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Modern in St. Louis: 1930's Architects and Their Clients

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MODERN IN ST. LOUIS:

1930's MODERNIST ARCHITECTS AND THEIR CLIENTS

by

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Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Fig.14. Jesse L. Bowling & Isadore Shank, design for Detroit Air Terminal, Michigan. c.1929. Courtesy of Peter Shank.

Fig.15. Eric Mendelsohn, Einstein Tower, Potsdam, Germany, 1920-4. Reproduced in William J.R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900.* New York and London: Phaidon, 1996, 187.

Fig.16. Jesse L. Bowling & Isadore Shank, designs for a hotel building in East St. Louis and the Owens Apartment Building, St. Louis. *The Architectural Record.* 244.

Fig.17. Jesse L. Bowling & Isadore Shank, DeBaliviere Building, 5654 Delmar Boulevard, St. Louis Missouri, 63112, 1928. Reproduced in Carolyn Hewes Toft with Lynn Josse. *St. Louis: Landmarks and Historic Districts.* St. Louis: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc., 2002.

Fig.18. DeBaliviere Building, exterior corner detail. (Mary Reid Brunstrom).

Fig,19. DeBaliviere Building, exterior terracotta block detail. (Mary Reid Brunstrom).

Fig. 20.Frank Lloyd Wright, Ennis House, Los Angeles, California, 1923-4. Reproduced in Curtis, 230.

Fig. 21.Ilse Shank, cover for *Collier's,* June 5, 1943. Reproduced in exhibition catalogue entitled Relative Perspectives: Isadore Shank/Ilse Shank/Adelheid Giessow/ Peter Shank/Paul Shank/Stephen Shank, Washington University, Des Lee Gallery, October 5-28, 2001.

Fig. 22.Isadore Shank, Shank Residence, # 4 Graybridge Lane, Ladue, Missouri, 63124, 1939-40, plan and front elevation. Reproduced in St. Louis Globe-Democrat, June 4, 1950.

Fig. 23.Shank House, living/dining room. Reproduced in *Ladue News Magazine* (Fall 2005): 68-9.

Fig. 24.Harris Armstrong, Shanley Building, exterior. 1935. Harris Armstrong Collection.

Fig.25. Harris Armstrong. Dentist's office/apartment for Dr. E.H. Jacobsmeyer, 121 North Brentwood Boulevard, Clayton, Missouri, 63105, 1938. Reproduced in *Architectural Record* (October, 1940): 54. (Bennett S. Tucker).

Fig. 26.Harris Armstrong, Grant Medical Clinic, 1938. (Mary Reid Brunstrom)

Fig. 27.Harris Armstrong, Wieneke & Rutledge Medical Building, 227 North Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, Missouri, 63122, 1941. Andrew L.W. Raimist, Armstrong Catalogue, Harris Armstrong Collection.

Abbreviations

AIA	American Institute of Architects
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BFA	Bachelor of Fine Arts
BS	Bachelor of Science
MFA	Master of Fine Arts
MD	Doctor of Medicine
GD	St. Louis Globe-Democrat
PD	St. Louis Post-Dispatch
MOMA	Museum of Modern Art, New York
The Style	The International Style

"I believe it should be a central aim of any history of architecture to explain why certain configurations and technical solutions were felt appropriate to a particular task, and to probe into underlying meanings and intentions."
--William J.R. Curtis, 1982.

"I don't think you can think about architecture without thinking about a kind of social structure. In the era we are talking about, they had to depend on a kind of society that would support them."
--Leslie Laskey, November, 2005.

Introduction

The long decade between the Wall Street crash of 1929 and the entry of the US into World War II in 1941 is notable in the history of architecture in St. Louis because modernist trends first appeared during the period. This thesis examines these early appearances. Some three decades had elapsed since the Viennese architect, Otto Wagner (1841-1918) in 1896 had coined the term "modern architecture" in his book of the same name, in which he argued for fresh architectural responses to the rapidly changing conditions of the machine age.[1] In St. Louis, architectural works that even now appear startling in their departure from the prevailing styles of the time, illustrate that the practice of modern ideas was far more varied in St. Louis than is commonly acknowledged. The goal of this thesis is to set out the richness and diversity of styles that have a legitimate claim to the modern label and to characterize their sources. I will attempt to determine why modernist designs were attractive to certain architects and their clients. I will also endeavor to establish how modernist buildings shaped the lives and professional conduct of the people who occupied them. I have examined architectural drawings, papers, photographs and artifacts such as furniture, but the subject has been brought to life most compellingly by conversations I have had with relatives and/or acquaintances of the architects and their clients. Using this material, I canvass their respective backgrounds in an attempt to gain insights into why they chose modernist architecture over other prevailing modes of the period. Pierre Bourdieu's sociological

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[1] See Eric Mumford, "Modern Architecture in St. Louis and the Washington University School of Architecture," in *Modern Architecture in St. Louis: Washington University & Postwar American Architecture 1948-1973* , ed. Eric Mumford (School of Architecture, Washington University in St. Louis, 2004), 44.

research found that high culture artifacts, in this case architect-designed buildings, function as declarations of social status, aligning the proponents, architect and client alike, with certain social/professional groups while differentiating them from others.[2] While I do not claim scientific validity for my observations, I nonetheless argue that a picture emerges from my material of a certain class of St. Louisians who enabled modernist architecture to take root. They found the identification with it useful and satisfying, for a variety of reasons that will become apparent.

The idea for this thesis came from Eric Mumford's book *Modern Architecture in St. Louis: Washington University & Postwar American Architecture 1948-1973*, in which he points to another form of modernism, "a more regional sort of modern architecture, one influenced by both [Frank Lloyd] Wright and Scandinavian designs," and distinct from the International Style.[3] Writing in the same book about church architecture, Kathleen James-Chakraborty refers instead to "this alternative modernism," attributing its difference from the International Style to its emphasis on "the creation of a community."[4] Both authors point to divergence between European-derived modernism and a more localized development. If we define "regional style" as a set of formal characteristics that determine the appearance of the building, I cannot draw such a conclusion because a much larger sample of buildings than I have undertaken, would be necessary. But if "regional" might be defined by certain modus operandi for responding

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2 See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1984).

3 Mumford, 44. The term "International Style" came from MOMA's 1932 exhibition entitled *The International Exhibition of Modern Architecture.* The use of the term emphasized the stylistic aspects of the architectural works in the exhibition over their ideological association with German and French collectivist, political ideas. Among the dominant motifs of the Style are cubic volumes, interpenetrating spaces, asymmetrical compositions, flat roofs, white stuccoed walls, and strip window systems.

4 Kathleen James-Chakraborty, "Moderate Modernism: Sacred Architecture in St. Louis and Its Suburbs," in Mumford, 27.

to local conditions such as climate and terrain, then I do make the argument for a regional "approach." That said, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to research other regions of the country, to provide a basis for comparison. Where I use stylistic criteria as a basis for analysis, I endeavor to do so bearing in mind William J.R.Curtis' caution: "…when one investigates an artist of any depth one discovers a sort of mythical content which pervades the forms. We have to do [deal?] with the ways in which fantasies, ideas, even intuitions of a moral order, are translated into architectural terms."[5] My goal is to identify those elements of a building which express the architect's and the client's unique vision and explain how they signify it.

I analyze selected works of seven St. Louis architects who were engaged with modernist idioms in the decade of the 1930's. They are: Isadore Shank (1902-1998), Harris Armstrong (1899-1973), Charles Eames (1907-1978), Frederick Dunn (1905-1984), Charles Nagel (1899-1992), Edouard Mutrux (1907-1999) and William Adair Bernoudy (1910-1988). By "St. Louis architect," I mean one who had an established practice based in St. Louis during the thirties and who had a strong identification with the city. Architects such as Charles Lorenz, Eugene J. Mackey, Jr., Joseph D. Murphy and Kenneth Wischmeyer also satisfy this definition. They were involved with modernism and would be part of a more comprehensive survey.[6] I show that the buildings on which I focus are infused with a spirit of innovation and experimentation that connects them with one another. I argue that notwithstanding the frustrations of finding willing clients, their

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[5] William J.R.Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (New York and London: Phaidon, 1996), 14.

[6] I am grateful to Eugene Mackey III for a conversation about architectural modernism during which he discussed these architects in addition to those I am examining in this thesis. I have excluded the work of Samuel Marx because I wanted to focus on St. Louis architects. I might also have included two early modern buildings drawn to my attention by Osmund Overby, namely Neighborhood Gardens (1935) and Eden Publishing Company (1932), both by Hoener, Baum & Froese.

architects understood the need to seek architectural solutions that would suit the particular needs of the Midwest terrain, climate and taste. In so doing, they drew from sources both modern and traditional. In evaluating their choices, we should bear in mind Curtis' judgment that "the most profound architects of the past hundred years were steeped in tradition. What they rejected was not so much history per se, as the facile and superficial use of it. The past was not, therefore, rejected, but inherited and understood in new ways."[7] Evidence of such creative adaptation of traditional architectural elements in combination with new ideas abounds in the legacy of the richly textured buildings which I will introduce.

The modernist moment of the nineteen-thirties was book ended by two catastrophic events which affected architectural practice in St. Louis and indeed the entire world, in profound ways. At one end, the Great Depression precipitated by the stock market crash of October 4, 1929 severely curtailed building activity and reduced job opportunities for architects correspondingly.[8] This situation improved over the decade of the thirties but as people began to sense that war in Europe was inevitable, American optimism converted to uncertainty. With the outbreak of World War II and especially after the United States entered the war on December 7, 1941, civilian construction dropped off as human and material resources were redirected to support the Allied Forces. In fact, most of the architects who are the subject of this thesis suspended their private practices to join the war effort.

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[7] Curtis, 13.

[8] In an interview on November 4, 2005, Rex Becker, a retired architect now in his nineties, recounted that in 1930 when he was a freshman at Washington University School of Architecture, he was unable to find part-time work. When he graduated in 1934, the only architectural position open to him was at the City of St. Louis where he was put to work designing repairs for the World's Fair Pavilion and the Jewel Box, and other ancillary buildings.

The struggle to find clients underscores the story of modernist architecture in the thirties like a musical continuo. The difficulty arose as a number of factors converged--the unfavorable building climate as already noted; the inexperience of young architects, in most cases recently out of school and yet to establish their professional credentials; new ideas which challenged established design expectations, and St. Louis' exceptionally conservative nature, making it unresponsive to developments that looked too progressive. I will take up this issue of appearances in due course. Meanwhile, the architectural community's frustration with hidebound St. Louis was captured by Harris Armstrong in 1945 in an interview published in *Architectural Record*: "It was St. Louis itself and its conservative, even reactionary, tendencies that presented such a challenge and such a need that we decided to stay here and starve."[9]

A strong and persistent theme in this thesis is the role played in the lives of the architects and clients by their wives who are characterized by their extraordinary character and strength. Behind every architect and client was an educated, talented, supportive and in many cases income-generating wife. Without these women, the account of the nurturing of modernist architecture in St. Louis would be incomplete. Therefore, Ilse Shank, Louise Armstrong, Natalie Grant, Alice Gerdine (Meyer), Tirzah Dunn, Elsa Mutrux and Gertrude Bernoudy feature prominently. In some cases, the husband's impulse to explore modernism in his practice created mixed blessings within the marriage, because there were relatively few clients and family incomes reflected that.

In Chapter One, I survey the social, political and cultural environment of the thirties in broad, "big picture" terms, that converge as the chapter progresses, to a

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[9] Harris Armstrong quoted in "Recent Work by Harris Armstrong," *Architectural Forum* 83 (September, 1945): 115.

discussion of modernist ideas as they played out in St. Louis architecture. I examine the role played by mass media such as movies, in disseminating modernist ideas. I discuss the preeminent architects of the time, Frank Lloyd Wright, the European exponents of the International Style and the Finnish architects associated with the Cranbrook School in Detroit, Michigan, connecting certain themes in St. Louis projects to their ideas. Also covered are the key exhibitions in Europe and the United States that established modernism in its various iterations. I link St. Louis projects to modernist trends in architecture such as the skyscraper. In addition to setting a context for analyzing St. Louis buildings, the chapter will equip us to characterize the particular contribution that St. Louis architects made to the cultivation and nurture of modernist thinking in St. Louis and in some cases, beyond. In the three following chapters, I examine the work of specific architects, Isadore Shank and Harris Armstrong in Chapter Two, Charles Eames, Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn in Chapter Three, and Edouard Mutrux and William Bernoudy in Chapter Four. I develop a biographical perspective on their work, characterize its modernity and weave in profiles of their clients. In conclusion, I draw together the themes elaborated in the previous chapters, showing first how architects synthesized modern and traditional ideas to create buildings that were eclectic responses to specific local conditions. Second, in creating a composite portrait of the cadre of clients who commissioned these projects, I show that they were united in their espousal of certain cultural values, equating modernist architecture with the idea of a progressive future in the expanding urban context of 1930's St. Louis.

Chapter One

The Idea of Modern

The concept of modernism grew out of a need to account for developments in the urban context driven by the advent of the machine, mass production and mass consumption. It carried a connotation of progress with a focus on the future, as opposed to the past.[1] Modern was equated with new, therefore, anything that smacked of historicism could be marginalized in the definition of modern. At the same time, the term functioned as a catch-all for anything conveying the idea of new. The term seems to have possessed significant contemporary purchase in the thirties and people who were interested in new things responded positively to the characterization of their lifestyles as modern. Evidence can be found in both editorial and advertising policies of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in the twenties and thirties, which were proactive in positioning modern products and materials of all kinds as accoutrements of a desirable lifestyle, compatible with progress in the region and in the country as a whole.[2] The strategy of the *Post-Dispatch* and other area papers was to devote generous spreads to buildings designed in an array of modernist styles. Featured projects included Harris Armstrong's Shanley Building in the International Style (1935), the Grant Clinic, a Wrightian/Scandinavian hybrid by Armstrong, and the Talbot Residence (1939) by Mutrux-Bernoudy, the first house in the area which self-consciously expressed Frank Lloyd Wright's principles of

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[1] The pervasiveness of machine age imagery in America's architecture and design spheres is well illustrated in Richard Guy Wilson, Dianne H. Pilgrim and Dickran Tashjian, *The Machine Age in America 1918-1941* Exh. cat. (New York: Brooklyn Museum/Harry N. Abrams, 1986).

[2] My conclusions regarding the *Post's* advocacy of modernism are based on my reading of material made available to me by Dr. Paula Lupkin of Washington University's School of Architecture. In an American architectural history seminar, her students researched 1920's and 1930's issues of the *Post* to determine how the newspaper presented modern architecture and urbanism They presented their findings in an exhibition entitled *Every Day Architecture: See St. Louis through the Post Dispatch* in December, 2005.

organic architecture. Notwithstanding the efforts by the print media to promote modernist designs, St. Louisians seemed to be interested in the modern mainly insofar as it applied to items such as motor vehicles, labor-saving kitchen appliances and comfort-enhancing systems; when it came to selecting a style for their residence or office, they did not show a corresponding interest. As Otto Fuerbringer, a one-time editor and Vice-President of *Time, Inc.* put it in a 1939 article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch:* "Despite the growing activity in the residential home building industry, only an infinitesimal few [houses] have been designed in the modern or functional style which is the product of the most vigorous architectural and engineering minds of our day. The great mass of Americans eager for the new materials and inventions which science has placed at their disposal are still strangely leary [sic] about erecting the framework and arranging the distribution of space in such a way as to make the best use of these materials and inventions. They prefer modern plumbing, electrical and ventilating devices behind an exterior straight out of old England, France or Spain; or, at best, an eclectic façade, with details borrowed anywhere, generally resulting in a characterless building."[3] .

What, then, was the specter raised by the idea of the modern style building? Part of the answer is suggested in the above quotation in which modern and functional are conflated. Architectural modernism in America came to be defined by European modernism in the form of the International Style, a style whose pristine, angular, machine-like efficiency of design linked it to the industrial age and to many, suggested a lack of warmth and repose. Looking back over the evolution of modernism in the nineteenth century, the advent of the industrial age had sparked skepticism and widespread social concern at the inequities and disruptions inherent in the new machine

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[3] Otto Fuerbringer, "Functional Homes and Buildings," *PD*, 9 April, 1939.

age society. The worst nightmare scenarios came to pass during World War I when the killing power of the modern, streamlined war machine was realized. In the aftermath of the war, modernism became tainted by association with the prodigious killing capacity of mechanical warfare. In the postwar recovery of the twenties, the concept of modernism underwent rehabilitation in European architectural schools which emphasized the idea that the productive capacity of the machine could ameliorate the conditions of human life by making mass produced goods available to a rapidly expanding consumer market. The hallmarks of the International Style, namely, the white building, the transparent, washable material, glass, and the grid, added up to a composite metaphor for order and cleanliness, an antidote for a world besmirched by war. Paradoxically, the white grid existed contemporaneously in the public imagination of postwar Europe and America as an indelible image of loss, with uniform tombstones or crosses laid out with regimental precision in the military cemetery. The war dead were too numerous to be repatriated in death, and architects were engaged to develop suitable memorial and funerary arrangements near the battlefields, in Europe. The war cemetery represented a taxonomy of loss, homogenized and with infinite repetition, registering the grim reality that progress manifested in the techniques of modern warfare had come at a painfully high price. St. Louisians were well attuned to such associations. The modernist Soldier's Memorial by Mauran, Russell and Crowell which opened to the public on Memorial Day, 1938, two decades after the War had ended, commemorated the 1,075 citizens of the city of St. Louis listed on the cenotaph and buried in military cemeteries overseas.

Even as Americans may have harbored vestiges of negative association, in the two decades between the cessation of hostilities in World War I and the outbreak of

World War II, they came to believe that modernism in the form of machines, science and technology, would make life better. This belief was manifest in many differing approaches to design and construction. Some buildings were modern in terms of their constituent materials and construction methods even as they eschewed the modern look. For example, McKim, Mead and White achieved the neo-classical style of the main waiting room in Pennsylvania Station, New York City by covering a very contemporary building in terms of its steel-frame technique, with forms adapted from Roman architectural sources.[4] A desire to achieve an ultra-modern appearance of weightlessness and transparency caused Mies van der Rohe to cover up rather than express the steel construction in parts of the Barcelona Pavilion of 1929, paradoxically compromising his belief in truth to materials.[5] Other architects synthesized modern and traditional elements in a stylistic sense. Nagel and Dunn's St. Mark's Episcopal Church in St. Louis is an illuminating example and will be analyzed in detail in Chapter Three.

Movie Modern

The message about architectural modernism was disseminated through exhibitions, magazines and newspapers. But, as Donald Albrecht argues: "More than any other visual medium, film, by virtue of the size of its audience and its growing influence over culture as a whole, helped shape popular perceptions of architectural modernism."[6] St. Louis boasted one hundred and two "motion picture shows" in 1925 and when the

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[4] See Edward R. Ford, *The Details of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 53. I am grateful to Andrew Raimist for bringing Ford's book to my attention.

[5] Ibid., 269-273.

[6] Donald Albrecht, *Designing Dreams: Modern Architecture in the Movies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), xiii.

St. Louis Theatre (now Powell Symphony Hall) was inaugurated in Midtown in the same year, the seating capacity of St. Louis theatres exceeded 100,000.[7] A block to the south, an exotic movie palace, the Fox Theatre, arose in 1929, decked out in a fantastic "Siamese-Byzantine" décor.[8] Many architectural designs of the period seem to resonate with set designs in movie stills reproduced by Albrecht. One that stands out is the streamlined rounded desk, juxtaposed with the glass block grid, at the center of the spatial layouts in Harris Armstrong's office for Dr. Leo Shanley (fig. 1) and for the Grant Medical Clinic. (fig. 2) In different ways, each recalls the disposition of spare, stylish desk and window systems in Fritz Lang's 1927 movie *Metropolis* (fig. 3) and Edmund Goulding's 1932 movie, Grand Hotel (fig. 4) What might the movie association signify? In addition to familiarizing the public with modernism, Albrecht argues that "the 'modern look' became associated with affluence and with progressivism in taste, if not necessarily in political beliefs."[9] As already noted, newspapers in St. Louis were engaged in the project of forging such associations based on the premise that the reader was interested in projecting a modern affect in his/her own personal style. Armstrong's two projects are examples of the convergence of streamlining, functionalism and scientific progressivism.

In associating Armstrong's design motifs with movie sets, I am not suggesting that the inspiration was one-way. Far from it, we know that images then, as now, were subject to infinite cycling and recycling through media and other avenues and that movie set design had its roots in the work of modern architects. Illustrating this point, Albrecht

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[7] "Motion picture shows" means movie theatres. See Carolyn Hewes Toft with Lynn Josse. *St. Louis: Landmarks and Historic Districts* (St. Louis: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc., 2002), 87.

[8] See George McCue and Frank Peters, *A Guide to the Architecture of St. Louis* (Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1989), 65.

[9] Albrecht, xii.

argues that "movie modern" was influenced by five major exhibitions mounted in the twenties and thirties. Influence is the operative word, since Hollywood was not quoting verbatim from modernist trends as observed in exhibitions. Rather, it wove these trends into its characteristic version of modernism, that is, a sophisticated, uncluttered, seductive soundstage acting as a metaphor for the glamour embodied in the actors themselves. The first exhibition was the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris in 1925. Art Deco and Art Moderne both took their names from the exhibition and the terms were more or less interchangeable, both exploiting the geometric patterns of machines for aesthetic effect. St. Louis was partial to Art Deco which was often executed in sumptuous materials. Elements of the interior of Nagel and Dunn's St. Mark's Episcopal Church are good examples, even though Dunn "loathed" the term "Deco."[10] Art Moderne, which took a more simplified, streamlined form appeared in St. Louis also, in Mutrux's Samuel A. Bassett Office. The second exhibition, that of the Deutscher Werkbund in Stuttgart, Germany in 1927, focused on modern design for the industrial society and was the first large-scale public presentation of it. Ideologically, the architecture carried a strong egalitarian message, a fact which made its appropriation by the film industry as elitist iconography, ironic.[11] The exhibition introduced the work of Walter Gropius (1883-1969), Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) and Le Corbusier (1887-1966) among others, whose common architectural language included "asymmetrical compositions of simple geometric shapes; taut, skin-like enclosures of

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[10] Quinta Scott, daughter of Frederick Dunn, interview by author, tape recording, Waterloo, Illinois, 10 February, 2006.

[11] Albrecht, xii

glass, stucco and metal, free of ornament; and open interior spaces."[12] In *Towards a New Architecture* published in 1923 and translated into English in 1927, Le Corbusier had promulgated a theory of a new architecture based on five points which formed a syntax of the modern architectural language: "free standing supports (pilotis), the roof garden, the free plan, the ribbon window and the freely composed façade."[13] He applied the prevailing notion of the ambulatory viewer taken from painting and sculpture, thus eliminating the single point of observation and the related need for symmetry in the façade composition. This concept required the architect to envisage the various planes of the building in dynamic interaction with each other. In the third exhibition, in 1932, the Museum of Modern Art in New York took a major first step in exposing Americans to modernist architecture of the Deutscher Werkbund variety with its own landmark exhibition, The *International Exhibition of Modern Architecture.* This exhibition traveled widely throughout the United States (but not to St. Louis) and will be discussed below. A fourth exposé of modernism took place in Chicago in 1933-34 with the Century of Progress Exhibition, important to this thesis for its influence on Dr. Leo Shanley and his choice of the International Style for the Shanley Clinic completed in 1935. (fig. 5) At the Century of Progress Exhibition, Shanley became very interested in George Fred Keck's *House of Tomorrow*. (fig. 6) Keck took the setback massing that was a typical design feature at the top of Art Deco skyscrapers and gave it a modernist wrapping of floor-to-ceiling glass and pipe railings in an attempt to implement the tenets of Le Corbusier's new modernism outlined above.[14] Streamlining in design was introduced at

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[12] Ibid., 12.

[13] Patrick Nuttgens, *The Story of Architecture,* 2nd.ed. (London: Phaidon, 1983), 268.

the Chicago fair but came into its own as the dominant motif of the New York World's Fair 1939-40, the fifth influential modernist exhibition. Streamlining advocated a smooth, curvilinear approach to form and was a scheme that likened buildings to aerodynamic modern objects such as airplanes and ocean liners. The fair's theme, 'Building the World of Tomorrow,' denied the reality of the Second World War raging in Europe, and may have seemed ironic to the generation of St. Louis architects who forfeited their private practices to join the war effort. These architects were looking at these exhibitions, either directly through travel, or vicariously through publications, even as they were viewing Hollywood movies. When considering the influences bearing on the modernist architects of the thirties, it is important to factor in this diversity of stimuli.

The International Exhibition of 1932

The International Style took its name from the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition of 1932. The exhibition's three curators were the art historian, Henry-Russell Hitchcock (1903-1987), Philip Johnson (1906-2005), New York architect and Director of MOMA's Department of Architecture and Design, and Alfred Barr (1902-1981), Director of MOMA. Through extensive travel, Hitchcock and Johnson claimed to have sought out the most progressive of architectural practice worldwide and represented it in the exhibition, using photographs and models. They denied any national bias in their selections, arguing rather that the works were self-referential, a claim that was consistent with the International Style's philosophy of autonomy.[15] However, it is difficult to

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[14] Shanley's interest in the *House of Tomorrow* is noted by St. Louis architect, Andrew L.W. Raimist, in an unpublished chapter on the Shanley Building, part of a book project dedicated to Armstrong's work. He has kindly made the chapter available to me and I have used material from it as noted. Also Albrecht, 20.

[15] See Terence Riley, *The International Style: Exhibition 15 and the Museum of Modern Art* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 16.

reconcile this claim regarding the absence of national bias with, for instance, the minor attention accorded to the Finnish modernist, Alvar Aalto, and the complete omission of Eliel Saarinen who had commenced design of the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan in 1924.[16] Construction of the Cranbrook complex was well advanced by 1930. Concurrently with the International Style exhibition, the canon of modernism was handed down in a liturgy propounded by Henry- Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson in their book entitled *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*.[17] The authors specified three main aesthetic criteria of "The Style" which would characterize modernist design: an emphasis on volume as opposed to mass and solidity; regularity of appearance as opposed to symmetry as the chief means of ordering design; and expression of the intrinsic elegance of material, rather than applied ornamentation, as a means of aesthetic enhancement. The first appearance of the International Style in St. Louis is generally acknowledged to have been in the planar, white and self-consciously geometric composition of Armstrong's Shanley Building of 1935. But, Armstrong's building, like much of International Style architecture in the United States, was not a verbatim rendering of the Style. This point is convincingly argued by Andrew Raimist in his detailed study of the building. His conclusions lend weight to Terry Smith's broader argument that "neither the International Style nor any other European-based transplant was widely *built* in the United States, whereas a broader 'Moderne' was--

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[16] Hitchcock and Johnson did not visit Finland although they were in neighboring Sweden and Denmark. Aalto was represented in the exhibition by one project, the Turun Sanomat Building in Turku of 1930. See Riley, ibid., 18 and 190.

[17] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr. and Philip Johnson, *The International Style: Architecture since 1922* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1932).

and, indeed, it absorbed International Style elements such as horizontality and white-stuccoed surfaces into it."[18]

The organizers of the 1932 exhibition consigned Frank Lloyd Wright to the passé world of nineteenth century. His determined and inspired individualism provided them with a theoretical basis on which to label him a romantic and his vision regressive rather than futuristic, a judgment that Hitchcock would substantially retract some three decades later.[19] Johnson, on the other hand, granted Wright grudging recognition but no contemporary purchase: "[Wright] is better than Perret or Berlage, more advanced if you will but he has nothing to say today to the International Group."[20] These are important judgments in the context of this thesis, because they cast light on the polarities in stylistic preference in St. Louis where Wright's influence has been far more pervasive than any other form of modernism. Even though his importance had been diminished by the 1932 International Style exhibition and by Washington University School of Architecture which appears to have shunned his work as a field of study, the works of the architects under review in this thesis resonate with their encounter with Wright's ideas in terms of style, construction, materials and spatial configuration.

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[18] See Chapter 1, note 13. Also, David Gebhard, "The Moderne in the U.S., 1920-41," *Architectural Association Quarterly 2* (July 1970) as quoted in Terry Smith, *Making the Modern: Industry, Art, and Design in America* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1993), 396. Smith takes up the evolution of the International Style from its ideological roots in Europe to its transformation into an aesthetic movement in the United States citing Gebhard's argument among others.

[19] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, foreword to the 1966 edition of *The International Style*, by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1966), vii-xiii.

[20] Philip Johnson quoted in Riley, 26.

Frank Lloyd Wright

In the International Style exhibition, Wright was represented by several projects including two prairie houses, the Roberts House in River Forest, Illinois of 1907 and the Robie House in Chicago of 1909. Wright's work was already known in Europe to such members of the architectural avant-garde as Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier and Hendrik Berlage, who took account of Wright's ideas including those on spatial flow and use of materials.[21] The prairie house was "truly modern", argues Jack Quinan, "in its spatial-temporal conflation of inside and outside, in the analytical processes of its creation, in the transparency of its spaces, and in its derivation from machine-inspired thought."[22] Moreover, it was quintessentially American in its radical departure from the vertical box format of colonial architecture through its accommodation to the particularities of the Midwestern landscape. It became residential architecture's definitive form, as a symbol of warmth, shelter, openness, repose and retreat from the business of the outside while harmoniously integrated with nature. The prairie house thereby proposed an alternative format for domestic life. But in its strong evocation of locale, it violated a cardinal rule of the universalizing International Style. Another such violation lay in the individuality of the houses, a point elaborated by Quinan, who argues persuasively that Wright's houses in certain cases amounted to portraits of his clients, observing that "Wright strove to integrate the building as much with the client as with the

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[21] The Berlin-based publisher Ernst Wasmuth published a portfolio of Wright's drawings in 1910-11. At the time Berlin was "at the very center of modern architecture in Europe" and was home to, among others, Peter Behrens, mentor of Gropius, Mies, and Le Corbusier. See Neil Levine., *The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright* (Princeton: Princeton up, 1996), 66. The Wasmuth portfolio was circulated widely throughout Europe.

[22] Quinan, Jack. *Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House/Architecture as Portraiture* (New York: Princeton Architectural press, 2004): 32. "Machine-inspired thought" refers to Wright's use of the machine's efficient mass production capacity to produce functional materials that expanded the scope of architecture. Machine-tooled millwork and structural steel are examples.

surrounding landscape, a fact that has been largely ignored in the scholarship on Wright."[23] Wright's work synthesized cultural traditions such as those of Japan and pre-Columbian America with his private belief in Unitarian and Transcendentalist thought. These diverse influences informed his theory of organic architecture which located authority in nature. Design proceeded outward from the organic core, characterized by a massive chimney, to an harmonious accommodation with the contours of the site and the environment beyond. The exposure to such philosophies made Wrightians out of William Bernoudy and Edouard Mutrux who created a large inventory of houses form-fitted to the physical and cultural environment of St. Louis. In 1937, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* published possibly the first ever major article on Fallingwater, Wright's country retreat for Edgar Kaufmann near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The house symbolized Wright's comeback after almost two decades of oblivion, exemplifying a virtuosic fusion of design, engineering and setting.[24] TIME. Inc. followed suit, featuring Wright on the cover of the January 17, 1938 issue, with a drawing of Fallingwater in the background and an orientalist figural sculpture over his left shoulder.[25] Wright's residue will become apparent in all of the projects under discussion in this thesis. Each in his own way, the architects took up Wright's philosophy of comprehensive design. In this regard, Wright

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[23] Ibid., 33.

[24] Max Putzel, "A House That Straddles A Waterfall," *PD*, 21 March, 1937 as cited in Osmund Overby, *William Adair Bernoudy, Architect: Bringing the Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright to St. Louis* (Columbia and London: U of Missouri P, 1999), 44. Overby speculates that Bernoudy may have been instrumental in gaining this coverage for his mentor by virtue of his friendship with Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. who worked at the *Post* and was interested in such matters. .

[25] See *TIME/The Weekly Newsmagazine*, Vol. XXXI, No. 3, (17 January, 1938): Cover and 29-32.

seems to have provided a model for imagining the style and substance of the architect/client relationship.

Wright had worked in the office of his mentor Louis Sullivan in Chicago from 1888-93 when St. Louis' Wainwright Building (1892), the steel frame building which anticipated the tall modern building of the future, was on the drawing board. Wright, with some engineering background prior to his architecture study, understood that he could advance his building design by the use of new engineering materials and techniques, especially in terms of opening up interior space and projecting cubic volumes outward by the use of the cantilever. Wright was instrumental in forging a bridge from the nineteenth to the twentieth century by harnessing the new technology and working innovatively at the cusp where the interests of architecture and engineering coalesced. As Curtis points out, Wright believed that industrialization should be understood "as a means to the larger end of providing a decent and uplifting environment for new patterns of life." At the same time, Wright sustained but "radically reinterpreted" his Arts and Crafts philosophy which encouraged "restrained simplicity, the honest and direct use of materials, the integration of the building with nature, the unification of fixtures and fittings, and the expression of an elevated moral ideal."[26]

Eliel Saarinen and Alvar Aalto

An Arts and Crafts philosophy was also in play at the Cranbrook Academy of Art outside Detroit in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Cranbrook had been founded in 1920 by the newspaper tycoon George C. Booth as part of a strategy to improve the quality of design in Detroit, the home of the motor car industry. Booth sought to create an integrated educational and living experience for artists in a variety of fields encompassing

[26] Curtis, 117.

both design and fabrication. In 1924, he tapped the Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen to design a complex and in 1932, Saarinen became the academy's director. Emphasizing the social responsibility of the designer, Saarinen challenged his students to maintain high artistic standards in the design of products capable of mass production at prices accessible to the average consumer. Saarinen, by all accounts, was a highly effective and influential teacher who encouraged his students to experiment with all aspects of the design process.[27] Saarinen had connections with the St. Louis architecture community, most notably with Charles Eames, whom he invited to Cranbrook as a student in 1938.

As already noted, Saarinen's architectural designs for Cranbrook were overlooked in the International Style exhibition even though a modernist movement was growing there. It included Eliel's son, Eero, who would create the Gateway Arch in St. Louis (1948-1965). The omission of Eliel Saarinen is the more surprising since he had placed second in the Chicago Tribune Competition in 1922 with a skyscraper design made up of telescoping forms that became very influential in the inter-war years.[28] Eliel Saarinen and his compatriot Alvar Aalto were friends who were profoundly influenced by each other's work. Aalto's work demonstrated his capacity to synthesize Nordic classicism with national Romanticism and ultimately with the new Dutch, German and French architecture, adapting the work to the particularities of the climate while using local materials, particularly timber."[29] But Aalto was most influential on Saarinen and Cranbrook in his insistence that rationalism and standardization "should not mean the end

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[27] Pat Kirkham, *Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 46.

[28] See Curtis, 223.

[29] Ibid., 342.

of human imagination and creativity." For his part, Aalto respected Saarinen for his insistence on individuality and his "resistance to architectural fashion."[30] This trait was well illustrated when, around 1941, the St. Louis architects Eugene J. Mackey, Jr. and Joseph Murphy visited Saarinen at Cranbrook en route to a design conference in Ann Arbor. Puffing on his pipe and tapping his drawing board, Saarinen evidently chastened them in the following terms: "There's nothing new for you in Ann Arbor. Everything you need to know is back in St. Louis on your drawing board."[31] Both Saarinen and Aalto made a discernible impact on Eames' design of the John P. Meyer House of 1936-8 and arguably on Harris Armstrong's Grant Medical Clinic of 1938. The impact of these architects was almost certainly felt further afield in St. Louis' architectural community, if for no other reason than that Eames and Armstrong maintained contact with their colleagues.[32]

Perceived cultural similarities between Finland and the Midwest were key to the successful cultivation of Finnish-derived architecture at Cranbrook.[33] "In the Middle West it was the scale of the landscape, the endless prairies and huge inland seas, that tended to impress residents, along with the severity of summer heat and winter cold… Its power was immense but its beauty was more subtle with uniformities cloying to eyes

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[30] Kirkham, note 114, 415.

[31] Eugene Mackey III , son of Eugene J. Mackey, Jr., interview by author, tape recording, Office of Mackey Mitchell Associates, St. Louis, Missouri, 27 February, 2006.

[32] In addition, Gyo Obata, founding partner in Hellmuth , Obata and Kassabaum, was a student at Cranbrook from 1945-46.

[33] These similarities are enumerated and discussed in Neil Harris, "North by Midwest" in Robert Judson Clark, et al, *Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision 1925-1950* Exh. cat. (New York: Harry N. Abrams/Detroit Institute of Arts/Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 15-19.

seeking the contrast of mountain and plain, or ocean and seacoast. "[34] These observations may shed light on why Finnish design ideas seem to have resonated with St. Louisians.

Colossal Modern

While Finnish architects were producing a style based on the principle of interdependency of man and nature, the late twenties and thirties saw the expansion of the built vision upwards, in the form of skyscrapers, and also into a new scale of conquest of nature. Both symbolized modernity. The profession of engineering was on the ascendant, experiencing growth commensurate with the scope and scale of building. The colossus of the urban context, the skyscraper, had its counterpart in the transformation of great natural sites. For example, in 1937, the Golden Gate Bridge spanned San Francisco Bay with the longest continuous span in the world at 4,200 ft. River systems were harnessed by massive dam projects such as the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Hoover Dam, to exploit nature's water resources for power. Such images spoke to burgeoning urbanization. In the public imagination, tall buildings erected in population centers, along with bridges and dams, were equated with progress. In this pre-television era, the photograph was the chief means of disseminating images of progress.[35] Strategies were adopted to mobilize public opinion behind the notion that the conquest of nature represented progress. Such a strategy was at work in St. Louis when the City Art Museum (later to become the Saint Louis Art Museum) in 1941 presented an exhibition of photographs and drawings of the Tennessee Valley Authority project. The curatorial rationale for the exhibition can be inferred from the accompanying publication produced

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[34] Ibid., 16.

[35] Television became generally available to the public in 1939.

by the Authority entitled *Tennessee Valley Authority: A New Phase in Architecture.* It underscored the essential connection between architecture and engineering: "Here architecture and engineering are perhaps more completely integral than they have ever been at any time since the two professions became separated."[36] The publication directed the viewers to observe the structures which were handsome exercises in stripped-down modernist design at breathtaking scale. Progress so-defined was self-evidently beneficial and no account needed to be taken of any downside in terms of the impact on nature of such massive, man-made schemes. Perhaps this prevailing atmosphere of conquest of nature was a factor in inspiring local architects to develop a more reflective approach to modernism, one that would engender accord between their buildings and the environment.

St. Louis was connected in vital ways to the evolution of the skyscraper. First, the ten-story Wainwright Building, a progenitor of the modern skyscraper, had been erected in downtown St. Louis in 1890-1892 by Adler and Sullivan. Second, the mystique of the skyscraper was promulgated widely, but with no greater appeal to the imagination, than in *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, by Hugh Ferriss, America's leading architectural delineator, and a St. Louisian who maintained his home town connections.[37] Ferriss' "skyscraper sublime" was encapsulated in stunning, futuristic images rendered with virtuoso drawing skill. Such images became instrumental in shaping the architectural imagination with respect to tall buildings, especially since the passage of setback laws in

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[36] Tennessee Valley Authority Exhibition catalogue, 6.

[37] Overby, 46. See Hugh Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (New York: Ives Washburn, Publisher, 1929).

New York in 1916. Ferriss' work was known to the architects under consideration in this thesis. His models and drawings for a new Civic Plaza on Market Street in downtown St. Louis had been exhibited at an AIA national convention at the Chase Hotel in 1928. (fig. 7) Moreover, he had assisted Harris Armstrong to obtain a job in the office of Raymond Hood, "the pioneer architect of modern skyscrapers" in New York in 1929.[38]

As technological innovation over the ensuing decades enabled architects to increase building heights dramatically, the skyscraper became the emblem for American modernity worldwide. However, St. Louisians have never visualized their city as vertical. For them, the sense of the horizontal is defining, a fact that in part accounts for the appeal of the Wrightian style practiced by Bernoudy and his associates. The artist Richard Serra remarked on the flatness of the terrain in 1982, a half century after skyscrapers were first mooted in St. Louis: "the flatness of St. Louis' urban landscape coupled with the movement of the Mississippi and the horizontal extensions of these great bridges has affected me---the horizontality resounds because of St. Louis."[39] Nonetheless, some St. Louisians were developing ideas for high-rise, high density living. Two landmark tall buildings were completed in St. Louis in the twenties. In 1928, the twenty-two story Continental Building by William B. Ittner described by McCue and Peters as "skyscraper gothic of good proportion" and with "abundant Art Deco detail", arose at Olive Street and Grand Boulevard in the entertainment district in Midtown St. Louis.[40] (fig. 8) Further

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Richard Serra quoted in "Richard Serra's Steel Sculpture: A New Landmark for St. Louis." Broadsheet produced for the dedication of the Serra sculpture, *Twain,* on 1 May, 1982. St. Louis Public Library Central Branch File on *Twain.* Cited in Mary Reid Brunstrom, "Serra in St. Louis: From Twain to Joe"(master's thesis, Washington University, 2004), 7. Note that in the 1930's there was one main bridge across the River, namely the Eads Bridge, constructed in 1874.

west, the twenty-seven story Park Plaza was built on Kingshighway in the up-scale residential district of the Central West End in 1929. The Park Plaza's assembly of forms, its lift, its simplicity and the power of its shape, all mark it as an important modernist building. Designed by Schopp and Baumann as a hotel, its Art deco motifs on the interior and exterior embody the taste of the wealthy class for whom it was designed, reflecting the prevailing belief that art deco was "the most up-to-date style for fashion, shops, nightclubs, movie-houses and skyscrapers."[41] (fig. 9)

During the period of design and construction of these buildings, both Isadore Shank and Harris Armstrong made designs for skyscrapers that would have presented noteworthy alternatives had they been built. In 1928, Shank and his partner Jesse L. Bowling designed a twenty-five story apartment building for the corner of Lindell Boulevard and Euclid Avenue in the Central West End, described in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* as "a 25-Story Modernistic Apartment to be the tallest and largest structure of its type in St. Louis." (fig. 10) The report stated that Bowling and Shank had "brought the modernistic style in architecture to St. Louis."[42] The rendering featured a central tower with a strong vertical thrust, flanked by two cylindrical set-backs with roof gardens which created an image of streamlined elegance. The building meets the street level through a colonnade of arches which repeat the curvilinear motif for the lower levels of the building. The exterior of the building was to be executed in brick, "with a structural steel frame protected with aircrete, a new type of concrete that is exceedingly light and

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[40] McCue and Peters, 64.

[41] Albrecht, 19.

[42] Hugh C. Sexton, "Twenty-Five-Story Apartment Planned at Lindell, Euclid," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 1928.

does not conduct heat or sound."[43] The building called for the most modern fixtures and décor. An interior swimming pool and interior golf course along with indoor parking and high speed elevators, were all envisioned as new developments in design. Harris Armstrong's proposed skyscraper of the early 1930's made under the auspices of Boyer and Armstrong, Architects was intended for a site on Broadway in downtown St. Louis.[44] (fig. 11) Some fifteen stories higher than Shank's, Armstrong's skyscraper was an almost starkly modern composition with the central tower rising at the sidewalk. Its strong verticality is reminiscent of Raymond Hood's McGraw-Hill Building in New York of 1928-30 (fig. 12) in its angularity and confident massing of plain rectangular forms. This is not surprising since, as noted already, Armstrong had been working in Hood's New York office in 1930. Armstrong's design was given an extensive airing in the print media of the time, such was the degree of innovation in its systems, its aesthetics and its height relative to existing St. Louis buildings. Because of its height and its modern systems, the building would have presented considerable challenges in terms of its constructability.

Magazine Modern

In the 1930's, three main design magazines, *Architectural Forum*, *Architectural Record* and *Pencil Points* informed the design world of new trends overseas, along with the state of contemporary practice in the United States. The message was conveyed by text and drawings, but most persuasively by photographs. Like the movie industry, magazines, in the very act of selecting images, privileged some trends and styles over others, and contributed to universalizing concepts of modernism. Photography lent itself

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Boyer was an engineer. I am indebted to Andrew Raimist for the image.

to diverse outcomes and over time, some photographers adopted the techniques of architectural rendering and indeed of the artist, producing pictorial outcomes for particular ideological and aesthetic ends in the guise of documentation. Without an extensive survey of the period it is impossible to characterize magazine modernism in the thirties, and its influences. Those who traveled must have observed a difference between European architecture as it was practiced and what was portrayed in the architectural media or received through other means. One development is notable, however, that in the closing years of the twenties, *Architectural Record* and *Architecture* seemed to be looking toward Europe for direction in designing a form in which American architects had always thought they excelled."[45] As we shall observe in the following chapters, St. Louis architects were active in the discourse with a high incidence of publication of their work in *Architectural Forum* and *Architectural Record.*

Building in St. Louis in the Thirties

Like other parts of the country, St. Louis experienced the twenties as an era of economic boom as the country emerged from World War I. Building permit records in both St. Louis City and County show that the boom in construction of tenement buildings in particular reached a peak in 1928 and 1929 continuing into 1930 despite the onset of the Depression.[46] Isadore Shank's DeBaliviere Building was constructed in 1928 at the height of the boom period. The full impact of the Depression was felt in 1931 and 1932

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[45] This conclusion is based upon a survey taken of architectural periodicals in the twenties by Betty K. Bird, the results of which are in "Images of European Modernism: The Treatment of European Architecture in American Architectural Periodicals between 1920 and 1930" (Master's thesis, University of Virginia, 1978).

[46] I am grateful to David J. Simmons for information on building permit activity and beyond that, for our conversations in which he helped me understand these statistics in terms of the larger political, economic and social forces bearing on the region in the period. He is a specialist in nineteenth-century St. Louis architecture currently engaged in compiling numbers of building permits issued for architect-designed buildings in both St. Louis City and County, commencing in the nineteenth century.

when there was very little activity at all. This fact is demonstrated in the growing numbers of AIA members in the period from 1929-1933 whose dues were in arrears because of lack of professional income.[47] Noting that building reports nationally for the period were discouraging, the architect Eugene Klein, in an AIA-sponsored talk on KMOX Radio in June 1932, made the following statement: "Millions of mechanics, in all trades, are idle. Steel plants, lumber mills, brick kilns, stone quarries and hundreds of plants depending on the building industry for their output are shut down. Consequently, the prices of labor and materials are lower than they have been for a number of years. Buildings of all kinds can be built at bargain prices today, and yet, throughout the nation, the industry lies paralyzed."[48] Recovery began in 1933 and as the decade progressed, there was a notable increase in building in the residential sector for upper middle and wealthy classes, but not in the commercial sector.[49] This factor makes the entrepreneurial activity of physicians like Shanley and Grant in commissioning new professional facilities, seem courageous. As Eugene Klein noted, materials and labor were cheap due to an oversupply in both markets. The wealthy took advantage of the situation to realize their dreams of moving out of the city to the surrounding counties to new homes and fresher air. Moving west has always has been a leitmotif in the narrative of St. Louis development and the architects under consideration all gained commissions and consolidated their businesses as a result of this westward trajectory. As the decade of the

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[47] See Esley Hamilton, "The Great Gifts: Steedman and Givens," in Carolyn Hewes Toft, Esley Hamilton and Mary Henderson Gass, *The Way We Came: A Century of the AIA in St. Louis,* ed. George McCue (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1991), 52.

[48] Eugene Klein in a radio talk on KMOX Radio, St. Louis on June 23, 1932 entitled *Prosperity Dependent on Revival of Building Industry.* Typed transcript is held by Esley Hamilton, Preservation Historian, Saint Louis County Parks in a file labeled AIA Radio Talks, 1930 and 1932. www.stlouisco.com. I am grateful to him for making this material available to me.

[49] Commercial property owners tended to repair, remodel or add on to existing buildings.

thirties drew to a close, war in Europe began to seem inevitable and in the ensuing years, materials and manpower were directed to the war effort. Residential building in St. Louis and across the Mississippi in Illinois, decreased in favor of construction of manufacturing facilities to support the war. In spring of 1945, as the end of the war in Europe approached, building permit activity began to increase again and by 1946, the building industry in the area moved into full expansion.

While private sector building was directly vulnerable to the impact of the Depression, public building in St. Louis proceeded with the aid of massive infusions of Federal Government financing under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, generating work for architects. During the period, the city saw the completion of major landmarks including The Civil Courts Building (1930) of Klipstein & Rathman, Kiel Auditorium (1934) of LaBeaume & Klein, the Jewell Box in Forest Park (1936) of William C.E. Becker (an engineer), the Soldiers' Memorial (1938) of Mauran, Russell & Crowell, and the Municipal Opera (1939) in Forest Park, by Murphy & Wischmeyer. Also in 1939, ground was broken for the Jefferson Westward Expansion Memorial for which Eero Saarinen submitted the winning design in 1947 in the form of the Gateway Arch.

Modernism and the St. Louis Chapter of the AIA

Most of the architects under consideration belonged to the St. Louis Chapter of the AIA at one time or another. Presumably in response to prevailing hardship amongst architects, the AIA in 1930 came up with a strategy to promote architecture to the public. In those pre-television days, AIA members gave radio talks on local stations, nine in 1930 on radio station KWL and seven in 1932 on KMOX. By addressing a growing

consumer interest in new materials and systems such as air-conditioning, the series purported to be educational. However, most of the talks stressed the importance of the architect's professional training for the successful realization of design and construction, suggesting a concern with the encroachment on the design field of the emerging designer/developer with no architectural training who could eliminate the architect from his projects. The survival of architecture as a profession emerges from the transcripts as an urgent priority and the fact that only three of the sixteen talks addressed the idea of modernism may be more reflective of the embattled state of the profession than of the listening audience's interest (or lack thereof) in modern architecture. In the three talks, modernism was positioned as a new "approach" rather than simply a new style. Arthur E. Koelle, in his 1930 talk, denounced the traditionalist approach to design while criticizing the blind mimicking of the machine culture: "The danger is that we become enslaved to this material development that is taking place at present, in fact, that danger is fast materializing as we contrive to build modernistic houses that are shaped to resemble steamships, flying machines and locomotives, buildings that strive to emulate or even imitate the machine. Isn't this architecture after all just as lifeless as that of our past?"[50] In his talk, Louis LaBeaume pointed out that the New York skyline attracting worldwide attention was indeed the work of "our American Architects." Two weeks later, in a talk entitled *The Trend Toward Modernism in Architecture*, Laurence Hill broached the subject in the following terms: "Must we design in past style? Are we to continue to build homes transplanted from the hill towns of Italy, the rural districts of England or some town in Spain? Modernism is not a transitory fad although its present forms will probably soon pass away. Modernism, in its true meaning, is a conscious awakening to the

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[50] See note Chapter 1, note 47. Koelle's address was entitled *A Plea for Architecture in America.*

significance of our epoch with the resolution to deliver its art from the thralldom of the past. It is, I am convinced, the precursor of another great era in the evolution of Art."[51]

Exhibition Modern in St. Louis

In the decade prior to the Tennessee Valley Authority exhibition, the City Museum hosted six exhibitions dealing with developments in contemporary architecture but not, as already noted, the 1932 International Exhibition from the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Why St. Louisians were not given this opportunity is intriguing, since the exhibition traveled to sixteen venues outside New York including in the Midwest.[52] Two exhibitions did travel to St. Louis from New York, however. The decade opened with an exhibition from the Brooklyn Museum entitled *Architectural Models and Plans by Professor Behrens and His Master School at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna.*[53] Behrens (1868-1940) was a foremost German modernist and it seems likely that the exhibition would have highlighted his advanced designs for the AEG Turbine Factory, Berlin (1909-10) and other industrial plants. In 1939, the museum presented an exhibition mounted by MOMA entitled *Three Centuries of American Architecture,* an encyclopedic show which contained four sections dealing with modernism: the one on Frank Lloyd Wright featured the Larkin Building (1904-5) and the Robie House (1908-9) among others; a section entitled "The Evolution of the Skyscraper" featured among other

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[51] Ibid.

[52] The exhibition opened at MOMA on February 10, 1932 after which it traveled in the following order to these venues: Pennsylvania Art Museum, Seattle Art Institute, The M.H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, Los Angeles Museum, California, Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, Cleveland Museum of Art, Toledo Museum of Art, Cincinnati Art Museum, Milwaukee Art Institute, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, St. Paul Institute, Rochester Memorial Art Gallery, Art Museum Worcester, Art Institute of Omaha, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. See Terence Riley, *The International Style: Exhibition 15 and the Museum of Modern Art* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992): 220-1.

[53] Information on the exhibition is in the St. Louis Art Museum Archives, Director's Office, Special Exhibitions Correspondence, 4/4, 12/1930.

buildings, the PSFS - Philadelphia Savings Fund Society - Building (1931-2) of Howe and Lescaze and Rockefeller Center (1931-40) of Raymond Hood and Associates; the section on industrial architecture consisted of designs for gas stations, dams, automobile plants and bridges including San Francisco's Oakland Bridge (1936) designed by Ralph Modjeski. The third, entitled simply *Modern Architecture*, included designs by the west coast modernist Richard Neutra, and the Gropius house in Lincoln, Massachusetts (1938) by Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer.[54] In 1940, an exhibition of the designs of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe came from the Art Institute of Chicago and included the Tugendhat House (1930) in Brno, Czechoslovakia and the Barcelona Pavilion (1929).[55] These four exhibitions demonstrate that even though the International Style exhibition did not visit St. Louis, there was an acknowledgement by the museum of the contemporary relevance of modernist developments in the United States and overseas.

Two exhibitions in 1939 and 1940 showcased photographs of works by members of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.[56] Reviewing the 1939 show, both the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* singled out Nagel & Dunn's St. Mark's Episcopal Church and Harris Armstrong's medical clinics for special mention. The *Post* acknowledged directly Wright's pervasive influence on all architects in the exhibition, while the Globe implied it.[57] A third exhibition involving local architects was presented in June, 1938 under the title *Architectural Photographs by*

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[54] Ibid. 16/6. 4/8-30/1939.

[55] Ibid, 18/14. 5/19/40-6/23/40.

[56] Ibid. Box 17.

[57] See "Architects Show Classic Designs," *GD*, 8 October, 1939 and "St. Louis Architects Show Work In Photos," *PD*, 8 October, 1939.

St. Louis Architects, from the exhibition held by the Architectural League in New York City.[58] A checklist is not available, however, the title suggests an interest by architects in photographing their own work, along with promoting their designs to larger and more influential audiences.

Modernism and Washington University School of Architecture

The fact that in 1931, Washington University School of Architecture chose a classical design for its new building was emblematic of its belief in the foundational value of Beaux-Arts architectural training. Givens Hall, named for the school's benefactor Joseph B. Givens, was designed by the campus architects, Jamieson & Spearl, with the school's controversial French director, Gabriel Ferrand, in the role of consultant. Ferrand's insistence on a classical curriculum modified by eclecticism, and his resistance to any modernist encroachment, either European or Wrightian, was at the center of the modernist controversy at the school. By all accounts, modernism had at least one proponent among its faculty, the Italian architect Paul Valenti.[59] All of the architects under consideration in this thesis were students and/or faculty at Washington University at one time or another. Anecdotes from three of them serve to convey the flavor of the institutional stance on modernism. Isadore Shank who was a student in the mid-twenties, felt alone in his interest in modernism. Shank was also interested in Wright's early work.[60] Charles Eames attended Washington University on an architectural scholarship but soon found himself disagreeing with the curriculum which he found "narrow and

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58 Ibid. Box 15.

59 See Kirkham, 12.

60 Peter Shank, interview by author, tape recording, Shank house, 9 January, 2006.

constraining, with its emphasis on a 'correct' manner of drawing plans, elevation, and ornamentation as well as on the symmetry, solidity and monumentality of classical architecture." Like Shank, Eames was also interested in Wright and "simply did not understand why the school could or would not embrace new ideas such as those of Wright."[61] The Architecture School's intransigence is perhaps most vividly reflected in Harris Armstrong's 1968 interview with the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*: "A former professor of mine at Washington University delighted in telling his classes about the ridiculous building I had designed." [62] That building was the Shanley Building, which brought international recognition for Armstrong (and St. Louis) when it won a silver medal at the 1937 Paris Exposition.

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61 Kirkham, 12.

62 Caroline Rehg, "Old Man of Modern Architecture Has Young Ideas," *GD*, 14 June, 1968.

Chapter Two

Isadore Shank and Harris Armstrong

The publicity accorded the Shanley Building as the first International Style building in the Midwest undoubtedly contributed to the early identification of modern with "The Style" in the St. Louis area. However, modernism was also taking root through a variety of other approaches, and Isadore Shank (1902-1998) was an early exponent.[1] Shank began his modernist work in the late twenties and, with his partner Jesse L. Bowling, designed the DeBaliviere Building at 5654 Delmar Boulevard in the Central West End. "It was unique in its time, the first modern building in St. Louis, I would say, since the Wainwright Building [1892]," Shank told a reporter.[2]

Isadore Shank

In the firm of Jesse Bowling & Isadore Shank, Architects, Bowling was the businessman and Shank was the designer. Shank's legacy includes a significant inventory of modernist houses and other buildings mostly in the counties surrounding the city of St. Louis. His early years are marked by forays into areas which were at the forefront of design and emblematic of the dramatic changes taking place in housing, office accommodations, and transportation. Shank entered design competitions and received awards for such diverse projects as skyscrapers, airport terminals, and gas stations. Shank's futuristic terminal schemes for Tulsa and Detroit airports which were published in American Architect. (figs. 13 & 14) show that he was aware of the stylistic potential of streamlining well before the Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago in 1933. The

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[1] I am grateful to Peter Shank, the oldest of three sons of Isadore and Ilse Shank, who spoke to me at length in an interview on January 9, 2006 and provided copies of articles and other materials.

[2] Isadore Shank as quoted by Robert W. Duffy, "New Life For A Vanguard Building on DeBaliviere," *PD*, 9 January, 1983, 5C.

designs are almost certainly influenced by the curvilinear, central tower of the Einstein Tower in Potsdam of 1920-4 by Eric Mendelsohn (1887-1953).[3] (fig.15) It is possible that Shank also had in mind the work of the industrial designer and architect, Norman Bel Geddes.[4] In 1928, contemporaneously with the mania for tall buildings on the East Coast, Shank made drawings for skyscrapers including two for sites in the Central West End in St. Louis, one of which has already been discussed, and one for East St. Louis, Illinois. Two of these renderings were published by *The Architectural Record* on the same page as a drawing for the Chicago Merchandise Mart then under construction.[5] (fig. 16) The October 1935 issue of *Architectural Record* devoted a full page to Shank's prize-winning design for a drug store in a competition entitled "Modernize Main Street."[6] Shank also designed a recreational complex for the Teamsters Union in Pevely, Missouri in 1963 as well as apartment complexes, of which the Ambassador Apartments on Delmar Boulevard of 1950 with its reinforced concrete balconies, stands out as a striking example of modernist design.

Shank was born in St. Louis in 1902 to Russian Jewish émigré parents. The influence of Judaism faded as a new world opened up through his education at Washington University. Notwithstanding, in the early years of his practice, he was denied access to projects due to anti-Semitic feelings which were freely and directly expressed. This prejudicial situation would change after World War II when Shank noticed an

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[3] Peter Shank does not know if his father ever met Mendelsohn during his visits to Louis during the planning and construction of the B'nai Amoona Synagogue (1950) in University City, St. Louis.

[4] Bel Geddes (1893-1958), who had a background in theatre set design and advertising, had himself looked at Mendelsohn's work in the early twenties. See Wilson, 85.

[5] *The Architectural Record* (September 1928): 244.

[6] "Modernize Main Street" Competition: Drug Store," *The Architectural Record* (October 1935): 217.

upswing in interest in his particular approach to modernism by Jews, who made up a large part of his client base for modernist residences.[7] Shank gained a BA and an MA in Architecture from Washington University in 1924 and 1925 respectively. Paul Valenti, mentioned above as an advocate for modern architecture, was his favorite professor at the school. Shank won a national competition sponsored by the AIA which enabled him to spend a year traveling in Europe where he saw, amongst other things, the 1925 Art Deco exhibition in Paris.[8] He also visited northern Germany and Holland, observing developments in modern architecture. Upon his return he established his own practice. He was in his mid-twenties when he designed the DeBaliviere Building which was heralded as "an expression of contemporary American architecture with geometric rather than naturalistic forms."[9] (fig. 17) The building, which wraps the corner of Delmar and DeBaliviere, was designed for commercial use on the ground level--Walgreen's was the first tenant-- and apartments on the upper two floors. The client was financier and real estate developer, Sam Hamburg.[10]

The DeBaliviere Building (1928)

My case for the building's modernism is made on stylistic issues relating to the exterior rather than spatial considerations on the interior. Located just within the western border of the Central West End Historic District, this building has been identified as Art

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[7] Peter Shank speculates that these clients may have been anxious to erase unpalatable memories of a painful recent past, and modernist designs with their clean lines, natural materials and understated elegance fulfilled this desire more adequately than other available options. .

[8] Shank traveled to Europe with fellow St. Louis architect, Art Koelle.

[9] *GD*, 27 October, 1929.

[10] See Duffy, "New Life For A Vanguard Building." Little is known about Hamburg and I was unable to determine what attracted Hamburg to Shank's design. Peter Shank provided an anecdote that may be tangentially related. As the story goes, Hamburg wanted Shank to marry his daughter and being an orthodox Jew, duly arranged for a matchmaker. But Shank had decided that he did not want to marry a Jew and for this, and perhaps other reasons, declined.

Deco for want of a better classification, but its origins are more accurately identified in terms of Shank's early interest in Frank Lloyd Wright and possibly more importantly in his observation of German and Dutch architecture during his travels in Europe. While ornamentation was to be eschewed by the proponents of the International Style, Shank used it to confer individuality, life and aesthetic interest on the exterior surface of the building. In the DeBaliviere Building, masonry and ornamentation were integrated with modern materials and techniques such as repeated geometric shapes, plate glass windows, and steel construction. As shown in figure 17, the building's façade is composed of intricately ornamented brick and tile into which glass windows are integrated, creating an ordered composition. Visual interest in the façade is heightened by a very intimate, sumptuously tiled tenants' entrance, suggesting some whimsical intent in the determination to make one aware of the richness of the entry experience. The building's ornament is integrated rather than applied. The building wraps the corner with a curved detail that signals the commercial entrance and embodies the modernist notion of streamlining. (fig. 18) Even though masonry is the hallmark of the building, its potential for heaviness at the ground level is relieved by the use of ordered bands of plate glass windows with metal mullions, an order repeated on the upper levels. Shank designed the terracotta tiles that form the outer skin and had them fabricated for the building. The integrated decorative systems are the defining feature of the building. While they rely on repetition of the form, close examination reveals the artistry at work in juxtaposition, rather than straight repeat, of the tile. For example, as shown in figure 19, the terracotta tiles are installed in a running repeat while the black glazed tiles are installed in mirror pattern horizontally and different patterns are used above and below the horizontal. The

mode of their physical integration as well as their design recalls Frank Lloyd Wright's textile block houses in California.[11] (fig. 20) The tiles embody interesting polarities. In their material (clay) and their palette (terracotta and black), they are organic while in their regularity and repetition, they evoke the machine process of their fabrication; on the one hand, they suggest antiquity and exoticism, a characteristic of Wright's design taken from pre-Columbian forms in, for example, the Ennis House of 1923-4. On the other, they encapsulate the spirit of the modern style in play in northern German and Dutch architectural brickwork handled with virtuosic craftsmanship. Shank may have chosen tile for the façade material for practical as well as aesthetic reasons. "Mat-glazed terra-cotta, with its own lustrous finish resistant to dirt penetration and easily washed, had found many applications by the 1920s and 1930s, in facings where stone had formerly been standard, and terra-cotta kept the ornamental alive for as long as it had a foothold in building design."[12] The building underwent a comprehensive renovation in 1983 and continues as a multi-use facility with apartments on the upper levels and a child care facility on the ground level.

In 1932, Shank married Ilse Giessow (1909-1998). He had determined not to marry a Jew and Ilse was a German protestant. For a good part of the thirties, Isadore and Ilse Shank lived away from St. Louis, because there was no work due to the Depression. Shank worked in Chicago, New York, San Diego and Dallas as a designer for World's Fairs. In 1937, after his return to St. Louis, he formed two successive partnerships, Goldman and Shank in 1937 succeeded by Shank and Auer in 1939, and he

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[11] Note that the material of the Wright houses is concrete, not terracotta.

[12] George McCue, *Sculpture City: St. Louis/ Public Sculpture in the "Gateway to the West"* (New York: Hudson Hills Press/Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, 1988), 82.

designed houses (including one for himself), apartment buildings and a shopping center until the United States entered World War II in 1941, when he joined the war effort. Shank suspended his practice entirely from 1943-6 and went to work for Curtiss-Wright where he designed parts for bombers. Meanwhile, Ilse was building her career as a magazine illustrator. After graduating from Washington University, where she and Shank had met, she moved on to study graphic design at the Art Institute of Chicago after which she moved to New York. Al Parker, a St. Louisian and Ilse's fellow Washington University classmate who later gained worldwide recognition as an illustrator, helped Ilse establish herself by introducing her to his agent. After the Shanks moved back to St. Louis, Ilse continued her professional life working out of their home. Her work was published widely in magazines including *Collier's*, *McCall's* and *Ladies' Home Journal*. (fig. 21) She also designed advertisements for Carson Pirie Scott (Chicago), Wanamakers (New York) and other department stores. Isadore and Ilse were each supportive of the other's work. Ilse's successful career was an extraordinary accomplishment for a woman in a time when women were not career-oriented outside the home. She and Isadore raised a remarkable family with art, architecture and other creative pursuits at the core of their upbringing.[13] They took their three young sons on a family pilgrimage to see Le Corbusier's defining projects in France, the Chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp (1950-4) and the Unité d'Habitation (1947-53) in Marseilles.

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[13] Their three sons, Peter, Paul, and Stephen Shank are all artists, as was Ilse's younger sister Adelheid Giessow. The Family's artistic contribution was celebrated in an exhibition entitled *Relative Perspectives: Isadore Shank/Ilse Shank/Adelheid Giessow/Peter Shank/Paul Shank/Stephen Shank: A Retrospective of the Architecture, Illustration, Jewelry Design and Painting of One St. Louis Family* at the Des Lee Gallery, Washington University School of Art from October 5-28, 2001, catalogue essay by Liam Otten.

Isadore and Ilse espoused progressive causes. They were both active in the Ethical Society. Shank described his politics as "liberal Democrat."[14] Ilse was a staunch advocate of civil rights and in the sixties, along with Elsa Mutrux, was involved in anti-Vietnam War activities. Shank was pro-union and his recreation center for the Teamsters in Pevely, Missouri brings modernism and unionism together. For him, modern buildings were more symbolic of democratic ideals than the English colonial or French provincial styles in vogue at the time, in their modesty and in their human scale. Shank at one point expressed interest in going to the Soviet Union to live because he felt that progressive developments there would give him an opportunity to work on modernist architecture.

The Shank Residence (1939-40)

In 1940, a decade after his auspicious start with the DeBaliviere building, Shank designed a modestly scaled house for Ilse and his young family, in which he was able to implement his modernist ideas without having to accommodate the demands of a client.[15] (fig. 22) The house has a Wrightian emphasis on accommodation to its site, opening as it does onto a steep, downward slope. The slope enabled Shank to create two levels in the house, the upper one for the family and the lower one for playrooms, utility areas, an air-conditioning system, accommodations for household help and a garage under the porch. The house enables an effortless transition from inside to out, hence the awareness of the wooded site is pervasive. The house features an open plan enhanced by Shank's use of planes of color reminiscent of Gerrit Rietveld and Dutch modernism. (fig. 23) The layout of the house enabled Ilse to pursue her design career and motherhood under the same roof

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[14] Entry on Isadore Shank, *Alumni Biographies*, Washington University School of Architecture, 1964. Harris Armstrong Archive, Special Collections, Washington University in St. Louis, Series 01, Box 01.

[15] Building permit issued for # 4 Graybridge Lane. *Daily Record*, 18 September, 1940.

since it provided good light for her drafting table and well rationalized space for the children. In San Diego, Shank had experienced the architecture of Rudolf Schindler at first-hand when he and Ilse rented a Schindler house for a year and a half, an experience that informed Shank's design. Schindler's design philosophy was based on the idea that "space--not structure--was the essential medium of architecture in the twentieth century."[16] In addition to the free flowing space in the living areas, the Shank house makes reference to Schindler's use of materials, for example, redwood, and the copper on the fireplace.

The Shank house is located on Graybridge Lane in Ladue, some ten miles from St. Louis City and still largely rural in the 1930's. Shank bought a tract of some twenty acres, subdivided it and with his then partner and immediate neighbor, Jim Auer, pursued a vision of a modernist enclave.[17] Auer had been a classmate of Charles Eames and was Eames' best man at his first wedding. Shank and Auer designed and built the first few houses, two of which were for Shank's cousins, while some residents retained other architects. All of the houses started out incorporating modernist ideas such as floor-to-ceiling windows, and had Shank had his way, they would all have been explorations of the purist modernist ideas. But most are not as distinctively modern as the Shank House. An anecdote from Shank's experience in negotiating the City of Ladue's permitting process illustrates the degree of resistance to modernist style. The house, as built, features a long white wooden rail wall across the front, a feature which Shank felt may have been

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[16] Schindler's particular style of modernism is discussed and well-illustrated by Eric John Lutz in "The Architect's Eye: R.M. Schindler and His Photography" (Ph.D diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2004).

[17] Listed in the *Daily Record* as the Nellie Agee tract, the property was farmland when Shank bought it from Nellie Agee, an African-American woman who had inherited the land from the family for whom she worked. At the time, African-Americans were excluded by covenant from residing in the City of Ladue.

too modernist for the City of Ladue, therefore, in order to get the design through, he inserted columns and shutters on the plans, to bring the building more in line with the prevailing taste for colonial style. The permit was issued uneventfully and the columns and shutters were never built.

A decade after he built his residence, Shank was dubbed the "undisputed dean among modern designers in this section of the country" by the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.[18] But at the time there was at least one other contender for that title--Harris Armstrong. The transition from Isadore Shank to Harris Armstrong is in many ways a natural one, because Armstrong was working in Shank's office in the late nineteen-twenties during which time, according to Shank, he 'turned Armstrong on' to modern architecture.[19]

Harris Armstrong

In a career that spanned some four and a half decades, Harris Armstrong (1899-1973) designed close to two hundred projects. The work included residences, school projects, office buildings, and churches in St. Louis and a number of projects elsewhere in the country as well as the United States Consulate at Basra in Iraq. Armstrong's Shanley Building (1935), the Magic Chef Building (1946), and the Ethical Society (1962) mark high points in the evolution of modernist thinking in St. Louis. Like Isadore Shank, Armstrong made proposals for skyscrapers and futuristic designs for gas stations. In the twelve years from1936 to 1948, *Architectural Forum* and *Architectural Record* devoted a total of thirty-one pages to his designs, a trend that continued throughout his career.[20] For

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[18] Emmet Layton, "A House That Couldn't Miss," *GD*, 4 June, 1950, 4.

[19] Peter Shank, interview.

example, The American Stove Building of 1947 made the cover of *Architectural Forum* in 1948, his Medical Laboratories for Washington University (1951) was the cover image for *Architectural Record* and his McDonnell Aircraft Corporation engineering campus was featured in *Architectural Forum* in 1958. In addition, his Scruggs Vandervoort Barney department store in Clayton was featured in *Progressive Architecture* in 1953. During the period from 1934-1940, there were some twenty building permits issued for Armstrong-designed buildings.[21] Armstrong was one of the first architects in the Midwest to deploy steel, plate glass, and concrete in modernist designs. In 1939 in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* Otto Fuerbringer characterized Armstrong's modernist practices in the following terms: "Among the architects in this section of the country who have been trying to lead the way to functionalism, to the designing of homes and buildings suited to our times, Harris Armstrong has been the most consistent in his aims. His buildings were based on clean and simple lines and thoroughly contemporary in construction and arrangement."[22] Lesley Laskey expresses similar views in stronger terms, characterizing Armstrong's design philosophy as a disruptive influence: "Harris Armstrong established a foothold for modern architecture, he protected and nurtured it as a single entity. Prior to him, buildings in Clayton had colonial façades and Harris ruptured that wall."[23] Armstrong's concerns went beyond form to address the issue of efficacious design particularly in relation to the climatic rigors of St. Louis: "I think there is a crying need

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20 Dorothy A. Brockoff, "Harris Armstrong" (AIA St. Louis Chapter File on Harris Armstrong), 3.

21 David J. Simmons. See Chapter 1, note 45.

22 Otto Fuerbringer, "Functional Homes and Buildings," *PD*, 9 April, 1939.

23 Lesley Laskey, interview by author, tape recording, Laskey residence, St. Louis, 11 November, 2005.

for proper buildings for our very trying climate."[24] As a strategy for mediating climatic conditions, Armstrong, in advance of his times, designed for solar considerations while at the same time introducing modern air-conditioning systems.

Armstrong understood local conditions because he was a Midwesterner, born in Edwardsville across the river from St. Louis in Illinois. He became a successful architect in spite of dropping out of high school. While working during the day as office boy and draftsman in the office G.F.A. Bruggeman, Armstrong attended night classes at Washington University, followed by a year at Ohio State University. He gained his professional license by passing the examinations after several years of apprenticeship and practice in St. Louis in the offices of LaBeaume & Klein, Maritz & Young, and Isadore Shank.[25] In 1930, on the recommendation of architectural delineator and fellow St. Louisian, Hugh Ferriss, Armstrong was employed in the New York office of Raymond Hood, the leading exponent of skyscraper design, when Rockefeller Center was on the drawing board. [26] Apart from this New York stint, Armstrong spent his entire working life in St. Louis."[27] In 1948, Armstrong's design was judged runner-up in the second [and deciding] phase of the competition for the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial which was awarded to Eero Saarinen for his design for the Gateway Arch.[28] Armstrong was

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[24] Harris Armstrong quoted in Fuerbringer.

[25] National Register of Historic Places Inventory Form for Shanley Building, Section 8. Compiled by Esley Hamilton, Preservation Historian, St. Louis County. www.stlouisco.com.

[26] Overby, 46. Overby describes Hood as the "pioneer architect of modern skyscrapers."

[27] George McCue, "Architect Who Made His Own Rules." *GD*, 30 December, 1973.

[28] The competition is discussed by Helene Lipstadt in "Co-Making the Modern Monument: The Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Competition and Eero Saarinen's Gateway Arch," in Mumford, 4-25. Of the five designs selected for the Second Phase, Armstrong's was the only one made by a single architect; the others were by design firms. Designs by Frederick Dunn and Charles Eames were eliminated

elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1955. His entry in the 1964 Alumni Directory of the Washington University School of Architecture summed up his professional life in these terms: "I have had my own firm since 1932. I was employed in a local architect's office until 1929, [presumably Isadore Shank's]. Worked for Raymond Hood, New York City, 1930 (worked on early studies of Radio City); returned to St. Louis, survived the depression, and have been in private practice ever since."[29] Armstrong was a man of strong opinions not only about architecture but about the issues that shaped the cultural fabric of St. Louis and beyond. He was a clear and forceful writer who, from time to time, published his views in local newspapers and architecture publications. Even though his practice had benefited from the proliferation of suburbs in the counties surrounding St. Louis, later in his life he questioned the unstemmed tide of urban expansion on quality of life grounds--he could see that time spent commuting would be time lost for productive activities.[30]

In 1926, Armstrong married Louise McClelland (1900-1994) a neighbor in the middle-class suburb of Webster Groves. An aspiring writer, Louise graduated from Lindenwood College and she recalled that when she first met Harris, he was always reading books and was very idealistic about his pursuit of an architectural practice.[31]

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in the first round, along with some one hundred-sixty others. The Eames entry was made by Charles and Ray Eames and John Entenza. The competition's judges included Charles Nagel, sometime partner of Frederick Dunn.

[29] Entry on Harris Armstrong in *Alumni Biographies* , School of Architecture, Washington University, 1964, Harris Armstrong Archive, Special Collections, Washington University , Series 01, Box 01.

[30] See, for example, Harris Armstrong, "The American Dream, The Spoiled Country," Op-Ed, *PD*, 14 September, 1969.

[31] Andrew L.W. Raimist, interview by author, tape recording, Raimist Studio/Residence, 11 January, 2006. I am grateful to Andrew Raimist for conveying to me the substance and spirit of conversations he

Louise was supportive of Harris' vision in very practical ways. As time went on and income from his practice proved insufficient to support the family, she took on numerous income-generating occupations, including real estate sales and landscaping. Working outside the home played against the norm for middle class women, nevertheless, Louise continued to exercise her considerable energy and ingenuity assisting with the project of keeping them and their family of three children afloat. In later years, Louise would identify real estate property for Harris to buy on speculation, enabling him to offer a building site along with his design services. Evidence of Louise's support for Harris' role as an architect can be found in her obituary which noted that she was the first president of the Women's Architectural League, an auxiliary of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Also mentioned was her interest in cultural matters illustrated by her active participation in the National Society of Arts and Letters.[32] Louise's support also helped Armstrong develop business. One important instance is the Shanley Building, the commission which came to him through Louise's acquaintance with Shanley's wife, Marie, a co-worker at a Clayton bank.[33]

Harris and Louise Armstrong possessed significant social skills which among other things allowed them to mix easily with people who were likely to be open to Harris' particular approach to architecture. His challenge was to find clients who would entertain modern designs for their offices and houses. Referring to the conservatism of St. Louis, Armstrong said: "But those hard years [the thirties] gave meaning and value to work and

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had with Louise Armstrong. To a great extent I have based my profile of her on that information along with contributions from Lesley Laskey and others.

[32] "Louise Armstrong, 94. Volunteer, Officer in Architectural League," *PD,* 28 February , 1994.

[33] Dr. Leo S. Shanley, son of Dr. Leo M. Shanley, interview by author, tape recording, Shanley residence, 6 January, 2006. This confirms Andrew L. Raimist's account.

the chance to work. They made clients people and very special people, at that."[34] This statement is significant in a number of respects. First, Armstrong acknowledges that his modernist architecture was dependent upon these "very special people." Second, it alerts us to the possibility that they subscribed to values that made for a common appreciation of his architecture. One theme that connects a number of his 1930's clients is the field of medicine and medical research. *Architectural Forum* noted that "The clients, mostly young professional people, began to trickle in after 1933, and Harris Armstrong began to establish a reputation for his unusual residences and physicians' buildings."[35] While acknowledging that these doctors may have associated modern architecture with progressive ideas in their professional field, Lesley Laskey points to a social dynamic in the situation: "Doctors had a certain social status and Harris and Louise ran into that stream of people. I think it [modernism] was a social thing more than an aesthetic idea. I think they were giving [a project] to Harris--architect, Harris--friend and Harris--part of a social group."[36] Harris and Louise shared many interests with the circle of Harris' clients. For instance, they liked the outdoors and they kept horses at stables in St. Louis County.[37] In 1947, Armstrong built a weekend retreat close to the Big River near DeSoto, Missouri. Named the Rockpile, the cabin was constructed on a site sheltered by impressive bluffs from which the name was presumably taken.[38] The Rockpile served as a venue for

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[34] Harris Armstrong quoted in Dorothy A. Brockoff, 2.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Lesley Laskey, interview.

[37] Laskey, interview.

[38] Armstrong was assisted with the construction by Gyo Obata who described the process in the following terms: "We board-framed the concrete wall, laid in large stones from the creek. And poured

excursions to the country as did the neighboring farm owned by Dr. Samuel B. Grant and his wife Natalie. It was a short walk through the wooded countryside to the Grant's cabin, a one hundred-twenty year old structure made into a family retreat and gathering place for their friends. Indeed, it seems possible that the Armstrongs may have become aware of the land on which they built the Rockpile through the Grants.

As noted in Chapter One, the increase in residential building towards the end of the decade of the thirties was not matched by a corresponding rise in commercial building.[39] Physicians as a group did forge ahead, however, and Harris Armstrong had a significant number of them as his clients. In 1935, Armstrong designed an orthodontics office for Dr. Leo M. Shanley at 7800 Maryland. With its white stucco and glass block exterior, the Shanley Building inaugurated the International Style in St. Louis.(fig. 24) The building was on a prominent corner in the growing business district of Clayton, visible to all especially physicians who were looking for new options for their growing practices. Shanley recommended Armstrong to his colleague, Dr. E.H. Jacobsmeyer and in 1938, Armstrong designed for Jacobsmeyer a clinic/residence resonant in style with the Shanley Building, at 121 North Brentwood, a few blocks west of the Shanley Building. (fig. 25) In 1939, Armstrong followed up with a medical clinic for Dr. Samuel B. Grant at 114 North Taylor in the Central West End. (fig. 26) The Grant Clinic is infused with an entirely different spirit, although Armstrong utilized International Style materials such as glass block and plate glass. A clinic for Dr. Joseph C. Wieneke and Dr. Paul E. Rutledge at 227 North Kirkwood, no longer extant, followed in 1941. (fig. 27)

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concrete, making a stone wall with great character." Gyo Obata, "Thoughts on Architecture in St. Louis from the 1940's through the 1960's," in Mumford, 87.

[39] David J. Simmons. See Chapter 1, note 45.

This was a white stucco structure with a large horizontal cantilever over the porte-cochère. The building's modern features included integral planters and extensive glazing.[40] Each of these medical offices participated in the modernist spirit, suggesting a connection in the minds of the physicians between their profession and modernist architecture. As the photographs show, the Shanley Building, the Jacobsmeyer Office and Residence and the Wieneke and Rutledge Medical Building featured the stuccoed ,white planes of the International Style as well as other hallmark characteristics such as rectilinear form, flat roofs, and metal strip windows. The choice of traditional red brick for the Grant Clinic stands out in this progression of white buildings. Apart from the appeal of the soft handmade bricks and a desire to fit in with the residential style of the area, practicality may well have governed the choice. The Grant Clinic was located west of the city center where the ambient air was often grayish as the winds carried pollution from the soot-soaked city westward, a phenomenon well described by George McCue: "In the 1920s and 1930s the business district was often in mid-morning darkness, and the shopper routinely detoured scaffolding erected for sandblasting and steam scrubbing blackened building walls and encrusted ornament."[41] Things were so bad on November 28, 1939 that it became known as "Black Tuesday."[42] Clearly, a white building could not have survived the environmental rigors of bituminous coal-burning in the city. By contrast, new construction in the county featured cleaner forms of heating (and cooling). Armstrong's pristine, white buildings with planes of glass and glass block, were symbols

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[40] See Andrew L.W. Raimist, Armstrong Catalogue, unpublished compilation of Armstrong projects, HA41-3, 33. Harris Armstrong Archive, Washington University.

[41] McCue, *Sculpture City: St. Louis*, 82.

[42] James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley: St. Louis, Missouri* (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Company, 1981), 476.

of a new life in the ever-expanding county areas of St. Louis, away from the congestion of the city. The new medical clinics drove home the connection between modernity, science and medicine. Their materials and their streamlining telegraphed hygiene, lucidity and transparency.

In 1935, Armstrong also designed a house for Washington University medical researchers Drs. Carl and Gerti Cori on North Berry Road in Glendale. (fig. 28) Consisting of "massed cubic forms joined in a loose, asymmetrical composition, the Cori house is a significant landmark as one of the first definitive statements of many of the principles of modernism in residential architecture in St. Louis."[43] In 1947, the Coris were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in medicine for their work on carbohydrate metabolism. The Coris and the Grants were close friends. The medical client theme continued when Armstrong designed a house in 1941 in St. Louis County on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River for Dr. Evarts A. Graham, a physician who had been instrumental in establishing the link between smoking and lung cancer. These and other physician clients were united by a progressive belief that science could bring about an improved future, and as we have seen, the buildings that Armstrong created for them embody those beliefs.

The Shanley Building (1935)

Dr. Leo M. Shanley (1898-1979) was a distinguished orthodontist who practiced for more than fifty years and was in his mid-thirties when he commissioned Harris Armstrong to design a new office to house his practice.[44] Prior to that he had been in

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[43] Andrew L. R. Raimist, Cori Residence HA35-6, Compilation of Armstrong Designs, Harris Armstrong Archive, Washington University, St. Louis, 19.

[44] See Chapter 1, note 13, on Raimist.

practice with another doctor in downtown St. Louis. Many expressed surprise when he announced that he was moving west to the then "sleepy county seat" of Clayton, but he understood that his patient population was moving steadily westward. Shanley anticipated a trend, because within ten years of the building of the clinic, most orthodontists had moved out of downtown and into the suburbs.[45] Orthodontics had evolved into a specialty as recently as the mid-1920s. It was seen as a progressive approach to dental care and as such was suspect by many, above all by other members of the dental profession, who thought orthodontists were "skimming off the cream" by placing a priority on orthodontics at the expense of dental hygiene.[46] The modernist design of the building clearly established that the activity within was something new and future-oriented. The building reads formally as a product of modernist thinking exemplified in its poured concrete construction overlaid with refined white stucco, its use of rectangular volumes and hovering horizontal planes, its flat roof system, its floor to ceiling metal-frame glass windows integrated with banks of glass block, its emphasis on the properties of its materials, its planar rectangular forms and its innovative approaches to a host of functional issues such as climate control. (figs. 5 & 24) In formal terms, its modernist sensibility shows Armstrong in dialogue with Le Corbusier, the Bauhaus architects and the Dutch modernists such as Gerrit Rietveld. As Eric Mumford points out, the International Style divested itself of its association with socialist ideology in its trans-Atlantic migration, becoming apolitical and suitable for the new 'machine age'. Moreover,

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[45] Dr. Leo S. Shanley, interview. Clayton was described as a "sleepy county seat" in Shanley's obituary. "Dr. Leo Shanley Funeral Monday," *PD*, 29 July ,1979, in *St. Louis Necrologies*, Vol. 32., Missouri Historical Society, 73.

[46] Dr. Leo S. Shanley, interview.

he asserts that "It would be difficult to find a better example than the Shanley Building of this complete shift in architectural meaning from the European 1920s to the American 1930s."[47] Notwithstanding its strong resemblance, the Shanley Building does not replicate the International Style. As Andrew Raimist argues, Armstrong was not beholden to the strictures of any one internationalist theory of modernism, but rather, the Shanley Building established him as an architect confident in his own ideas and interested in and accepting of "complexity and pragmatism over simplicity and idealism."[48]

Armstrong was presented with the challenge of adapting his building to a long, narrow site with a ten-foot grade on a busy corner for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The building would be visually prominent from all elevations, north, south and east in particular. The building is noteworthy in terms of its modernist affect in a number of ways. First, its monochromatic, bright whiteness trumpets its modernism and contributes to a sense of weightless, effortless repose on its site. The building's style marked it as distinctly urban, whereas people had moved to the county to displace themselves from the urban context. Second, its self-conscious adaptation to the site bespeaks a new awareness of the possibilities of integration of building with site. The Shanley Building registers the rise/fall of the land on its east elevation on Bemiston Street. Third, the building offers an unfolding drama of volumes and planes as one moves around it, a drama that relies on asymmetry, one of the chief tenets of the International Style. The building is distinctive and visually appealing from each of the four sides. Fourth, it makes a rational, well

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47 Mumford, 43.

48 Raimist, unpublished chapter on the Shanley Building.

articulated transition from outside to inside and vice versa. The main entrance is from the Maryland Avenue on the north, via a long straight path through a gated courtyard to a discreet front door removed from a direct interface with the street. (fig. 24) A second entrance is located on the lower level under the terrace on the south side where cars can drive up in inclement weather. Fifth, the vocabulary of streamlining confirms the building's modernity. The most dramatic example of this is the welcoming semi-circular reception desk backlit by diffuse light from a glass block wall, a scenario strongly evocative of movie sets of the period as noted in Chapter One; (fig.1) and sixth, the building introduces new materials and/or new uses for old materials. For example, pecan shells used to create a textured surface in the driveway, attracted great flocks of birds--starlings, crows, chickadees and tufted titmice--to feed in the morning, possibly an unforeseen consequence of an unconventional application of materials. In acknowledgement of its historic place in the history of modern architecture in St. Louis, the Shanley Building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Dr. Shanley's particular take on the machine age was that scientific and technological advances would be the basis for improved patient care and that the way to build a business was to offer up-to-date care to a patient population that could afford it.[49] Thus a connection between progressive architecture and wealth became embodied in the building. This was an ironic twist of meaning, since the International Style's ideological origins had to do with architecture for the common man. Streamlining of the building in pursuit of optimal efficiency was a key concern. Dr. Shanley 's vision of his practice was of a single proprietor, himself, working with associates who came in from time to time.

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[49] In the era before dental insurance, orthodontic care was paid for in full by the patient. Then, as now, the treatment was expensive.

Shanley conveyed his modus operandi to Armstrong via a process that bore the hallmarks of a very effective collaboration. Armstrong spent about a week in Shanley's office observing what he did, how he did it and where he did it. When Armstrong stated to a magazine writer that "The client was frequently a 'design partner' in the architectural process," he may well have had Shanley in mind. [50] The fact that no significant changes were ever made to the building during its six decades as an orthodontist's office speaks volumes for the quality of the initial communication between Armstrong and Shanley, for Shanley's grasp of the functional requirements of the space, and about Armstrong's success in realizing a scheme that would accommodate them effectively.[51] Optimal efficiency was achieved with three treatment rooms with a laboratory in between for taking impressions and making appliances while the plaster lab was separated off in the basement. The spacious reception room was large in order to accommodate high volumes of patients who made frequent, short visits. The reception room was designed with patient comfort in mind but beyond that, the room was full of interesting and instructive diversions for adult and child alike. (fig. 29) Furniture included a desk and chairs, there were integral planters, cork floors and a ceiling mural of the night sky by Charles Kress who was a friend of Armstrong's. Patients could move out onto the balcony or play ping-pong in the recreation room downstairs. With its very simple, clean lines the semi-circular reception desk maximized the circulation space while creating a streamlined appearance.

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[50] Brockoff, 2.

[51] Despite the fact that the building was designed for a sole orthodontist, Shanley was joined in practice by his son, Dr. Leo. S. Shanley in 1962. The younger Shanley practiced orthodontics in the building until he sold it in the 1990's. He stated that the building had functioned well for him for the entire period, except for a roof that leaked, and one or two minor problems.

Leo M. Shanley was born in Texas. The family moved to St. Louis and he attended Washington University where he completed his studies in orthodontics. There he met his future wife, Marie Stifel, who was from a long-time St. Louis family and who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Marie Shanley was very supportive of her husband's vision for the new clinic. Shanley does not seem to have been particularly interested in architecture, although he was very satisfied with the building. His wife was vigorously in favor of having Harris Armstrong design the building, perhaps because she knew something of Harris through her acquaintanceship with Louise.[52] In his obituary, Shanley was described as "an internationally known Clayton orthodontist." [53] He was actively involved in professional societies, he was a fellow of the American College of Dentists and he served as president of the International College of Dentists, the Missouri Dental Association, and the St. Louis Dental Society. Washington University School of Dentistry (now defunct) acknowledged his distinguished career with an award as an alumnus of great distinction. Shanley was hailed for his vision of the independent medical practice in a free-standing, purpose-built facility with ample space. According to his son, "Dad got two or three death threats when they were putting the building up because they thought it was so horrible. Knowing my father," he said, "it would in no way dissuade him from going ahead. He was determined once he had made up his mind."[54] In light of this, it would be interesting to know if Armstrong encountered obstacles to modernism such as Shank foresaw in Ladue, in negotiating the building

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[52] The Shanleys' interest in modern architecture did not run to their private residence on Lay Road, Ladue which was Tudor style. Leo. S. Shanley recalled that the family moved to the Lay Road house from Kirkwood because his parents preferred Ladue to Kirkwood.

[53] "Dr. Leo Shanley Funeral Monday."

[54] Dr. Leo. S. Shanley, interview.

permit process in the City of Clayton. Leo and Marie Shanley were friends with Harris and Louise Armstrong. They knew the Grants since their sons attended John Burroughs School at the same time. The Grant connection was key, because Grant said that it was after he had seen the new Shanley Building that he decided to engage Armstrong to design a clinic for his medical practice.[55]

The Grant Medical Clinic (1938)

Whereas the precepts of the International Style seem to dominate the Shanley Building, the spirit of modernism evident in the Grant Clinic at 114 North Taylor in the Central West End, seemed to hail from a different source. The building is Wrightian in terms of its cubic volumes, its free-flowing open plan, its use of the vernacular brick and above all its occupation of the site as a natural inhabitant. (fig.31) Its modernist vocabulary includes interlocking cubic spaces, expansive window systems, glass block grids and streamlined space on the interior. These characteristics also relate it to the work of Finnish modernists, most particularly Alvar Aalto. Said Lesley Laskey: "I'm sure that the Grant Clinic and Alvar Aalto are really related in spirit as well as form. The brickwork is from Aalto and only in St. Louis could you get masons and brick that could be used the way it was. Harris had that language down like you couldn't believe."[56] Aalto was at the forefront of a movement in Finland that practiced an independent approach to modernism, absorbing the tenets as laid down in France, Holland and Germany, but expanding the scope of the style to encompass materials such as brick and wood in both traditional and innovative ways. Armstrong's interest in Aalto is evidenced

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[55] See Marion Hunt, "In A Class By Himself: Samuel Becker Grant, M.D.," *Outlook* XX Number 4 (Winter 1984): 15.

[56] Laskey, interview.

in photographs which show several Aalto designs such as the Paimio chair, the armchair 31, the molded plywood chair and the L Leg table in the furnishings for the clinic.(fig. 32)

The Grant Medical Clinic building is richly articulated in red brick from southern Missouri, in a composition which combines both flat and pitched roofs with an interesting variety of copper roof and gutter details, bands of glass block, ribbon windows and tall, metal-frame glass windows, and a staircase with aluminum handrails protected by a sheltering, well illuminated overhang. The markedly pitched copper roof signals a welcoming entrance to the patient. Situated in the middle of the block, the building is in a less prominent position than the Shanley Building in terms of public scrutiny, but Armstrong nonetheless made an exterior that was architecturally striking in different ways on each of the four elevations.[57] (figs. 33 & 34) The site must have presented Armstrong with certain logistical challenges, since its street frontage was relatively narrow. It is not clear what governed the choice of material or design of the Grant Clinic. Perhaps Grant was warned off a comprehensive flat roof system by Shanley whose roof leaked continuously.[58] One factor would have been compatibility with the surrounding architecture which was primarily residential and consisted of historic buildings in a variety of styles. The drawings show an addition by Armstrong in 1959/60 that extended the building along the alley to the east and to the south, adding office space, laboratory space on the upper level and a kitchen/dining facility on the lower level. In

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[57] The site fronted onto Taylor Avenue to the west, an alley to the north, a residence to the south and the fifteen-story Hawthorne Apartments to the east. The property immediately to the south was subsequently acquired and made into the existing parking lot.

[58] Dr. Leo S. Shanley, interview.

later years, the building was enlarged significantly by Smith and Entzeroth, who reworked the space in a manner deemed unsympathetic to the original design by many, including Armstrong himself. The building is currently owned by Washington University and continues to function as a clinic for a group of physicians.

Washington University was Samuel B. (Sam) Grant's alma mater and he maintained an active connection as a clinical professor, an attending physician and a member of the University's Board of Directors.[59] He was an indefatigable supporter of the University and the Medical School, raising money for student scholarships, housing, and other institutional needs and spearheading the fund drive for the Spencer T. Olin Medical Student Dormitory. The Samuel B. Grant University Health Service was established in 1963 in his honor.[60] Grant was born in 1896 into an esteemed St. Louis medical family. His father, John Mosby Grant, was a general practitioner who was very involved in community affairs including as a member of the Board of Education. Samuel Grant graduated with an MD from Washington University in 1920. Early in his career, he began publishing articles in medical and scientific journals and his interest in clinical research would continue for the rest of his life. His father's solo medical practice operated from a building which he himself owned, provided a business and professional model for the young Grant. But after practicing in downtown St. Louis for a time, his vision

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[59] For information about Dr. Grant's life and practice, also about his wife, Natalie, I am grateful to their two surviving sons Dr. Neville Grant and Dr. Samuel B. Grant Jr. and his wife, Pat. Much of the material in this section on the Grant Medical Clinic is based on conversations and materials provided by them as follows: Neville Grant, interview by author, telephone conversation, 5 January, 2006; and Samuel B. Grant Jr. and Pat Grant, interview by author, tape recording, 9 December, 2005 and subsequent telephone conversations.

[60] Hunt, 12-13. Dr. Grant's professional memberships included the Central Interurban Clinical Club and the Society of Sigma Xi, he was a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians.

expanded to encompass the idea of a group practice in a building which he would build and own.[61] In the Shanley Building, Grant seems to have seen such a vision realized and he engaged Armstrong to design a new facility for him.[62] Whether Armstrong was involved in the selection of the site, or whether the Armstrongs and the Grants were friends ahead of the project is not known, although it is highly likely that the Grants would have been familiar with the house Armstrong had designed in 1935 for Carl and Gerti Cori, since they were friends.

Clearly, Grant like Shanley, Jacobsmeyer and Bassett, had a choice to make with respect to the location of his practice, either to join the westward migration of professionals or to stay to serve an existing patient population. By all accounts, patients came from the educated and professional classes who lived in the general area of the city and the Central West End. The proximity of three major hospitals, Barnes, St. Luke's and Missouri Baptist, was an influential and possibly deciding factor in Grant's decision to build his new clinic in the Central West End. His decision, along with that of his colleagues in the Maryland Medical Group on Maryland Avenue, created an anchor in the city when most businesses and institutions were taking flight. Whereas he viewed investment in the stock market as fraught with risk, Grant saw his new building as a solid investment in medicine and science. As owner, he rented the space to the medical partnership which initially consisted of himself and three other physicians.

In 1926, Samuel Grant married Natalie Neville (1898-1999), a diminutive, vivacious New Englander from New Hampshire. Initially, Natalie does not seem to have

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[61] Dr. Grant was making home visits also and would continue to do so until he was paralyzed by a stroke in 1962.

[62] Hunt, 13.

greeted with unqualified approval the idea of investing in the new building: "To make such an investment, during a decade of national depression and at a time when there were three young Grants to raise, seemed a dangerous proposition--so much so that she remembers others dubbing the proposed building 'Grant's Tomb'"[63] Once convinced, however, she supported the idea wholeheartedly and became actively involved in certain aspects of the project. Natalie Grant was educated and well traveled, having lived with her family in Germany and France, where she achieved proficiency in German and French. During World War I, she worked as an occupational therapist in San Antonio, Texas and after the war became a registered nurse, working at the American Hospital in Neuilly, France. Natalie held progressive, humanist views on many issues, views which, for instance, led her to very active participation as a founder of John Burroughs School and as a member of the board of Planned Parenthood. French language was important to her and she belonged to a group that met regularly for conversational French. Her interest in people was palpable, and equipped her well for the role of physician's wife, when medical practice was much less specialized and doctors were concerned with the whole patient. She knew all of her husband's patients as did the Grants' three sons.[64] The Grants' social circle was wide and included doctors, scientists and artists. The walls of their residence at # 96 Aberdeen Place were adorned with works by their artist friends. Her interest was not in architecture per se although she lad a lively interest in all things cultural. Her interest would flow from the people who were associated with the

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63 Ibid.

64 Dr. Samuel B. Grant, Jr. & Pat Grant, interview. Two sons, John (Jack) Grant and Neville Grant became physicians and practiced at the Grant Clinic; the third son, Samuel B. Grant Jr. was, until his retirement, a member of the faculty of the Department of History at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Illinois.

architecture. Her son feels that modernism's potential for differentiating her may have been a factor: "I think mother would have said: 'Let's go with the modern' because she wanted to be different," adding that she liked the style of the family home because it was different from other houses in the area.[65] At the same time, Natalie did express some concern that the clinic's modern style may not "sit well" with the prevailing architecture in the area.[66] Saluting the Grants' courage and foresight in proceeding with an unfamiliar and potentially unpopular style, Lesley Laskey insists that "Nobody else would have dared to do that. The building has been alien up until the past twenty-five years. Now we've got Finnish architects coming to visit it!"[67]

Clearly, the design project was challenging and Grant and Armstrong worked on it together. As with Shanley, Armstrong spent hours in Grant's office observing the operations of the practice. The layout consisted of an upper level of the clinic with a large patient waiting room, six examination rooms, a laboratory, X-Ray room and a consultation room, with other amenities on the lower level. (fig. 35) The especially modern and efficient features were the design of the patient floor, the equipment, and the streamlining of the semi-circular desk with its connection to all the sites of patient care. The receptionist and nurses were accommodated at a convenient central point at a semicircular station under a circular skylight from where they had a commanding view of the waiting room and the examination areas. (fig. 2) Here Armstrong reprised this

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[65] Dr. Samuel B. Grant, Jr., interview. The Grant residence at # 96 Aberdeen Place was not a modernist house, but a very distinctive brick house built in 1926, on a private street west of Forest Park. Harris Armstrong made modifications to the house in 1948, opening up the rear to informal, private precinct with lush plantings and sculpture.

[66] Hunt, 14.

[67] Laskey, interview.

striking feature of the Shanley Building design. The awnings which may be raised and lowered from inside the building were integral to the design. The building was also equipped with central heating and cooling. Introducing the new clinic to its readership, the *Post-Disp*atch in a large-format photo spread on February 12, 1939 under the headline "Architecture For Use--Streamlining a Physician's Office," connected the doctor's profession, science and the building's modernity: "As pure functionalism is particularly appropriate for a scientific workshop, this physician's office…is a good example of how such functionalism is emphasized in modern architecture." [68] Some three decades later, another writer was careful to dissociate the building from cold, impersonal machine-age modernism, arguing that Armstrong's comfortable design showed that "functionalism and rationality do not have to produce a cold or mechanistic building."[69] One large factor that mediated against such as outcome was the Grants' humanistic attitudes to medicine and to human needs, which were deliberately and discernibly expressed in the building. The experience of the human scale at the entry was followed by a clear sense of procession into the reception room where the atmosphere was informal, warm and engaging. (fig. 36) Its light-filled volume associated clarity with hygiene and transparency. A wood-burning fireplace added to the sense of warmth and comfort in the winter. Natalie Grant was instrumental in making the clinic a hospitable and pleasant environment by suggesting strategies for alleviating the boredom often associated with waiting rooms. A fish tank was a calming but life-giving presence, a diversion for children and adults alike, as was the integral planter. (fig. 37) Writing tables and jig-saw puzzles typified her methods for occupying children, and in the examination rooms, she requested hangers for

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[68] "Architecture For Use--'Streamlining' a Physician's Office," *PD*, 12 February, 1939.

[69] Hunt, 14.

patients' clothes. She also suggested that each examining room have a wooden tray with puzzles to pass the time."[70] Natalie was involved with the furniture, too, traveling to Chicago with Armstrong to participate in the selection of pieces by Alvar Aalto and others. By all accounts, the new clinic worked very well and according to his son, Samuel Grant loved the building.[71]

Natalie Grant recalled that Frank Lloyd Wright visited the Grant Medical Clinic and pronounced it one of the two most interesting buildings in St. Louis, the other being Union Station.[72] That Frank Lloyd Wright took the time to visit Armstrong's project suggests that he was interested in Armstrong's exploration of modernism. Wright also visited Armstrong's house shortly after it was built, but this project did not fare so well in Wright's assessment. According to the story, Wright looked out the window at the house Armstrong had designed for his neighbor and commented that he had done a better job on that house than on his own.[73]

The Armstrong House and Architectural Studio (1938)

Armstrong's house (1938) is located at # 3 Sappington Spur in the suburb of Oakland, on a sloping site overlooking Westborough Country Club. Armstrong had already designed two other houses on what had been the Curlee Estate, one at #2 Sappington Spur for J.N. McClure (1937) and the other at #4 for Herbert S. Alcorn

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70 Ibid.

71 Neville Grant, interview.

72 Hunt, 14. Another version of this story includes the Wainwright Building which makes sense since Wright had worked in Sullivan's office during the design phase and in any event greatly respected the hand of his mentor.

73 Raimist. Armstrong Compilation HA 38-1, 26. Leslie Laskey also related this story to me.

(1937).[74] I have chosen Armstrong's home because he presumably had the freedom to be experimental in his pursuit of modernist ideas, constrained only by budgetary issues, issues which were real. In fact, this house exemplifies a common trait in Armstrong's residential design, namely a disproportionate allocation of space between the living area and the remainder of the house.[75] As the plan shows, in his own house, Armstrong dedicated very generous space to the first floor living, dining, kitchen and studio while the four bedrooms and two baths on the second floor were very small by comparison. (fig. 38) Notwithstanding, Armstrong was able to build the house for a relatively modest sum--$13,500 according to *Architectural Forum*.[76] Louise recounted that Harris "scrounged" some materials and was able to achieve economies of scale with others by fabricating accessories for a number of projects simultaneously. For example, he used the same design for the doorknobs in all three houses on the Curlee Estate, and had them manufactured at the same time to save money.[77] In this regard, it is notable that Armstrong used the same ornate copper gutter detail on his house and the Grant Clinic, possibly in an effort to achieve economies. (figs. 39 & 40)

Armstrong retained a long, quarried stone wall from an old building as a façade feature of his house, with the new part arising behind it like a vaguely oriental pavilion

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[74] The Armstrong house is currently owned by Durb and Ellen Curlee who are distant relatives of the original owners of the land. I am grateful to Ellen Curlee for her discussion with me on February 23 at the house and this section on the house is based on material she provided as follows: Ellen Curlee, interview by author, tape recording, Curlee residence, 23 February, 2006.

[75] In many instances, houses were relatively small because banks were reluctant to make loans on large properties. I am grateful to architect, Paul C. Doerner for these observations. Paul C. Doerner, interview by author, tape recording, Chase Park Plaza Hotel, 1 February, 2006.

[76] "73. House for Harris Armstrong, Kirkwood, MO.," *The Architectural Forum* vol. 71, no. 4 (October 1939).

[77] Ellen Curlee, interview.

with a built-up roof, wide eaves and upturned gutters in textured copper. (fig. 41) A modern, flat-roofed extension housing his architectural studio marked by metal-framed corner windows, projects to the west from behind the stone wall. The juxtaposition of materials, especially the rough brick wall with metal frame windows and stucco, strongly recalls the house that Aino and Alvar Aalto built for themselves outside Helsinki, Finland in 1937.[78] (fig. 42) The back (north) elevation is very different from the south. From the street view, the house is low and long and organically integrated with the site by the device of the rough-hewn wall, whereas at the back, it soars into a full two-story structure atop a daylight service area which included quarters for live-in help. (fig. 43)

The house is notable for many aspects which reveal Armstrong in experimental mode in the context of the prevailing thinking on modernism. The house has about 2,000 square feet of living space, but it feels much larger because of Armstrong's careful management of flow and scale. His resolution of these issues owes much to Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie house. Like Wright, Armstrong experimented with flow, creating an informal circular path that connects the kitchen, dining, living and entry foyer areas. The living and dining rooms flow into one another while maintaining the illusion of discrete spaces. As the photograph shows, the rooms are unified by an uninterrupted wall of double-hung, wood frame windows some forty feet in length, designed perhaps to simulate the metal windows of the International Style. (fig. 44) The wall exemplifies Wright's principle that partitions should dissolve and allow a free interchange between inside and outside. The low horizontal scale combined with the expansive use of glass suggests the possibility of movement through unfolding space. Armstrong further evokes

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[78] The Aaltos used whitewashed brick, not stucco, but it is the effect of the contrasting white expanses of wall with the materials that is important to my argument.

Wright in his systematic deployment of Japonisme throughout the house on the exterior and interior. The pagoda-like effect of the pavilion structure with its flared gutter details is strongly reminiscent of Wright's localizing scheme for the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Japan of 1913-1923. (fig. 45) Moreover, the porch that Armstrong later added to adjoin the master bedroom on the upper level of the east elevation, has a distinctly Japanese look created by the pergola.[79] When they lived in the house, Harris and Louise had a Japanese gravel garden in the back. On the interior, Armstrong used an oriental screen-type window as a Japanese affectation.

Another strikingly modern feature of the house is Armstrong's concern with comfort, livability and utility. He achieved a relaxing informality while maintaining a stripped-down elegance evident, for example, in the window ledge that runs the length of the dining and living room window wall. The ledge emphasizes the room's horizontality at the same time as it provides easy seating. (fig. 44) Also contributing to comfort is the regulation of air temperature and flow through the building. For example, triple-hung windows in the living room open from the bottom to facilitate air circulation. (fig. 46) Armstrong's understanding of climatic factors and weather patterns is apparent in the siting and orientation of the house behind a stand of mature, sheltering trees with the main aspect facing south, so that in the summer it is shaded from the sun on the south side. In the living room, a deep fireplace offset on the wall is faced with elongated rectangles of marble, enhancing the horizontal orientation of the space. An integral planter wraps the corner of the room, bringing the sense of the garden indoors. (fig. 46) The exterior and interior flow together in a natural and intensely private setting.

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[79] Ellen Curlee, interview. Louise Armstrong told Ellen that it was Armstrong's fantasy to have a spiral staircase leading from the bedroom to the garden on the outside of the house but that she had wanted a porch. Armstrong built the porch as a surprise when she was out of town on a trip.

The house is highly crafted and idiosyncratic, a trait first noticed at the front door where a sundial with references personal to Armstrong, greets the visitor. Instances of what Louise called "Harris' tomfoolery" catch the eye, in particular the angular, ornamental molding on the stairs and front door. (fig. 46) While Armstrong could indulge his penchant for experiment, individuality and whimsy in expanding his practice of modernism in his own home and in passing, take a friendly lunge at the doctrinal seriousness of the International Style, the realities of client-based work meant that he had to be adept at drawing from sources both historic and modern, to achieve acceptable designs for clients who would only go so far with modernist ideas. This may have constituted the basis of a certain intellectual rapport between Armstrong and Charles Eames, who in 1935/36 were working on adjacent houses in Webster Groves.[80]

[80] Armstrong on # 343 Bristol Road for Dr. Margaret G. Smith, and Eames and his partner Robert Walsh on # 335 Bristol Road for the Dinsmoor family. Raimist, interview.

Chapter Three

Charles Eames, Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn

In the late thirties, Charles Eames (1907-1978) and Frederick Dunn (1905-84) each worked on a large-scale project--Eames on a house for John and Alice Meyer and Dunn with his partner, Charles Nagel (1899-1992), on a new church for the Episcopal Diocese of St. Louis.[1] The two projects were significant in terms of their scope and their potential for the architects to advance their engagement with modernist ideas. Moreover, both projects embodied the concept of comprehensive design, including decorative programs involving many of the same of artists. This concept of a variety of artists operating under the artistic vision and control of the architect drew from the Arts and Crafts notions inherent in the design philosophies of both Frank Lloyd Wright and Eliel Saarinen. Eames was a close friend of Dunn and his wife Tirzah, and their frequent social contact undoubtedly provided opportunities for exchange of ideas and creative resources for these and other projects.

Charles Eames

Charles Eames achieved universal acclaim for innovation in many fields of design and his furniture designs remain in demand today because of their utility, comfort and timeless simplicity of line and material. Eames was born in St. Louis in 1907 to a "super Middle-class respectable" family.[2] While attending high school, he took a part-time job in the Laclede Steel Company's mill where drawing, engineering and architecture gave

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[1] The Meyer house is normally credited to the partnership of Eames & Walsh, although the original owner, Alice Meyer Gerdine, discussed the house as if it were the creation of Eames alone. This is also true of written sources.

[2] Eames quoted in Gloria Koenig, *Charles & Ray Eames 1907-1978, 1912-1988* (Köln: Taschen, 2005), 7.

him his first vision of architecture as a possible career. That vision progressed when he attended Washington University School of Architecture from 1925-1928, but Eames could not adapt to the formal classical curriculum under Gabriel Ferrand. For one thing, Eames believed that Frank Lloyd Wright's work should be part of any architectural curriculum, an unpopular notion in the prevailing and restrictive Beaux-Arts environment.[3] Explanations for Eames' dismissal from the school vary, but any residual bad feelings were smoothed over, at least for long enough for Eames to accept an Honorary Doctor of Arts in 1970.[4] After leaving Washington University, Eames worked until 1931 as a draftsman for the St. Louis firm of Trueblood and Graf, then established a private practice with Charles M. Gray, and later Walter E. Pauley.[5] In 1934, Eames formed a partnership with Robert Walsh, during which time the Meyer House was designed. Eames had met his first wife, Catherine Dewey Woermann, while in the Washington University architecture program where she distinguished herself as its first woman graduate. Charles and Catherine spent their honeymoon in 1929 traveling in Europe looking at classical architecture in France, England, and Germany as well as the modernist works of Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe.[6] Like Shank, this first-hand experience of European architecture was foundational for Eames in terms of his vision of a future in design. In the three years from 1930-33, Eames like everyone else, was affected by the fall-off in jobs brought about by the Depression. As noted above, he formed two different partnerships, and following an extended trip to Mexico in

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3 Ibid., 8.

4 Robert W. Duffy, "Eames: A Man Who Did What He Wanted," *PD*, 27 August, 1978.

5 David G. De Long, "Eliel Saarinen and the Cranbrook Tradition in Architecture and Urban Design," in Robert Judson Clark et al, 71.

6 Koenig, 8.

1933-1934 spent painting, drawing, writing and wrestling with issues to do with his creative future, he returned to form a partnership with Robert P. Walsh. Eames and Walsh designed a number of successful buildings including the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary in Helena, Arkansas. When this project was published in *Architectural Forum,* Eliel Saarinen contacted Eames & Walsh to inquire about their future plans.[7] In 1938, Saarinen offered Eames a fellowship to study at Cranbrook, and Eames so impressed the older architect that after a year, Saarinen put him in charge of the design department. He also worked in the design practice of Eliel and Eero Saarinen. Now divorced, Eames in 1941 married Bernice Alexandra (Ray) Kaiser (1912- 1988) whom he had met at Cranbrook. In that year, Eames and Eero Saarinen won first prize in a MOMA competition titled *Organic Design in Home Furnishings*, in the seating category. Charles and Ray Eames left Cranbrook for California in 1941, where Charles worked for the MGM studios and was known for his modernistic "white sets" in the early Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers films. Eames also produced architectural renderings for set designs, an interesting instance of architecture and set design expressed in the work of one designer. As discussed in Chapter One, movie set designs were instrumental in shaping the public association of modernist designs with glamour, wealth and the good life.[8] At the same time, he and Ray were establishing their design practice which would develop their signature molded plywood furniture along with other things. During World War II, they developed and mass produced molded plywood leg splints for the U.S. military. They inaugurated the Plyformed Wood Company in a commercial space in 1942. Eames occupied the Charles Eliot Norton Chair of Poetry at Harvard in 1971-2,

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7 Ibid., 9.

8 Ibid., 12.

and in 1977 was elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.[9] Eames died at the Chase Hotel in 1978, while back in St. Louis working on a project.

The John P. Meyer House (1936-38)

The partnership of Eames and Walsh had designed several projects when in 1936, John Philip Meyer IV (1899-1960) and his wife, Alice Meyer (1905- 2005) engaged them to design a home on a five acre lot in Frontenac at #4 Deacon Drive. (figs. 47 & 48) The Meyers were cultured and civic minded people with the courage of their convictions in art and other matters. These qualities made them perfect clients for Eames whose restless, adventurous design spirits were engaged by the scope of the project. Meyer was educated at Andover and Yale, after which he returned to St. Louis to work in banking, rising to the presidency of the Northwestern National Bank. Alice graduated from Mary Institute Country Day School and Washington University, after which she spent a year in Switzerland where she studied voice and opera and achieved proficiency in French and German. Like Natalie Grant, Alice met regularly with a group of French language speakers until she was well into her nineties.[10] The Meyers' interest in visual and performing arts, especially music, stands out in a distinguished inventory of the community organizations they supported. After Meyer died in 1960, Alice put her Eames House on the market in 1961 with an asking price of $ 150,000. In 1962, Alice married Leigh Gerdine, President of Webster University and continued her active role in music and other educational and philanthropic concerns in the St. Louis community, interests she shared with Gerdine. When Alice S. Gerdine died in 2005, her obituary described her

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[9] Duffy, "Eames: A Man Who Did What He Wanted."

[10] The group was organized by Henriette Bulus and met at her house.

as "a generous and beloved patron of the arts," singling out her support for the Community Music School and her founding role in Opera Theatre of St. Louis.[11] Her active interest in modernist architecture was apparent well into her nineties when she joined the effort to restore Frank Lloyd's Wright's Kraus House (1951) in Kirkwood, Missouri. A recent article in *Modernism* described her as part of an "aristocracy of cultivated St. Louisians" who "embraced modern painting, sculpture design and architecture, flexing their civic muscles--and opening their wallets--to promote the expression of new ideas."[12]

The award of the commission to Eames demonstrates the Meyers' willingness to foster the career of an upcoming designer, a characteristic which Alice Gerdine continued to exhibit throughout her life. Given Eames' youth and relative inexperience, the Meyer commission amounted to a vigorous gesture of confidence, and the opportunity of a lifetime, although as noted above, it was his earlier work with Walsh that brought Eames to Eliel Saarinen's attention in the first instance. Eames was known to the Meyers through his first wife, Catherine Woermann, who had been a classmate of Alice. "We knew that we wanted a contemporary house. We'd seen the houses that Charles had designed, and decided to give him the commission," commented Alice.[13] The Meyer House is a product of Eames' pre-Cranbrook thinking and is a noteworthy example of a fertile design imagination that drew from many disciplines to create an integrated, if highly

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[11] John M. McGuire, "Patron of arts, education dies at age 99," *PD*, 13 September, 2005.

[12] Robert W. Duffy, "A Modernist Landmark Bites the Dust: Samuel Marx' May House," *Modernism*, Vol.8 No.4, (Winter 2005-06): 117. According to Duffy, the group also included Morton D. "Buster" May, Joseph Pulitzer Jr., Ethan A.H.Shepley Sr., Howard Baer, Perry Rathbone, Etta Steinberg and Stanley Goodman.

[13] Robert W. Duffy, "Designing A Whole Building Is Just Too Demanding," *PD*, 1 August, 1982, 5C.

individualized, interior. The Meyers rejected Eames' first design, but they approved the second, a design which Saarinen had looked at. According to Alice, "Charles took the plans with him to Cranbrook in 1936, where Eliel Saarinen made some suggestions." How extensive or detailed Saarinen's suggestions were is not known, however Alice cites an instance where Saarinen modernized Eames' niches in the dining room "and made them much more interesting."[14]

While certain of St. Louis' wealthy families maintained both city and country residences to accommodate seasonal changes, the Meyer house was designed to be their principal, and possible only, St. Louis residence. Set in formal gardens on five acres away from the street, the house consisted of five bedrooms, servants' quarters, a library, a nursery, wine cellars, formal gardens and stables and was clearly designed to accommodate the Meyers' expanding family. When they engaged Eames to design their house in 1936, they had three children with a fourth arriving in 1939. The most compellingly modern aspect of this house may well be its inventive synthesis of tradition and innovation. Pat Kirkham argues that the house descends from Swedish modernism as exemplified by Gunnar Asplund's Stockholm City Library of 1920-28.[15] (fig. 49) This connection is tenable in at least two respects--the semicircular rampart shapes on the south and east walls of the building seem to quote Asplund's cylindrical tower, and the building's unassailable mass and pared down form are highly evocative of the Library. However, Asplund's work strove for geometric simplicity whereas Eames has achieved complexity with the massing of disparate geometric shapes such as rectangular flat-roofed boxes without overhangs, semi-circular walls and rectangular columns. A more

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14 Ibid.

15 Kirkham, 22.

convincing comparison made on the same grounds may be with Le Corbusier's Villa Schwob in Switzerland of 1916. (fig. 50) As can be seen in comparing the two plans, the design also owes something to Frank Lloyd Wright's use of diagonal planning in, for example, his Cooper House of 1890. (figs. 51 & 52) In addition, Eames' diagonal plan format in conjunction with the semi-circular forms strongly recall Alvar Aalto's Paimio Tuberculosis Sanitarium of 1930-33. (fig. 53) The irregularity of form is an argument for the building's modernity. However, the asymmetry seems more arbitrary than calculated, suggesting that for Eames the form of the house might follow the function to be accommodated within. Interiors were Eames' strength; hence it is not surprising that the Meyer House was mannered and integrated as a comprehensive decorative scheme.

The Meyers were active on the social scene and wanted a house in which they could entertain their friends who came from a wide swath of St. Louis social and cultural circles. Interviewed some forty years later, Alice commented: "I think our friends thought it was pretty weird, but we loved it. It was a wonderful place to live."[16] Descriptions of the interior of the house reveal it to be not definitively modernist in spirit, however, its idiosyncrasy results from its synthesis of new and traditional materials with classical and contemporary design elements. In Kirkham's view, "the interior of the Meyer House can best be described as a combination of Georgian Revival, Scandinavian National Romanticism, Swedish modernism, Vienna Secession, and Art Deco styles, the latter two of which already drew heavily on eighteenth century neo-classical sources."[17] In addition, certain of its stylistic features such as the aluminum balustrade on the staircase were distinctly modern. Moreover, it pioneered the use of aluminum sash windows and was

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16 Duffy, " Designing A Whole Building..."

17 Kirkham, 26.

one of the first air-conditioned houses in the area. The elegant tone of the house was established at the entry way with a maple inlaid parquet floor. Features included a silver-leaf coffered ceiling and a marble stair with the aluminum balustrade, illuminated during the day by a stained-glass window designed by Eames and fabricated by Emil Frei, a popular artist in the area.[18] Frei 's stained glass work was sought after in the St. Louis area and would come to public attention with the opening of St. Mark's Episcopal Church on which he was working at roughly the same time. Eames coordinated a design effort to outfit the house with sumptuous but subdued textiles, furniture and artifacts consistent with the tranquil tenor of the pinks, grays and terracottas in the overall scheme. This arts and crafts approach suggests the influence of Saarinen and of Wright. V'Soske made a terracotta colored rug, Loja Saarinen designed grey draperies, ceramic plaques were designed by Sheila Burlingame (1893-1969), and Carl Milles (1875-1955), a sculptor on the Cranbrook faculty, contributed a figurative work for over the fireplace.[19] A St. Louisian and former student of Milles, Burlingame created a significant inventory of sculpture in the St. Louis area.[20] Eames designed a veneered card table and a set of four armchairs after Eliel Saarinen's furniture from the late twenties. (fig. 54) R. Craig Miller

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[18] R. Craig Miller, "Interior Design and Furniture," in Robert Judson Clark, et al, 109.

[19] It is possible that Milles and the Meyers were acquainted prior to the commissioning of their house. Milles' work had been shown at the City Art Museum in 1931. Milles' major work in St. Louis is the *Meeting of the Waters* fountain in Aloe Plaza which occupies two full city blocks on the Mall opposite Theodore Link's Union Station. The sculptural group includes a male and female figure, both nude, advancing towards each other in a gesture symbolizing the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers which is geographically close by. The nudity gave rise to a legendary public outcry, but Milles persisted and eventually prevailed. Soon after he arrived in Cranbrook in 1938, Eames began work with Milles on the *Meeting of the Waters* project. He assisted with the design of the fountain basin and prepared the scale models, in Cranbrook's tradition of assigning students to projects in their own communities while working with experienced masters. See Kirkham, 47-48.

[20] Sheila Burlingame was also an accomplished, painter, printmaker and book illustrator. For example, she produced fifty portraits as illustrations for Clyde Robertson's *Fifty Famous Women* (Atlanta: Banner Press, 1936).

views "such conservative work" as "an indication of Eames' lack of awareness of avant-garde design during the St. Louis years."[21] Miller is correct to interpret the work as conservative by any reasonable modernist standard, but incorrect to conclude that Eames was unaware of the contemporary developments in design. Eames' European travel was less than a decade behind him, and he mixed in circles in St. Louis where such issues were discussed. Furthermore, we do not know that Eames did not try to introduce more advanced ideas. It seems more likely that the design outcome may have more to do with Eames' forging a bond with Saarinen, if not with complying with the Meyers' wishes.

If Eames' professional sights were oriented towards Cranbrook after he met Eliel Saarinen in 1936, he remained well entrenched in St. Louis' creative community and would continue to move in and out of it for the remainder of his life. Eames' modernist predilections found a sympathetic cohort in the creative world of art and architecture in St. Louis. He belonged to a club referred to variously as the "Paint and Potters' Club" or "Paint and Putter Club." One version related by Joseph Pulitzer Jr., then publisher and editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, is that both Armstrong and Eames belonged to the Paint and Potters' Club. The club was made up of architects, artists and writers who gathered to discuss topical issues in design and culture, and Pulitzer himself belonged.[22] Another version referring to the Paint and Putter Club comes from the architect Charles Nagel and suggests a different emphasis, a group of friends spending Sundays in convivial gatherings, painting, knitting, chatting and drinking.[23] A watercolor by Eames

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[21] Miller, 109.

[22] Raimist interview. Raimist described his interview with Pulitzer which had taken place following a call from Emily Pulitzer shortly before Pulitzer's death in 1993.

depicts the members of the Paint and Putter Club, faceless but identifiable by their activities and gestures. (fig. 55) Those depicted were: Thomas and Chloe Sherman--Sherman was the music critic of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* for forty years, dubbed by *Newsweek* as the high priest of culture in St. Louis;[24] Charles Nagel; Fred and Tirzah Dunn; and the painter Wayman Whittemore whose wife, Mamie, is missing from the picture. Eames' ditty about Whittemore conveys the shared interest in art along with the sense of easy familiarity and affection operating within the group:[25]

> Here's to Waymie Whittemore,
> He did paintings by the score,
> First Picasso then Gaugin,
> Modigliani and Cezanne.

Armstrong did not belong to Eames' painted version of the Paint and Putter Club. Neither did Pulitzer.[26]It is possible that the Paint and Putter Club so depicted, evolved into a later iteration which Pulitzer described, and to which Armstrong and Bernoudy, among others, belonged.[27] Perhaps they liked the name and the concept, and reconstituted it as a social group for males looking for a venue to exchange views on modern art and culture.

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[23] Quinta Scott, interview. Some twenty years ago, Nagel relayed this information to Quinta Scott, Frederick Dunn's' daughter. See note 23. Eric Mumford's account accords with this version. See Mumford, 44.

[24] Nagel and Dunn designed an exquisite house for the Sherman's at 306 DeMun.

[25] Quinta Scott, interviews by author, Scott residence, Waterloo, Illinois, 10 and 12 February, 2006. The daughter of Frederick and Tirzah Dunn, Quinta Scott is a photographer and environmentalist. I am grateful to her for providing me with a great deal of material on her father, her mother and their friends and colleagues. This material includes photographs of St. Mark's that were taken in 1939. Quinta picked up Eames' ditty from her father and said she could hear him reciting it as if it were yesterday.

[26] Born in 1913, Pulitzer was younger than the others. At the time when Eames made this watercolor, somewhere in the mid-thirties, Pulitzer would have been a student at Harvard.

[27] Raimist, interview.

Frederick Dunn and Nagel & Dunn

Within the partnership of Nagel & Dunn, Frederick Dunn was the principal designer while Nagel took care of the business side in addition to design matters. How the firm secured the commission for St. Mark's church for the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri is not known, but in all likelihood, it came about through Nagel's connections in the community.[28] A 1948 entry for Nagel in a Yale publication states that "The firm [Nagel & Dunn] acted as official architects for the Diocese of Missouri,"[29] but it is not clear if this was the case before the commission. Nagel was Episcopalian while Dunn grew up Methodist. In the early 1940's, Bishop William Scarlett, the Episcopal Bishop of Missouri from1933 to1952, baptized Dunn's two daughters and in 1949, Dunn joined the Episcopal church.[30] By all accounts, Dunn and Scarlett were good friends, but it is not known if they were acquainted prior to the St. Mark's commission.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church (1938-39)

St. Mark's Episcopal Church located at 4712 Clifton Avenue in Clifton Park in the area of south St. Louis known as St. Louis Hills, was the largest and most noteworthy product of the partnership of Nagel & Dunn and was their only project in South St. Louis. (fig. 56) St. Mark's historical importance in architectural terms arises from the fact that it was the first modernist sacred building in St. Louis, and was recognized as such at the time: "Modern functional architecture is itself not news, but applied to church building it

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[28] Quinta Scott, interview. Minutes of a meeting of the Diocesan Council dated 14 December, 1937 state simply: "The Bishop [Scarlett] was authorized to ask Nagel & Dunn, architects, to draw plans for the proposed church of St. Andrew's Mission."

[29] John Barlow Derby, ed., *Single File: The Men of Yale '23/ A Quarter-Century Chronicle of the Combined Class of Yale College and Sheffield Scientific School*, New Haven, 1948, 377.

[30] This information was provided by Susan Rehkopf, Diocesan archivist.

is….St. Mark's by its innate beauty and charm scores a definite victory for the use of modern architecture for ecclesiastical purposes."[31] Moreover, St. Mark's found itself in distinguished company in an exhibition entitled *Building Today: Church/School/Theatre* at the Akron Art Institute in Ohio. Included were a proposal by Eric Mendelsohn for Park Synagogue in Cleveland, and Eliel and Eero Saarinen's' Tabernacle Church of Christ in Columbus.[32] Dedicated on January 15, 1939 by Bishop Scarlett, and located on an irregular block in a developing residential neighborhood, St. Mark's was financed with an earmarked gift of $ 75,000 from real estate broker John A. Watkins in memory of his mother, Anna J. Watkins, whose name is recorded in stone on the façade. In a deft entrepreneurial move, Bishop Scarlett seized on the gift to establish a church in predominantly catholic St. Louis Hills where new housing and infrastructure was being built to attract the upcoming professional classes. Set on handsomely landscaped streets, the houses were characterized by very fine brick and tile work with generous applications of stained glass which, in the thirties, were featured in national magazines.[33] According to the historiographer of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, "[the] bold departure from the traditional…startled the church-building world. It created a sensation…" [34] The church's lofty, abstracted form would almost certainly have embodied an element of provocation in the neighborhood.

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31 Nancy Blair, "St. Mark's Episcopal Church A Gem Of Modern Architecture,"*GD*, (21January, 1939).

32 See *Building Today: Church/School/Theater, National Survey Exhibition*, Akron Arts Institute, Akron, Ohio. October 3-31, 1948. Catalogue in Missouri Historical Society, Stinson Collection/Booklets.

33 See History of St. Louis Neighborhoods/ Southwest/St. Louis Hills at http://stlouis.missouri.org/neighborhoods/history/southwest/stLouisHills24.html of 3/29/2006.

34 Charles F. Rehkopf, "The Episcopate of William Scarlett," *The Bulletin*, Missouri Historical Society, vol. xx, no. 3 (April, 1964): 198.

A 1939 photograph (fig. 57) shows how dramatically the building dissents from the prevailing red brick, residential styles in height, form and color. With this monumental, white church, Bishop Scarlett and the governing powers of St. Mark's created an impressive symbol of Episcopalian-style Christianity in their midst.

Intended to revive Episcopalian activity in the area, St. Mark's began its life as the mission church of St. Andrew's which itself grew out of the merger of two older parishes.[35] Why St. Mark was selected as its patron, is not clear.[36] Was there something, perhaps, in the witness of St. Mark that was apposite in the circumstances of the 1930's? If so, what process would the congregation have gone through to establish such identification? The current pastor, Dr. Lydia Agnew Speller, while noting that the original mission of St. Mark's was to act as a witness to the social concerns of the Depression exemplified in the windows, does not see a connection between Mark's gospel and the mission of the new church, "at least from a contemporary critical point of view."[37] According to her, Bishop Scarlett certainly cared about the build-up to war, the struggle between labor and capital, and unjust oppression, but whether or not the congregation shared his concern is, in her view, another matter.

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[35] The two parishes were Mount Calvary and Holy Innocents. See the website of St. Marks at http://www.saintmarks-stl.org/history.html dated 1/26/2006. The Episcopalians had established the first church of any denomination in the area in 1871, but with the decline of coal mining in the South St. Louis area of Oak Hill, the Parish of the Episcopal Church of the Holy Innocents diminished accordingly. St. Mark's was formed from the merger.

[36] The sole available reference is one note among parish news items on the order of service for Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church for Sunday, March 6, 1938 which stated: "At a splendid meeting of the joint vestries of Holy Innocents and St. Andrew's Churches held last Thursday the mergers of the two Churches was made official and plans for handling the new Church were established. The name decided upon was SAINT MARK'S MEMORIAL CHURCH." I am grateful to Susan Rehkopf, archivist for the Episcopal Archdiocese of Missouri, for making these records available to me and for follow-up discussion.

[37] Dr. Lydia Agnew Speller, interview by author, tape recording, 31 January, 2006. "The Gospel of Mark is really about the Kingdom of God as a future event, not so much about the present." I am grateful to Dr. Speller for this and many other insights and ideas on sources.

Bishop Scarlett appears to have granted Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn a remarkable degree of freedom to engage their artistic sensibility in the creation of a spiritual ambiance, perhaps in the belief that the liturgical function would best be served in this way.[38] Their only limitation may have been the $ 75,000 budget which had to cover the costs of land acquisition, design and construction as well as the comprehensive decorative program specified by Nagel & Dunn.[39] If the look of St. Mark's strikes us as somewhat attenuated, it is because the building is incomplete in terms of the inaugurating vision. The site plan shows the present building constituting the nave only of a larger cruciform church. (fig. 58) The architects, while developing the larger plan, were nonetheless charged with producing a design for the first phase with structural and aesthetic integrity independent of the larger plan. These circumstances make the building challenging to categorize in terms of its style. In 1939, at its dedication, the congregation would have understood that they were experiencing the first phase of the plan and may have responded to it as an incompletely realized idea more than a modernist innovation. Construction of the apse and transept at the east end were deferred at the outset due to budgetary limitations and have never been added, while the rectory and Parish House that flank the church on either side and were envisioned in the original scheme, did go forward in later years.[40] Records show that the church's hopes for completing the original scheme were still alive in 1946: "At the time of the extension of the building, it is

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[38] The Diocesan archive could not find any correspondence between Scarlett and the architects, but it is reasonable to assume that the final design including the decorative program, realized the architectural vision of Nagel and Dunn.

[39] The church newspaper, *The Witness,* dated 1 June, 1939 reported that "...$ 15,000 was spent for the purchase of property, leaving $ 60,000 for building purposes." 8.

[40] In 1950/51 the rectory designed by Dunn was added to the south of the church and in 1955, the Parish House named for Bishop Scarlett was added to the north after a design by Norton-Higginbottom.

proposed to have a versus populum altar in the chancel, with clergy seating arranged behind it in the manner of early Christian church plans. Suspended over the altar at that time will be the crucifix and canopy, at present occupying a position on the east wall."[41]

What was characterized in 1939 as austerity in the architectural style may have been the stylistic consequences of a limited budget. On the other hand, the office décor at Nagel & Dunn showed that simplicity was a preferred style. For example, the foyer in their architectural offices suggests a commitment to elegance achieved through restraint. (fig. 59) As with the façade of St. Mark's, a sculpture by Sheila Burlingame is the only significant decorative element in the office foyer. Moreover, Kathleen James-Chakraborty, noting the traditional association of Episcopalian Gothic Revival with wealth and social status, argues that the move towards austerity in St. Mark's was "an exercise in equating architectural simplicity with social justice."[42] This point is well taken, particularly when other moralizing elements in the church such as the stained-glass window systems are taken into account. Scarlett's advocacy of social causes is documented by the diocesan historian as follows:

> "The Diocese of Missouri became known throughout the church through the life and works of Bishop Scarlett. …he made Missouri known for his and its stand on social issues. Nothing was foreign to his theology. Mankind was his concern, and he made the diocese feel and exercise this concern. Its members may not all have followed him all the way, but they respected him when he spoke of the love of Christ for all men, and of man's inhumanity to man."[43]

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41 Church Property Administration, Vol.10, No. 4 (July-August, 1946): 18-19. A versus populum configuration orients the altar so that the rector may celebrate the mass facing the congregation. That is, in fact, the current format, but originally the altar was against the east wall with the celebrant facing away from the congregation.

42 James-Chakraborty, 28.

43 Charles F. Rehkopf, "Episcopate of William Scarlett," 196-7.

A church newspaper report at the time ascribed to the building a "severe simplicity, reminiscent of the early primitive Christian churches…a powerful tribute to the living militant church."[44] This statement echoes Frank Lloyd Wright's description of his Unity Temple in Chicago three decades earlier, which characterized the very spare, unadorned structure as "a frank revival of the old temple form"[45] In formal ways and at an intimate scale, St. Mark's recalls Unity Temple in the massing of the strong cubic shapes, the flat roof and the expression of the interior form on the exterior of the building. (fig. 60)

Frederick Dunn was born in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1905 and grew up in Montana. He attended Carnegie Institute of Technology for two years after which he transferred to Yale where he received a BFA (1930) and an MFA (1933) in Architecture. Dunn valued his classical Yale training very highly. While there, he was awarded several fellowships including the Winchester European Traveling Fellowship in 1930-31, which enabled him to spend time in France and Italy. From 1928-1936, Dunn worked in New Haven in the office of the architect, Douglas Orr. In 1933, Dunn had married Tirzah May Perfect (1906-1986), a graduate of the Parsons School of Design, who had a business in Brooklyn designing greeting cards. Tirzah created her own modernist niche as illustrated by the tag line for her card: Tirzah Studios for Modern Christmas Cards. (fig. 61) Describing her design philosophy, she said: "I tried to get away from the holly and jingle bells type of thing and turn to something more sophisticated--more in keeping with our way of life."[46] To bring in income, Fred and Tirzah compiled a portfolio of wallpaper

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[44] *The Witness*, 8.

[45] Frank Lloyd Wright, "In the Cause", 1908, quoted in Neil Levine, *The Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright* (Princeton: Princeton UP 1996), 41.

designs and sold them throughout New England. Tirzah continued the wallpaper designs which for many years were widely published in shelter magazines with nationwide distribution. Her crucial contribution to the family income and the architectural enterprise was recognized by Dunn who acknowledged that she brought in twenty-five percent of the income.

At Yale, Dunn had taken classes with St. Louisian, Charles Nagel, who invited Dunn to set up an architectural partnership with him in St. Louis. They established Nagel & Dunn in 1936 and practiced together until Dunn left in 1943 to serve in the navy in World War II. Like Isadore Shank, Dunn's design talents were pressed into service for the war effort. Whereas Shank designed parts for bombers, Dunn designed submarine interiors. Dunn was tempted to remain in the Navy after the war but instead returned to St. Louis and continued to practice architecture in a number of partnerships including with Nolan Stinson who succeeded him.[47] Dunn went on to create a portfolio of works that are greatly admired among architects and include residences and churches.[48] His most familiar, and many argue, his most distinguished work from the post-war period is the headquarters for the National Council of State Garden Clubs at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Like Armstrong, Dunn entered the competition for the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial whose winner, Eero Saarinen had been an architecture student at Yale at the same time as Dunn. Nagel was one of the competition's judges. In

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[46] Tirzah Dunn quoted in Beulah Schacht, "She Gave Up Greeting Cards to Design Wallpaper and Achieved National Fame," *GD*, 14 August , 1948. Scores of greeting card designs held by Quinta Scott reveal a modernist aesthetic, with distinctive use of line and color, mixed with a restrained charm--unsentimental but communicative.

[47] According to his daughter, Dunn was invited by George Hellmuth to become a founding partner of the firm which would ultimately become Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum, but Dunn declined.

[48] Dunn called residential architecture "underpaid psychiatry" and church architecture "chiseling for Jesus."

1961, Dunn became a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Fred and Tirzah Dunn were divorced in 1962 and Dunn left St. Louis for New York in 1963, where he worked for Rogers & Butler for approximately ten years. He died in New York in 1984.

The older of the two, Charles Nagel was born in St. Louis in 1899. His father was a prominent St. Louis attorney who became Secretary of Commerce and Labor in the cabinet of President William Howard Taft from 1909-13. Nagel was a cousin of Ethan A.H. Shepley, Sr., a member of St. Louis' modernist-oriented cultural elite mentioned earlier in the discussion of the Meyer house. The family's connections were invaluable to the fledgling firm of Nagel & Dunn, and along with the fact that Nagel was the older partner and had been Dunn's teacher, explain why his name preceded Dunn's on the company masthead. Nagel had impressive academic qualifications, a BA (1923), and a BFA (1926) and an MFA (1928) in Architecture from Yale. Nagel practiced architecture in Boston and was an assistant professor and decorative arts curator at Yale in the years from 1930-36. The museum theme that thus emerged early in Nagel's career would be fully actualized from the time when he and Dunn dissolved their partnership in 1942 to his retirement in 1969. Nagel distinguished himself as director of the St. Louis Art Museum and the Brooklyn Museum. In 1964, he established the National Portrait Gallery and was its director until his retirement in 1969.

The fact that Fred and Tirzah Dunn had come to town with Charles Nagel eased their way into a circle of like-minded friends and colleagues, a circle which included Harris and Louise Armstrong, Sam and Natalie Grant, Carl and Ruth Mose, he a sculptor and she in the education department at the St. Louis Art Museum, and Robert and Minna Elman. Elman was a surgeon and Minna operated a modernist furniture store on Euclid

Avenue, the first to open in St. Louis after the war. Charles Nagel and Fred Dunn were lifelong friends, and Nagel was godfather to one of Dunn's daughters.[49] Dunn used to say that Nagel always wanted to be a museum director, a goal which he would achieve with great distinction, while Nagel would say that Dunn wanted to practice modernism, but was not able to realize that vision very fully in Nagel & Dunn, because there was not enough interest in modernist design to sustain his exploration. Both Nagel and Dunn were extremely capable artists. Nagel's interest in the decorative arts led him to design and built furniture and ultimately to a career as a museum director. Dunn was a hands-on architect, perpetually building and making sketches and renderings for his business, and for the habitual pleasure of drawing.

At Yale, both Nagel and Dunn had been trained in a classical curriculum and their projects showed marked classicizing features. But Dunn's defining capability was to integrate and synthesize various architectural styles with the modern. Such was the case with St. Mark's. A church paper noted at the time: "…the church building…is new and yet old," whereas Eric Mumford observes that "St. Mark's appears today more classical than modern.[50] Dunn might agree with Mumford since he himself described St. Mark's as "neo-classical."[51] Appearances notwithstanding, St. Mark's arguably espouses certain of the principles of modernism discussed in Chapter One. First, on the treatment of space, the entry progress through the low narthex up a flight of stairs into the great volume of the nave is a modern manipulation of space, reminiscent of Armstrong's arrangement of the entry to the Grant Clinic. Notwithstanding its soaring cubic form, the interior offers

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49 Nagel was godfather to Quinta Scott.

50 The first quote is taken from *The Witness*, 8. For the second, see Mumford, 44.

51 Quinta Scott, interview.

an intensely comfortable, private, even intimate experience. (fig. 62) Second, the principle of regularity is evident in the rhythmic progression of piers and windows along the nave. Symmetry on the horizontal plane of the interior strikes the visitor as the chief means of ordering the space and as such might argue against its modernism were it not for the fact that a strong sense of verticality places the horizontal and vertical elements in tension. (fig. 63) Minimal decoration, a third principle of modernism, presumably created a dilemma for architects working on sacred architecture since churches, by their very nature, required functional, symbolic elements to fulfill the requirements of the liturgy. In this context, we should note that the decorative program at St. Mark's was described as austere or "perfectly plain," even as the same writers marveled at its richness.[52] The decorative scheme, densely packed with symbolism, is a composite of the work of a group of local artists convened by Dunn. He tapped Sheila Hale Burlingame mentioned earlier in the discussion of the Meyer house, for both the façade sculpture of St. Mark and the altar crucifix. Clark Battle Fitz-Gerald, the son-in-law of Bishop Scarlett, designed the pulpit and lectern. The stained-glass windows were designed by Robert Harmon and fabricated by Emil Frei who had made the stairwell window in the Meyer house. Margaret Drewes, a weaver, made the communion burse and veil in addition to the vestments and the sanctuary rug was woven by Beatrice Boot. (fig. 64) Nagel and Dunn designed the pendant light fixtures and candlesticks. (fig. 65) It is not clear how the group's collective vision played out in the moralizing themes encapsulated in the design.

Numerous elements of the decorative scheme engage the modernist argument in instructive ways and I shall deal with four here. Taking first the façade, its economy of

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[52] See, for example, Nancy Blair.

detail is a successful decorative strategy because the composition of the elements--the rose window, the entrance door and the stone sculpture of St. Mark offset by the spire --is balanced. (fig. 56) Burlingame's eleven-foot sculpture of St. Mark made from Bedford stone is the only projection from the brick façade.[53] The work shows St. Mark holding the gospel with his weight supported by a lion, the symbol of the apostle's power. (figs. 66 & 67) Its stylized, fluted drapery achieved with graceful undulating volumes relates it to Art Deco of the period, although the head is markedly individualized. In a literal sense, this work might be viewed as applied ornamentation and therefore inconsistent with the spirit of modernism. However, the figure is not superfluous, ingratiating or ornamental for ornament's sake. Rather, it is integral to the building in two senses: first, no separation is made between the figure and the building; and second, along with the spire that serves as its counterpoint in the façade composition, St. Mark signifies the building as a church. The strategic placement of the figure of St. Mark on the façade with the head of the apostle tilting toward the visitor approaching the door, offers a greeting to the faithful and sets a mood of thoughtful absorption of the word of God set out in Mark's Gospel. The visitor identifies with the scale of St. Mark, set as he is against the soaring forty-foot high façade of the building. Furthermore, the architects' economizing gesture in the use of a single, mannered figure amounts to a distillation of the practice of figurative ornamentation of Church façades. The eloquence of a lone apostle on a white brick wall establishes the biblical authority of the church right at the street, and is as economical a statement of biblical connection and resonance as it is possible to imagine. In its dramatic vertical façade and its use of a single figurative sculpture, St. Mark's evinces a haunting

[53] The Pickel Stone Company did the carving for the figure of St. Mark which Burlingame completed in place in 1938. See McCue, *Sculpture City : St. Louis*, 94.

affinity with Eliel Saarinen's 1909 mausoleum at Joensusu, Finland. (fig. 68) St. Mark's strong silhouette, planar façade and tall, vault-like shape also recall Arthur Gordon Shoosmith's St. Martin's Garrison Church in New Delhi (1928-30). (fig. 69) This work was itself reminiscent of World War I memorials built by Sir Edward Lutyens.[54]

Second, Burlingame's altar sculpture engages the modernist debate in a different way from the sculpture of St. Mark. The figure of Christ, realized in pewter and framed by a richly polished wooden cross, is clothed in priestly vestments and crowned king, reigning in glory while presiding with apparent weightlessness, even as he confers a spirit of divine gravitas on the church interior.[55] (fig. 70) This image of Christus Victor was more in keeping with a modern, optimistic vision of the future of the church than was the notion of a suffering, sacrificial Christ. The spareness of the figure resonates with the architecture, suggesting the divinity of Christ embodied in the building. The approach to the Christus Victor is made physically through interaction with the Gospel depicted in the eight stained glass windows flanking the nave, a third element of the decorative scheme which engages the tenets of modernism. "Since this is a modern church," wrote one observer, "it is fitting there should be allusions to modern times."[56] These allusions are to be found chiefly, but not exclusively, in the glass windows that pierce the nave and that act as a compendium of post-Depression social thought inspired by the Gospel of Mark. Looking back at the period, one reporter explained: "These windows reflect the

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[54] Shoosmith was a former associate of Lutyens. Dunn is believed to have been an admirer of Lutyens' work, especially its fine detailing.

[55] The sculpture was part of an initiative at the time to revive the tradition of the triumphant Christ, a tradition that descends from the Christ Pantocrator of early Christian and Eastern orthodox churches and was reintroduced to the western church in the early twentieth century through the writings of the Swedish theologian Gustave Aulén. *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement,* trans. A.G.Herbert (New York: MacMillan, 1951).

[56] See Blair.

difficulty of living the gospels in the 1930's."[57] The four windows on the north side depict the vicissitudes of Mark's discipleship while their counterparts on the south side interpret Mark's story as an exemplum for contemporary witness. In one window, two overall-clad workers exemplify a cooperative spirit in labor, in fact, they encapsulate a punning reference to Dunn and Nagel whose German names translate as "hammer and nail." (fig. 71) In another window, racial conflict is symbolized by a black figure separated and placed in a hierarchical design pattern with the word "unfair" featuring prominently as a social commentary.[58] (fig. 72) A further window makes direct reference to war in the image of two trees, one growing bullets and the other money bags with dollar signs. Budget strictures dictated that Harmon and Frei use larger rather than smaller cuts of glass, which posed a challenge in the area of color saturation. The resulting softness in the blues and purples minimizes the vibrant color effects associated with cathedral glass, producing a modern application perhaps more in keeping with the didactic intent. A fourth modern element is the use of text in two prominent places: SANCTUS, SANCTUS, SANCTUS on the vertical face of the altar facing the congregation reminds the worshipper of the altar's sacrificial symbolism. The motto on the façade --IN THE SERVICE OF GOD AND MAN--is a further evocation of Frank Lloyd's Unity Temple (1906) whose motto reads: FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD AND THE SERVICE OF MAN. (fig. 60)

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57 Patricia Rice, "Church Celebrates Power Of The Arts," *PD*, 5 July, 1997.

58 The race relations theme is also taken up in Beatrice Boot's tapestry, designed initially for the floor in front of the altar but now hanging on the wall to the right of the altar. It depicts a vision of the Kingdom of God on earth in which people of all races and classes unite, with the text: "Earth shall be fair and all her fold be one."

As suggested above, the very precise and intentional working out of the religious symbolism through the artists' program suggests that the church was alert to the possibility of enhancing the experience of the liturgy with such a scheme. Might it imply a congregation educated in the dynamics of art in worship? Moreover, what did it mean to a congregation to have a church like this? Was it the vision of the then rector Charles Wilson or Bishop William Scarlett or some combination of all of the above? Certainly both Scarlett and Wilson espoused progressive views on issues of the morality of war and the injustices of society. Wilson attracted adverse criticism for views expressed from the pulpit in the late 1930's and early 40's. At least one person did not appreciate the social commentary embodied in the windows. Cyrus Crane Willmore, the developer of St. Louis Hills who at the outset had come forward as the donor of the windows, declined to pay after he saw them, presumably because of their polemical content. The current pastor believes that Willmore's views may have been more representative of the congregation than Scarlett and Wilson. She went on to comment that the congregation of St. Mark's is not like its predominantly catholic neighbors. The differences, she believes, have over the years led the congregation to support progressive causes such as the ordination of women and the embrace of gays and lesbians. She further speculated that the building and its didactic program may have been instrumental in shaping the congregation over time.

Chapter Four

Edouard Mutrux and William Adair Bernoudy

Edouard Jules Mutrux (1907-1999) and William Adair Bernoudy (1910-1988) sit well together in the same chapter because they worked in an harmonious partnership that spanned their most inventive years, creating along with partners who entered the picture later, a legacy of projects, mainly residential, that took up Frank Lloyd Wright's characteristic style. Hence, in St. Louis, one influential stream of modernism flowed directly from Wright into the practice that Mutrux and Bernoudy built. Their professional relationship started in 1938 after Bernoudy had returned from Taliesin, Wright's hands-on academy in Spring Green, Wisconsin, where he had spent three years as a student of Wrightian praxis. The evolution of their firm is documented by Osmund Overby in his 1999 monograph *William Adair Bernoudy, Architect/Bringing the Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright to St. Louis*.[1] Even though Bernoudy's career as an architect was just beginning as the decade of the thirties closed, I have included the Talbot House, the first of two houses designed with Mutrux in the decade, because it encapsulates the first full iteration of Wright's ideas.[2] Prior to their partnership, Mutrux produced one of St. Louis' most prominent and admired modernist landmarks.

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[1] Osmund Overby, *William Adair Bernoudy, Architect: Bringing the Legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright to St. Louis* (Columbia and London: U of Missouri P, 1999). I make use of the text as the basis for my discussion, particularly in relation to Bernoudy. I am grateful to Osmund Overby for a long conversation on 11 February, 2006, and his follow-up thoughts on this thesis topic.

[2] The other is the Doris House on Maret Drive, Kirkwood of 1941. See Overby, 44.

The Samuel A. Bassett Office and Residence (1938)

In 1938, about two years after Harris Armstrong had completed the Shanley Building, Edouard Mutrux designed the combined medical office and residence which stands at 1200 South Big Bend Road in Richmond Heights, for Dr. Samuel A. Bassett. The building was contemporaneous with the Grant Medical Clinic and shares stylistic characteristics with it and the Shanley Building. The range of architectural influences operating in the design are apparent in a 1939 photograph. (fig. 73) Its cubic volumes, flat roofs, roof gardens and ribbon windows relate it to the Shanley Building. Its flat roof system accentuates the rectilinear geometry which is emphasized even more by the long, curved glass block wall that faces the street. Brick and stucco predominate with the curved wall to the street featuring a wide, stuccoed fascia above the glass block. Metal-framed ribbon and corner windows are additional modernist hallmarks. The building is composed of rectilinear, geometric forms assembled in a rational progression up/down a sloping site, evocative of Frank Lloyd Wright's integration of buildings to their sites. The massing of forms on the slope, the cheek walls flanking the south entrance, the open-corner windows and the towering chimney bring to mind Frank Lloyd Wright's Freeman House, built on a hillside in Los Angeles in 1924-5, to cite one of many possible examples. The use of brick relates the building to Armstrong's Grant Medical Clinic as both Mutrux and Armstrong exploited the expertise of St. Louis masons. Horizontal banding in the brick work is also reminiscent of Wright's use of the technique as a device for enhancing the textural interest of the wall planes. Mutrux' European travels had exposed him to the age-old traditions of brickwork. The building was originally realized

in natural unpainted brick and was painted white some time later (fig.74), hence we must reimagine it in the tradition of expressed masonry as Mutrux designed it as shown in figure 73. The curved wall, porthole windows on the south elevation and glass blocks are hallmarks of the Streamlined/Art Moderne and the Art Deco style.[3]

The professional and residential functions of the building are separated but well integrated in the building. The doctor's offices and equipment facilities are on the lower level and are on grade with the sidewalk so that patients could enter without negotiating steps, a design feature that anticipated later requirements for handicapped access. The residence occupied the upper levels and was accessed via an exterior staircase on the north side, also from the garage under the rear. (fig. 75) Like the Shanley Building and the Grant Clinic, the Bassett Clinic's waiting room was designed with the comfort of patients in mind. It's most striking feature was a streamlined glass block wall and integral planter forming an indoor garden. This innovation was deemed worthy of a full page in the May, 1939 issue of *Architectural Record* under the heading "New Dwelling Unites: Floricultural."[4] (fig. 76) The glass block created an environment of suffused natural light beneficial for plants and patients alike, and creating a visually engaging environment. Like the Shanley Building and the Grant Medical Clinic, light and clarity were symbolic of a transparent approach to medicine based on science, and almost certainly played a part in transforming the patient's attitude to medicine. Streamlining was in effect throughout the building especially in the treatment rooms which were outfitted with

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[3] See Esley Hamilton, Registration Form for the National Register of Historic Places. www.stlouisco.com.

[4] "New Dwelling Units: Floricultural," *Architectural Record* (May 1939): 59.

modern stainless steel cabinets located on the common walls and accessible from either side by the physician. (fig. 77)

The clinic was Mutrux' third architectural commission and it came to him because he knew the Bassetts and was able to present the idea readily.[5] Why Bassett chose a modern building is difficult to establish in the absence of family members who might speak to the issue. Whether or not Bassett operated as a sole practitioner like Shanley or in a group practice like Grant, is also not clear. Like Grant, the medical profession ran in the family. Dr. Bassett was the middle of three sons of a physician. He purchased the property in 1936, possibly following Shanley's example. Bassett was Health Commissioner for Richmond Heights in the early 1940's. He died in 1944, a mere five years after the building was completed. After his death, it passed to various uses and now houses a law office.

Edouard Mutrux came from an extraordinarily cultured family, many of whom worked in architecture and related fields. He was the oldest of twelve children, five of whom received architecture degrees from Washington University.[6] Mutrux' French father, Louis and German mother, Annie, emigrated from Lausanne, Switzerland. French was the language spoken in the Mutrux home and was Edouard's native tongue. He also spoke German and some Italian. In 1925, the entire family traveled to Europe for a

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[5] See Esley Hamilton, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Section 8, Page 2. Mutrux' widow, Elsa, said that Mutrux was acquainted with the Bassett's. I am grateful to her for two long conversations and materials she provided regarding her husband's work. Elsa Mutrux, interview by author, tape recording, Barclay House, Clayton, 23 November, 2005 and 6 February, 2006.

[6] Louis Mutrux, Edouard's father attended the School of Fine Arts at Washington University in 1892, after which he sustained a successful career as a designer/ developer of apartment buildings. Edouard's brother, Robert, received a BS in Architecture also in 1931. A brother Jean Louis Mutrux was awarded a degree in architectural engineering in 1932, moving on to a career as a furniture designer and maker, and collaborating with Bernoudy-Mutrux on projects. This information is quoted in Overby, 35 and is taken from a conversation between the author and Edouard and Elsa Mutrux on September 21, 1995. See also Esley Hamilton, Registration Form for the National Register of Historic Places.

fifteen-month sojourn during which the children attended school in Switzerland. His proficiency in language would facilitate Mutrux' exploration of architecture during his European travels later in his career. Louis Mutrux was a designer and developer of apartment buildings. The family lived on a tract of land in Ladue at #6 Sumac Lane where Edouard would eventually design two more houses for the family. Mutrux graduated from Washington University School of Architecture with a Masters in Architecture in 1931. He was awarded the Frederick Widman Prize by Washington University in 1930 and continued his studies in France in 1931 and 1932. The authority of European architecture in the Mutrux household is well illustrated by an anecdote which holds that his father encouraged him to leave St. Louis after graduation in light of the scarcity of jobs due to the Depression. Mutrux was to make the best of the situation by spending two years in Europe "to see how building used to be done."[7] He spent the first year at the American School in Fontainebleau after which he studied fresco painting at the École de Beaux Arts in Paris with Jean Despujols, a painter, designer, writer on art, and winner of the Prix de Rome in 1914."[8] Mutrux bicycled through Denmark, Austria, Southern Germany, Bavaria, Italy, Spain, France with three others--his brother and fellow architect, Robert; George Hellmuth, who later became a founding partner in Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum; and Malcolm Park, an architect friend from New York. In France, while staying in 400 year old buildings, Mutrux developed the belief that a building should last forever. That philosophy informed the design of the home that he built for his family at # 6 Sumac Lane using cemesto panels.[9]

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[7] Elsa Mutrux, interview.

[8] Overby, 35.

In 1942, Mutrux married Elsa Krull, who came from a family of German immigrants. She graduated from Washington University in 1935 with a degree in Latin, German and French. In the late fifties, after her children had left home, she joined a program run by the Board of Education in the city of St. Louis called Career 2, which enabled her to undertake career training to equip her to teach in city schools. After her training period, Elsa selected the Irving School at Grand and Natural Bridge, a once German neighborhood where she had grown up, but since deserted by whites fleeing to the counties. She felt committed to teaching underprivileged African-American children whose families had come off the plantations and were illiterate. She later taught at the Eugene Field School at Taylor and Olive. In the absence of painting supplies for the children, Elsa recycled her husband's blueprints. She was involved in social causes and was active in sit-ins and other strategies aimed at integrating downtown restaurants in the fifties.

Ed and Elsa Mutrux mixed with a circle of cultured people which included Harris and Louise Armstrong, Isadore and Ilse Shank and numerous artists including the visiting Danish artist, Torsten Johansson. They were also friendly with Werner Drewes, the German painter, printmaker and Washington University faculty member whose modernist ideology had developed at the Bauhaus under Lyonel Feininger, Johannes Itten, Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee. Works by Johansson, Drewes and other artists hung on the walls of the Mutrux home. Ed and Elsa attended architecture parties with people whom Elsa described as "a pretty liberal bunch," meaning that they were against President Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War. Along with Ilse Shank and others of

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[9] Ibid., 77. Cemesto was a fire-resistant insulation board which could be surfaced on one or both sides with asbestos cement and was therefore practically indestructible.

their friends, Elsa was involved in anti-war activities. Ed Mutrux practiced a deep religious faith, having grown up as a member of the Church of the Restored Apostles. Mutrux, Elsa and their children attended the Episcopalian Church of St. Michael and St. George and later the Holy Communion Church at Delmar and Hanley. Mutrux was an architect who loved architecture. Beyond that, he believed that better environments produced better people and that architecture could change lives. The social mission to which he dedicated his practice was to provide good, effective places for people to live and work. Mutrux was a lucid and thoughtful writer on matters ranging from architecture to religion and education. He particularly admired the work of Frederick Dunn. He sustained an amicable professional partnership with William Bernoudy over a period of three decades.

With the Bassett Office and Residence, Mutrux established his place in the early history of modernism in St. Louis. The building brought national attention to St. Louis in the form of a 1939 article in *Architectural Record.*[10] The article refrains from editorializing on the virtues of the building design--the word "modern" is not mentioned, but the photographs, both exterior and interior, tell the story of a distinctively modern building. In 1993, the Bassett Office was added to the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its importance as an early modernist building.[11] Its prominent location just north of Interstate 64 on the east side of Big Bend Boulevard keeps it in plain sight as a reminder to St. Louisians of their early modernist heritage. In this respect,

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[10] See "St. Louis, MO.: Office and Residence Integrated in One Structure." *Architectural Record* (July 1939): 41-44.

[11] Building #92001866.
See http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/MO/St%2E+Louis/state.html on March 7, 2006.

the Bassett Clinic is to the suburb of Richmond Heights what the Shanley Building is to Clayton.

William Adair Bernoudy and Mutrux-Bernoudy

All of the architects so far considered paid attention to Frank Lloyd Wright and assimilated his ideas to a greater or lesser extent. Bernoudy's relationship with Wright was qualitatively different, however. He unabashedly took up Wright's style and sustained a very successful career adapting and re-presenting it to an appreciative clientele. The architect, Gyo Obata, attributes the following four characteristics in Bernoudy's work to Wright's influence: "respect for the site and its natural conditions; sensitivity to materials, particularly brick, wood, and glass; understanding of the interrelationship of each area to the whole, with an openness and flow of one space to another; and awareness of the extension of the interior to the exterior, particularly of residential spaces to the garden."[12] Notwithstanding Wright's pervasive influence, Bernoudy's work had its own distinctive character. As Frank Peters reported: "Bernoudy acknowledges Wright as his master and so does Mutrux--'he [Wright] was the Mozart of architecture'--but the houses they have produced, however indebted to Wright, can hardly be mistaken for anything Wright built."[13] This point is well taken. A Bernoudy house evinces a different statement of purpose from a Wright house. Whereas one is conscious in a Wright building of his propensity to make overt ideological statements about architecture, Bernoudy's work seems to be about settling a structure within a

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12 Gyo Obata, Foreword to Overby, ix.

13 Frank Peters, "Architectural Treasures of Low Profile," *PD*, 11 July, 1982.

complementary natural environment to serve an unselfconscious contemporary lifestyle. "Bernoudy had a language that came out of Wright…but not the real scale of Wright."[14]

Bernoudy left behind speeches and writings of various kinds which elucidate his theoretical position vis-à-vis modernism. In an eloquent lecture to the Garden Club of Kirkwood, a suburb of St. Louis, on April 20, 1936, Bernoudy made an important and substantive point regarding modernism, namely that "modern architecture is not a style" but was more in the way of a response which would be unique to the particular conditions.[15] The response would follow Wright's principles of organic architecture which Bernoudy elaborated without making direct mention of his mentor, while he made unfavorable comparisons with the International Style by way of the machine analogy. Like Wright, Bernoudy emphasized that modern materials such as steel and glass could be used to facilitate a more sympathetic integration of buildings with nature. However, Bernoudy revealed himself to be more conservative than Wright, who did not reject the machine out of hand but seized upon certain aspects such as the economies of scale of the its mass production capabilities, to move modern architecture forward.[16] For the audience, Bernoudy's critique of the International Style would have called to mind Armstrong's recently completed Shanley Building, sitting on a much-trafficked corner in Clayton. In an ironic turn of events, two years after the lecture Bernoudy started work in Armstrong's office.

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[14] Lesley Laskey, interview.

[15] The full text of the speech is reproduced in Overby, 29-31.

[16] The job of the architect, according to Wright, was to integrate the hand-crafted with the machine-made, in pursuit of the overall goal of efficient functioning of the building.

The Talbot House (1939)

According to Overby, Edouard Mutrux and William Bernoudy teamed up in 1938 during the construction of Mutrux' Bassett clinic to form a partnership called Mutrux-Bernoudy. Mutrux brought in their first client, his sister Suzette and her husband Dr. C. Hudson Talbot. The project was a residence for the Talbots at # 4 Sumac Lane in Ladue.[17] (fig. 78) Bernoudy was keen to design a building after Wright and in July 1938, he accompanied Mutrux and the Talbots to Chicago to tour Wright's houses in Oak Park, after which they visited Taliesin, where Mutrux met Wright for the first time. Reflecting on the experience, Mutrux admitted that he "got religion, "and became a life-long exponent of Wright's architectural principles."[18] He and Bernoudy were powerfully united by their admiration for Wright and their desire to make buildings that truly reflected the wisdom and integrity of his design principles.

The Talbots evidently were persuaded by their exposure to Wright's oeuvre since the house that Mutrux-Bernoudy designed for them was Wrightian in many of its stylistic features such as its chimneys, its horizontal brickwork with deeply raked joints, its copious eaves and its integration into the sloping site. (fig. 79) Elsa Mutrux, quoting her husband, described the Talbot House as a "Wright House." Six months after its completion, Talbot was transferred away from St. Louis in the military and Mutrux's father bought it. In the Talbot house, Bernoudy-Mutrux took up the Usonian concept of an affordable, functional house that Wright had elaborated in his 1936 house for Herbert

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[17] This was the same ten-acre tract on which Bernoudy-Mutrux would build a second house, and on which Mutrux would build a house for himself and Elsa in 1951.

[18] Elsa Mutrux said that Ed was completely devoted to Wright. Overby recounts that Mutrux used the term "got religion" in a 1995 interview. Overby, 36. Elsa used the term also in my interview with her. I asked her what she thought "got religion" meant in terms of design. She said she thought that her husband was referring to "organic architecture, the inside/outside thing and the preference for materials-- brick, wood and stone."

and Katherine Jacobs in Madison, Wisconsin. (fig. 80) Like the Jacobs house, the seven-room Talbot house provided for open planning and easy exchange between interior and exterior, along with a variety of innovative infrastructure elements such as in-floor radiant heating, described by a long article in the *Post-Dispatch* as "an ingenious heating arrangement," a reinforced concrete floor slab on grade and a car port replacing the traditional enclosed garage.[19] (fig. 81) As Armstrong had done in the Shanley Building, the Grant Clinic and indeed in his own home, Mutrux and Bernoudy addressed the specifics of the St. Louis climate especially the searing effects of the summer sun and the paucity of winter light. Bernoudy's language expressed that mediation process as a relaxed engagement with the climate: "The French doors opening out onto the terrace permit the slightest breeze to enter the room and the wide canopy and overhanging eaves of the clerestory screen the room from the intense heat of the summer sun. In winter the low lying sun enters freely into the house and the general atmosphere of warmth and cheerfulness is augmented by the three fireplaces set deep in the broad rising chimneys."[20] The Talbot house features sparing use of windows on the north side with large expanses of windows at the back of the house facing south. Light also enters the building through a continuous band of clerestory windows positioned above the wide, cantilevered canopy on the south. The house was designed as a two bedroom house with a third designated as a maid's room, and a fourth on the east end marked "children's room" on the plan, which Suzette Talbot used for a nursery school. (fig. 82) The poetic quality of Bernoudy's writing strongly reveals his Wrightian sensibility and philosophy and stimulates visions of Wright's prairie houses: "The Talbot house lies long and low,

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19 "Heating as Modern as Architecture for New Homes," *PD*, 26 May, 1940 cited in Overby, 33.

20 Bernoudy as quoted in Overby, 40.

slightly below the level of the road, on a shelf of land rising gently from a rolling hillside."[21] The words "long" and "low" are repeated several times, to reinforce the notion of a house that is engaged with nature. He continues: "The house was planned to conform quietly to its location and to provide the maximum of privacy and view to the most important rooms," in other words, nature would shelter those who worked out how to integrate the dwelling into its welcoming embrace. A key tenet of this was integration of exterior and interior spaces, achieved in the Talbot house through strategies for spatial continuity and flow including the continuation of materials, especially brick, from inside to out. Overby cites evidence that Bernoudy forwarded the plans of the Talbot House to Wright with a letter stating that "he hoped it was evident that he had tried his best to follow Wright's principles…"[22]

The essence of their effective and mutually satisfying partnership lies in the fact that Mutrux and Bernoudy complemented each other. Early evidence of this is seen in the Talbot project, where Bernoudy made a model which Mutrux translated into working drawings and then acted as contractor for the construction.[23] In addition to the fact that Mutrux held the professional license that the partnership required to operate an architectural office, he possessed a combination of engineering expertise along with design skills, whereas Bernoudy's strong suit was creating a concept and in producing a totalizing aesthetic scheme including décor and landscaping. Wright's pioneering advocacy of modern engineering developments such as the cantilever and the elongated span made possible by reinforced concrete and structural steel, necessitated engineering

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21 Ibid.

22 Ibid, 45.

23 Frank Peters, "Architectural Treasures of Low Profile."

expertise. Mutrux was an excellent engineer who brought to the table professional training in the area of construction drawings, specifications, and technical details. Perhaps with this in mind, Overby states that "Bernoudy's partnership with Mutrux was as essential for his architectural career as was his participation in the Taliesin Fellowship."[24] Says Lesley Laskey: "I think Ed Mutrux made him [Bernoudy] think about the building more as a whole, as a structure and as a system. Bill could then come in and direct it, soften it up, or make it look warm…could adapt into it the wood or whatever."[25] The partnership started off well. Mutrux, speaking about the Talbot house, and referring to the exposure given to the project by the *Post-Dispatch* in an article in 1940 said: "This was the beginning of a dream, and it didn't get any better than this."[26] The partnership did well during the decade of the fifties. In 1955, its name was changed to Bernoudy-Mutrux-Bauer to reflect the addition of Henry H. (Hank) Bauer. Despite the fact that the firm built landmark houses for many of St. Louis' prominent families such as Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., and John M. Olin, it encountered financial hardship in the early sixties, reflecting the fact that such a partnership could not be sustained on residential architecture alone, especially in the depressed construction market of the time. Bernoudy-Mutrux-Bauer was dissolved amicably in 1965. After that, Bernoudy remained in practice as Bernoudy Associates and Mutrux took on a variety of other architectural roles. Late in his career, Bernoudy began to design art glass which echoed Wright's work but took it further, with the use of a much more abstracted vocabulary than Wright.[27]

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24 Overby, 35.

25 Lesley Laskey, interview.

26 Overby, 44.

27 See Overby, 263.

William Bernoudy was the younger of two sons of Jerome Bauday (Baud) Bernoudy and Elizabeth Bernoudy née Maddox, and was known as Billy in the family. Wright also took to calling him Billy. The Bernoudys were part of the city's French history whereas the Maddoxes hailed from Kentucky where they were relatively more prominent than the Bernoudys were in St. Louis. Overby notes that "As Billy grew older…he seems to have felt more comfortable with the Anglo-Southern culture of the Maddoxes than with the Mississippi French traditions of the Bernoudy family."[28] Baud Bernoudy worked for the Railway Steel Spring Company. The family attended concerts, movies and lectures, they led an active social life and were involved in church activities. Despite the fact that Bernoudy was an indifferent student, he was admitted to Washington University in 1929 where he lasted for two semesters only.[29] By good fortune, Bernoudy inherited money which enabled him in 1933 to become a foundation student in Frank Lloyd Wright's new apprenticeship program known as the Taliesin Fellowship. The program was a hands-on, communal working and living experience, based on a philosophy of experiential learning and on maintaining focus by marginalizing the denizens of the neighboring town. It involved Bernoudy in everything from quarrying stone, hewing timber, machining, construction, landscaping, drawing and food production along with a range of artistic pursuits such as theater and music. Bernoudy remained at Taliesin until 1935 when he returned to St. Louis and, out of financial necessity, took a job at the Scruggs-Vandervoort-Barney department store working in the fabric department. In the following years, Bernoudy was turned down for employment by

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[28] See Overby, 5.

[29] In later years, Bernoudy made reference to learning disabilities as a reason for his premature departure. Overby, 7.

architects ostensibly because of his association with Wright. If true, this anecdote echoes the lack of respect for or understanding of Wright already noted amongst Washington University faculty. The circumstances make Bernoudy's resolve to design in a Wrightian mode principled and courageous, because initially at least, it would almost certainly have been difficult to see where the clients would come from to support his practice. Bernoudy had a number of design jobs including in the early years of his partnership with Mutrux. In Harris Armstrong's office in 1938-39, he made perspective layouts and working drawings for houses. Armstrong had a talent for juxtaposing and integrating materials not dissimilar to Wright's and it is possible that Armstrong learned something about Wright's design modus operandi from Bernoudy. The Grant Clinic may well have been on the drawing board during Bernoudy's stint in Armstrong's office and it is possible that he worked on its design and/or construction. Bernoudy joined the Navy in 1942, serving in Washington D.C. as an architectural liaison officer with the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery where, according to Overby, he was given significant architectural responsibilities.[30] Bernoudy and Mutrux resumed their partnership upon their return from war service, formalizing it under the title Bernoudy-Mutrux. Bernoudy, like Eames and Dunn, imagined and implemented comprehensive design schemes whenever he had the opportunity, which included furniture, textiles and other accoutrements. He cultivated his clients as friends and paid close attention to how they lived in the houses he had designed for them, proposing his firm for additions or modifications that they may have envisioned.[31] Significantly for the discussion on modernism, Bernoudy was the

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[30] Ibid., 47.

[31] Paul C. Doerner, interview. Paul Doerner was employed by Bernoudy for four years towards the end of Bernoudy's career.

St. Louis representative for the Knoll furniture company which specialized in modernist furniture designs by Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer among others.

By all accounts, Bernoudy was an elegant, worldly and charming man who loved to entertain and was well suited to the role of society architect that he grew into after his marriage in 1955 to Gertrude Lenart (1914 -1994). St. Louisians recall that Gertrude came from a universe of glamour, travel and art world connections which she parlayed to great effect to create a stimulating lifestyle, even as she promoted Bernoudy's creative design capabilities. Those who knew her well also noted the circumstances of her wrenching escape as a Jew from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia in 1939, facilitated by her marriage to U.S. citizen and New Yorker, Harry Schenker. The marriage ended on amicable terms in 1947 with Schenker providing generous lifelong support for Gertrude. In New York, Gertrude worked for the Curt Valentin Gallery where she had assembled a collection of fine modernist art which she brought to her marriage with Bernoudy. In St. Louis, Gertrude quickly created a mystique which grew out of her unique mixture of a European (Czech) background and accent, her authority in art and broader cultural matters, her easy familiarity with a certain east-coast milieu based around high art, and her striking beauty and stylishness. The Bernoudy's traveled widely in the St. Louis community, actively supporting the St. Louis Art Museum, the St. Louis Symphony, the St. Louis Zoo and the St. Louis Artists' Guild.[32] When Bernoudy was honored as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, the organization recognized the instrumental role he had played in the preservation of the Wainwright Building. William and Gertrude Bernoudy epitomized modern taste in St. Louis. Amongst their personal friends were artists from every field including, Marino Marini, Jacques Lipchitz, Max

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[32] Overby, 242.

Beckmann and Henry Moore.[33] They were a captivating duo who mixed widely in the highest social circles, entertained a fascinating range of people at their home on Litzsinger Road, and helped define St. Louis' cultural life for some three decades until Bernoudy's death in 1988. As Overby's text makes abundantly clear, one of the effects of Bernoudy's marriage to Gertrude was that they gained entry to higher echelons of St. Louis society where they encountered clients who were enthusiastic about commissioning modern houses. Bernoudy, along with Mutrux and Bauer, converted such opportunities into explorations of Wrightian modernism, adding up to a significant historical inventory in St. Louis.

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[33] Ibid.

Conclusion

Underlying this thesis is a triangulated dynamic involving architects, buildings and clients. Seven architects-- Isadore Shank, Harris Armstrong, Charles Eames, Charles Nagel, Frederick Dunn, Edouard Mutrux and William Bernoudy; nine buildings-- the DeBaliviere Building, the Shank residence, the Shanley Building, the Grant Medical Clinic, the Armstrong residence, the Meyer residence, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the Samuel A. Bassett Office and Residence and the Talbot residence, and their respective owners, constitute the protagonists in my account of the early history of modernism in St. Louis. The reasons why these clients chose these particular architects and then signed off on the modernist buildings that resulted from their collaboration are clearly varied. However, the perception that, in a changing home and professional environment, a modern building would fulfill certain expectations that traditional buildings could not, is a shared theme. For example, in the medical buildings, modernist thinking accorded with the notion of advanced medicine; in St. Mark's, Nagel & Dunn's design represented Christian piety in the building's economy and austerity, a radical departure from the richly-worked tradition of Episcopalian architecture; and in the Shank, Armstrong and Bernoudy houses, the free-flowing spaces and the openness to the exterior provided for expanded and less formal living possibilities. All of these architects specified modern systems and the buildings under consideration were some of St. Louis' earliest to incorporate central air, for example. With the encouragement of the print media, public demand for such systems escalated. The stylistic question in relation to modernism was more challenging and vexatious.

Since the International Style was promoted as the defining statement of modernism worldwide, it can be tempting to think of contemporaneous local trends as essentially reactive. I have shown that while architects were aware of the International Style and that Armstrong captured its spirit in the Shanley Building, modernism' s development in St. Louis in the thirties was more layered and complex. First, it drew from other influential movements and trends of the time including Frank Lloyd Wright, Eliel Saarinen and the Dutch modernists. Beyond these influences, our protagonists were engaged in adaptive responses to local conditions and to the needs and perceptions of individual clients. My research essentially establishes in more detail the existence of what both Eric Mumford and Kathleen James-Chakraborty identified as alternative forms of modernism. A more comprehensive survey of 1930's architecture would need to be undertaken to assemble such responses under stylistic headings. At this point, I do not see a distinctive regional style in the thirties although I think distinctive styles emerge later, for example, in the work of Bernoudy-Mutrux-Bauer. I have demonstrated that individual differences notwithstanding, the architects are united by an approach, each in his own way driven by a progressive impulse to impact architecture in St. Louis in ways that would speak to the quality of the built environment while foregrounding modernity, comfort and utility. Suffice it to say that the mainstream versus alternative model should be used with caution. St. Louisians clearly had no desire to be subsumed into a universalizing style with its spiritual roots in a machine aesthetic, as Bernoudy eloquently expressed in his Kirkwood Garden Club address in 1936. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Harris Armstrong made few buildings in the International Style after the 1930's, moving instead into other strands of modernism that relied on his talent for integrating

diverse materials, and producing buildings unified with their environment. Those who could commission houses and professional buildings and wanted a modern, functioning building that telegraphed their progressive engagement with living, joined their architects in the quest for buildings that used modern materials and aesthetics to enable more comfortable lifestyles in their particular locales.

A brief summary of the approach taken to modernism by the subject architects in their 1930's buildings follows. Isadore Shank's responses to both an urban and a rural setting illustrate two different strands of modernist design: in the urban location of the DeBaliviere Building, he applied Northern European masonry ideas integrated with Wrightian tile patterns to the exterior; for his residence, sited on a large lot in a rural precinct, his design responded expansively and individualistically to a wooded, sloping site with a house open to the site through long runs of glass windows and with open flowing spaces reminiscent of Rudolf Schindler, among others. Harris Armstrong came to note with the Shanley Building which self-consciously asserted the presence of European modernist thinking, albeit modified, in the Midwest. In the ensuing years, Armstrong took to using brick, wood and copper as in the Grant Clinic and his own residence, absorbing the influences of Saarinen, Alto and Wright through the filter of his own natural affinity for materials and his familiarity with the specifics of climate. Eames' facility with and curiosity about materials led him to experiment with concrete, steel, brick and aluminum in the Meyer House whose layout owed something to Frank Lloyd Wright's diagonal planning, and whose structure drew from modern Finnish architecture and Le Corbusier's early work. Eames' strong suit in this building was the richly-crafted interior based on a unified concept apparent in Saarinen's interiors, and including

modernist elements. Shortly after the Meyer house, Nagel and Dunn executed a highly symbolic but spare interior in St. Mark's Episcopal Church, like Eames using a cast of artists working in diverse media. The experience of St. Mark's can be breathtaking, an impact achieved through an exquisite balance of modernist features such as the highly abstracted nature of the façade with more classical elements such as the interior symmetry. Mutrux' Bassett Clinic is a successful synthesis of a number of strands--it calls to mind Armstrong's use of the International Style, but softens it with the introduction of a signature curved wall and porthole windows, hallmarks of Art Moderne. In addition, Mutrux dealt with the registration of the slope in a manner that makes reference to Wright. Finally, Wright's presiding influence over the entire cast of architects in this thesis is brought to a climax in the Talbot house, in which Mutrux and Bernoudy made material their belief that a career in architecture could be made in translating Wright's principles into appropriate and habitable dwellings for a clientele in St. Louis.

If the buildings are individual in character, so are their designers and clients. What can be said in summary, first about the architects? All seven were born within a decade either side of the turn of twentieth century, at the high point of nervous energy generated by the new machine age. At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, they were children or adolescents, in the prosperous decade of the twenties they were students and in the thirties they were young professionals starting careers as architects in the worst imaginable economic climate of the Great Depression. Through education and travel, they found their individual paths to private practice. They shared a strong impulse to attract clients who would entertain new ideas. Their vision of autonomous practice was redirected and shaped by World War II and they all survived the war. Eames had already

moved to California in 1941, Nagel made a career shift into the museum world, and Shank, Armstrong, Dunn, Mutrux and Bernoudy returned to St. Louis to restart their practices with the goal of pursuing modernism to the greatest extent possible. In every case, the vision was modified to accommodate a client base in some cases not willing to identify themselves with modern design. Speaking generally about the period, Leslie Laskey made the following observation: "I think they were hanging on by their fingernails--because they had chosen an unpopular form."[1] Remarkably, all lived into their seventies with Shank, Nagel and Mutrux surviving into their nineties.

In the course of this thesis, I have characterized the clients in terms of their values and their relationships with each other and with the broader community, and where possible, made an assessment of what their residence, church or professional facility as the case may be, meant to them in terms of its modernism. What image did the building project, and what meanings can be inferred from the design choice? Commencing with the three facilities built for physicians, we should note that they signaled a substantial change in the way in which the practice of medicine was beginning to evolve. In the case of orthodontics, the building symbolized the emergence of a new field of dentistry, connecting the modernist style with innovation in dental care. Similarly, the two medical clinics were emblematic of the preeminent role of medical care in the maintenance of good health. The Bassett Office and Residence in a sense perpetuates the nineteenth century practice where doctors' offices were located in their homes. However, Mutrux used various strategies to achieve a functional separation between residence and clinic, by exploiting the sloping site to create separate levels, with a public entrance on the street and more discreet entrances for the residence. The advent of new, modernist clinics

[1] Leslie Laskey, interview.

consolidated the trend away from offices toward the conduct of medicine with modern equipment in transparent, streamlined facilities that suggested an affinity with scientific laboratories. The Grant Medical Clinic anticipated this trend. Moreover, it became a model of group practice, even though Dr. Grant continued to make home visits until the 1960's. The buildings were also leaders in their field in the sense that they influenced the way in which the patient experienced medical care. In addition to the up-to-date equipment and facilities for patient care, all three clinics featured light-filled, patient-friendly waiting areas designed to envelop the patient in a comfortable ambiance. In the souring New Deal atmosphere of the late 1930's, government-sponsored health insurance legislation was a prominent theme in political discourse, with the AMA taking strong adversarial positions against President Franklin Roosevelt's attempts to rally support for such a measure.[2] Hence, medical facilities and the Shanley facility in particular, would almost certainly have been identified with a service by and large unavailable to those large sectors of the population who could not pay. While the respective locations of the clinics is indicative of where Drs. Shanley, Bassett and Grant understood their patient base to be resident, they may also reveal certain city/county attitudes prevalent to this day. Shanley and Bassett either followed or perhaps led populations to the county, while Grant chose to build his facility in the city, providing an anchor and an essential service for a city population, almost certainly contributing to stemming the westward flight of city dwellers.

Moving now to the clients for the houses, as his own client, Shank revealed himself to be unabashedly modern. The human scale, the lack of pretension, the attention to function, the simple elegance of detailing and finishes are striking features of

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[2] Medicare legislation was not enacted until the 1950's.

the building. These elements along with its felicitous assimilation into the terrain, all reflect the architect's thoughtful preoccupation with his place in the world, vis-à-vis other people and the natural environment into which he and his family had settled. Likewise, Armstrong's house sits very comfortably on a sloping site, absorbed seamlessly into the site on the front elevation by the fusion of the new structure with the old stone wall. The underlying idea in both the Shank and Armstrong houses is that "modern" consists in some fundamental, unceremonious reconciliation of habitation with occupation. The Mutrux- Bernoudy house for the Talbots embraces its site in a different way, by assimilating its geometrical logic. Of the four houses, the Meyer house stands out as an expansive assemblage which telegraphed the idea that the Meyers were willing to indulge in a speculative design venture with the highly imaginative Eames. The house inside and out was a symbol of evolutionary growth away from traditional architecture to a form that simultaneously symbolized modernity and the adventurous spirit of the Meyers: "We let our imaginations go," said Alice Gerdine (Meyer) "and the results were entirely satisfying."[3] One notable characteristic of all four houses is their private, tranquil settings, affording a lifestyle unmediated by contact with neighbors. Implied in the preoccupation with privacy is the desire to effect a separation from the encroaching business of modern life, while maintaining enough proximity to be fully vested in it.

Beyond these specific associations is a further issue, more difficult to characterize, but important for understanding the reception of modernism, that is, its significance as an agent of class distinction. From the profiles of architects, their wives and their clients, an image emerges of a class of individuals organized not around possession of wealth and power per se (some were wealthy, most were not), but on the

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[3] Duffy, "Designing A Whole Building Is Just Too Demanding."

basis of their access to and support of creative people, especially artists and architects. Significant 'cultural capital' accrued from that, to use Bourdieu's term, and a modernist building signified membership of that enlightened class in society that could assimilate and utilize the language of modern life. Like abstract art today, modernist ideas differentiated their proponents from the vast majority of those who were in the market for houses or professional facilities, or churches for that matter.[4] The classification carried a connotation of progressive in terms of a belief in science as we have seen, but also in terms of humanist ideas evident in the concern for the comfort of the patient in the medical clinics and in the broader involvements of women such as Natalie Grant, Ilse Shank and Elsa Mutrux in civil and human rights. In the wives of the architects, we see a quality of idealism supported by a willingness to offer practical support for their husbands' efforts to actualize the modernist dream. They were an extraordinarily talented cohort of women, who were gainfully occupied on income earning activity--Ilse Shank as an illustrator of national renown, Louise Armstrong as a realtor and landscape gardener, Tirzah Dunn as a wallpaper designer of national repute, and Elsa Mutrux as a teacher. Apart from their involvement directly or indirectly with modernism, these individuals--the architects, their wives and their clients-- had three things in common: tertiary education, European travel and a strong identification with St. Louis.

St. Louis architects captured the spirit of modernist innovation in the thirties with buildings that stood out then as they stand out now. Eames went on to have a transforming effect in his field, particularly furniture design, while Nagel realized his aspirations with his directorship of several influential museums. When Shank,

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[4] It would be instructive to undertake a study to determine precisely what their alternatives would have been in terms of style.

Armstrong, Dunn, Mutrux and Bernoudy returned from World War II to restart their architecture practices, they took up the modernist ideas they had introduced and nurtured in the thirties with the support of outstanding clients. The early work of all seven architects is historically important because it paved the way for them and their colleagues to produce a significant inventory of modernist architecture in the forties, fifties and sixties. Even though many modernist buildings, including the Shanley Building, are potentially endangered as current owners move to cash in on escalating real estate values, the early practitioners of modernism have made a lasting impact on the architectural landscape of St. Louis.

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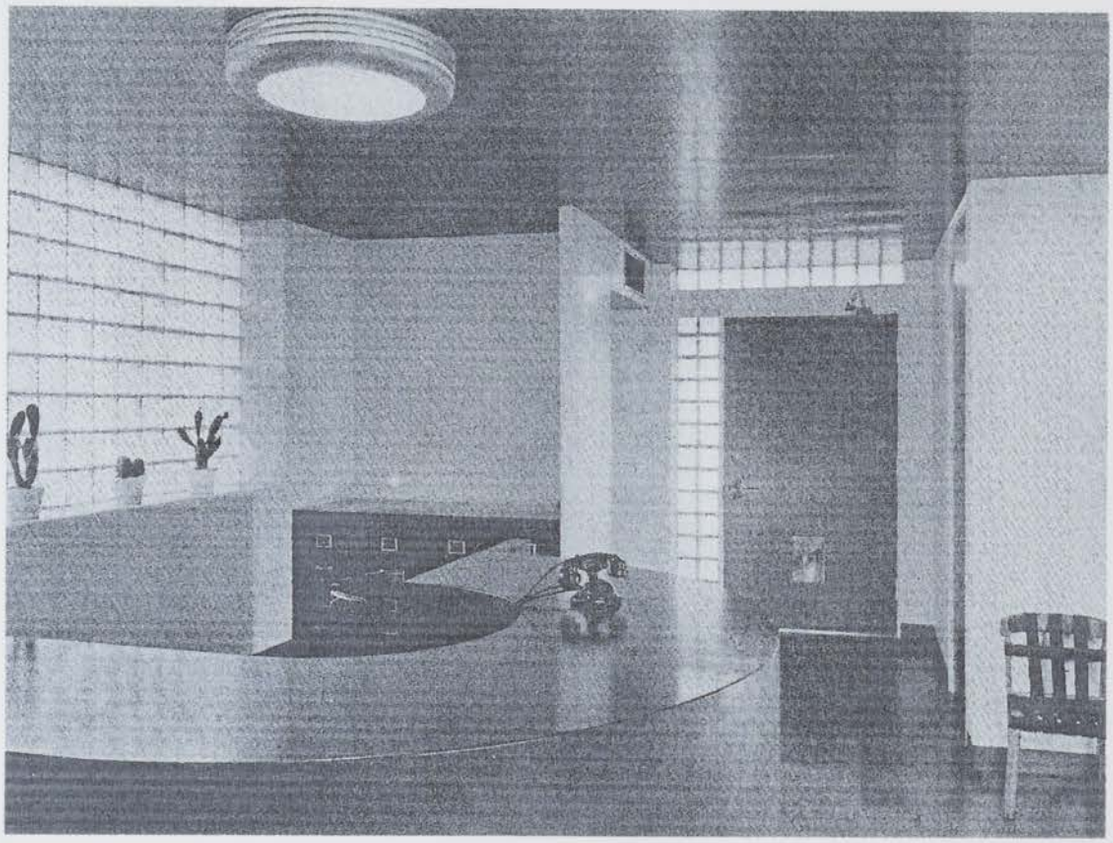


Fig.1. Harris Armstrong, orthodontic clinic for Dr. Leo. M. Shanley, 1935, reception.

Fig. 2. Harris Armstrong, Grant Medical Clinic, 1938, nurses' station.

Fig. 3. Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (1927).

Fig. 4. Edmund Goulding, *Grand Hotel* (1932).

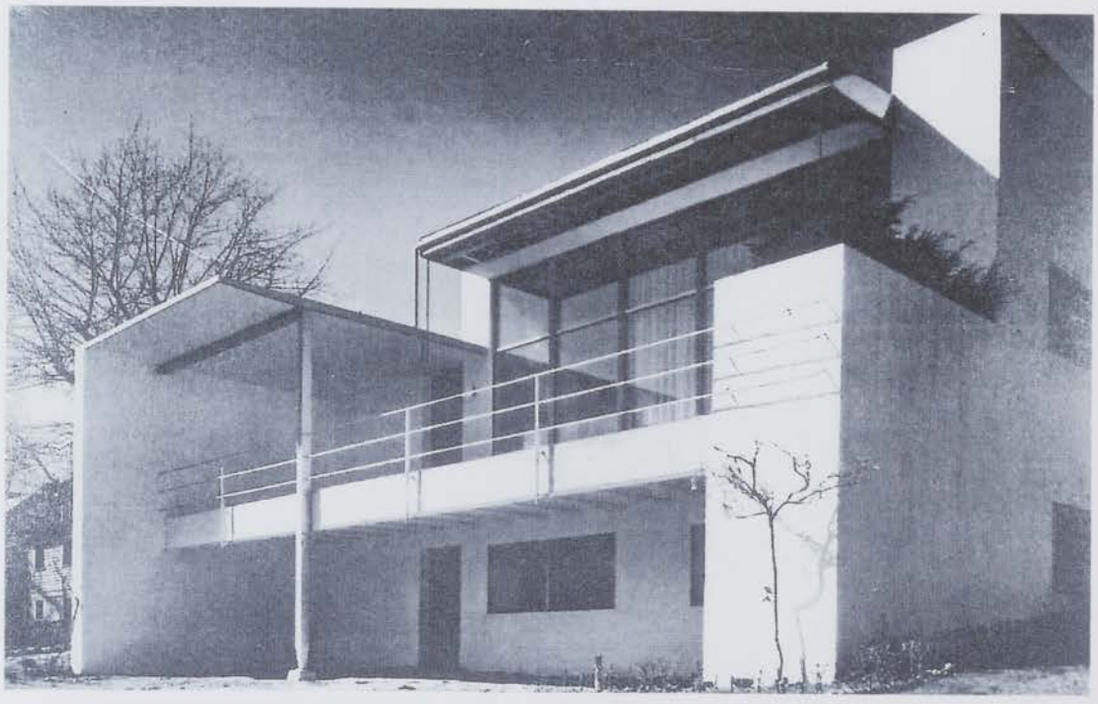


Fig. 5. Harris Armstrong, Shanley Building, 1935. South elevation.

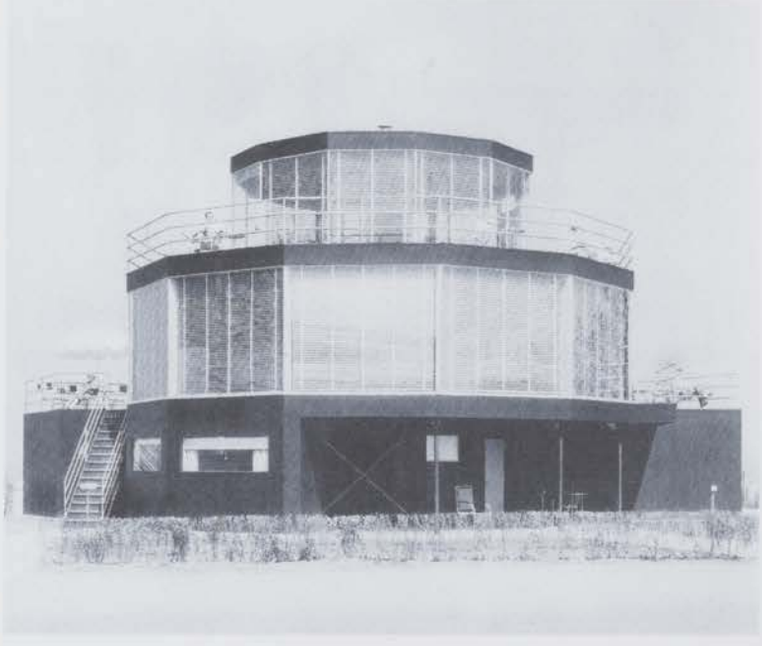


Fig. 6. George Fred Keck, House of Tomorrow, Century of Progress Exposition, Chicago, 1933.

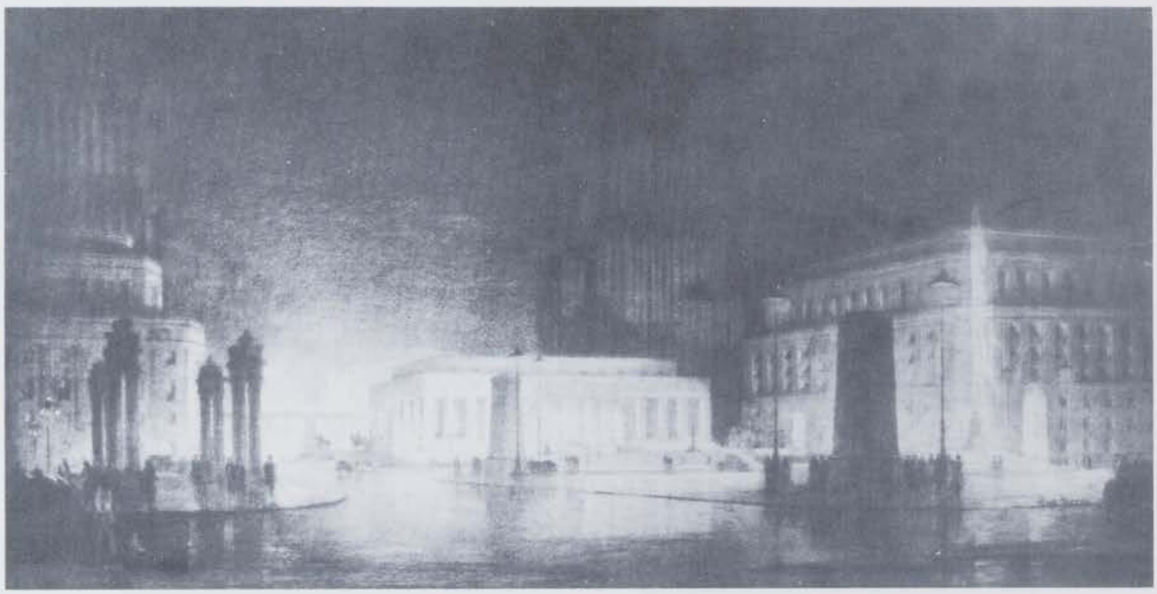


Fig. 7. Hugh Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*. Rendering of proposed St. Louis Plaza, 1928.

Fig. 8. William B. Ittner
Continental Building, St. Louis,1928.

Fig. 9. Schopp & Baumann
Park Plaza, St. Louis, 1919.

25-Story Modernistic Apartment

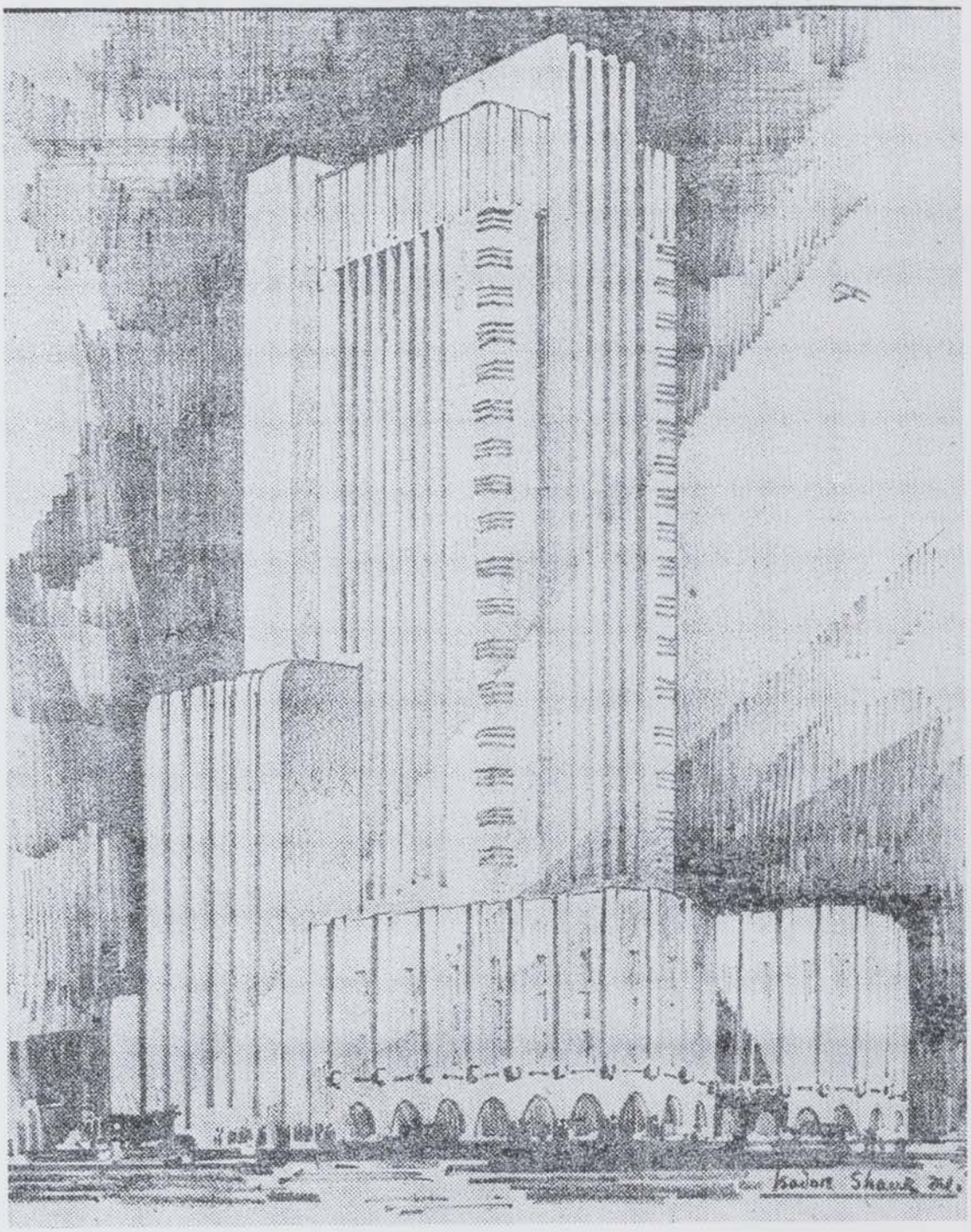


Fig. 10. Jesse L. Bowling and Isadore Shank, proposal for 25-story skyscraper. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 1928.

Fig. 11. Boyer & Armstrong, proposal for 40-story skyscraper, early 1930's.

Fig. 12. Hood & Fouilhoux, McGraw-Hill Building, New York, 1930-1.

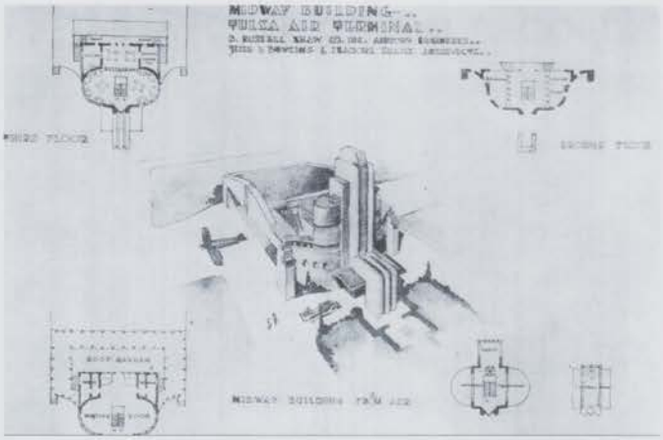
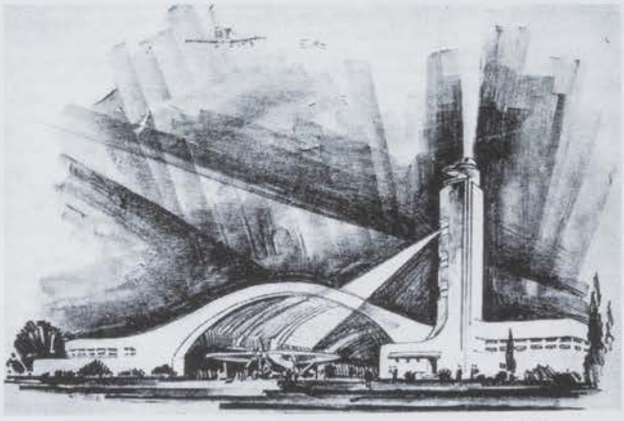


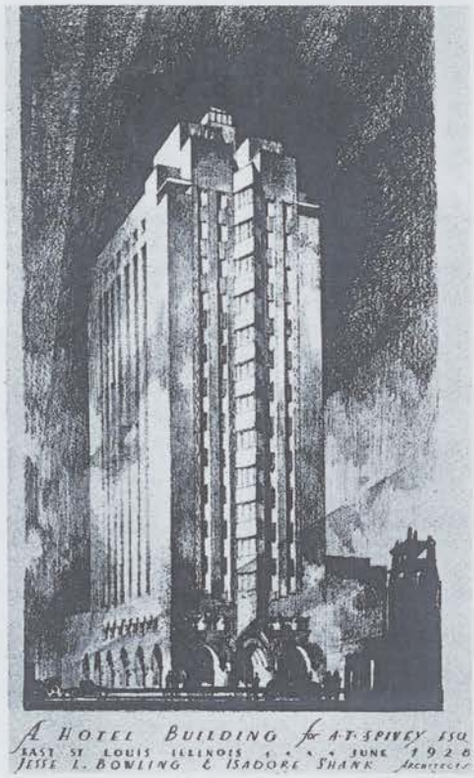
Fig.13. Bowling & Shank, design for Tulsa Air Terminal, Oklahoma,1929.

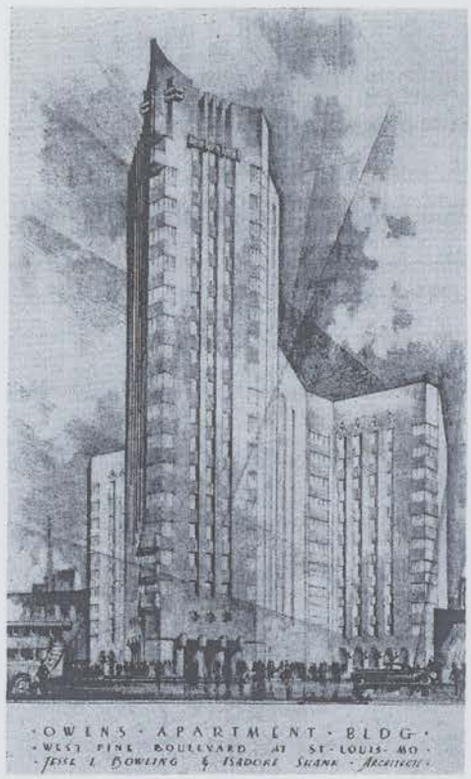


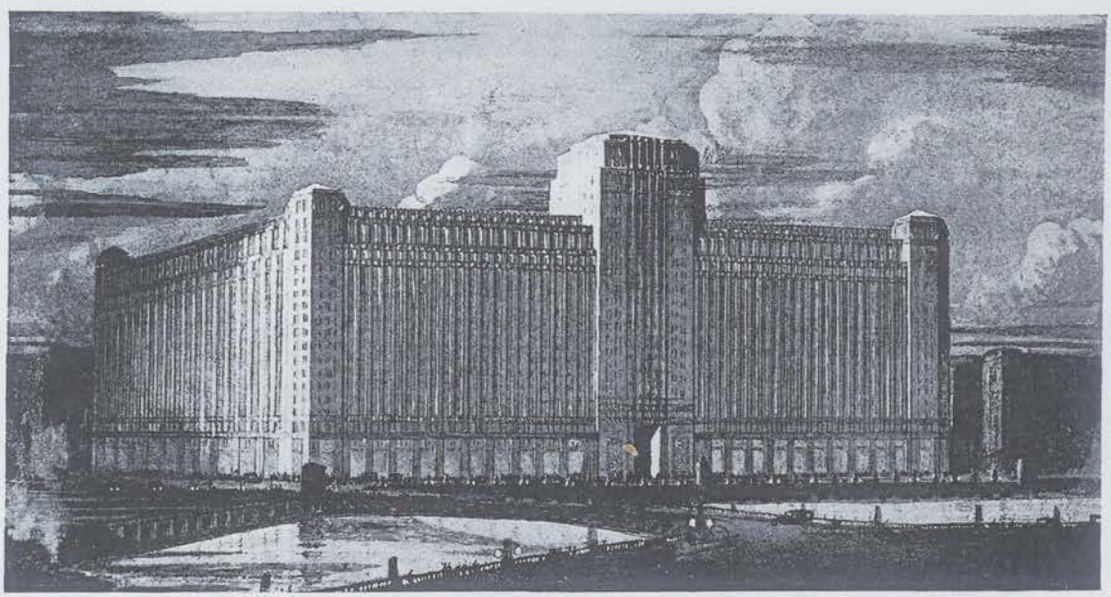
MIDWAY BUILDING, DETROIT AIR TERMINAL, MICHIGAN
JESSE L. BOWLING AND ISADORE SHANK, ARCHITECTS
R. RUSSELL SHAW CO., INC., AIRPORT ENGINEERS

Fig. 14. Bowling & Shank, design for Detroit Air Terminal, Michigan. c.1929.

Fig. 15. Eric Mendelsohn, Einstein Tower, Potsdam, Germany, 1920-4.







PERSPECTIVE SKETCH FOR THE MERCHANDISE MART, CHICAGO, IN COURSE OF ERECTION
FOR MARSHALL FIELD & COMPANY
GRAHAM, ANDERSON, PROBST & WHITE, ARCHITECTS

Fig.16. Jesse L. Bowling & Isadore Shank, designs for a hotel building in East St. Louis and the Owens Apartment Building, St. Louis shown with Chicago Merchandise Mart. 1928.

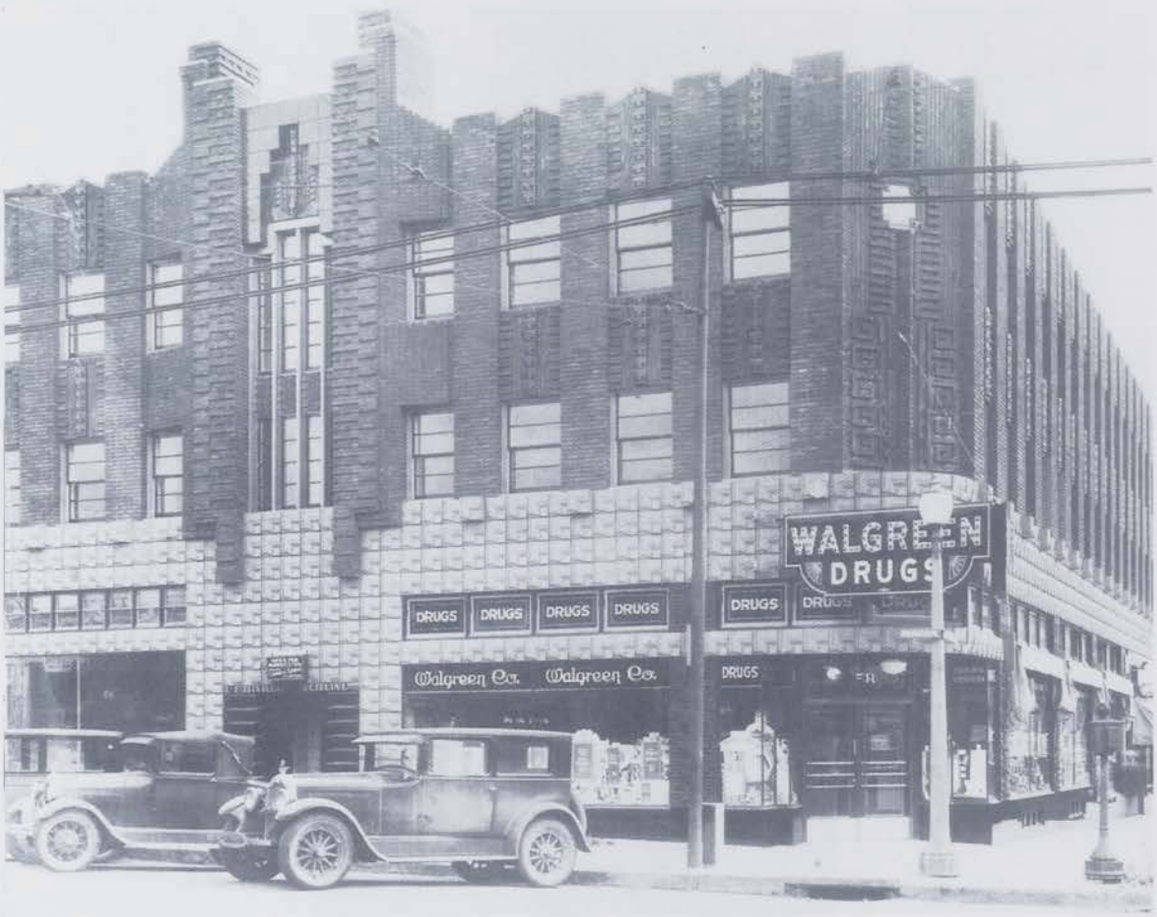


Fig.17. Jesse L. Bowling & Isadore Shank, DeBaliviere Building, St. Louis, 1928.

Fig.18. DeBaliviere Building, exterior corner detail.

Fig. 19. DeBaliviere Building, exterior terracotta block detail.

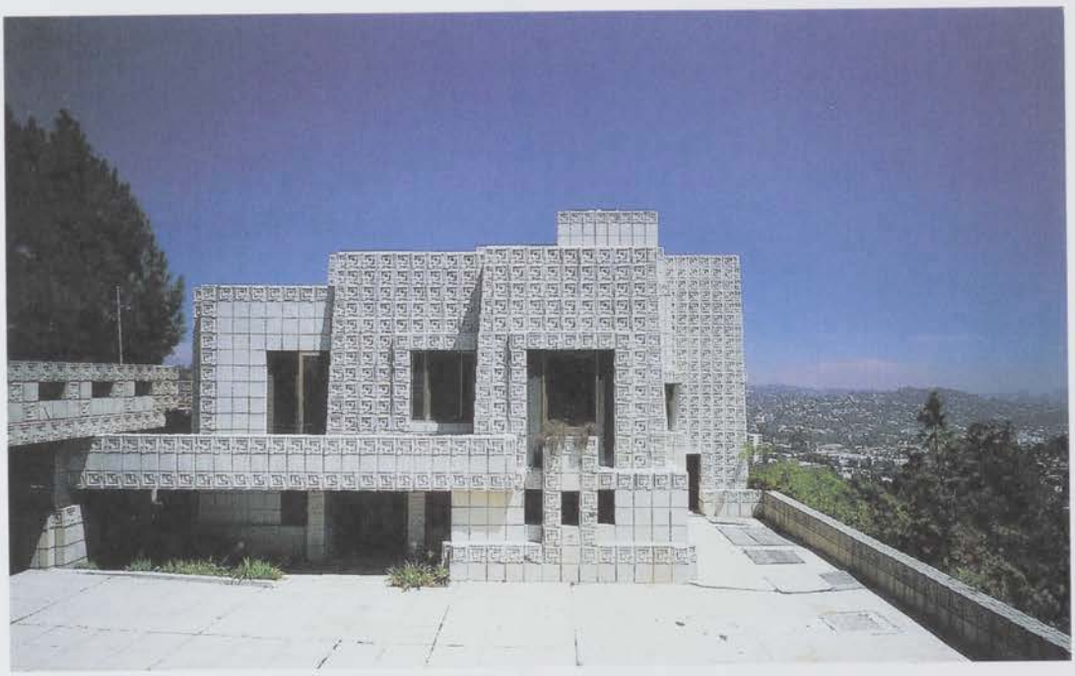


Fig. 20. Frank Lloyd Wright, Ennis House, Los Angeles, California, 1923-4.

Fig. 21.Ilse Shank, cover for *Collier's,* June 5, 1943.

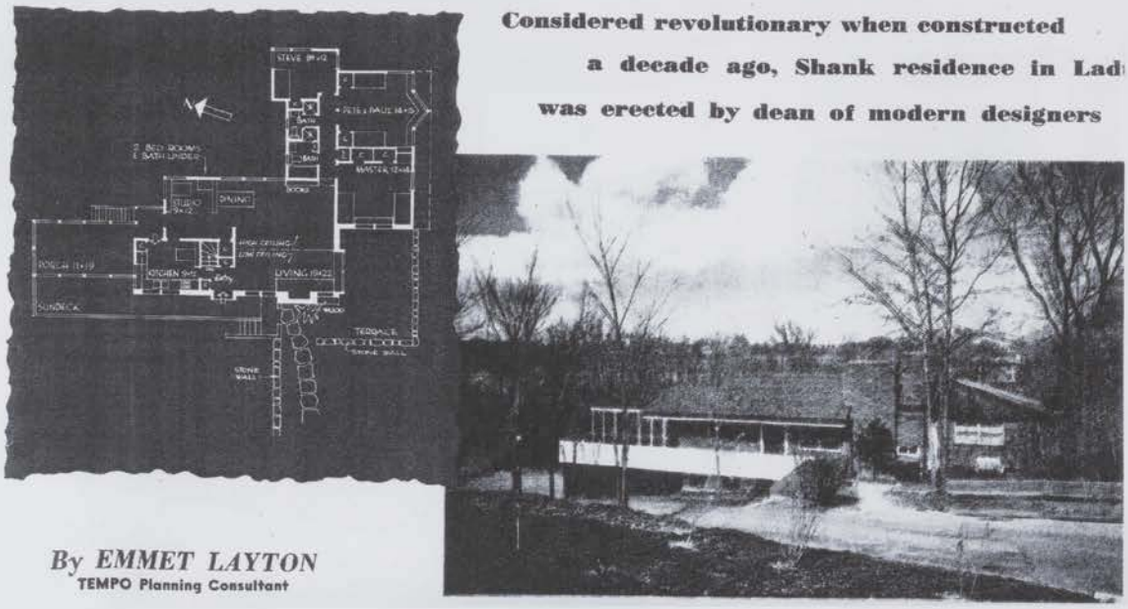


Fig. 22. Isadore Shank, Shank Residence, Ladue, Missouri, 1939-40, plan and front elevation, *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 1950.

Fig. 23. Shank House, living/dining room. *Ladue News Magazine,* 2005.

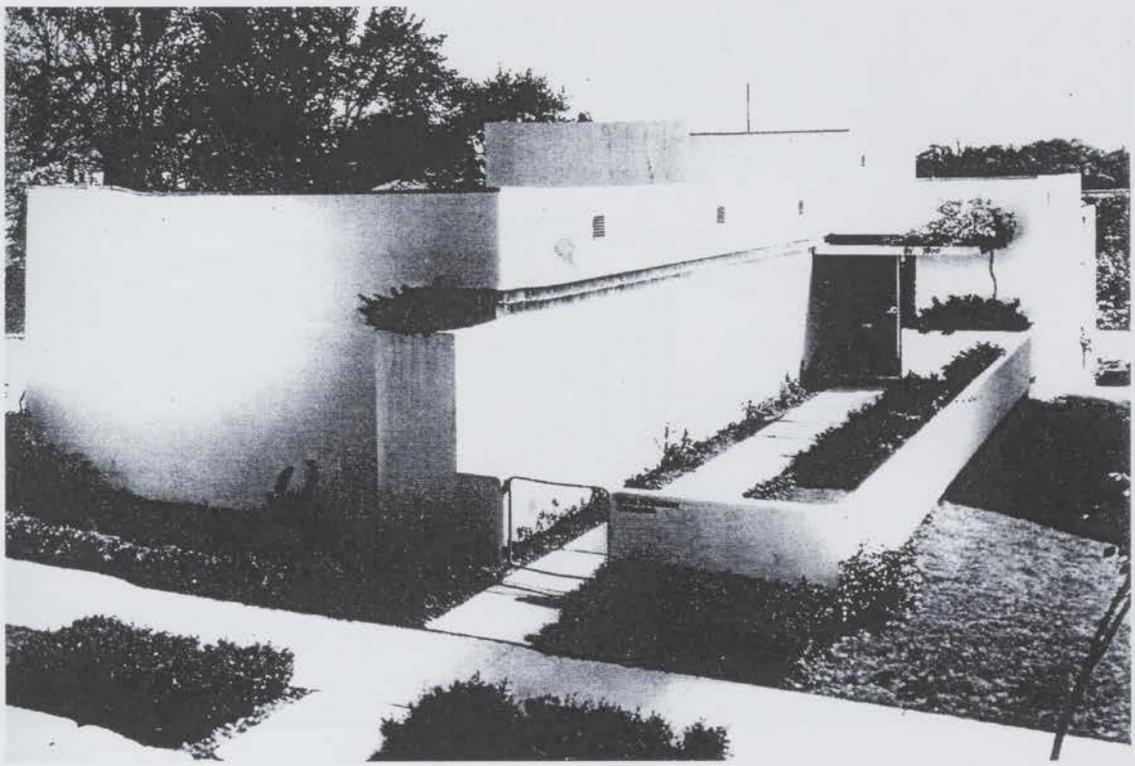


Fig. 24. Harris Armstrong, Shanley Building, exterior. 1935.

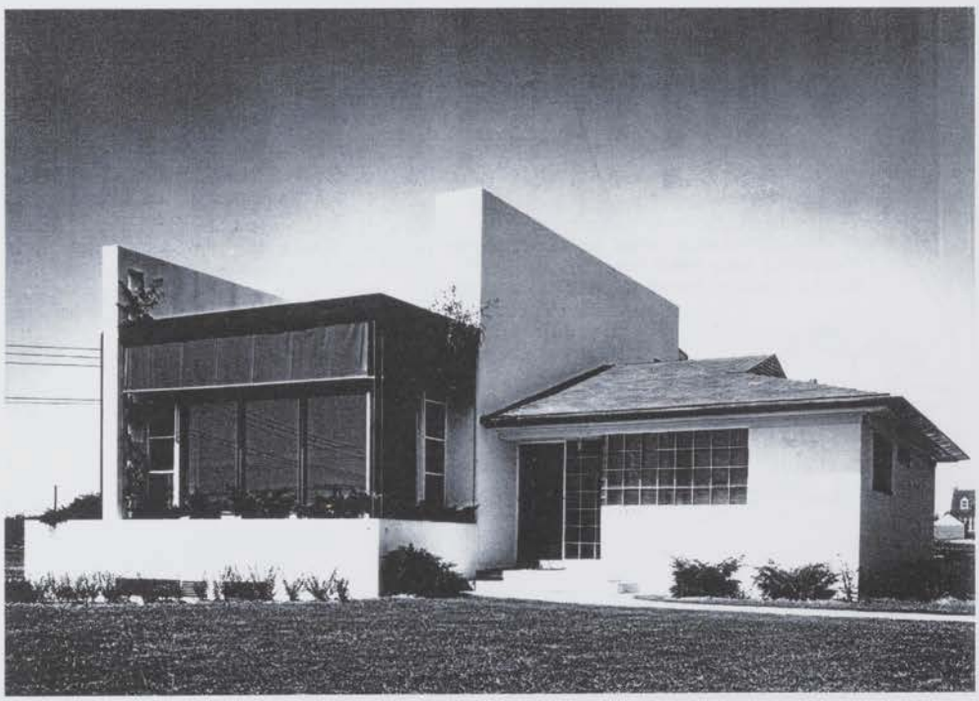


Fig.25. Harris Armstrong, dentist's office/apartment for Dr. E.H. Jacobsmeyer, Clayton, Missouri, 1938.

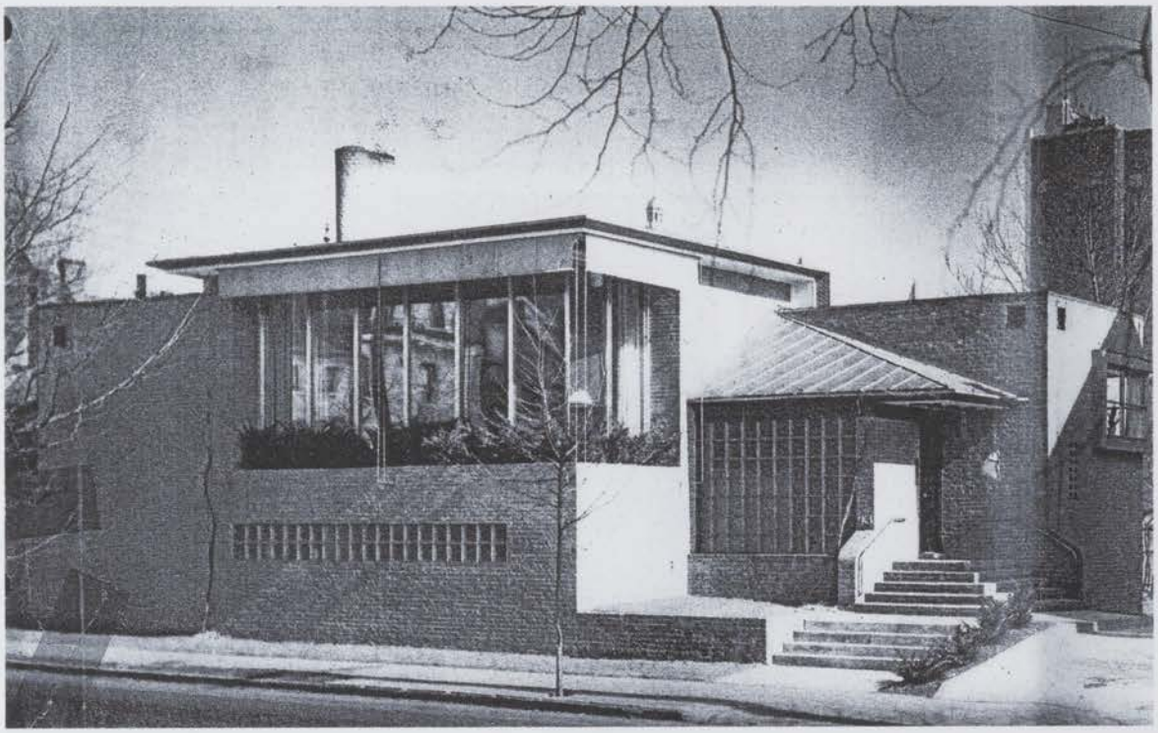


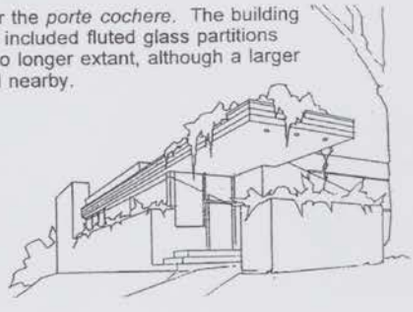
Fig. 26. Harris Armstrong, Grant Medical Clinic, St. Louis, 1938.

Wieneke & Rutledge Medical Building **HA41-3**

client **Dr. Joseph C. Wieneke and Dr. Paul E. Rutledge**

location **227 North Kirkwood Road**
Kirkwood, Missouri 63122

A white stucco structure with a large horizontal cantilever over the *porte cochere*. The building featured integral planters and extensive glazing. The interior included fluted glass partitions separating the corridor from office spaces. The structure is no longer extant, although a larger medical building (of a later date) with a similar entry is located nearby.



Armstrong Catalogue page 33

Fig. 27. Harris Armstrong, Wieneke & Rutledge Medical Building, Kirkwood, Missouri, 1941. Andrew L.W. Raimist, Armstrong Catalogue, Harris Armstrong Collection, Special Collections, Washington University.

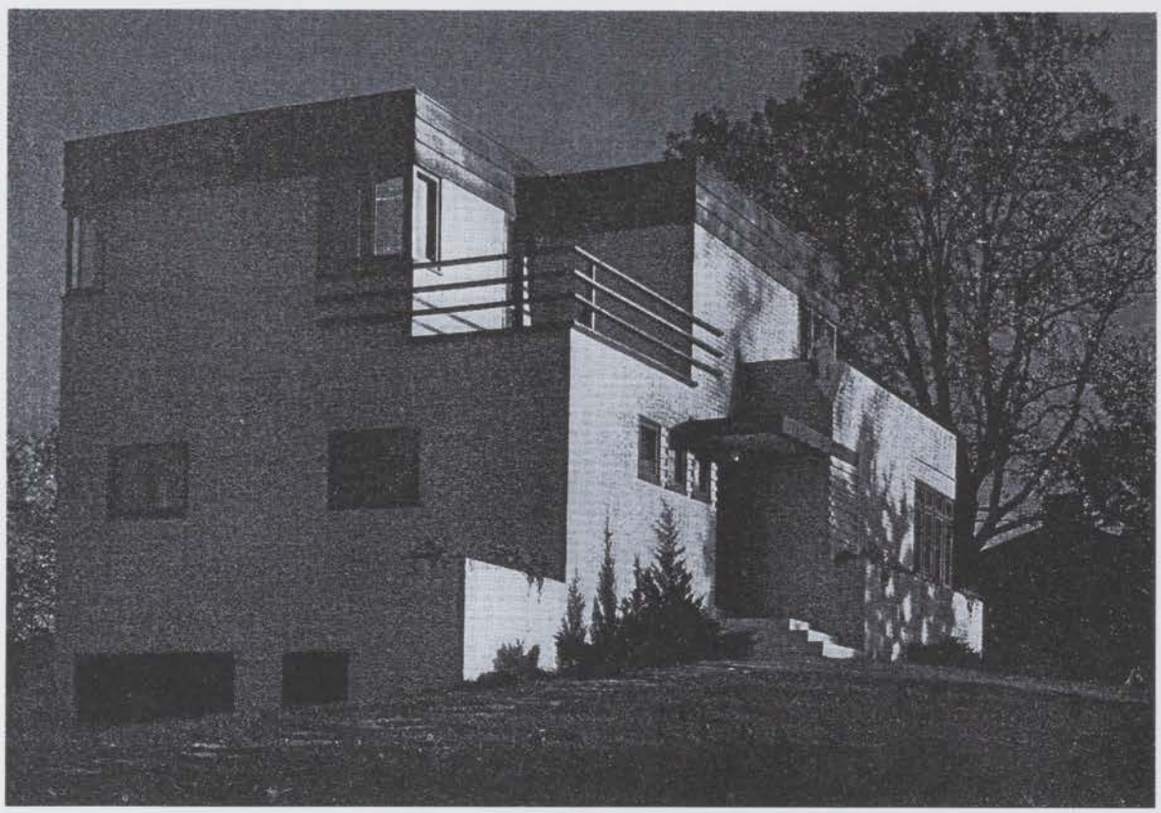


Fig. 28. Harris Armstrong, residence for Drs. Carl and Gerti Cori,
Glendale, Missouri, 1935.

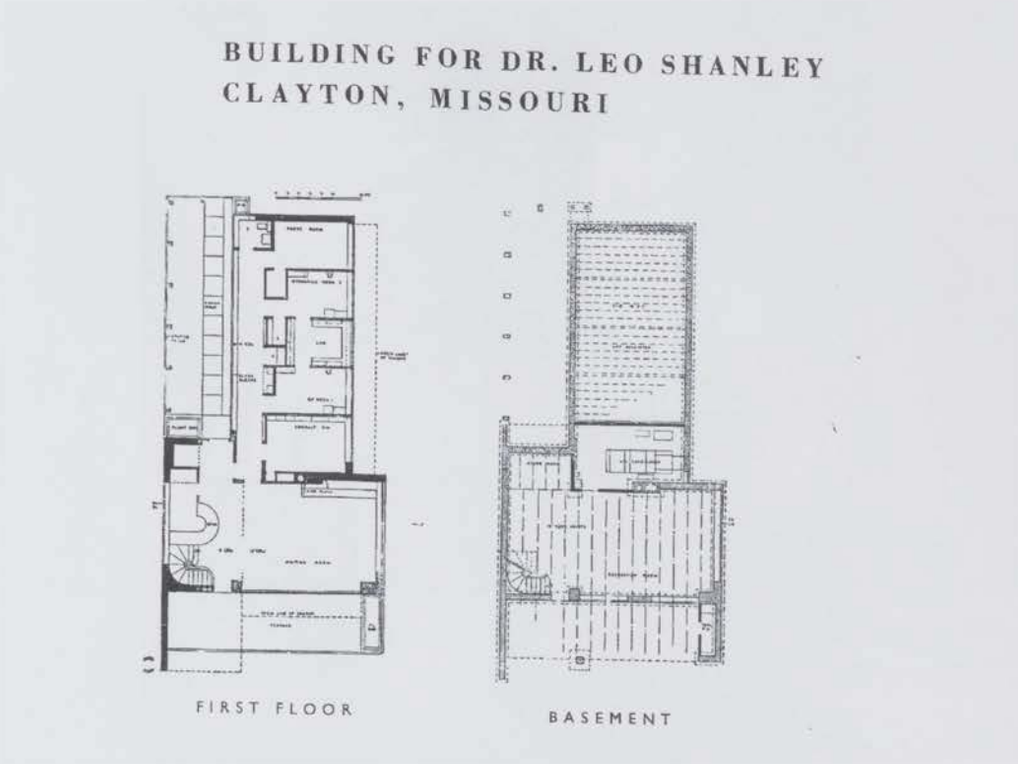


Fig. 29. Harris Armstrong, Shanley Building, plan.

Fig. 30. Shanley Building, waiting room showing night sky mural and semi-circular desk.

Fig. 31.Harris Armstrong, Grant Medical Clinic, Taylor Avenue, west/south elevations.

Fig. 32.Grant Medical Clinic, waiting room, Alvar Aalto cantilevered chairs and L leg table.

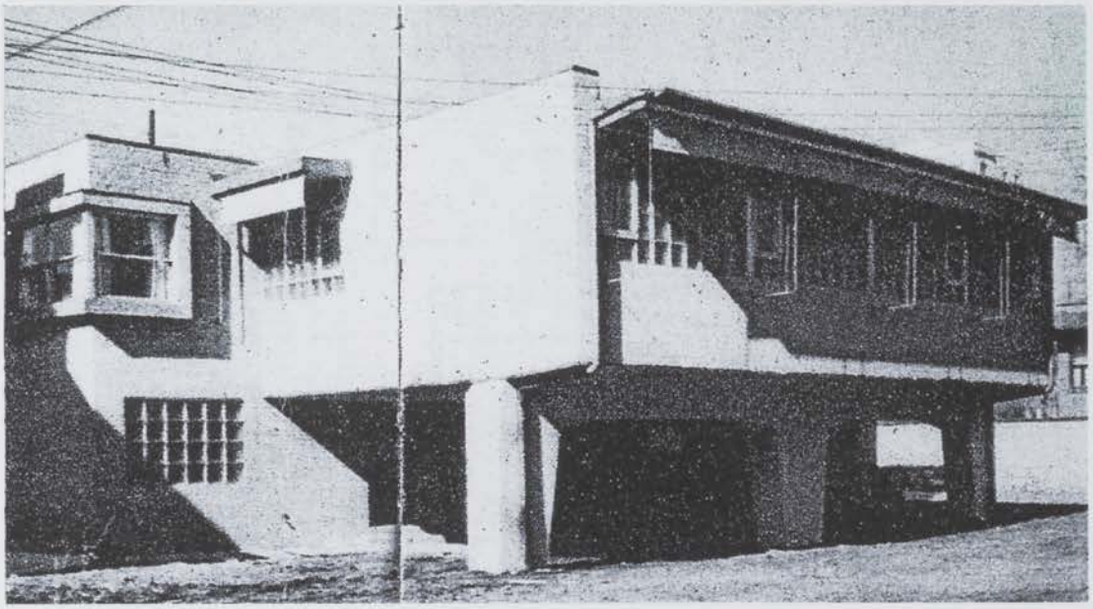


Fig. 33. Grant Medical Clinic, back (east) elevation.

Fig. 34.Grant Medical Clinic, alley (north & west elevations), detail.

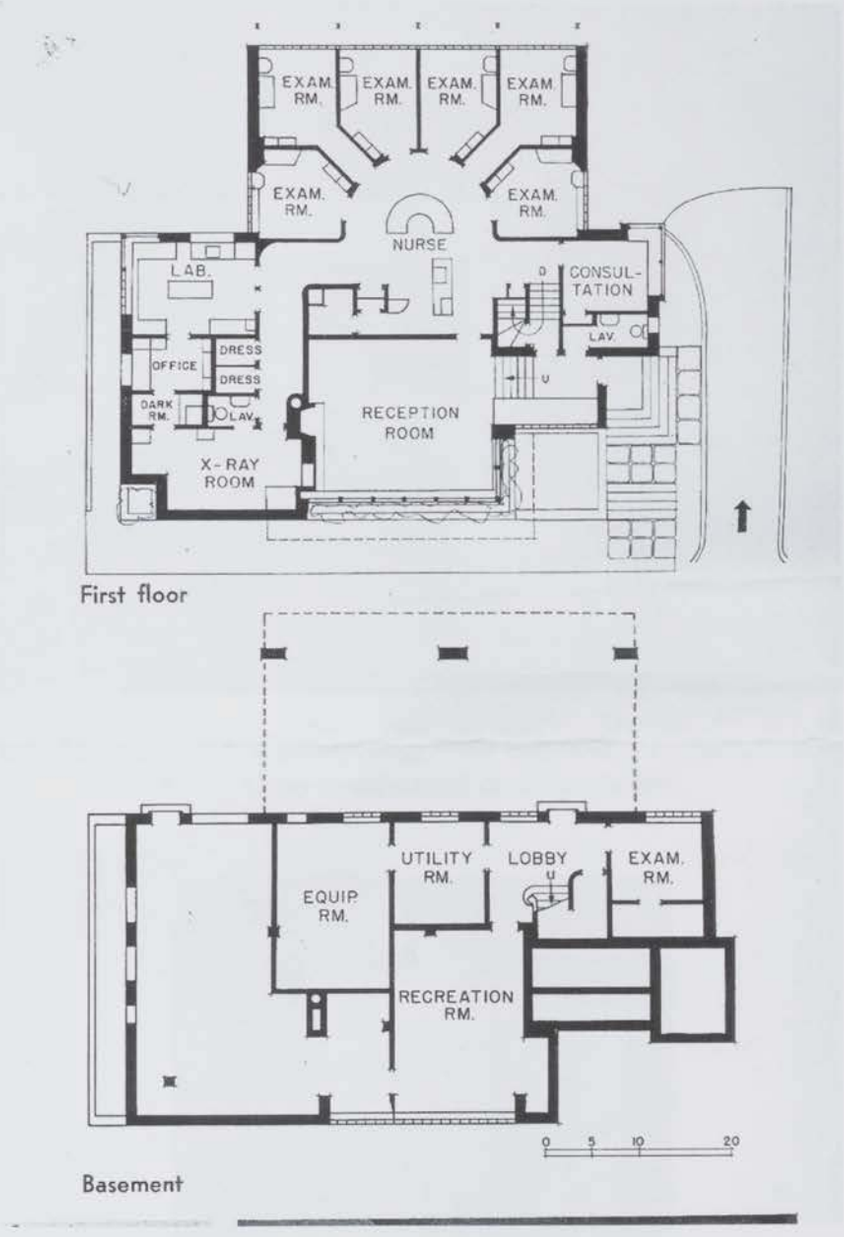


Fig. 35. Harris Armstrong, Grant Medical Clinic, plan.

Fig. 36.Grant Medical Clinic, waiting room, with fish tank, fireplace, writing desk, and Alvar Aalto cantilevered chair on the left.

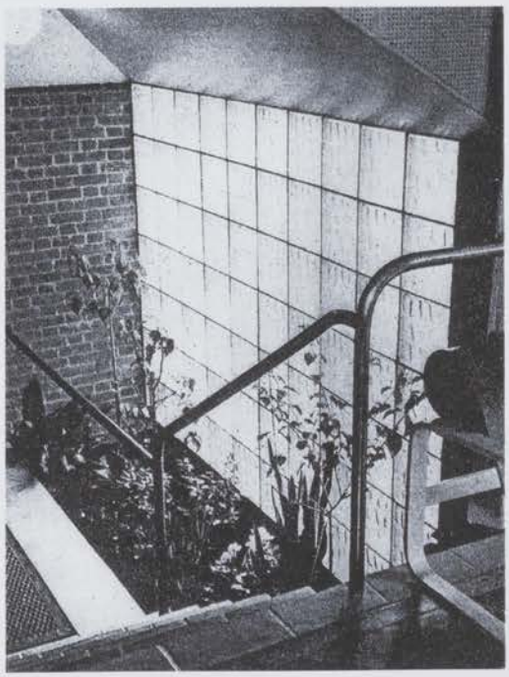


Fig. 37.Grant Medical Clinic, integral planter.

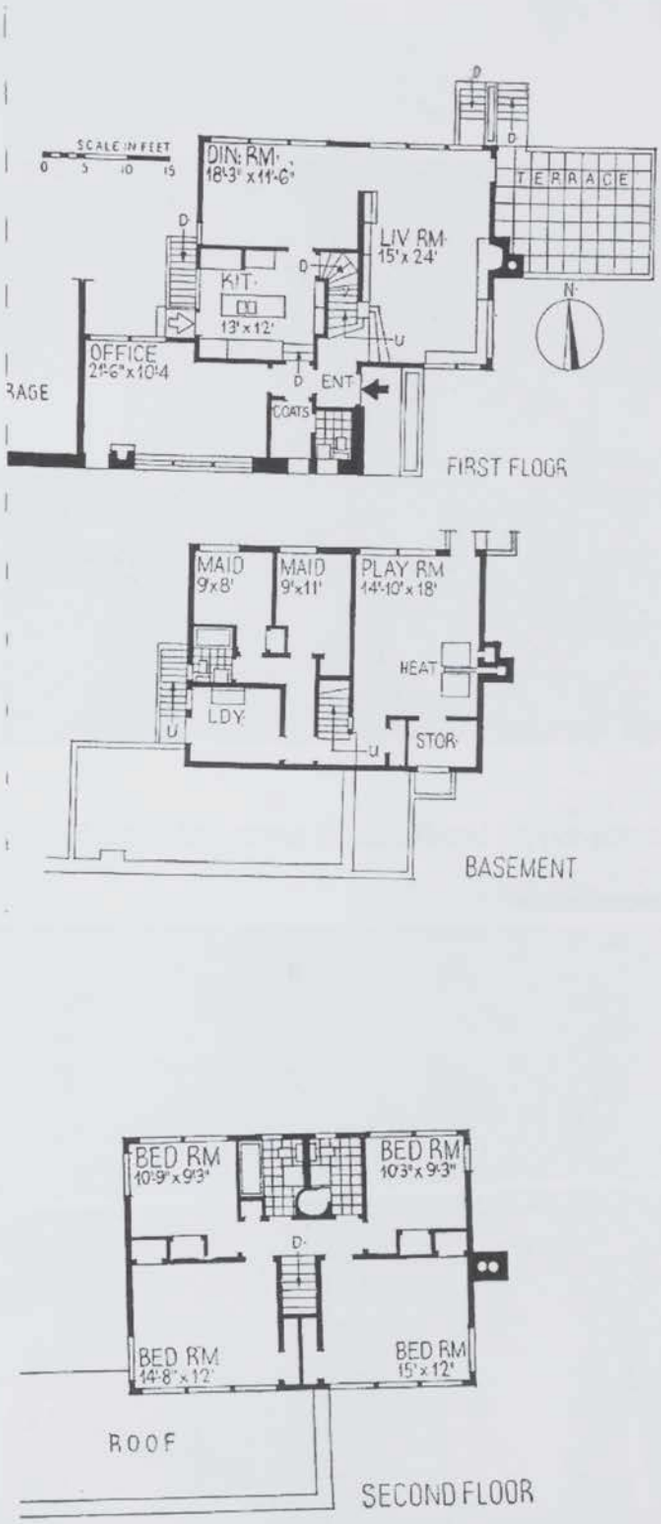


Fig. 38. Harris Armstrong House, Oakland, Missouri, 1938, plan.

Fig. 39. Harris Armstrong House, flared copper gutter detail,

Fig. 40.Grant Medical Clinic, copper gutter detail.

Fig. 41.Harris Armstrong House, front (south) elevation.

Fig. 42.Alvar and Amino Aalto, Aalto House, Helsinki, Finland, 1935-6, front elevation.

Fig. 43.Harris Armstrong House, back (north) elevation.

Fig. 44. Harris Armstrong House, window wall (north wall) joining living and dining room, showing ledge for informal seating.

Fig. 45. Frank Lloyd Wright, Imperial Hotel, Tokyo, c.1923, main entrance. Roofline executed with flanged gutter detail for pagoda-like effect.

Fig. 46.Harris Armstrong House, living room, showing integral planter, triple-hung windows and angular, ornamental molding on stairs and front door.

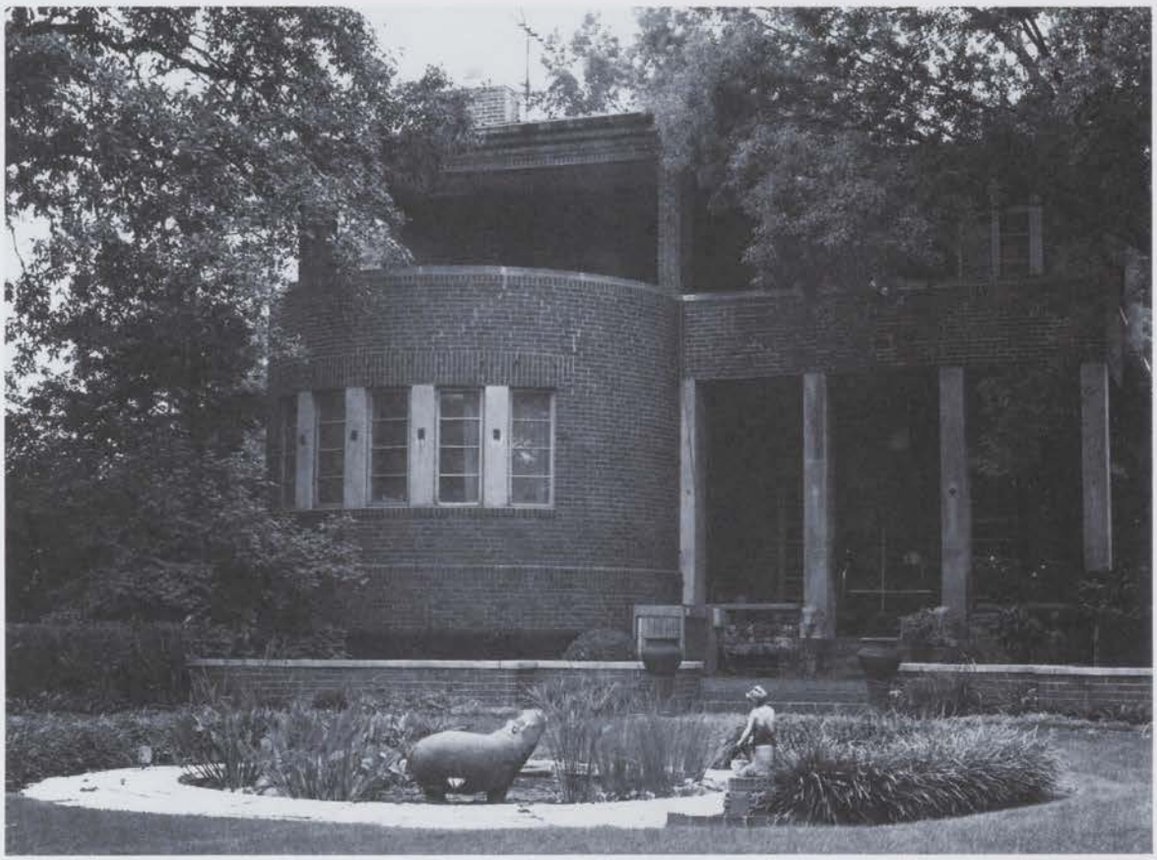


Fig. 47. Eames & Walsh, John P. Meyer House, Frontenac, Missouri, 1936-8, southwest elevation

Fig. 48. Eames & Walsh, John P. Meyer House, exterior, northeast elevation.

Fig. 49. Gunnar Asplund, Stockholm Public Library, Sweden, 1920-8.

Fig. 50. Le Corbusier, Villa Schwob, Switzerland, 1916.

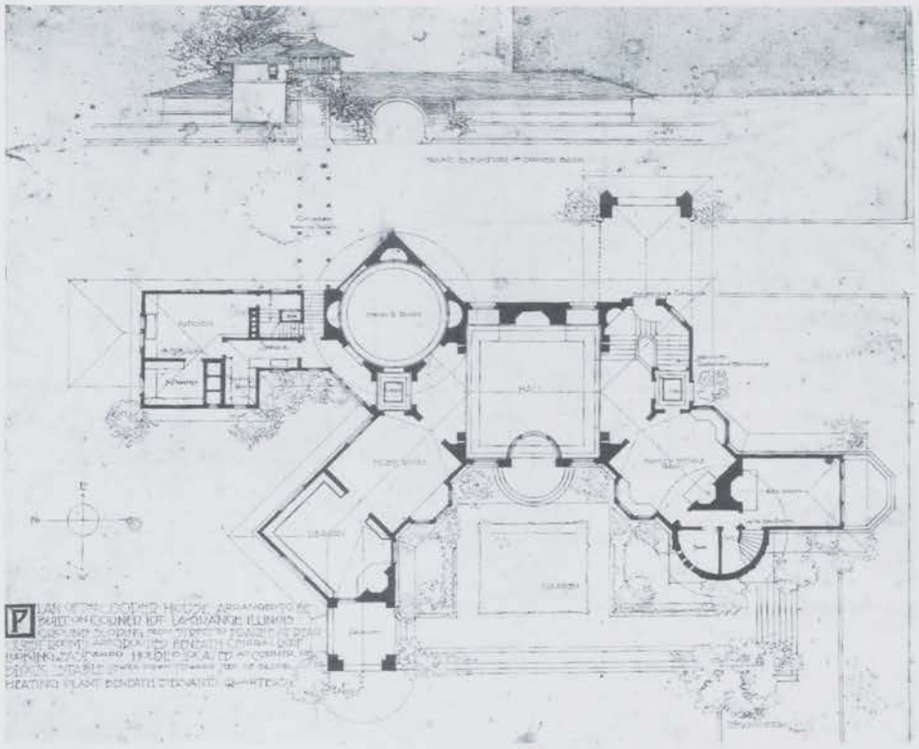


Fig. 51. Frank Lloyd Wright, Cooper House, La Grange, Illinois, 1890, plan exemplifying diagonal planning.

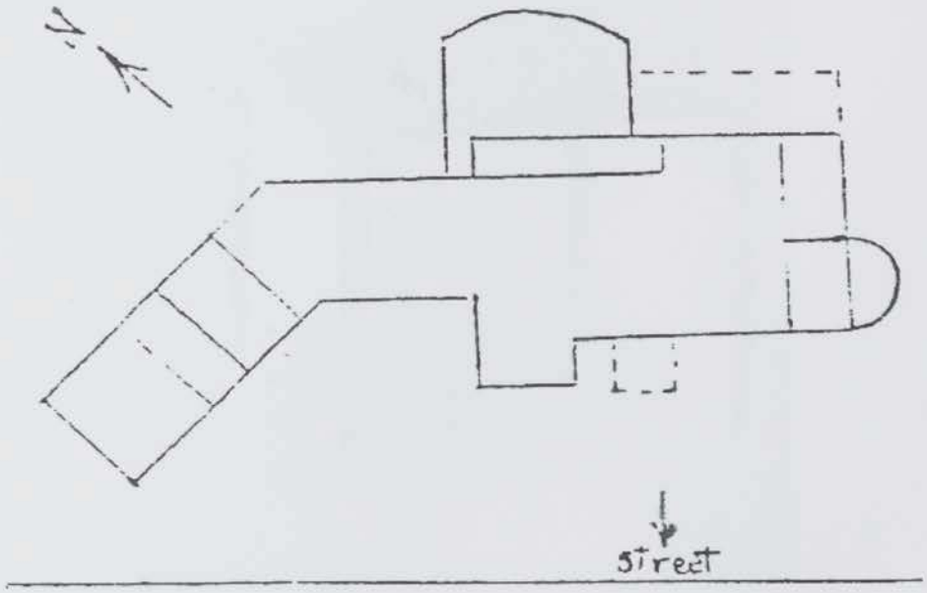
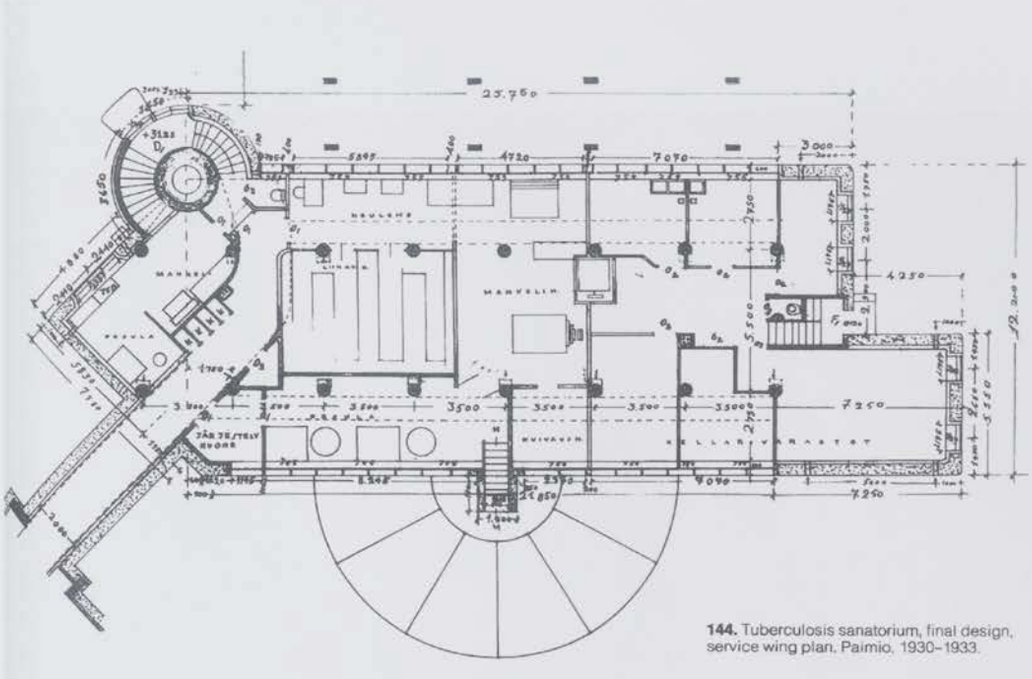


Fig. 52.Esley Hamilton, plan of Meyer House (rough sketch).



144. Tuberculosis sanatorium, final design, service wing plan. Paimio, 1930–1933.

Fig. 53.Alvar Aalto, Paimio Sanatorium, Paimio, Finland, 1930-33, plan.

Fig. 54. Charles Eames, table for Meyer House, bleached cherry, cherry veneer, European walnut veneer, harewood, and black paint, 30 1/8" x 36" x 36", 1936-8.

Fig. 55. Charles Eames, *The Paint and Potter Club*, watercolor, 12" x 19", c. 1935, private collection.

The subjects are identified left to right as:
Charles Sherman
Chloe Sherman
Charles Nagel (knitting)
Tirzah Dunn (holding the wool)
Frederick Dunn
Unknown
Wayman Whittemore

Missing from the picture are Mamie Whittemore and Lucie Nagel.
Information courtesy of Quinta Scott.

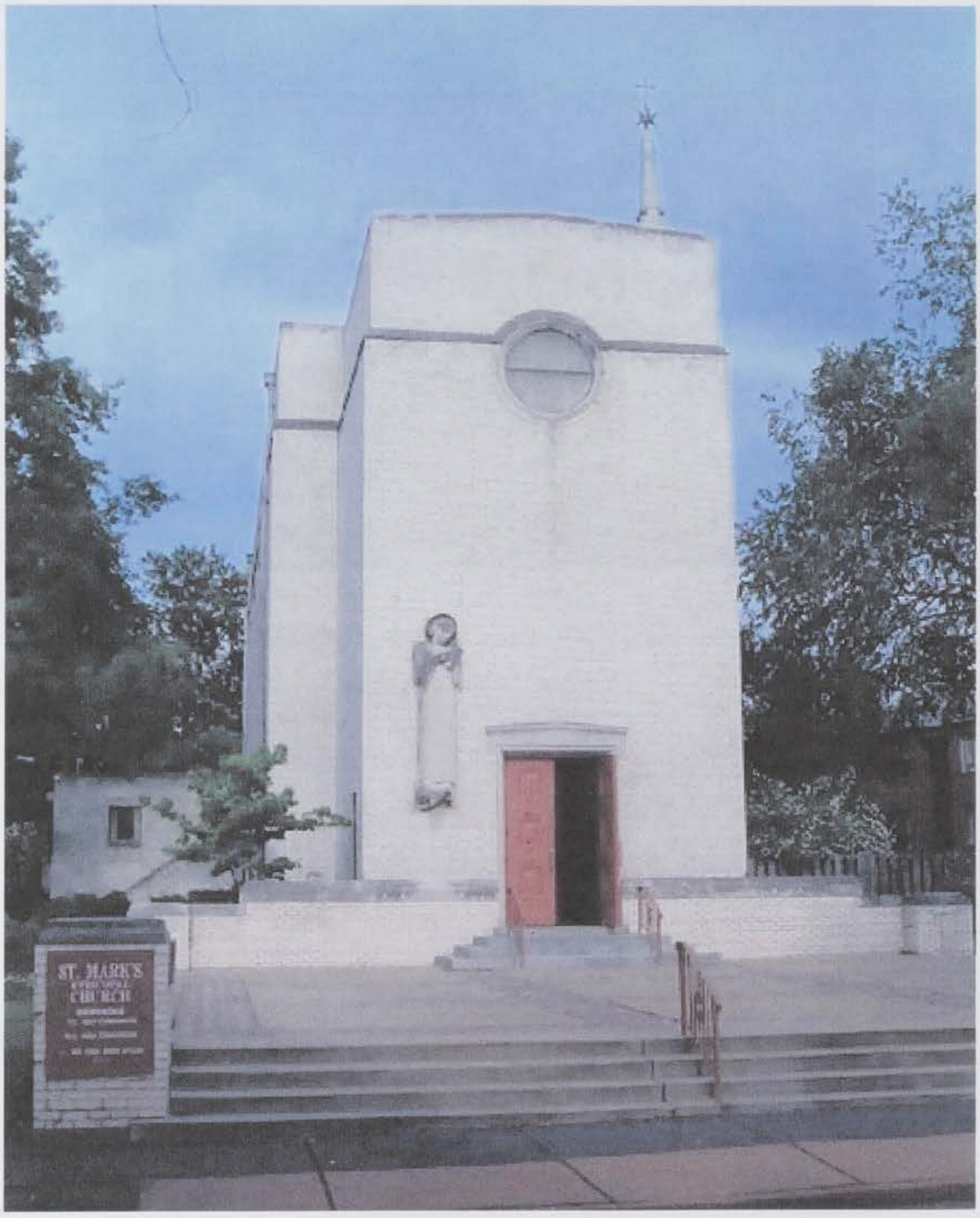


Fig. 56. Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, St. Louis Hills, 1939.

Fig. 57. St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Photograph taken in 1939.

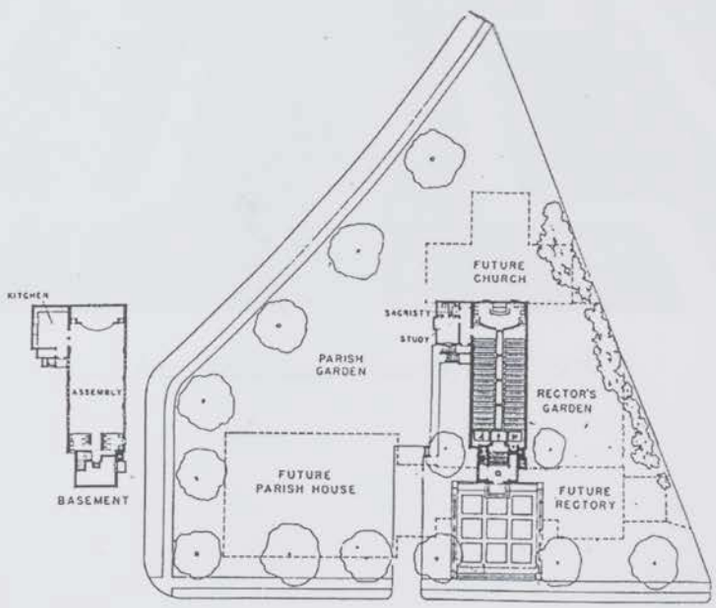


Fig. 58. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, site plan showing original cruciform plan.

Fig. 59. Nagel & Dunn, office foyer, c. 1939.

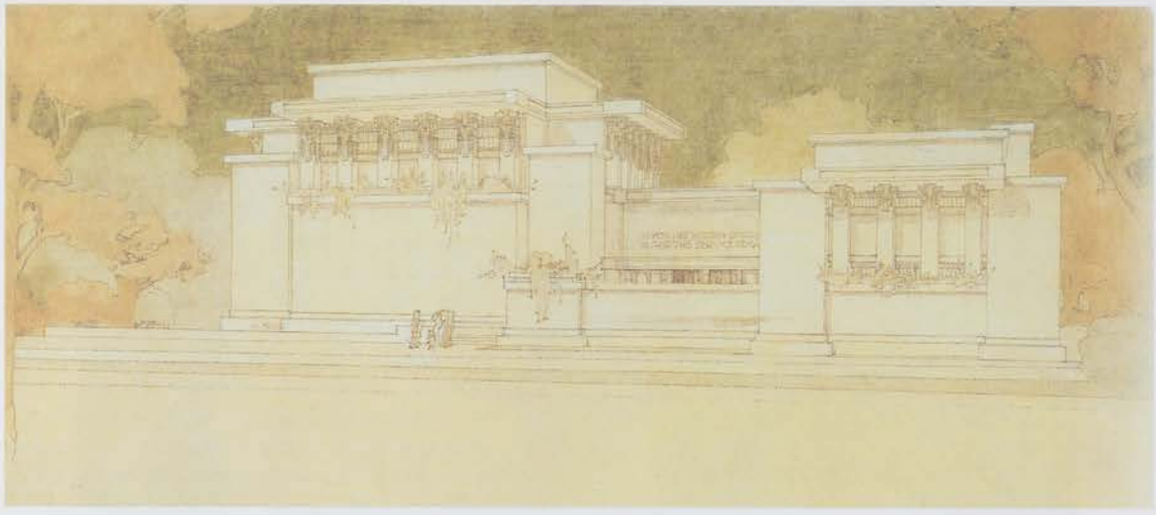


Fig. 60. Frank Lloyd Wright, Unity Temple, Oak Park, Illinois, 1905-8.

Motto reads

FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD
AND THE SERVICE OF MAN

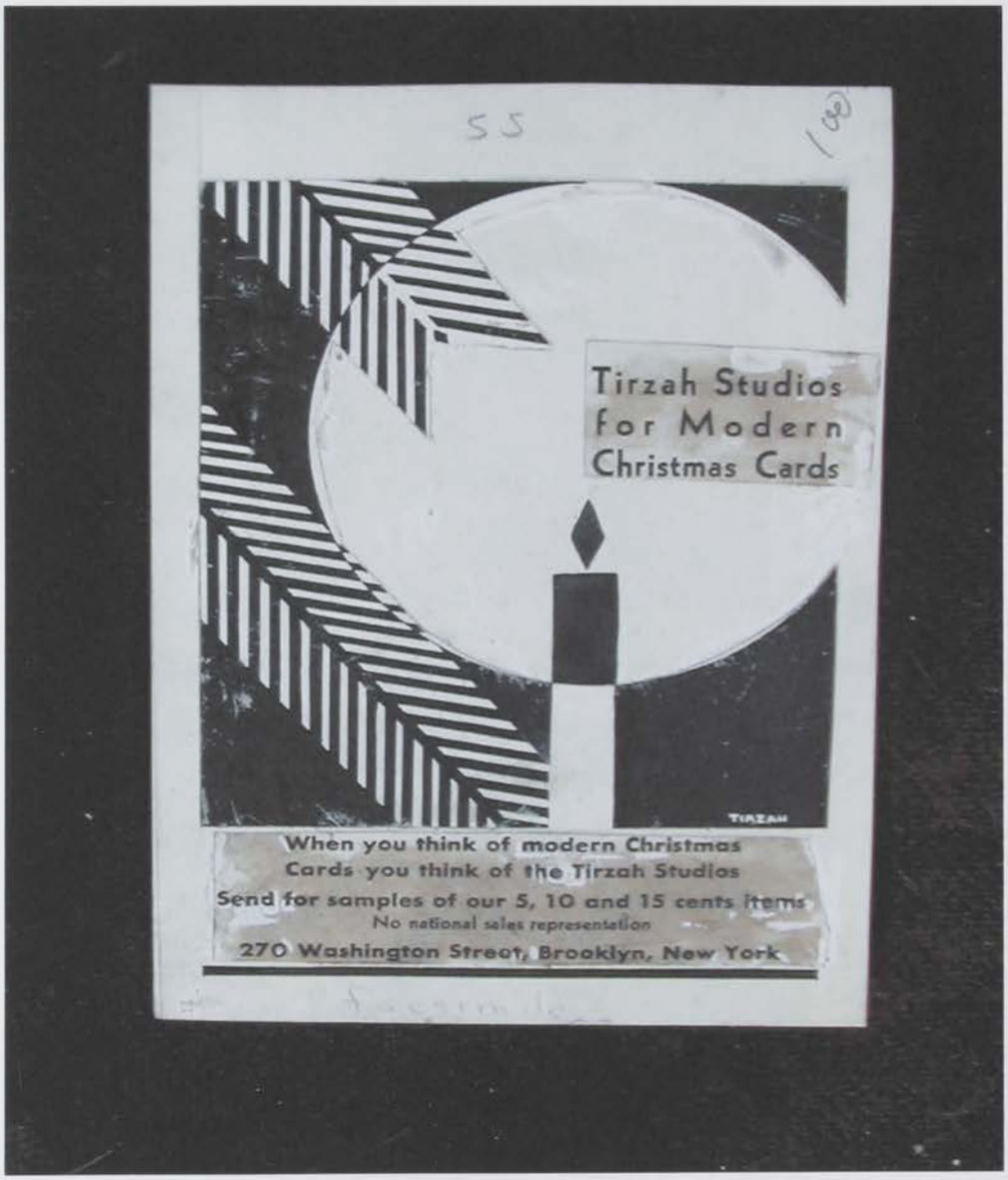


Fig. 61.Tirzah Dunn, design for a Christmas card, c.1933.

Fig. 62. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, interior, from narthex looking towards the altar.

Fig. 63. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, showing floor to ceiling piers and stained-glass windows.

Fig. 64. Beatrice Boot, "Earth shall be fair, and all her fold be one," altar tapestry, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 1939.

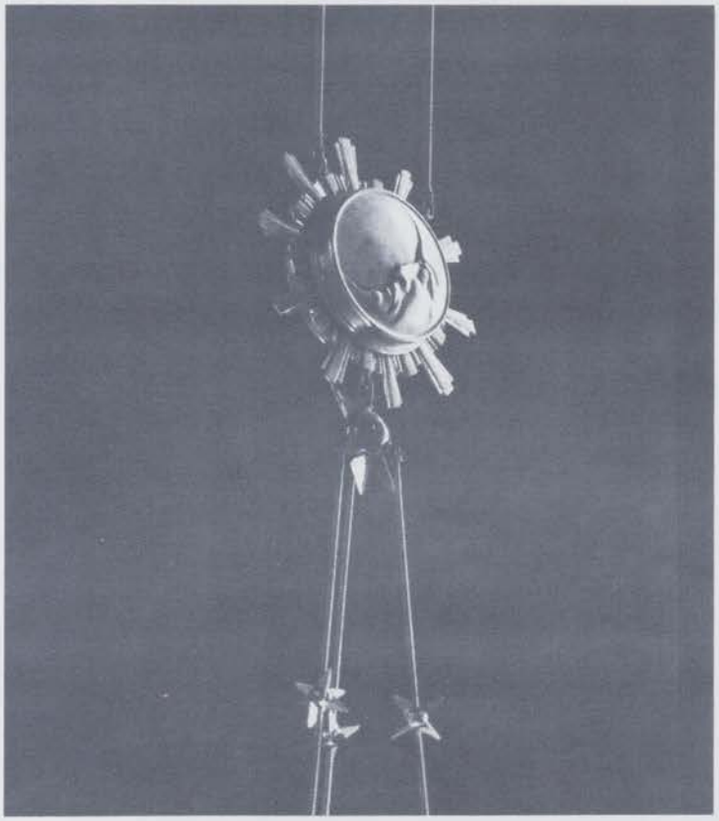


Fig. 65. Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn, pendant light (detail), St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 1939.

Fig. 66. Sheila Burlingame, St. Mark, stone, 14 ft. high, St. Mark's Episcopal Church façade.

Fig. 67. Sheila Burlingame, St. Mark (lion detail).

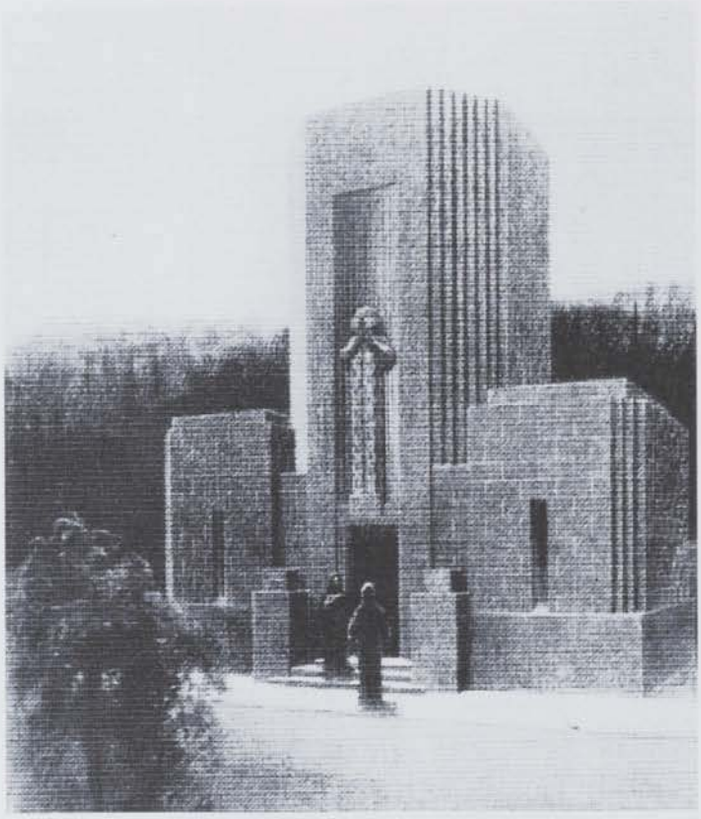


Fig. 68. Eliel Saarinen, Cederberg Mausoleum, Joensusu, Finland, 1909.

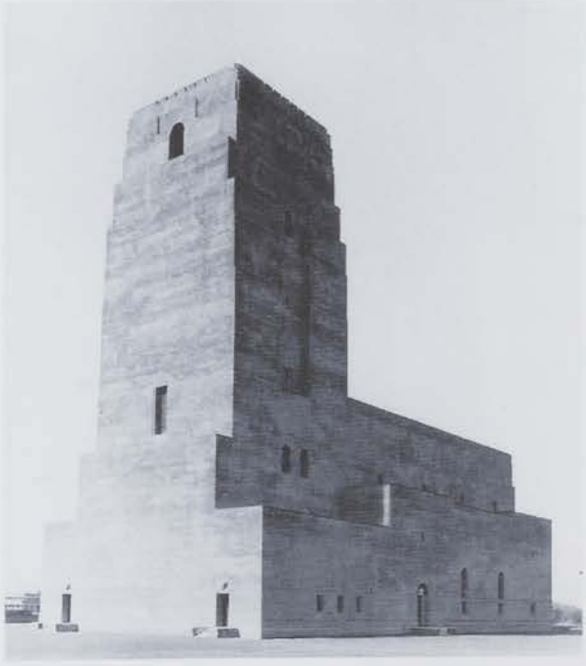


Fig. 69.Arthur Gordon Shoosmith, St. Martin's Garrison Church, New Delhi, 1928-30.

Fig. 70. Sheila Burlingame, *Christus Victor,* St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

Figs. 71 & 72. Robert Harmon, Emil Frei, stained-glass windows, (details),
St. Mark's Episcopal Church.
Fig. 71 alludes to Dunn and Nagel, German for hammer and nail.
In Fig. 72 , the word "unfair" alludes to exploitation of workers.

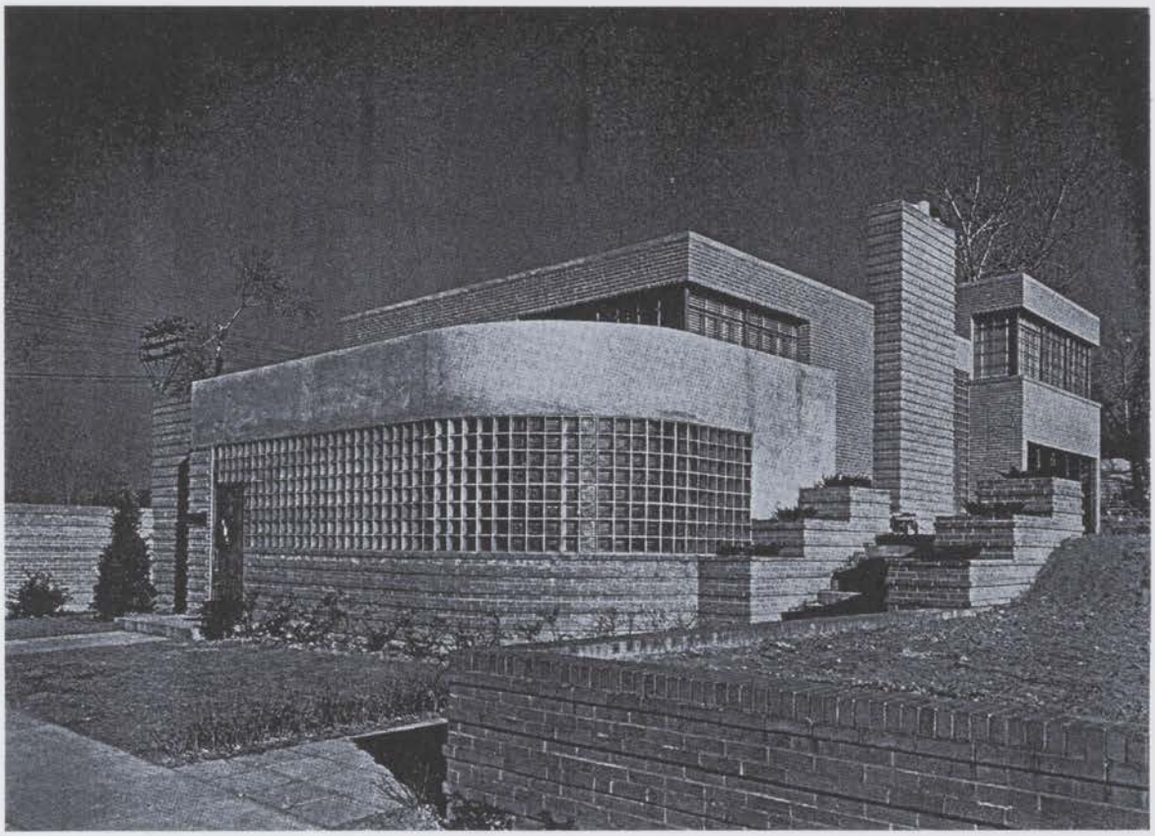


Fig. 73. Edouard Mutrux, Dr. Samuel A.Bassett Office and Residence, Richmond Heights, Missouri, 1938. South and west elevations showing natural brick exterior.

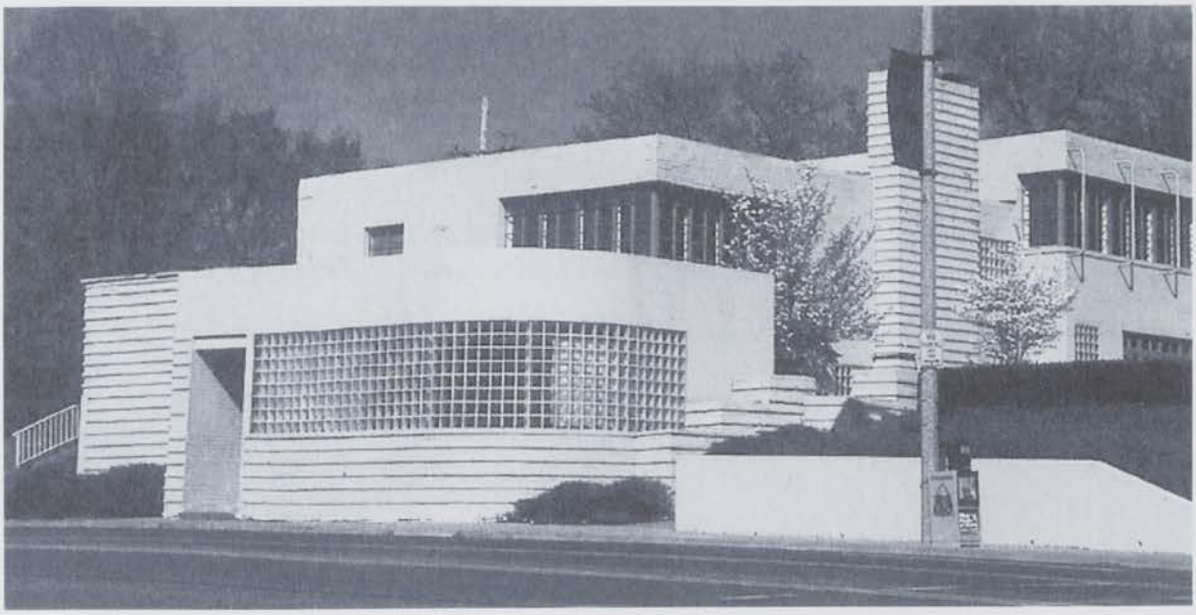
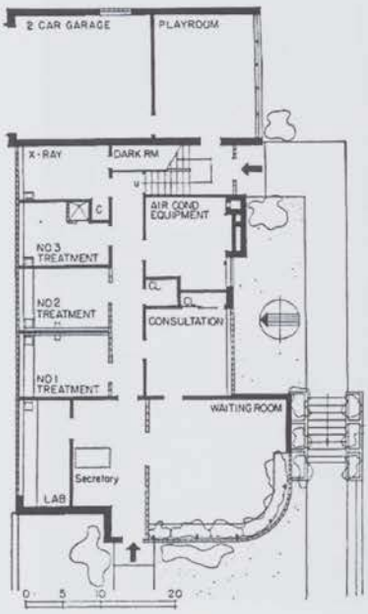


Fig. 74.Edouard Mutrux, Bassett Office and Residence, exterior painted white.



The ground-floor plan is organized along "flow" lines for convenience of both patients and doctor. A glass-block partition separates entrance hall and waiting room. At the rear is the entrance to the residence; on the same level with this hall is a playroom which connects with the garage.

The residence takes advantage of the difference in grade by using a split-level plan. The living area is a full story above the office portion of the building, while sleeping quarters are a half floor above the living area, but a whole floor above the entrance and play-room level. Dining room and living room both open on the paved sun deck.

Fig. 75. Edouard Mutrux, Dr. Samuel A.Bassett Office and Residence. Reproduced in *Architectural Record,*,1939 (Piaget).

Fig. 76.Edouard Mutrux, Bassett Office, integral planter.

Fig. 77. Edouard Mutrux, Bassett Office, medical cabinets accessible from both sides.

Fig. 78.Edouard Mutrux and William Adair Bernoudy, Talbot House, Ladue, Missouri, 1939, rendering.

Fig. 79.Edouard Mutrux and William Adair Bernoudy, Talbot House, north side.

Fig. 80. Frank Lloyd Wright, Jacobs House, Madison, Wisconsin, 1936-7, living room.

Fig. 81. Edouard Mutrux and William Adair Bernoudy, Talbot House, living room.

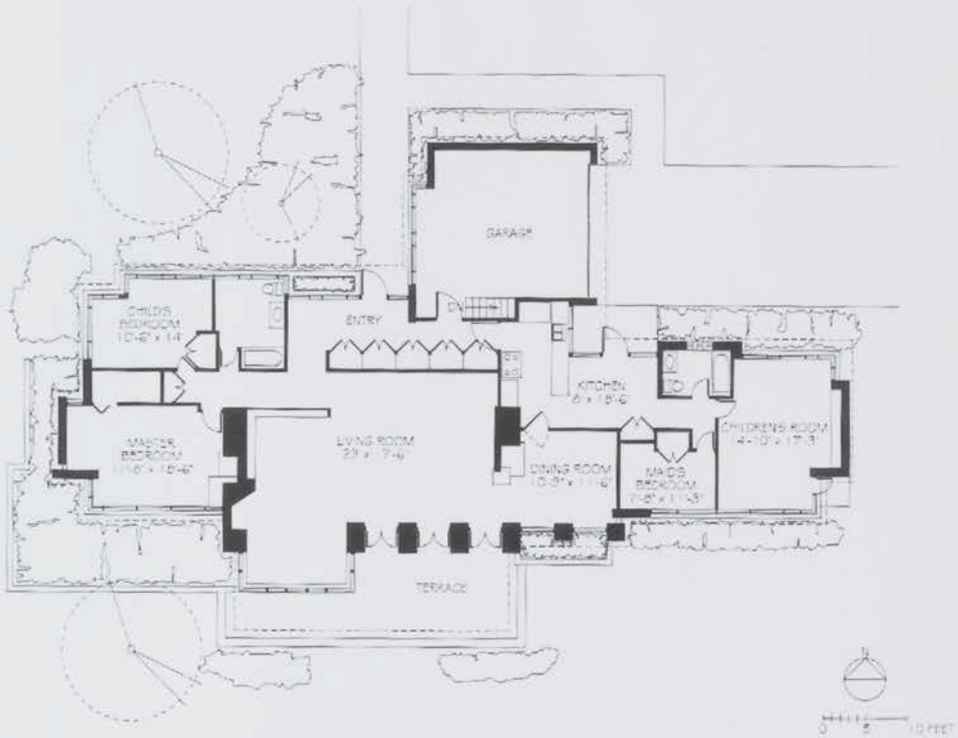


Fig. 82. Edouard Mutrux and William Adair Bernoudy, Talbot House, plan.