclectic sequence is indispensable. This was the psychological background to what we call the "modern" form. And although we shudder at the word style, Schinkel's search for its new expression contributed to the birth of modern architecture perhaps as much as any other factor.

No new form of architecture could have been created without a new structure, and the psychological receptiveness had to wait for its fulfillment until the structural possibilities ripened.

The middle of the last century with Paxton's Crystal Palace—its modular re-erection on a new site, its space concept of openness, created a new era. The following use of cast iron, then ferroconcrete and steel created the spine of the new frame structure from those days on dominant in modern building.

Independence of the partitioning wall from the frame created the free plan and, thus, all elements of the new architecture were present at the beginning of our century.

What would have been the characteristics of modern architecture had it followed the direction of those early days? Its form influenced strongly by the expression of the structure would have been intricate and detailed. The logical development of the skeleton would have accentuated the delicate ribs dividing areas of the building into supporting and supported members. The resulting form would perhaps have acquired the lightness and openness of lacework filled with translucent or opaque screen. In its final stage the

screen probably would have been replaced with a secondary skeleton filling the lacework with more lacework.

This is the way the gothic skeleton developed with its stained glass window and this was the road explored by Paxton, Labroust, Aifeel and their contemporaries. Modern architecture instead chose a road different in every respect from these expectations. To understand this change of destiny we have to make a digression. Architecture with its social, economic and technical complexities never was in the lead of aesthetic changes. As a rule it followed other media of art. The changes of taste in the nineteenth century, mentioned before, affected architecture very profoundly but they resulted from factors remote to the problems of building or design.

The great change introduced by the Renaissance can be quoted here as a striking example of the same problem. At the rebirth of the classical idiom, the medieval gothic structure reached the climax of its growth. The further life and growth of this structure was interrupted by an aesthetic wave unrelated to the technics of architecture. No structural competition to the gothic building was offered by the new style. The building methods of the renaissance were crude when compared to the advanced standard of the medieval mason. The change in architecture followed the changing aesthetic of the period and the responsibility and credit for this change should rest with its men of letters. In this way Petrarch and Dante fathered the architecture of the Renaissance.

A somewhat similar thing happened to modern architecture. This time the change of taste was inspired by the painters and not by the men of letters. The broad and open manner of Cezanne, the architectonic painting of synthetic Cubism introduced a new taste for the purity and simplicity of form. The development of the structural skeleton mentioned before could not be molded into the new aesthetic. The problems of structure and materials became secondary in a period preoccupied with the aesthetics of form. One has the impression that for an architect of the early twenties construction was the necessary evil. Architecture became "idealized" and "dematerialized." Colorful planes meeting at the corners of the cube emphasized the lack of material thickness. Structural



detail was eliminated to conform to the demands of purity with the result that the idealized structure reacted badly to time and weather. A column in this architecture became simply a cylinder surrounded by planes, a vertical among horizontals. The contrast of this juxtaposition had to be achieved to the satisfaction of the intellect so that no shape was created without a function which it should express and serve. But to create the shape a function was created or conveniently over-emphasized. Here my thoughts wander to those two massive cylinders dividing the steps of Le Corbusier's Salvation army Paris building. Although emphasized more than any other structural element of the building they function only as ventilation shafts and now, if technically obsolete, they may have lost their functional meaning preserving their compositional importance. This architecture of the "international style," romantically disposed to over-impressive technology, developed a notion which I shall call the **functional exactitude**. The truth of architecture was considered to be the exact expression of every function. When building became technically obsolete and therefore no longer ideally serving those changing functions, it was to be removed and replaced by a more efficient one.

The concept of functional exactitude found a source of decorative qualities in the inventive interpretation of human life and movement. One might say that this architecture became the decoration of function. The period of functional exactitude looked for its inspiration towards the physical function. The psychological one was not considered in its philosophy. The concept of controlled environment resulted and the main purpose of architecture was to control **physical** environment to the **physical** satisfaction of the user. The recent changes in modern architecture are perhaps as basic as those separating the nineteen twenties from their predecessors. True, we share our vocabulary with this period of yesterday but the same words have for us a different and often a basically opposite meaning. We both speak of functionalism but then it meant the exactitude and now it means the flexibility. Those are two opposite concepts. In our thoughts priority often is given to the psychological and not the physical human function. The concept of a short-



lived structure removed with the rapid change of technology is replaced by a notion of architecture that will be our contribution to the life of future generations. Le Corbusier introduces a measure on which this contribution can be composed—the "modulor" with its mystery of the golden section. This measure of good proportion is most significant for the change of values. No longer the measure of functional space, no longer the measure of time, but a measure of beauty. Whatever the validity of such a measure may be, it is interesting to notice that in the sequence of "time, space and architecture" the emphasis is shifting towards the last word in terms of the mystery of its art. The free plan is replaced by the modular plan. Again these are two opposite notions. A module is the most rigid discipline to which a plan can be subjected. A modular plan in reality is the opposite of a free plan. We are no longer preoccupied with the proximities of related functions but with the nature of space that leads from one function to another. It is no longer "how quickly to get there" but "how to get there," that matters most in our plans. It seems that from a quantitative period we have jumped into a qualitative one.

These changes are neither as conscious nor as pronounced to the degree pointed out in my remarks. It is an irresistible temptation to express those changes in the most striking manner. But, in order to be objective one has to realize that a dividing line between periods can never be geometrically defined. This division can better be compared to a wide ribbon which separates and joins at the same time like a gray belt between fields of black and white.

With respect to the main channels of human creation, namely the invention and the discovery, one might say that our present period is also different from the yesterday. The discovery of the formal symbol of the unchanging laws of the universe seems to replace the invention of the form without a precedent. The eternal story of gravitation is again consciously contemplated. We are aware that the form of the discovery has to change but the object of it remains the same; over and over discovered in many ways. Along with these elements of philosophy we also react in a different way to the techniques of our craft. Architecture discovered its own medium of creation and the difference between this medium and the others.

Picasso writing recently about his "blue period" of 1912 and several years later said that he discovered late the difference between sculpture and painting. Maturity brings a "sense of medium" and mature architecture in the same way discovered the difference between painting and the art of organizing accessible space. As a result we rely in our expression on the potentialities of materials and structure almost picking up the trend of the nineteenth century. This interest in structure and material may disclose within the building medium decorative qualities of ornament much too involved for the purist of yesterday. The symbolic meaning of a support became rediscovered and a steel column is used frankly as a symbol of structure even when it is not part of the structure itself. The period of functional exactitude expressed its mysterious longings for ornament in the decoration of function.

This period of functional flexibility expresses them in the decoration of structure. Art tends not only to discover the truth but to exaggerate and finally to distort it. **And, maybe in this distortion lies the essence of art.**

I have described our stage of the modern design as a style. Will this style repeat the sad story of other styles becoming an addition to the repertoire of a future eclecticism? The life and the decline of cultures follows an organic pattern which seems to be inevitable. But the span of life of a culture and its rebirth into another rests in the hands of the people responsible for its creation. Where is the future of modern design?

It seems to me that it depends on the constant effort of approaching every problem with the consciousness that there is no single way of solving it. "Art una-species mille." This battle cry of the Renaissance should be repeated again and again. Art may be one but there are a thousand species. We must face the dangers of the crystalizing style not negating its existence but trying to enrich its scope by opening new roads for investigation and future refinements.

"Form follows function" no longer satisfies ambitions aroused when form becomes judged for its universal values, but sensitivity to the minute exigencies of life remains the source of creative invention leading through the elimination of "exactitudes" to the more important and more general truth which equals beauty.



"his training was more a loving study of the **RENAISSANCE** than the rigorous academism of  
**MODERNISM**"





SKETCHES OF A CITY FOR

THESE STUDIES

MATTHEW

DONE DURING

HE WAS ARCHITECT

DEPARTMENT OF

NORTH CAROLINA

Photo of Grandstands and  
Paraboleum By Lewis Watson

STUDIES FOR THE STATE

F O L I O  
F O R  
T H E  
S T A T E

MATTHEW NOWICKI

PROJECT: A NEW CITY IN INDIA

this work was done in collaboration with  
MAYER & WHITTLESEY

PROJECT: NEW BUILDINGS FOR THE  
STATE FAIRGROUNDS

this work was done in collaboration with  
WILLIAM HENLEY DEITRICK

SKETCHES OF A CITY FOR INDIA WERE DONE IN SIMLA, E. INDIA

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THESE STUDIES ARE THE WORK OF  
MATTHEW NOWICKI  
DONE DURING THE TWO YEARS  
HE WAS ACTING HEAD OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE  
NORTH CAROLINA STATE COLLEGE

Photo of Grandstands and  
Paraboleum By Lewis Watson

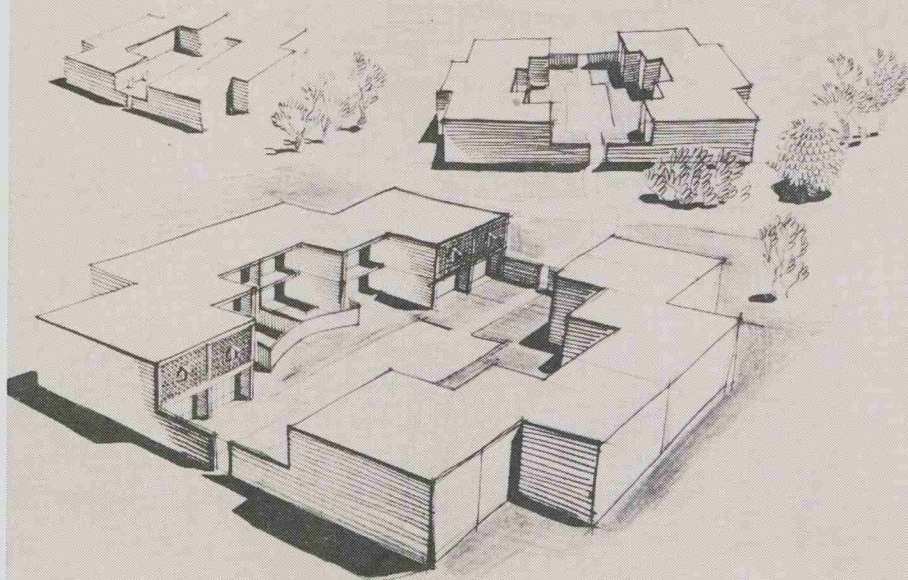
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STUDIES FOR THE STATE FAIRGROUNDS WERE DONE IN RALEIGH





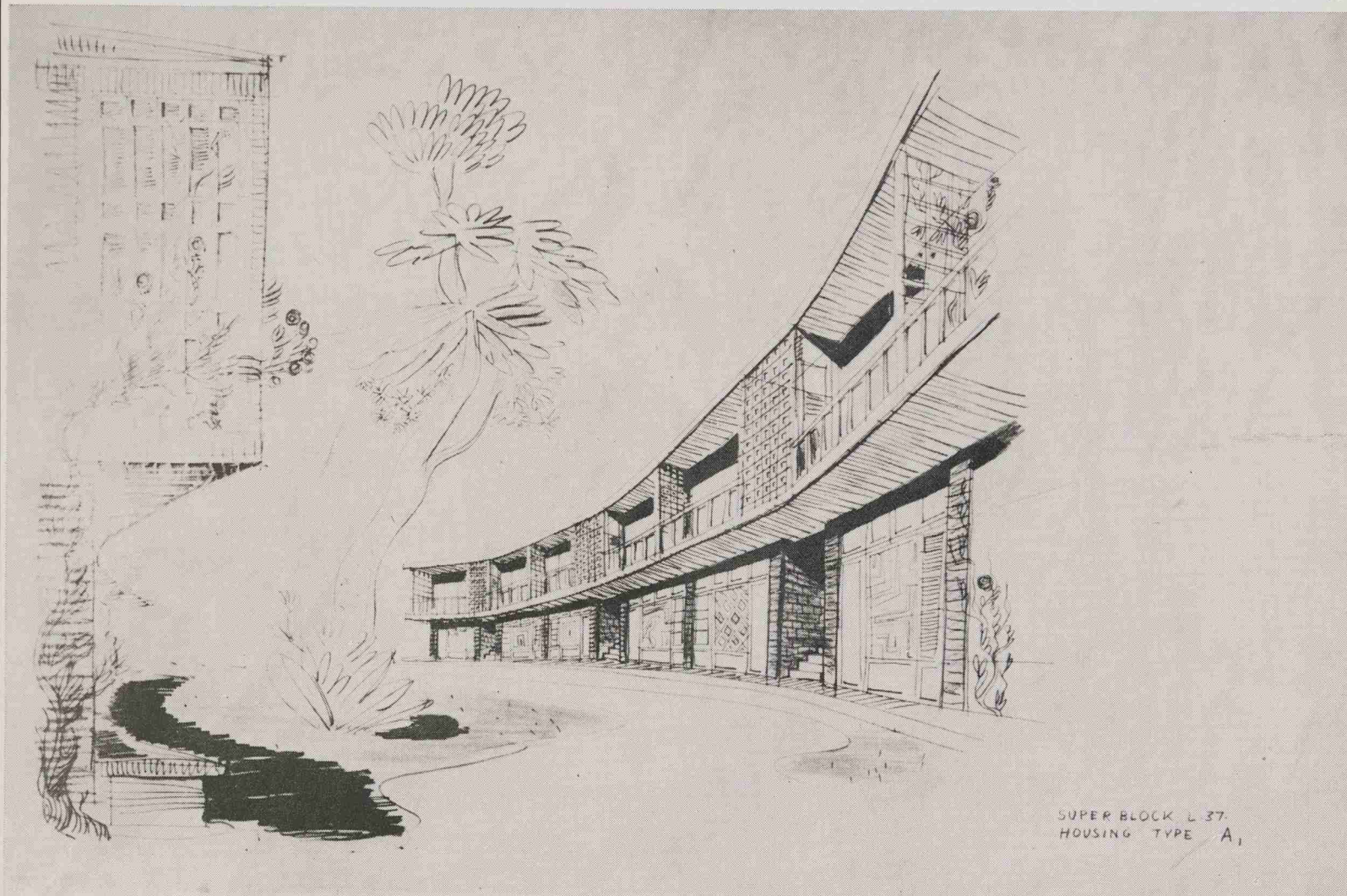
SUPER BLOCK L37  
THE PRIMARY SCHOOL



SUPER BLOCK L37  
THE COURTS — HOUSING TYPES  
B, and D



ROW HOUSING TYPE A1 WITH SECOND FLOOR. A CITY FOR INDIA

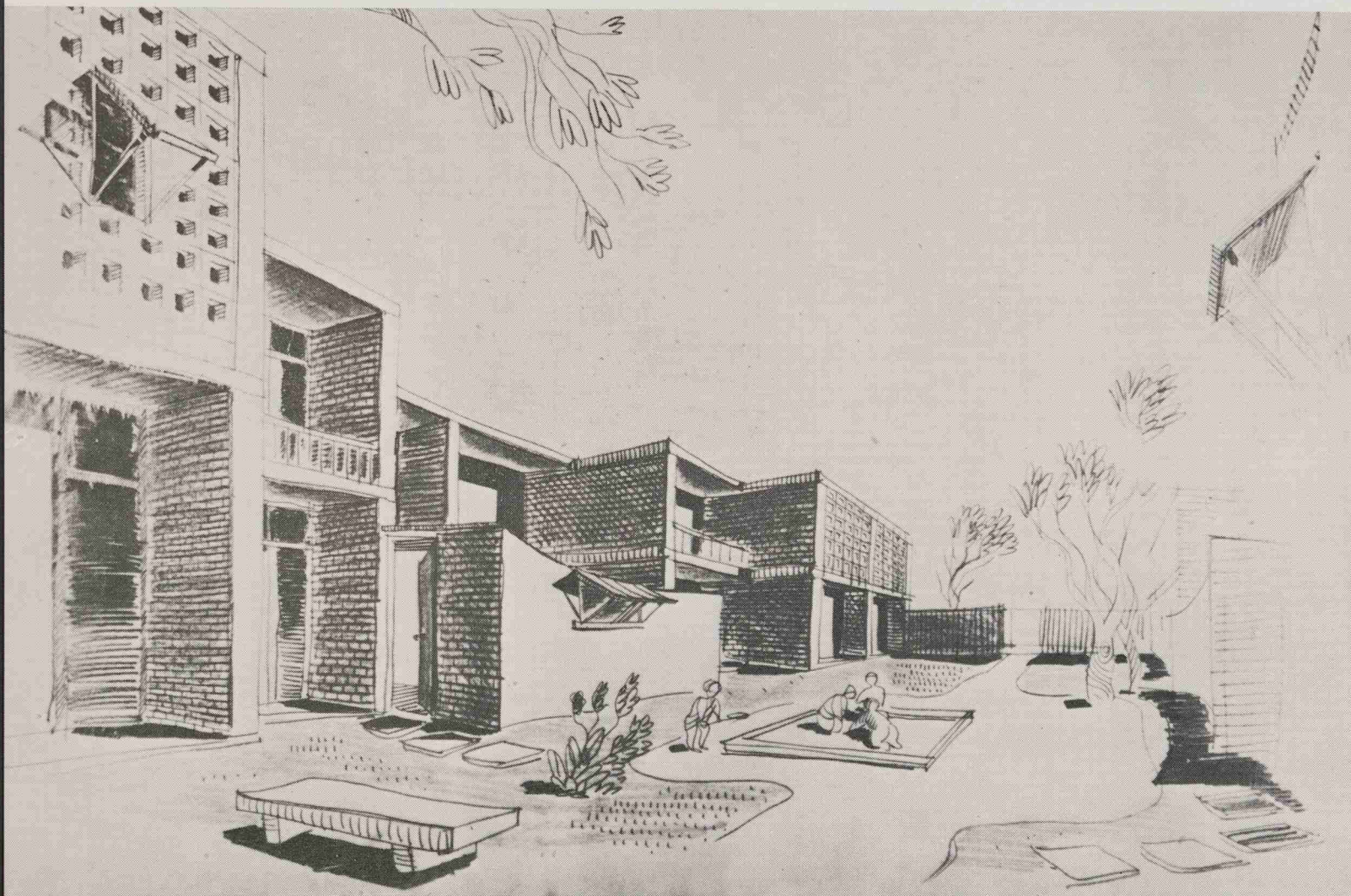


SUPER BLOCK L 37.  
HOUSING TYPE A1

THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY



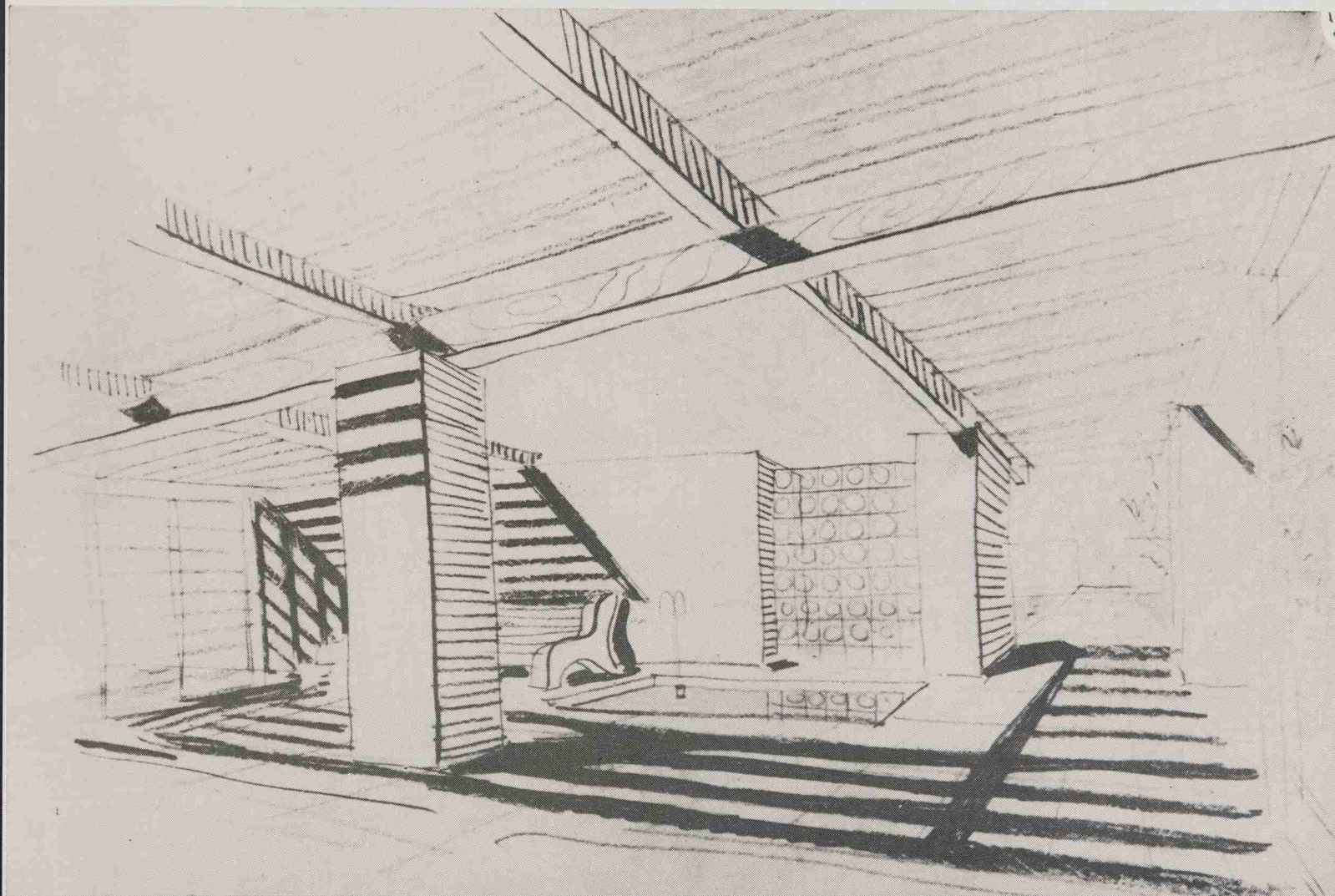
THE COURT, HOUSING TYPES B1 AND D. A CITY FOR INDIA



THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY



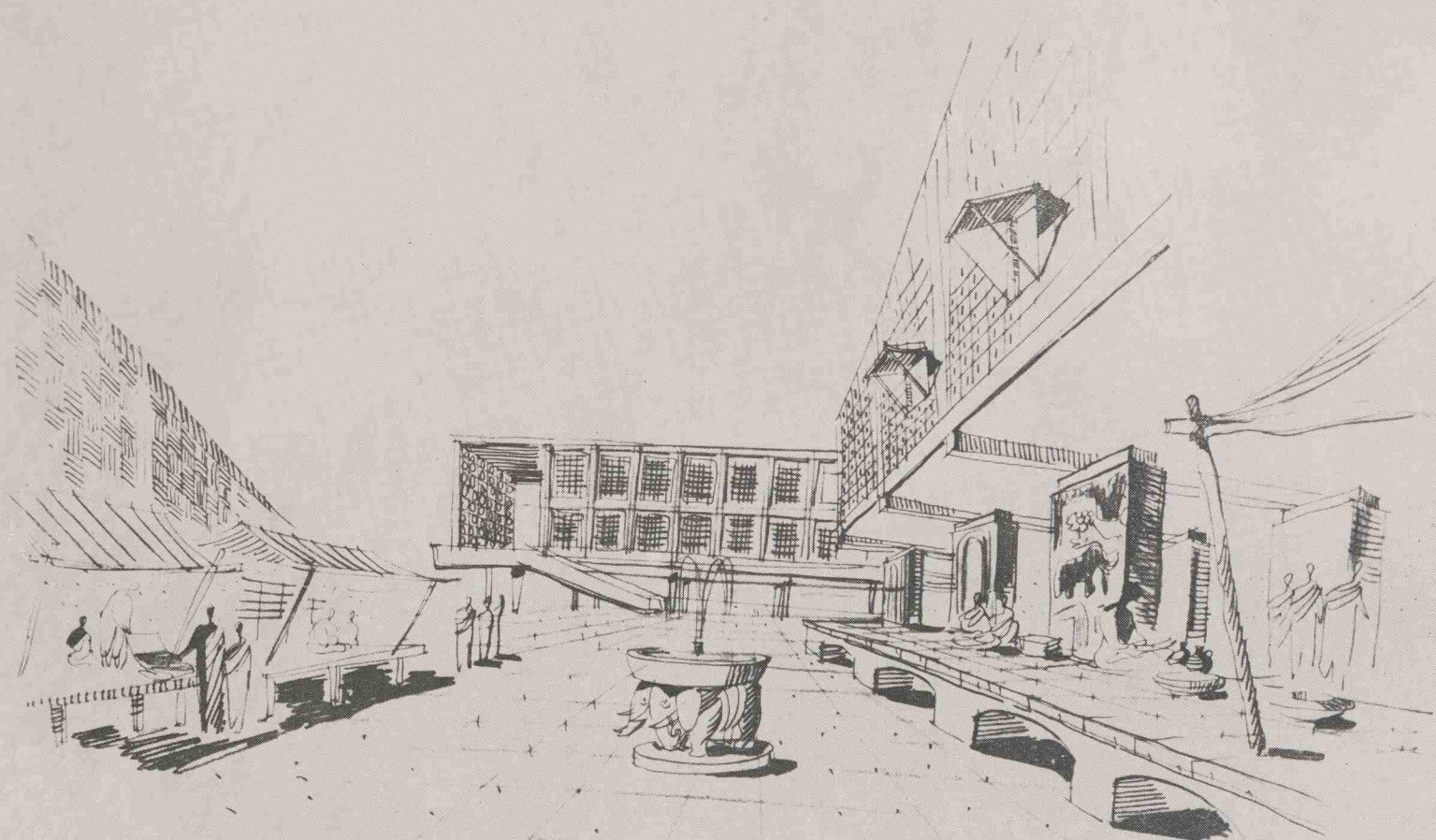
INTERIOR VIEW OF PERGOLA, HOUSING GROUP. A CITY FOR INDIA



THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY



SHOPPING CENTER IS AN OPEN BAZAAR. A CITY FOR INDIA



SUPER BLOCK L-37  
THE SHOPPING CENTRE

THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY



PEDESTRIAN STREET, ROW HOUSING TYPE C. A CITY FOR INDIA

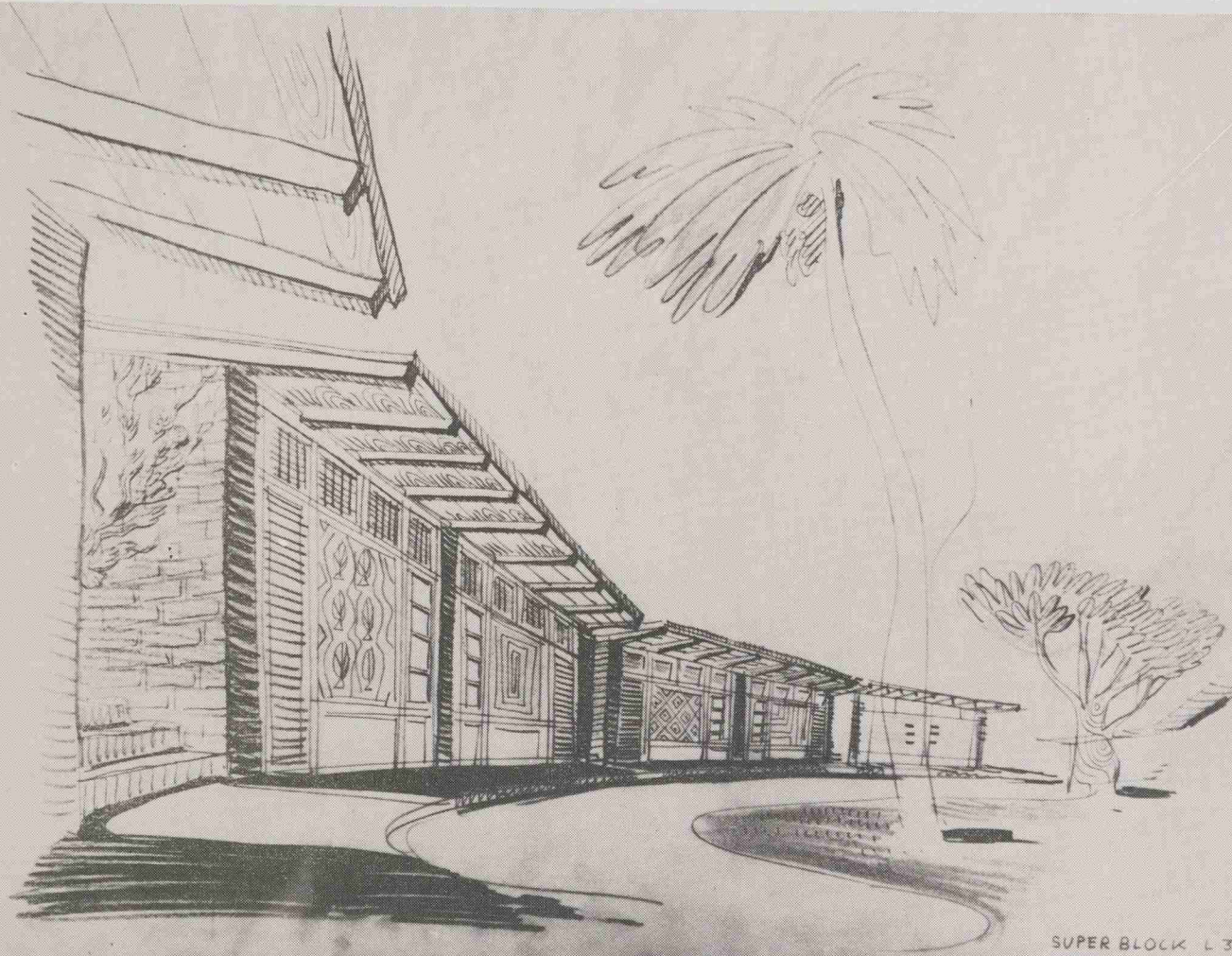


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PEDESTRIAN STREET ROW HOUSING TYPE A1. A CITY FOR INDIA

6

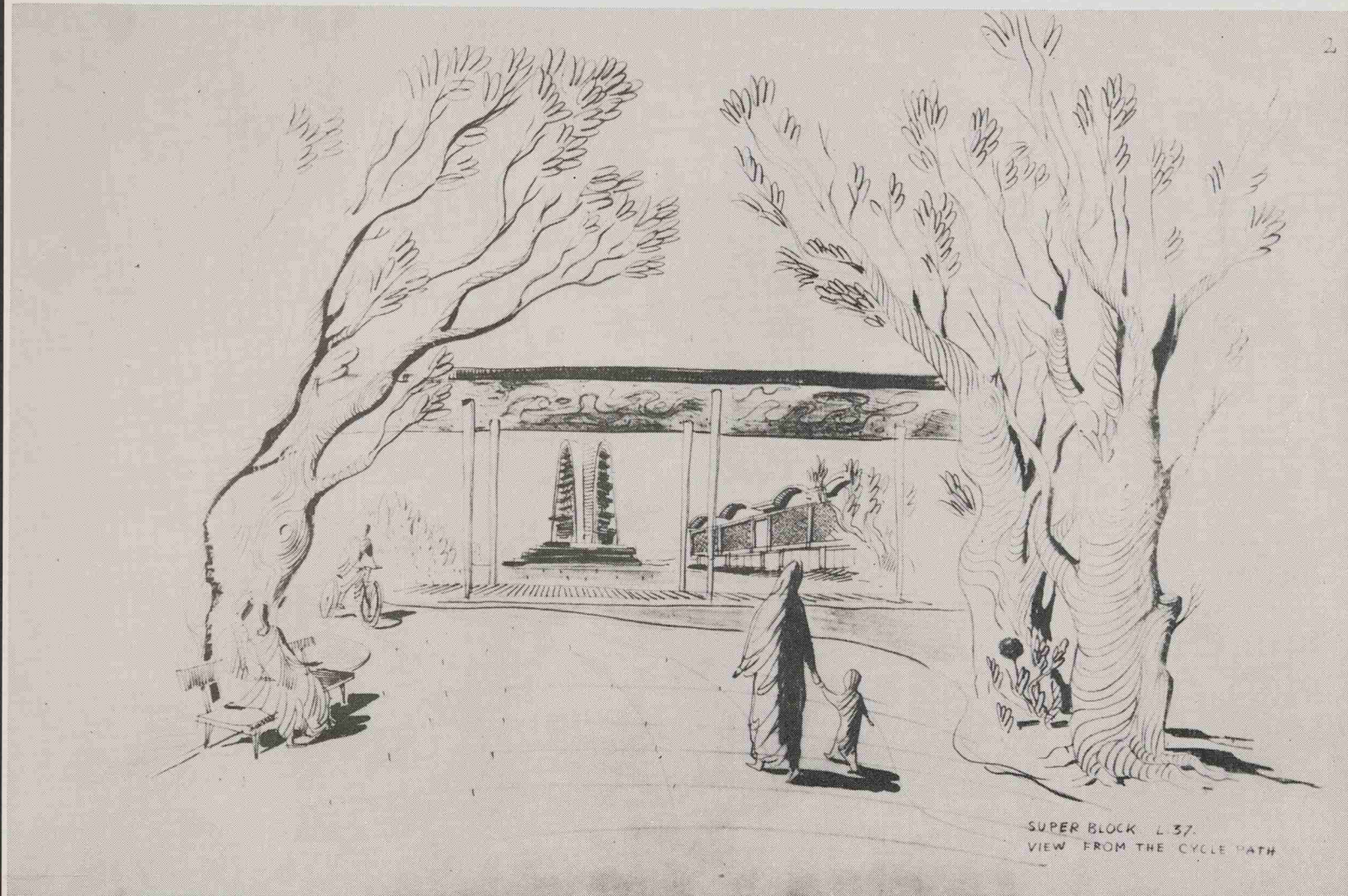


SUPER BLOCK L37  
HOUSING TYPE A.

THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY



VIEW OF TEMPLE FROM CYCLE PATH, A CITY FOR INDIA



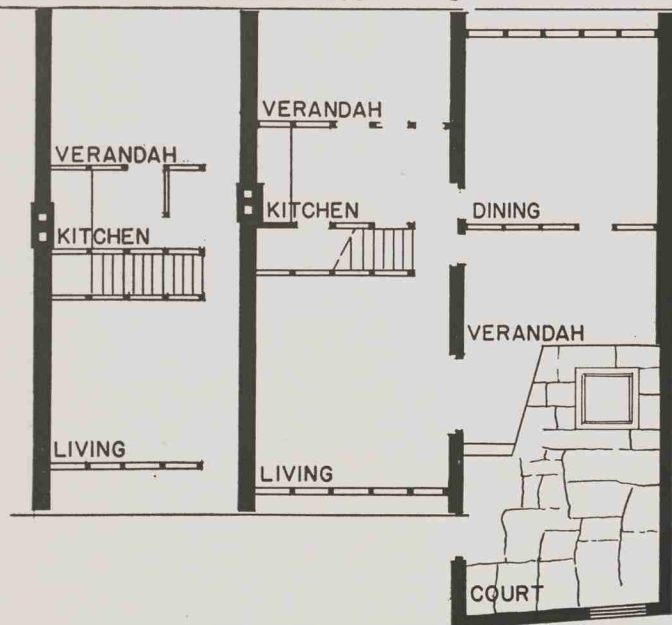
SUPER BLOCK L. 37.  
VIEW FROM THE CYCLE PATH

THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY

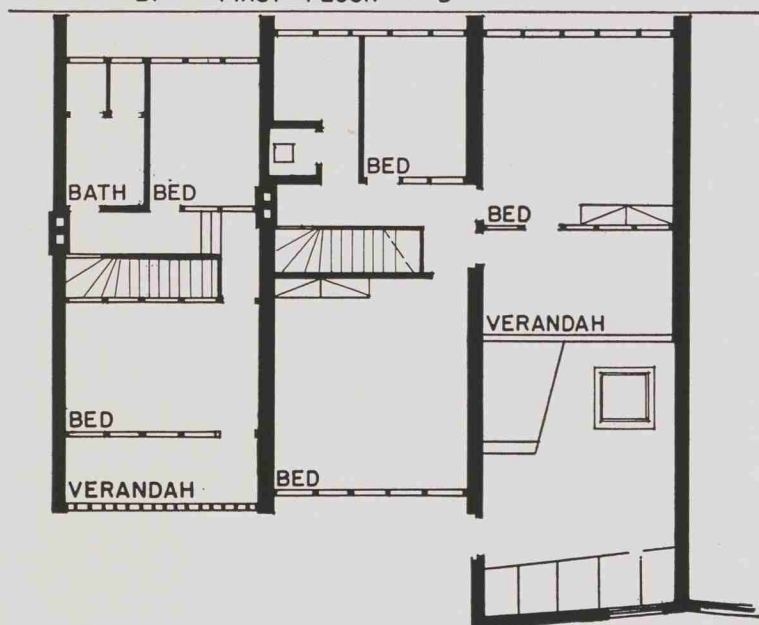


FLOOR PLANS FOR ROW HOUSING B1 AND D. A CITY FOR INDIA

B<sub>1</sub> - GROUND FLOOR - D

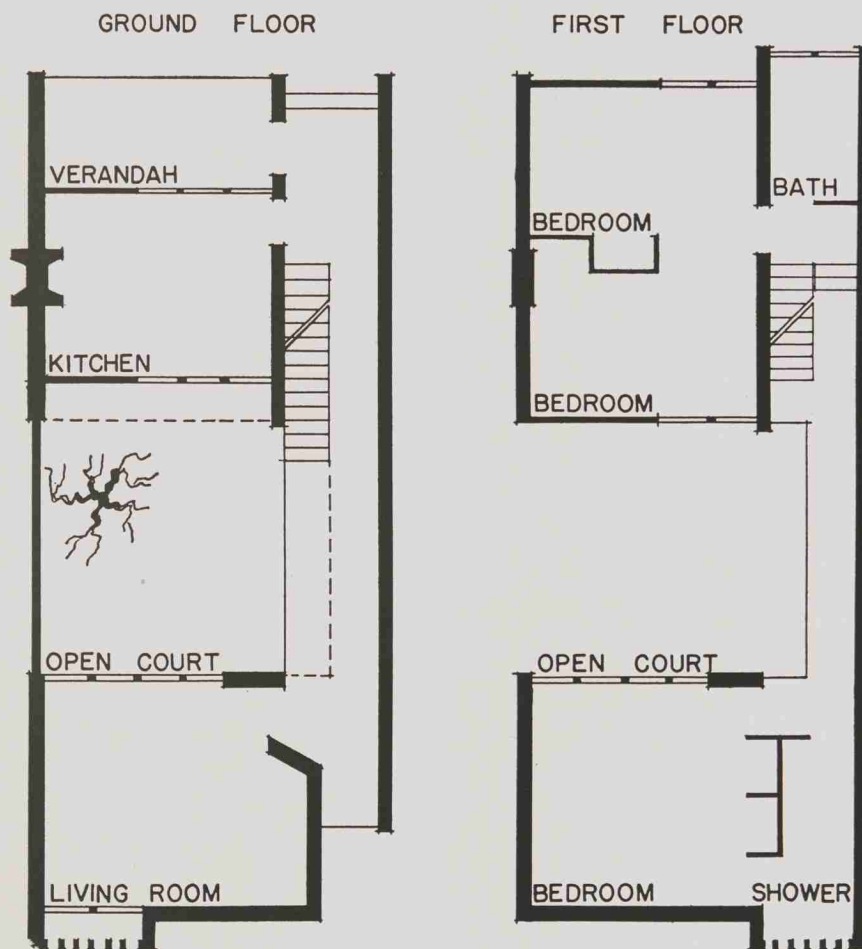


B<sub>1</sub> - FIRST FLOOR - D



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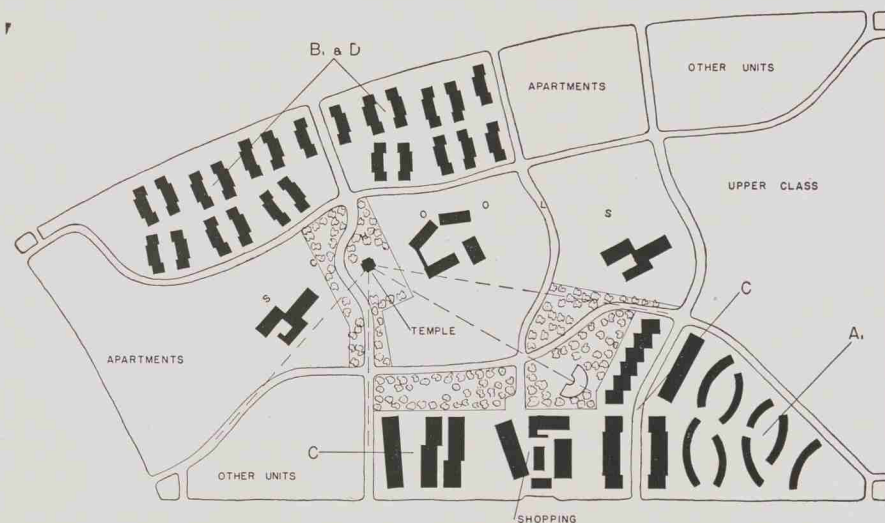
FLOOR PLANS FOR HOUSING TYPE C. A CITY FOR INDIA



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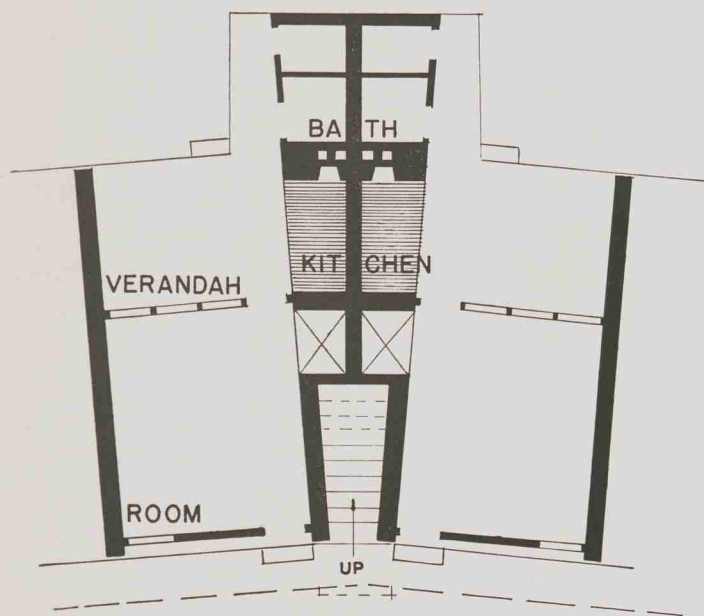


OVERALL SITE PLAN SUPER BLOCK L-37. A CITY FOR INDIA

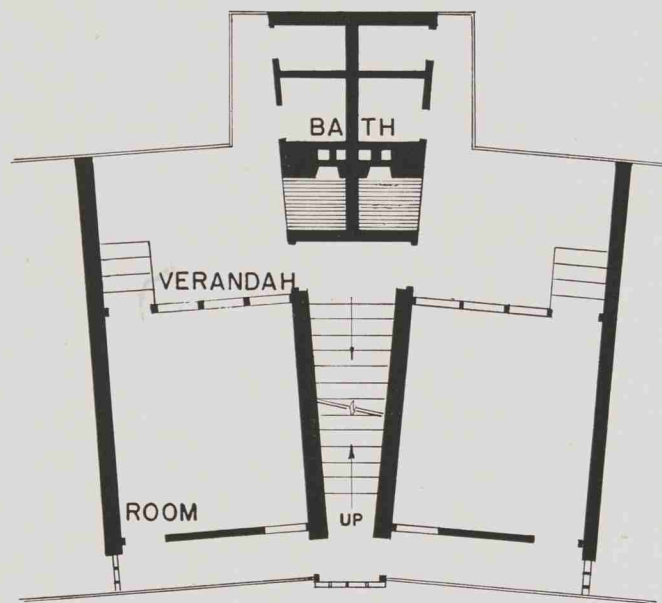


THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY

FLOOR PLANS FOR ROW HOUSING TYPE A1. A CITY FOR INDIA



GROUND FLOOR

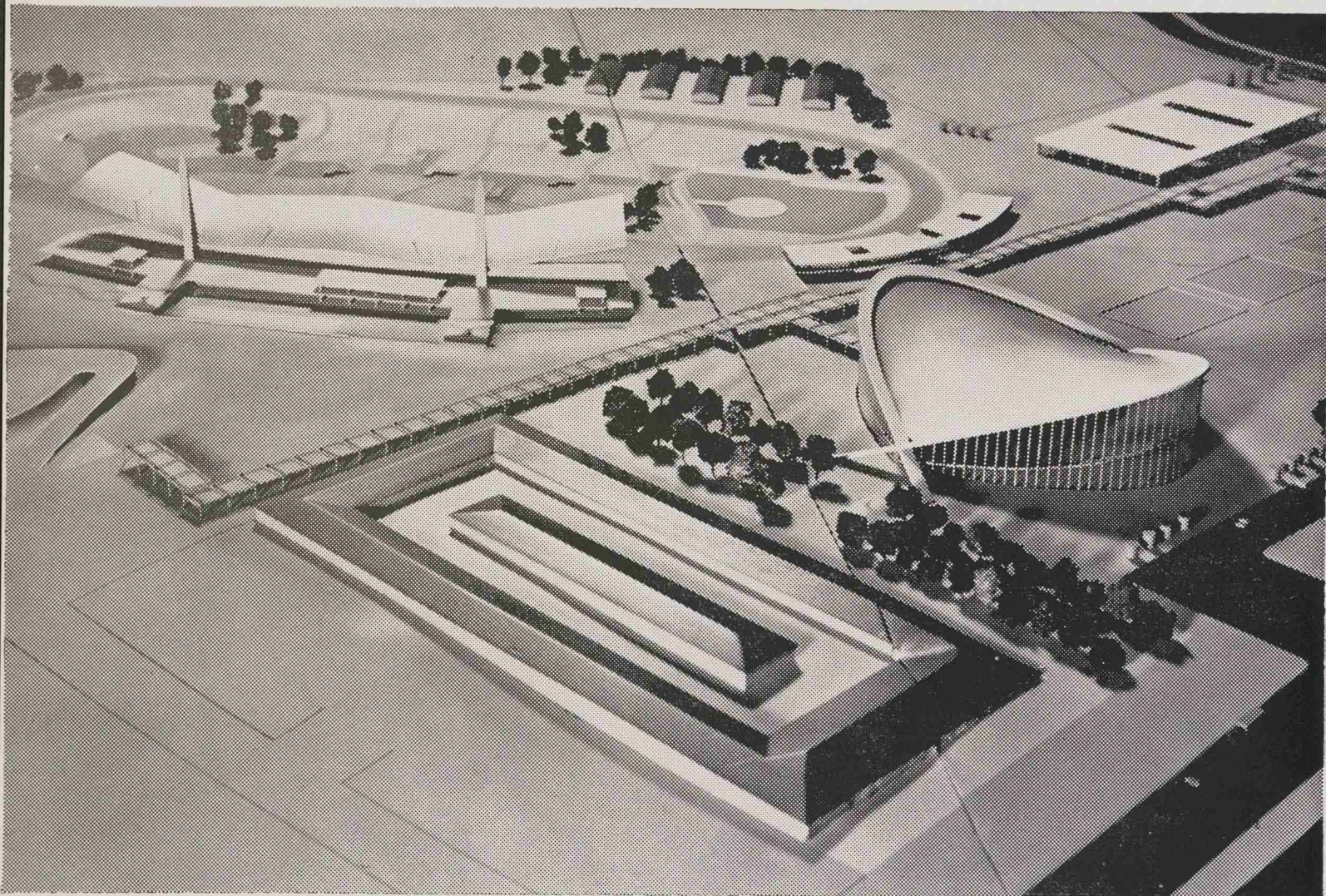


FIRST FLOOR  
TO BE ADDED LATER

THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH MAYER AND WHITTLESEY



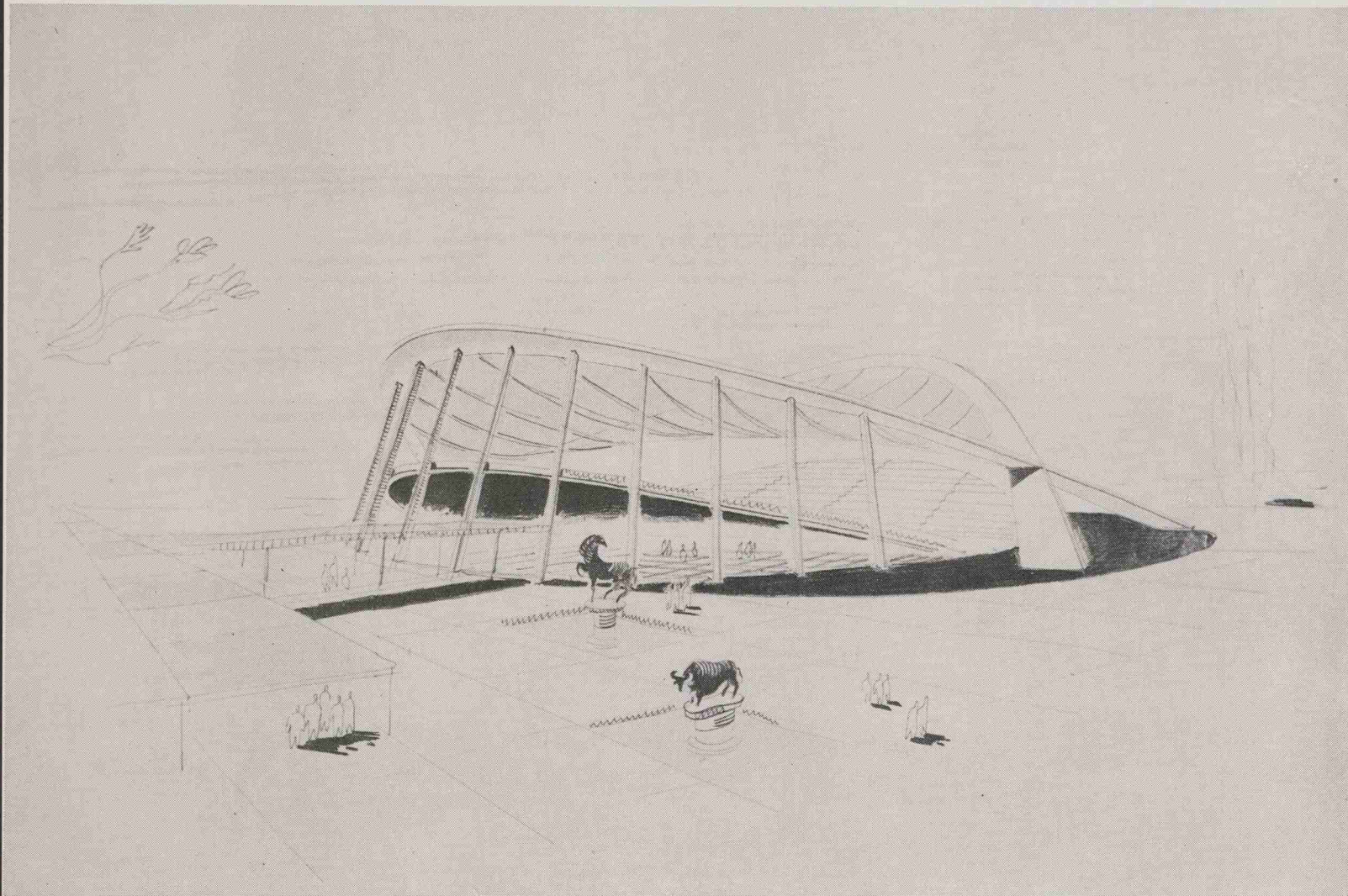
GRANDSTANDS AND PARABOLEUM. NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIRGROUNDS



THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH WM. HENLEY DEITRICK



STUDY FOR THE PARABOLEUM, NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIRGROUNDS

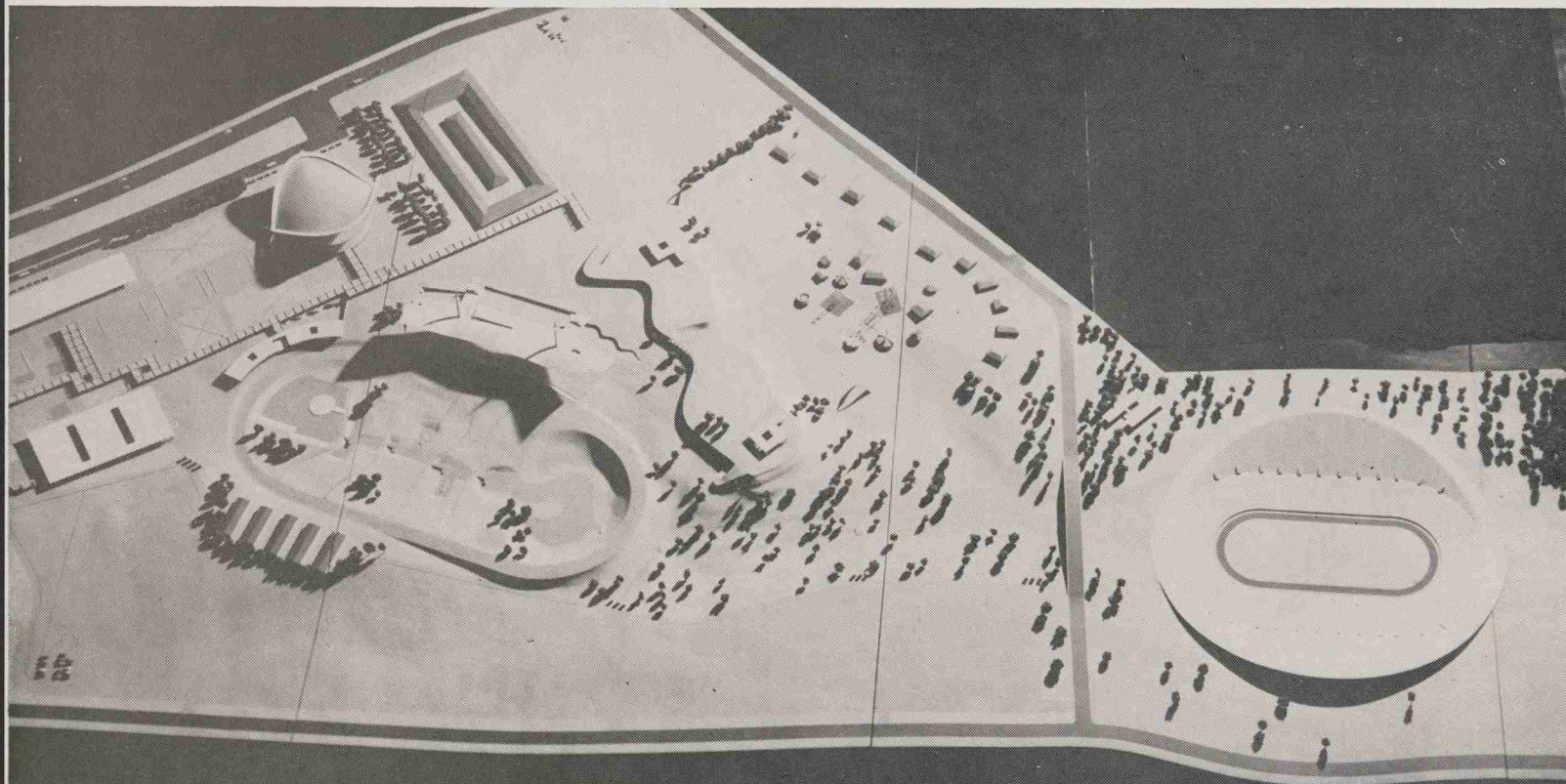


THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH WM. HENLEY DEITRICK



3686

MODEL OF THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIRGROUNDS, RALEIGH



THIS WORK WAS DONE IN COLLABORATION WITH WM. HENLEY DEITRICK



# MATTHEW AT THE FAIR

## William Henley Deitrick

It was fortunate for all concerned that Matthew Nowicki was interested in collaborating on the North Carolina State Fair project and that he was available. It was in the early fall of 1949—just before the Fair that year.

The problem presented was a challenging one. The commission embarked upon was the overall site plan, an amphitheatre or livestock pavilion and an enlarged grandstand and exhibit building. In addition to the new buildings new faces were to be overlaid on old structures to insure a pleasing continuity. Various buildings were too good structurally to be destroyed and too bad architecturally to remain untreated. The budget was inadequate to provide for all needed facilities but a long range plan was required and as much new building as the funds would permit.

Numerous conferences with the Fair officials were held and enthusiasm mounted. Matthew was an inspiration to his associates and clients alike. The clients wanted a fair facility that would advertise North Carolina as a progressive state and they wanted no copy of anything done before. This, Matthew's genius, boldness and originality, set out to do. Hundreds of sketches came from his pencil—lightning like—many of them satisfying everybody but himself. Finally one would be developed.

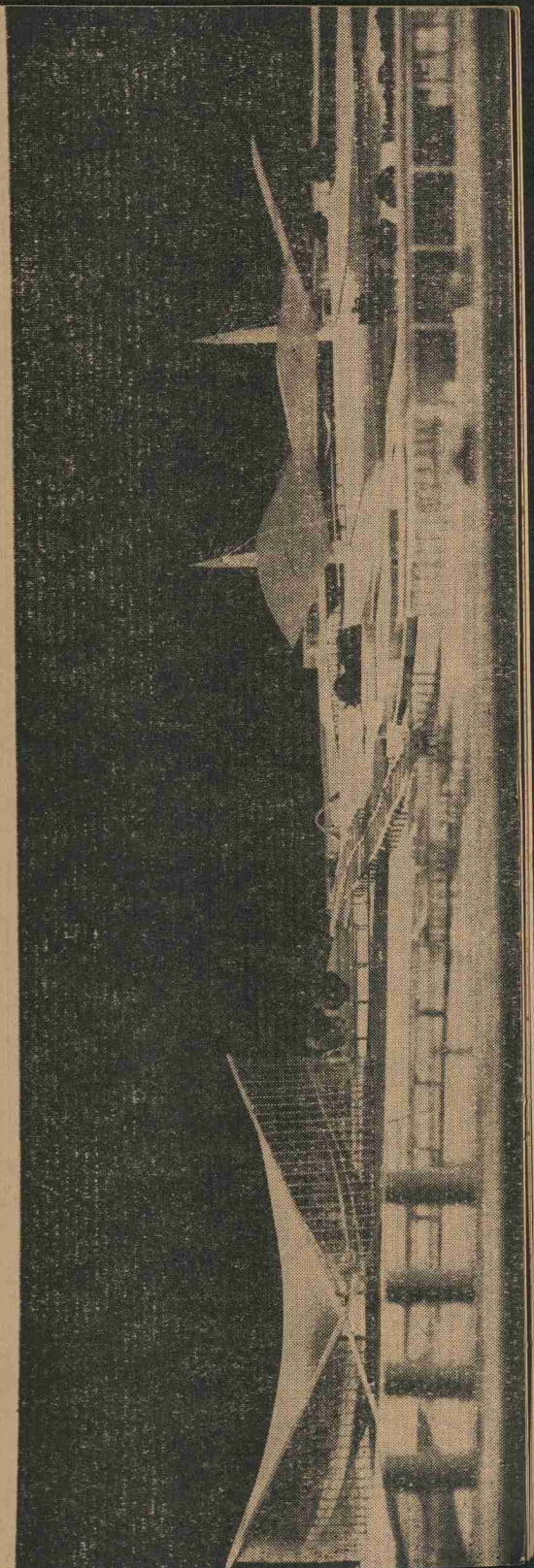
The livestock pavilion, for which the building contract was awarded early this year, is a design, the originality of which has not been questioned. Planned so that all seats are on the sides where the walls rise high and none at the ends where the walls are low, it is shaped by intersecting parabolic arches. No old name seemed to fit and so Dr. Lodwick Hartley of North Carolina State College has called it by a new name—a "paraboleum." It has no ornamentation whatsoever, its architecture being determined by the simple lines and surfaces necessary for its structure and use.



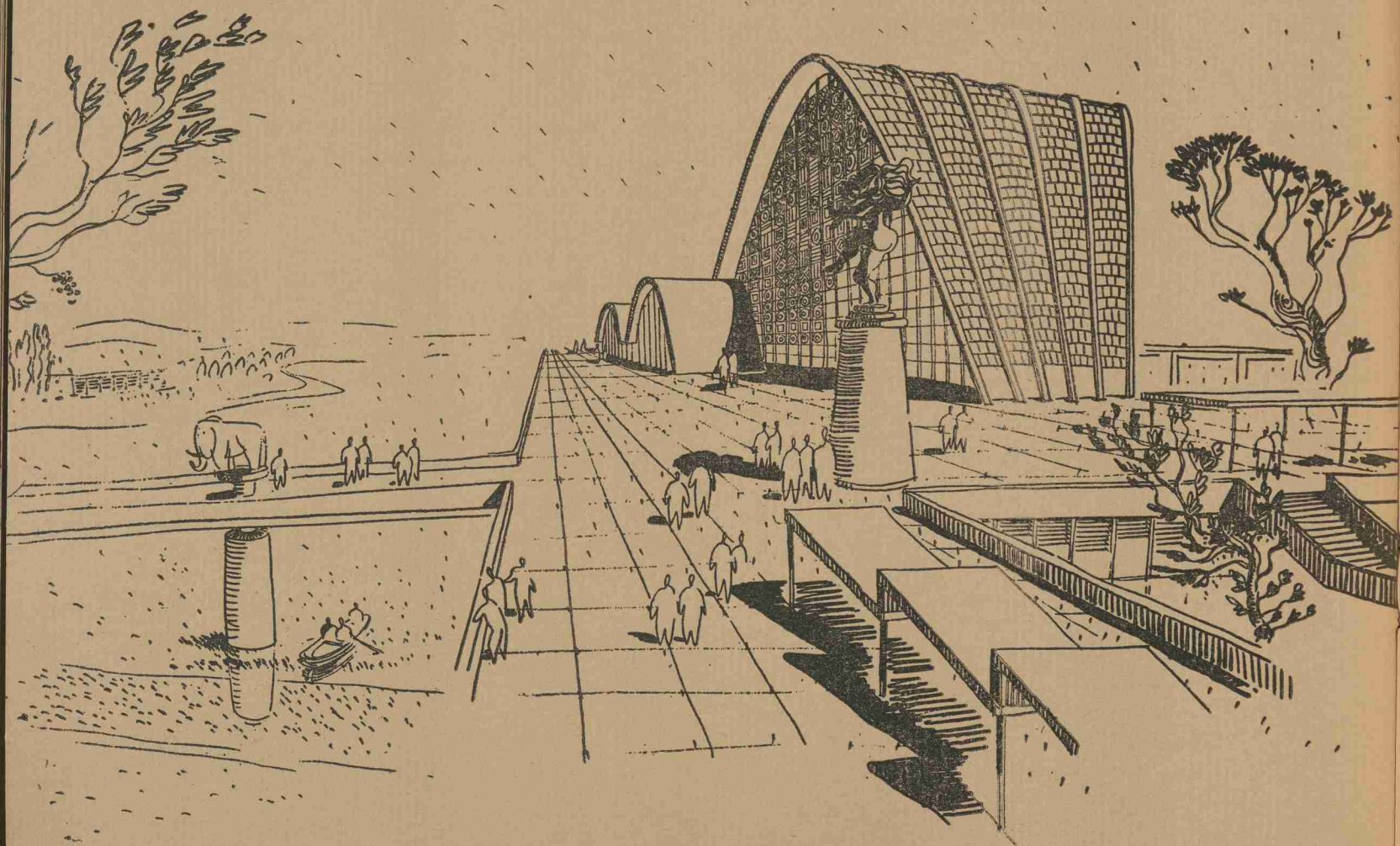
In addition to his concentrated effort on the "paraboleum," Matthew in his remarkable use of time, was interested in a number of other office projects, especially the proposed North Carolina Museum and Archives Building in its early stages. Though he wasn't enabled to complete his studies, here again his impact was great.

He had a way with clients which early convinced them of his sincerity and ability, resulting in a continuing mutual respect and cooperation. With him a primary tenet fixed the client as the most important factor in any successful architectural undertaking. His philosophy was contagious—the whole drafting room would catch his spirit. It is certain that his influence on character building was as great if not greater than on design. Quoting Jonathan Daniels' editorial tribute: "If Nowicki could not live to see the embodiment in stone and steel of the plans he had made . . . there was design in his death as in his life. Indeed, the flight which ended in his death emphasized that men in our time, despite war and brutality, the necessity of flight from tyranny, the difficulty of shaping new careers in strange lands, still dream the new cities and are not merely caught in the sickness of a dying world."

"he was young enough not to have to be modern."







# MATTHEW'S LAST EIGHT WEEKS WERE SPENT IN INDIA

**Albert Mayer**

In the most pervasively trying set of circumstances and working conditions that either of us had ever encountered, Matthew achieved a rare mosaic of architectural understanding and virtuosity, or personal sympathy and humanity, even of political skill and tact, rare both because it is so rarely required and because so few could have attained it.

I met Matthew in Delhi after his arrival and we spent the next ten days working together in Simla. The first shock was that nothing had been done with our plans. No one had really studied them, no one had closely studied the reports; there was as yet no program beyond what we had crudely proposed.

No one doubts that Matthew was an architectural genius. But there was in him none of the waywardness of genius and none of the ivory tower requirement. Matthew was grand in human relations too. He showed himself eager and resourceful in diagnosing and tackling situations which are, or should normally be, quite remote from an architect's sphere of duty and action. And above all, his bubbling humanity never failed him in even the most distressing and frustrating situations. How gaily we discussed and wrote each other letters and made our plans to overcome these tribulations, and how many he did overcome! There is personal grief in Simla for Matthew, shared by draftsmen, engineers, civil servants, politicians, ministers.

There were other unexpected difficulties. Not even the house plans had been developed appreciably beyond our own diagrammatic indications. There was no assembled staff and no drafting room. We settled for an empty room in the Secretariat. A couple of draftsmen were found. Into our hotel room we managed to get a drafting table and a very good adjustable desk lamp—a British one, which we both agreed, incidentally, was better than anything on the American market.



We had come expecting to do some fairly high level work, to criticize what had been done by the government staff, to coordinate the work of private architectural firms who were to have been employed to develop various sections of the town and to develop further the main civic and governmental features. Instead, we had to start really from the beginning with developing the smallest houses in our L-Blocks. This state of things was far from being the only source of disappointment and bafflement. It was part of a general situation. The Chief Engineer, whose personal vision and tenacity almost single-handed were responsible for there being a new Capitol project instead of just some addition to an existing city, had recently lost what to him was an important administrative struggle of some sort. One can only say that this and other conditions had—temporarily at least—resulted in no action having been taken to prosecute and implement the design. In the field there was intense opposition by the farmers to be displaced, aided and broadened by skillful political opponents of government. No land had been acquired. Surveyors had been chased off.

The Cabinet had previously approved the plans, but there was still dissension and indecision—a part of the general political malaise and confusion in this province, truncated by partition.

In those first ten days we worked as hard as we could among distractions and conferences and interruptions. Matthew did not for a moment let himself be disappointed by the fact that he was designing small houses instead of city squares and capitol buildings. He took hold happily and without fuss. In a very few days he had begun to show what aesthetic and living quality and what characteristically Indian quality could be given to an excessively minimum house, to the texture of the street.

Still, I hated to leave him there by himself. Even to me, used to many strange conditions of work and atmosphere and to slower tempos, it was a troubling situation. On



top of that Matthew was deeply worried about the Korean War, about Siasia and the boys on the other side of the world. We walked and talked endlessly at night along Simla's enchanted Mall, with its enchanted constellations of lights up and down the hills, the haloed mists, the sudden sharp views down into the drama of steep winding lanes. It was exciting, and our spirits would recover, and we would discuss a million plans and situations, as well as philosophy and aspirations.

Matthew was prolific in solutions, all of them stimulating and imaginative, most of them feasible. Next morning we'd be sketching on our drafting tables, and the room servant would have to sidle in with our early morning tea, because the space had not been designed originally for bedroom and drafting room both. We finally decided that there was no question of covering a lot of ground on this visit, that to complete one of the thousand family super-blocks and do it well, with its houses, schools, playgrounds, and shopping center, would be all we could possibly do this time and all that they would need for some months to come. As I left, Matthew said, "Don't worry. I'm not discouraged, and I'm a good salesman." Matthew had justified self-confidence, disarmingly felt and expressed. We met again in Delhi six weeks later, on August 22. He brought along his drawings, and a fine show they made, full of spirit just as drawings, full of gaiety almost as a cartoonist's drawings are, and professionally illustrating new possibilities of the minimal house and its grouping into varying close coupled and open patterns. What amazed me was the sheer quantity of work Matthew had produced practically single-handed and the flow of imagination through it all, as though the work and thinking had been quite unhurried, quite undistracted by the other complications of the situation. But, actually, he had been attending cabinet meetings, explaining the issues generally and his drawings in particular, following up these meetings by personal conferences, ironing out issues, bringing personalities together, writing publicity pieces. . . . Other professional men have done such extraneous work, too, but generally their own work loses quality, sharpness, distinction—for the two aspects don't generally go together.



In Matthew they did indeed, and in both to the highest degree. He made warm friendships, and he made issues clear to people who had not thought of such problems before. He catalyzed and produced action.

The small house he designed, the one with the inner court and the tiny balcony connecting the two elements of the upper floor, is a gem in architectural scale and feeling and a first-class tropical solution. The conception and careful study of levels as economy, convenience and scale, the house with the inner open stairway, the one with the front garden-court—all of these showed an extraordinarily prolific flow which in itself was the crystallization from a much larger number of ideas. The street is, of course, the important unit of architecture where these small houses are concerned. The problem is to create something interesting, something of varied appeal, in place of the usual pre-ordained rectangular, equidistant blocks. I think the characteristically narrow street, breaking into small squares now and again, with houses of different plan, different ventilation requirements suitable to each location, form an important contribution to eastern urbanism. The house types can in most cases be built in stages—a probably important feature in a country where, it is ardently hoped and expected, the desperately low present incomes will become more adequate; where, also, due to the strong ties of family and of place of origin there is likely to be more of a mixture of incomes in any one locality than with us.

I don't mean to get too much into a discussion of architecture and planning, but based on all our talk and work and other of his work that I have seen and studied with him, I do need to say this:

Matthew was certainly an architectural genius of an order to match anyone in this generation, fully as bold, fully as original. But these other men of talent whose work I have known, lack a sense of discipline, a sense of the living importance of the great past, an integral and pervasive and dynamic impulse from it, a textured habit and feel-


ing that we are building a projection into the future of the great work of all ages and places. Matthew was not **merely** original, **merely** bold, **merely** an innovator, but an architect whose work was organically connected with the greatest contributions of all architectural time. This is what I was beginning to learn from him, not just as theory, but as an interwoven element of the fabric. We spent a day and a half together this last time, criticizing the work, discussing refinements, adjustments, changes, and discussing how we could carry out the next design steps of other super-blocks and centers which the government seemed likely to entrust to us. We had both been disappointed and chagrined by not having found men who could be trained, stimulated, inspired, as I had found could be done in other areas. But we had to leave that for another time.

There is just not the tradition of serious systematic architecture, and really not the raw material yet. Matthew had thought about it a lot and had the answer; America must set up a complete architectural-engineering school in India. Nothing less drastic would meet the problem, said Matthew. It would be a flea-bite for America, and what a tremendous gesture it would be, what impact it would have, how Quixotic and American and necessary in this murky world. And it would work. The Indian is not a self-starter in the realm of the specific, but quick and eager and effective on the uptake; susceptible to absorption of know-how.

And so the great talk went on. And maybe we can, and perhaps we must, do something or much about these ideas of Matthew's.

He was on his way to Bombay about which I had enthused to him. The last word he sent me, a postcard before he took off, had all his zest. "You're right. Bombay is wonderful. Don't make any mistake, Albert. With all the grief, I've had a great time in India. We'll crack it open." That was the spirit and rough content of it anyway. I didn't keep the card, for I had no premonition.





If all the edges were even,  
Planed smooth.  
If all forms  
Were indistinguishable.  
All tastes  
Were of bitter, saline ink.  
All smells  
Were of moldering vomit  
All textures  
Were of the feel of bone  
Dry cloth that falls apart  
At the least touch,  
Crumbling like the ash  
Of burned leaves—  
Would that be madness?



## TWO POEMS

William C. Dobson, Jr.

In hot weather the sweat  
Runs sticky,  
Collects in eyebrows,  
Spills over distended veins  
This is the mill—  
What else of the city?  
The squeal of pigs  
Scrambling for the freshly filled  
Slop trough;  
The local trains  
Caren wildly  
Through the masonry caverns  
And defiles.  
Chips of marble lie  
Scattered in the city hall courtyard.  
Fluttering along are bits of  
Yesterday's newsprint  
And wrapping paper,  
Crushed peanut hulls  
Scream and echo shrilly  
Up the old, old sooted walls.

The city  
Crouches on all fours,  
Crammed and cramped into  
Thirty square miles  
Along with the filth;  
The coal smoke  
And sewage rotting in the rivers,  
And the atrocities  
That clutter downtown sidewalks.  
Cry aloud, slaves  
Drink the carbon monoxide  
And the dead amoebas  
In the water  
Wallow in it,  
All speaking at once  
In a confusion, a bubble  
Of automobile horns  
Eat the filth  
Dipped up in grimy bare hands  
Along with stained cigarette stubs  
And nails bent double.

It is yours, all of it.  
It belongs to you and the  
Street lights; the theater marquees,  
You shall have it,  
Wrapped in the stench of  
Burning rubber,  
Mangled and well masticated  
By the teeth, the grinding wheels  
Of trolley cars.  
I cannot wait—  
Wait like a leaden plug  
Crammed into the muzzle,  
But all my forces  
Are of no avail.  
The city—  
Well-contained in its thirty square miles  
By the pressure of open  
Living Space.  
Well contained and held,  
While the open space stands,  
Laughing.



# T H E M U S E U M I S S L I P P I N G

Every time I visit the Museum of Modern Art, I wonder what the Museum will have done since I was last there. Invariably I can quickly find the answer; sometimes I can **predict** the answer. It becomes increasingly evident that the Museum is shaping a conservative mold for itself, a fact which, to me, is extremely disappointing. It is unfortunate, too, that by so doing the Museum is losing that respectful patronage among the group of enthusiasts who first greeted its opening with little less than passionate adoration. Worst of all, the Museum no longer champions the experimental movements in the arts. The Museum has contributed immeasurably to the spiritual and mental stimulation of the active mind, and has played a major part in presenting art to the public as a fluid medium of human expression. For these past achievements we can be proud of the Museum, but it is disheartening to see the Museum as it is now—seemingly content with good intentions.

Why is the Museum slipping? There seems to be only one rational conclusion: The Museum has become just a little too well established. This position of acceptance allows the Museum to operate pretty much as its directors see fit. Yet it seems to me that a museum, like a public library, has a responsibility to itself and to the public, that of continually reshuffling its stock and making additions and deletions in as impartial a manner as its good judgment will allow. The Museum should never attempt to influence art or the artist and, indeed, let us hope it could not. The Museum can and must, however, provide an easily accessible place where the artist and the public alike may see the assembled work of their contemporaries. As their fellows are diverse, so is their work; thus, to serve its true purpose, the Museum could never linger in one period of realization or set its course by one movement in the arts. That



is, it could never become conservative. But such is exactly the case. The Museum of Modern Art is potentially the most conservative museum in New York. It was conceived in a certain period and is being evolved along increasingly more definite lines. Its keepers, having found their means of expression, continue to augment their experiences in that period. This is not to condemn the period, nor to say that the product of the period is not sufficiently adequate to merit lasting attention; it is to condemn the static mold the Museum is shaping for itself by the exclusion, knowingly or unknowingly, of other activities in the arts.

What is the Museum trying to do with the "house in the garden" project? Two houses have been exhibited in the last two years: one by Marcel Breuer and one by Gregory Ain. It must be noted that both houses illustrate one phase of modern architecture—the Harvard school of the plaster panel and unpainted vertical siding. Most people accepted the houses themselves, however, not with any great admiration. The acceptance of these two specific houses is rather unimportant when we consider that the houses appear *somewhat* late, because of the recent war, to do the public any real service. Ten years ago, visitors to the Museum might have benefited greatly by such a project. Now, enough houses have been built to acquaint the public with the contemporary approach to residential architecture.

The Museum is an established institution. If this fact has limited the range of the Museum's activities, it has also made evident the increasing lack of imaginative sensitivity on the part of those in charge of arranging the exhibit material. Two things seemingly indicative of this trend toward less and less imaginative effort disturbed me on my last visit. William Lehmbruck's two wonderful pieces of sculpture, the standing man and kneeling woman, formerly occupying a room entirely to themselves, had been moved to a larger room which they shared with two rather uninspiring pieces of work, out of key with

Lehmbruck's sculpture, and impossible to overlook. The addition of these two completely destroyed the exciting space modulation which is possible with Lehmbruck's sculpture.

The Museum had Leopold's "Full Moon" on exhibit. It was placed in a dark alcove, and a bench was provided so that observers might sit and watch the subtle movement of the Full Moon. Two lights pointing away from the observers lit the mobile full on its center as it hung suspended in the blackened space. As far as the Museum had gone, it had done an adequate job, but the lighting arrangement seemed to me very questionable. On the ceiling were the intricate linear shadows produced by the mobile's geometric patterns. These shadows, however, were kept to a minimum. What fantastic possibilities this piece of work offered in variations of shadow arrangement from a basically simple symmetrical geometric structure! Pin point lighting or variations in the lighting arrangements could have exhibited the Full Moon in its ultimate effectiveness.

Regardless of how we feel about the Museum (and most of us love it dearly), we cannot help watching it with a critical eye. Many fond friends and yearly visitors to the Museum have not and will not in the future visit the Museum less frequently, but they are coming back for different reasons and with different feelings from those they had when they first came. The building itself still inspires the same quiet delight, and the garden retains its amusingly casual appearance. But more and more I feel a touch of reminiscent expectancy about my visits there. Hardly does one come across an exhibit that does not fit the familiar pattern. A nice quiet old Museum is in the making. After several years of this slumber, someone will open a new Museum to serve the experimental activities in the arts.

All the Museum needs is the acquisition of new blood—the regenerative influence of an additional energetic force—another pair of sensitive eyes to watch the more subtle forms of divergence.

—SHERMAN PARDUE, JR.

## THE PAGES AHEAD . . .

At the beginning of any worthwhile undertaking is an Observation—an observation that all is not right with one's personal concept of the world. In our own case, the observation is the not entirely original one that the "Age of the Specialist" has gone about as far as we can allow it to go. There are too many painters who know of pigments and oils but nothing of Einstein's **Theory of Relativity**; too many politicians who know of loud oratory and parliamentary procedure but nothing of Donne's **Meditations**; too many chemists who know of elements and radicals but nothing of Gabo's "Spiral Theme"; too many actors who know of elocution and stage business but nothing of Wright's "Falling Water"; too many mechanics who know of engines and brakes but nothing of Russell's "A Free Man's Worship"; too many doctors who know of pills and symptoms but nothing of Dostoevski's **Idiot**; too many farmers who know of legumes and plowing but nothing of Honegger's **Sonata for Two Solo Violins**.

And yet we believe that the intuitions and thought-processes



behind all endeavor are basically similar whether they be in the frontiers of science or the arts or even a new way to promote a fast buck.

The only real difference is in the medium with which each man works—the clay the sculptor molds, the earth the farmer plants, the body the doctor heals. But the intricacies and details of each medium are such that perhaps only a genius can master several of them, let alone all. Although this is so, there is a place for what has been variously called the Renaissance Man, the Educated Man, the Whole Man, the Well-rounded Man. There is a place for the man who realizes that his specialty—his money-crop—is not the only work of importance. The educated man may not be able to master the technique of a great many pursuits. He must, however, learn enough about man's work in other media to perceive the significance of that work and to have a sympathetic understanding of what its masters have to say to him.

Our observation, then, is that modern man's ideal of the Specialist is wrong. He attempts to find or create enough specialized compartments so that each individual in our Democracy of Equality can be a master of one of them. Specialist worship leads to pigeonholing and ultimately to the robot of the Twentieth century who inhabits the arid wasteland where Monotony kills Inspiration.

The School of Design is dedicated to producing not just architects but well-developed citizens. It seems to us that the magazine of its students should lead in that direction—in the direction of an unlimited scope, in the direction of a well-rounded content. We have a place for short stories as well as articles on modern art; for sonnets as well as elevations; for musical as well as architectural criticism.

We hope that the taste and judgment of the editors will be the only limitation on an otherwise limitless horizon.

—JAMES L. BRANDT

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THE IDEAS AND OPINIONS OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS MAY FIND RECOGNITION  
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