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Preserving the Work of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates

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Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Master of Science in Historic Preservation 2006.

Advisor: David G. De Long

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Disciplines

Historic Preservation and Conservation

Comments

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PRESERVING THE WORK OF MITCHELL/GIURGOLA ASSOCIATES

Brendan Reid Beier

A THESIS

in

Historic Preservation

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

2006

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To CJC,

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My family and friends

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INTRODUCTION

That time inevitably passes is one of the few certainties in the preservation field. Every year a new group of buildings becomes fifty years old – the accepted age, according to federal guidelines, at which structures officially become eligible for attention from the preservation community. In recent years, the newest group of potentially eligible buildings has been the modern architecture of the post-war period. How, as preservationists, to approach these buildings is particularly interesting in a city like Philadelphia, which has long focused primarily on its colonial-era heritage. In any city, however, the preservation of post-war and recent architecture poses unique challenges.

As controversies like the cases of Edward Durell Stone's 2 Columbus Circle in New York and Mitchell/Giurgola's Liberty Bell Pavilion in Philadelphia reveal, preservation decisions, while rarely straightforward, become especially complex, and heated, when the structures in question do not fit easily into conventional notions of what is historic. Indeed, conventional notions of the historic may not even apply to architecture that was consciously different from what came before it. These buildings of the post-war period were designed and built with new methods, new materials, and based upon new ideas. Perhaps, then, they deserve an equally new approach to preservation. At the same time, their very recentness can be an obstacle to attaining the distance necessary to make appropriate and objective preservation decisions. Nevertheless, some judgment criteria must be used in determining which modern buildings are significant, and how their significance should be preserved.

The designation of the masterpieces of post-war architecture, often designed by the world's most prominent architects, is not likely to raise much objection, and indeed many modern buildings have already been listed on the National Register. Contemporary preservation practice, however, has moved beyond considering only the iconic buildings of the past and now often places a great deal of value on notable works by lesser-known practitioners or the vernacular buildings that have important roles in the everyday lives of the American public. Preservationists therefore currently face, and will continue to face, the challenge of dealing with the work of prolific twentieth-century architects, who, although talented and to some degree prominent, have not achieved the renown of many of the past century's greatest architects. Their recentness often means that a considerable amount of their body of work is extant, while the fact that they often worked within large firms of many individuals means that the body of work is of varying levels of quality. It is very likely impossible, and potentially unnecessary, to preserve all of their buildings. Instead, distinctions must be made. This thesis is an attempt to make such distinctions.

The architectural firm Mitchell/Giurgola Associates produced a number of important works of architecture throughout the second half of the twentieth century, particularly in and around Philadelphia. This thesis will assess the work of the firm, focusing on the designs of principal architect Romaldo Giurgola, and attempting to develop preservation recommendations for those buildings of the firm's body of work that are considered significant. It is a timely subject. The recent loss of some of Mitchell/Giurgola's work, such as their Liberty Bell Pavilion, has garnered the firm new attention from the preservation

community and makes even more necessary a concerted effort to address the future of their work.

Methodology

The topic of the preservation of the recent past is a vast one, and determining a more limited scope appropriate for a master's thesis required several phases: (1) studying established approaches to preserving the recent past; (2) focusing on a specific context – the work of a single architectural firm; (3) selecting that firm and providing a broad overview of their work; and (4) identifying individual projects to serve as case studies for a deeper discussion of preservation issues applied to specific buildings.

The National Park Service's *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years* asserts that the fifty years of age requirement is not rigid, for properties of “exceptional” significance, and even admits the arbitrariness of that chosen number.¹ The passage of fifty years does not, after all, automatically result in the objectivity, historical knowledge, and awareness that are necessary elements of making appropriate preservation decisions. Social events and trends rarely conform to manmade standards and may sometimes signal the conclusion of distinct time periods, which can be assessed and studied even before fifty years has elapsed. The most important thing to recognize is that waiting, alone, will never be enough. Instead, the development of

¹ M. Sherfy and W.R. Luce, *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for evaluating and nominating properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, 1989).

perspective is aided by the passage of time, but is ultimately achieved only through extensive research, leading to an understanding of a site's historic context and contemporary values.

Researching a site's context is complicated by the fact that every site has several contexts. A building may be studied as part of its immediate physical surroundings, leading one to analyze how it contributes to its neighborhood or landscape. A building can also be considered as a single representative of a certain building type, which would require studying that building type and determining the extent to which the individual building in question reflects the significant elements of that type. One can also look at a building as the creation of its architect, and consider the building as one part of the architect's overall body of work. Alternatively, one could take a broader view and look at the building as the product of a particular time, comparing it to its contemporaries.

This thesis addresses the issue of historical context by focusing on the work of a single firm, Mitchell/Giurgola Associates. Much of the firm's earlier, and finest, work is located in Philadelphia, and the major collection of their plans and papers is housed at the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania. The accessibility of such resources, in combination with the quality of the firm, was instrumental in the choice of a thesis subject.

After the selection of the firm, the research for this thesis began with the buildings themselves. The monograph published by Mitchell/Giurgola and the collection of their drawings at the University of Pennsylvania were invaluable for compiling an overall project list and gaining an understanding of the firm's entire body of work. Refining the lengthy

project list to a size that was manageable and appropriate for a master's thesis required a number of delimitations. This thesis focuses on the Philadelphia-area projects from the earlier decades of the firm's work, until Giurgola moved to Australia in the 1980s, and only on those projects that were actually built. While proposed designs are an important resource for architectural historians, the preservation perspective of this thesis means that focusing on the built structures was essential. This edited list of projects serves as the scope of the thesis and supports a discussion of the body of Mitchell/Giurgola's work overall.

Throughout the thesis, the theoretical writings of Giurgola have served as a constant reference and important consideration in the determination of the significance and success of individual projects. In his essay for the firm's 1983 monograph, Giurgola indicates four general "constants" that he sought to address in his work:

Although difficult to define, those constants which have occupied us over the years in the design of the work illustrated here may be said to be (1) the definition of a place through a sequence of rooms as constituent parts, (2) the language of space understood as an internal or external definition in the formulation of an itinerary, (3) resonance as an essential quality of architecture and (4) the development of an architectural aesthetic based upon a building's accessibility, clarity and power to elucidate its meaning and relationships.²

These constants informed the study of the firm's body of work, but must be acknowledged as the retrospectively-defined intentions of the architect, written by the architect himself years after the completion of many of the buildings he was discussing. They are not the conclusions of a more distanced critical assessment. Thus an independent overview of the firm's work as a whole is necessary in order to understand individual buildings' places within

² Romaldo Giurgola, "Constants," *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983) 16.

that work and to understand the firm's place in the architectural world at large. In addition, contemporary newspaper and journal articles provided a sense of the critical reception of many of the firm's projects. Correspondence with Giurgola on the subjects of his buildings and their preservation has also been a means of using temporal proximity as an advantage rather than a hindrance to understanding the firm's work.

Following the overview, three case studies investigate specific buildings in greater detail. The refined project list was sorted into four major categories: residential, commercial, institutional, and utilitarian. Although Giurgola expressed strong feelings about the importance of residential architecture, it is the other three categories that comprise the significant majority of the firm's body of work. As such, a representative building from each of these three main categories – institutional, utilitarian, and commercial – was selected, with consideration given to the quality of its design and the opinions of Giurgola himself. In addition, the case study buildings were chosen to illustrate a broad spectrum of preservation situations, ranging from continued original use to potential demolition. The drawings and plans of the Architectural Archives, as well as interviews, design meeting minutes, deeds, and maintenance records, were used to furnish individual case studies with greater detail. These case studies thus add depth to the broad overview, providing an opportunity to discuss the development of individual projects, their character-defining features and position within the firm's work, and the specific preservation threats and challenges currently facing the work of Mitchell/Giurgola. This understanding of the buildings and the firm then informs preservation recommendations for the firm's work and broader conclusions about the preservation of the recent past.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A thesis on preserving the work of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates must necessarily address the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities that are inherent to the preservation of post-war architecture. Because of the relative newness of both the firm and the recognition of the importance of preserving the recent past, there is not yet extensive literature on either of these topics. The lack of art historical writing on Mitchell/Giurgola, in particular, demonstrates the need for further study and appreciation of their work, before more important buildings are lost.

Preservation of the Recent Past

Although the importance of preserving architecture from the recent past is by no means universally recognized, what is perhaps generally accepted is that the topic requires special consideration and may somehow be different from preservation practice focused on more conventionally historic buildings. As a specific subject of interest to preservationists, buildings of the recent past, or post-war heritage, as it is also called, is relatively new and the majority of published literature on the topic is the result of conferences held in the United States and England in the late 1980s and 1990s.³ DOCOMOMO, the International Working

³ Special Issue: Preserving What's New, *APT Bulletin* XXIII.2 (1991).

Susan Macdonald, ed., *Modern Matters: Principles and Practice in Conserving Recent Architecture* (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 1996).

Susan Macdonald, ed., *Preserving Post-War Heritage: The Care and Conservation of Mid-Twentieth-Century Architecture* (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 2001).

Party for the Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites, and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement, one of the leading groups in this area, was founded in 1988, with the American branch, DOCOMOMO-US, established in the mid-1990s.

There is, however, evidence of an interest in preserving the architecture of the twentieth century dating somewhat farther back. Chester Liebs, in an article in a 1978 issue of *Historic Preservation*, proposes the study and preservation of the undervalued elements of the modern built environment, such as gas stations and diners, that are building types unique to the twentieth century and will be important parts of that century's legacy. He believed the preservation of these sorts of utilitarian and quotidian structures could also help to reinvigorate the entire field of preservation, and refute claims that preservation had become homogenized, and predictable in what it values and the aesthetic it prefers.⁴ This may or may not be an accurate representation of what the field of preservation was truly like in the 1970s. Nevertheless, Liebs was correct in believing that the architecture of the twentieth century would become an increasingly important concern of preservationists. At some point, whether at the official fifty-year mark or not, preservationists would have to grapple with the study and designation of mid-twentieth century architecture. That point, however, has come sooner rather than later, while that time period is still within living memory.

The existing literature from more recent years often revolves around the identification and discussion of challenges and obstacles. Andrew Saint's article on the "Philosophical Principles of Modern Conservation" is an interesting introduction to the topic, attempting to

⁴ Chester H. Liebs, "Remember Our Not-So-Distant Past?" *Historic Preservation* Jan.-Mar. 1978: 30.

distinguish the particular characteristics of modern architecture that he believes make its preservation so distinctly different than the preservation of other buildings.⁵ Saint identifies six fundamental ways in which modern buildings differ from those that came before: number, technique, intention, performance, viability, and appeal. An important distinction quickly becomes clear, however, that is not explicitly addressed by Saint: the preservation of the recent past and the preservation of post-war architecture are not, in fact, the same thing. The matter becomes complicated, and the two are regularly conflated, simply because today's recent past *is* the post-war period. Therefore, some of Saint's explanations justify why post-war architecture is unique, such as technique and intention, while others, particularly number and appeal, are really more applicable to buildings of the recent past.

Post-War Architecture

Quite separate from the philosophical difficulties of studying the recent past are the challenges facing the preservation of work from the post-war period. Many authors focus on the materials conservation issues affecting buildings that were constructed of new, technologically innovative materials that were little understood and did not have an extensive past on which to base expectations for the future. Alice Jurow specifically addresses the issue of age in "The Immaculate Conception: Aging and the Modernist Building." She posits three distinct reasons why people do not seem to appreciate signs of age in Modernist buildings: (1) the materials used were new and untested, and sometimes proved short-lived or have aged in unattractive ways; (2) the materials may not have failed, but the public's lack

⁵ Andrew Saint, "Principles of Modern Conservation," *Modern Matters: Principles and Practice in Conserving Recent Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 1996) 15-28.

of experience with these materials means that they do not have visual references with which to associate and appreciate their aged appearance, as people do with bronze, stone, or wood; and (3) a Modernist building that looks old may represent a sort of “conceptual failure,” a betrayal of a promise that these buildings represented a clean, new future. An aged appearance provides evidence that these buildings, too, have become old, become a part of the past from which they had sought to break away.

While Jurow’s compelling arguments are most applicable to truly Modernist buildings, they are still relevant to the study of any post-war buildings. The obstacles posed by the use of new materials are particularly important to understand when preserving any architecture from the twentieth century, and the conferences held on the subject of post-war architecture have focused on collecting and disseminating information on twentieth century building materials.⁶ Susan Macdonald points out, however, that the failure of materials in modern buildings is not always the fault of the materials themselves. Rather, misconceptions that these new, futuristic-seeming materials would be maintenance-free meant that many post-war buildings did not receive the regular upkeep necessary to buildings of any kind or time period.⁷

Whether it is because of flaws inherent in the materials themselves or because they have not been appropriately cared for by unappreciative inhabitants, many post-war buildings have not withstood the trials of time. It is clear that the proliferation of new building materials and technologies that were developed in the twentieth century have greatly expanded the

⁶ Thomas C. Jester, “Historic 20th-Century Building Products Database,” *CRM* 16.6 (1993): 21-22.

⁷ Susan Macdonald, “Defining an Approach,” *Preserving Post-War Heritage: The Care and Conservation of Mid-Twentieth-Century Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 2001) 32-40.

body of knowledge that preservationists must command when dealing with these post-war buildings. Even if the materials are understood, however, there may remain new difficulties of production when machine-made, technologically advanced materials are no longer being manufactured. Unlike bricks or wood panels, these materials cannot be produced by hand no matter how much time or skill is available. Even if possible, reproducing these materials on the small scale likely to be needed for preservation projects would be prohibitively expensive. Alan Powers recognizes this difficulty and believes that, given the largely conceptual nature of much modern architecture, authenticity of design should be prioritized over authenticity of material.⁸ To Powers, maintaining the abstract “essence” of a place is the most important thing, and designation may actually sometimes confuse the issue by insisting upon maintaining the physical nature of the building, potentially to the detriment of its character. Susan Macdonald, while recognizing the difficulties inherent in twentieth century materials, argues that not replacing materials in kind wherever possible will incrementally and eventually lead to a dilution of the building’s aesthetic value.⁹

Debate over the issue of integrity in post-war buildings is further complicated by the difficulties involved in maintaining these structures in active use. Many authors, particularly those published by English Heritage, seem generally accepting of the fact that some alterations or additions will have to be made to many significant post-war buildings in order

⁸ Alan Powers, “Style or Substance? What Are We Trying to Preserve?,” *Preserving Post-War Heritage: The Care and Conservation of Mid-Twentieth-Century Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 2001) 3-11.

⁹ Macdonald, “Defining an Approach.”

to facilitate new uses.¹⁰ John Allan explicitly views the preservation of post-war buildings as a means of urban development and extending the reach of preservationists beyond their traditional sphere. He suggests that the temporal proximity of post-war architecture, rather than an obstacle to achieving objectivity, could be an aid to overcoming the reverence often felt for historic buildings and therefore allow them to be more actively and productively used by society.¹¹ While urban development is an important and admirable goal, it is not necessarily within the expertise of the preservationist, nor should historic buildings be valued primarily for the economic benefits they may be able to provide. Expanding the role of preservation in the world is desirable, but not if it is done by expanding that role outside those limits to which it is legitimately confined. It is not, after all, as if these confines do not contain enough complexities and challenges, as the topic of post-war heritage reveals, and it should be recognized, particularly by preservationists, that preservation is valuable and important in itself, without requiring the additional justifications of being useful to urban development or economic revitalization, as desirable as those things may be on their own.

Perhaps it is because of the often large scale of these modern buildings, or perhaps it is because of currently popular notions about the environmental importance of recycling and reusing the built environment,¹² but at times it seems as if alterations to post-war buildings are treated as necessary but tolerable evils, trade-offs made to appease a public that does not

¹⁰ Martin Cherry, "Listing Twentieth-Century Buildings: The Present Situation," *Modern Matters: Principles and Practice in Conserving Recent Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 1996) 5-14.

Macdonald, "Defining an Approach" 32-40.

Powers, "Style or Substance?" 3-11.

¹¹ John Allan, "Preserving Heritage or Revaluing Resources?," *Preserving Post-War Heritage: The Care and Conservation of Mid-Twentieth-Century Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 2001) 201-208.

¹² Mike Jackson, "Preserving What's New," *APT Bulletin* XXIII.2 (1991): 7-11.

see the value of these buildings anyway. It must be wondered whether these authors would view alterations made to older, more conventionally historic structures in the same way.

Architecture of the Recent Past

A generally accepted premise, whether correct or not, is that preservationists must address recent buildings without waiting the conventional fifty year period recommended by federal and local laws because the rate of change in today's world is steadily increasing. Buildings are built, torn down, and rebuilt faster and on a larger scale than ever before, and preservationists must act quickly to ensure that an architectural record of these fast-paced times will remain.¹³ It seems undeniable that, with today's technological innovations and increasing globalization, the world has become a faster and smaller place, and so development or redevelopment are noteworthy threats to significant architecture everywhere. Nevertheless, the current emphasis on the recent past may also be caused by contemporary culture's marked self-consciousness and the growing establishment of the field of preservation itself.

Regardless of the reason why, it remains true that many preservationists have decided that addressing the architecture of the recent past is a pressing concern, and to postpone doing so would be to neglect their duty as custodians of the world's built heritage. How to do so appropriately, however, without the objectivity and discernment that temporal distance usually provides, is a problem that many authors recognize. Richard Longstreth warns against substituting criticism for history when determining significance, yet also

¹³ Richard Longstreth, "The Significance of the Recent Past," *APT Bulletin* XXIII.2 (1991): 12-24. Susan Macdonald, "Foreword," *Modern Matters: Principles and Practice in Conserving Recent Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 1996) xix-xxi.

acknowledges that other historical disciplines do not hesitate to study and recognize the importance of recent events.¹⁴ In his opinion, denying modern architecture a place in preservation creates an “artificial separation” between the more distant past and the present, and so negates the value of preservation as a means of creating a bridge and an understanding between times.

The proceedings of the conferences that English Heritage organized on the topic of the preservation of the twentieth century offer a view of how other countries deal with the same difficult issues.¹⁵ The regulatory environment in the United Kingdom is different from that in the United States. On the national level, there is a waiting period of thirty years, not fifty as in America, and buildings only ten years old can be listed if they are imminently threatened. It may seem, therefore, that the importance of preserving the recent past might be more generally accepted, but articles emphasize that public perception issues remain one of the greatest obstacles to protecting modern buildings in the United Kingdom.¹⁶ A more flexible listing process is not necessarily the solution, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. Designation is, after all, only one of preservation’s tools. Allan points out the importance of looking beyond the designation process to other ways of understanding and appreciating the built environment, and educating others about its importance.¹⁷ He feels this is particularly important for post-war vernacular buildings and everyday landscapes that, even with increased appreciation, are unlikely to be eligible for designation anytime soon, yet remain

¹⁴ Longstreth, “The Significance of the Recent Past” 12-24.

¹⁵ Macdonald, *Modern Matters*.
Macdonald, *Preserving Post-War Heritage*.

¹⁶ Cherry 5-14.

¹⁷ Allan 201-208.

valuable and useful cultural resources.

Not all of the unique circumstances surrounding the architecture of the recent past are negative or challenging. Instead, there are also opportunities that the very recentness and large volume of post-war architecture can provide. For example, Longstreth in his article on the significance of the recent past makes the point that what has often guided preservation designation is rarity – a building’s being the only remaining example, or one of the few, of a certain type, technology, or time.¹⁸ Rarity, however, is not necessarily related to a building’s quality or representativeness of its time, place, or designer – qualities that seem much more worthy of preservation. Contemporary preservationists have the opportunity to select and designate the best and most representative post-war buildings, provided they are guided by extensive research and an appropriate understanding of context, from among the numerous modern buildings that are currently extant, rather than having to choose from only those that remain at some point in the future.

Placing too great an emphasis on rarity or scarcity seems to imply an almost Darwinian attitude about preservation. Such an approach may have a certain appeal, according to Saint, because it removes much of the burden of identification and protection from the shoulders of preservationists, leaving it instead to the process of natural selection.¹⁹ Perhaps in a world in which a widespread appreciation for architecture and a nuanced knowledge of history had the same influence as the forces of the economic markets, natural selection would result in the survival of the “best” buildings. The recent loss of, and ongoing threats to, many great

¹⁸ Longstreth 12-24.

¹⁹ Saint 17.

twentieth century buildings shows, however, that future generations will lose much without more action in the present.

With so much discussion of the uniqueness of post-war buildings and the difficulties of preserving the architecture of the recent past, one must not lose sight of the fact that, in some very fundamental ways, modern buildings still are buildings, and the preservation of buildings from any time period must be grounded upon the same things – extensive research into the building’s history, contexts, and materials. Macdonald discusses an approach to the preservation of post-war buildings that is based on the guiding principles of English Heritage and that stresses understanding the building, identifying its problems, and addressing them using proven techniques and avoiding unnecessary damage.²⁰ This sort of straightforward method, while not groundbreaking or in any way flashy, reviews the basic steps that should be applied to the treatment of any building, ancient or modern.²¹ In the same way, the criteria for assessing significance promoted by the Secretary of the Interior and the National Park Service are not inappropriate for use in the preservation of post-war architecture, as long as they are applied with a sufficient understanding of the particular characteristics and challenges of the time period.²² In the case of twentieth century architecture, architecture from the recent past, however, the greatest problem may be that the existing research is not yet extensive enough.²³ One lesson from history that is known, and that should be remembered when dealing with the preservation of post-war architecture, is that many

²⁰ Macdonald, “Defining an Approach.”

²¹ Susan Macdonald, “Reconciling Authenticity and Repair,” *Modern Matters: Principles and Practice in Conserving Recent Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 1996) 87-100.

²² Beth L. Savage, “Disappearing Ducks and Other Recent Relics,” *CRM* 16.6 (1993): 21-22.

²³ Thomas C. Jester, “International Perspectives on 20th-Century Heritage,” *CRM* 18.8 (1995): 27-30.
Macdonald, “Reconciling Authenticity and Repair.”

generations have undervalued or neglected their recent architecture²⁴ and that beginning to study and preserve a new body of work is always complex, but always considered worthwhile in hindsight.

Mitchell/Giurgola Associates

Mitchell/Giurgola Associates and Romaldo Giurgola, the firm's principal designer, although well respected and internationally recognized throughout the second half of the twentieth century, have very little presence in art historical literature. The vast majority of published pieces about the firm and its work are special photographic features contemporary with the construction of their major buildings during the 1960s and 1970s.²⁵ Other than demonstrating the significant amount of attention from the media that Mitchell/Giurgola received during those decades, these articles provide little more than photographs and some construction details of several of the firm's major projects, with very little text and no real contemporary criticism.

²⁴ Chris Green, "Introduction," *Modern Matters: Principles and Practice in Conserving Recent Architecture*, ed. Susan Macdonald (Dorset: Donhead Publishing, 1996) 1-2.

²⁵ "Evolving Environment," *Interiors* 120 (1960): 184.

"New Talent U.S.A.: Architecture," *Art in America* 49.1 (1961): 67.

"Romaldo Giurgola Wins Brunner Memorial Prize," *Architectural Record* June 1966: 36.

"Great Builders of the 1960s," *Japan Architect* 45 (1970): 65.

"Pupil is His Own Pace-setter in Two Schools Exemplifying the Revolution in Education," *Interiors* 130 (1970): 126-131.

"Works of Mitchell-Giurgola," *Space Design* Special Issue Feb. 1972: 5-84.

"Giurgola's Graft," *Architectural Review* Mar. 1972: 189.

David Morton, "Complimenting the Past," *Progressive Architecture* Feb. 1973: 56-61.

"Mitchell/Giurgola," *Architecture + Urbanism* June 1973: 69-92.

Paul Goldberger, "Works of Mitchell/Giurgola," *Architecture + Urbanism* Dec. 1975: 121-123.

"Mitchell/Giurgola," *Architecture + Urbanism* Dec. 1975: 61-120.

Donald Canty and B. Dunlop, "Post-Renaissance Philadelphia," *ALA Journal* Mar. 1976: 31-51.

Andrea O. Dean, "Profile of the Firm Award Recipient: Mitchell/Giurgola," *ALA Journal* Apr. 1976: 58-61.

William Marlin, "Mitchell/Giurgola Associates: Three Benchmark Buildings," *Architectural Record* Apr. 1976: 107-118.

A 1967 article by Denise Scott Brown discussing the “present state of architectural theory,” provides a more critical, although brief, view of the work and ideas of Giurgola. She identifies Giurgola as a follower of Kahn and mentions Giurgola’s own theoretical writings, emphasizing his concept of the ‘partial vision’ – an idea that the architect, like all people, has limited knowledge of the abstract and the overall, and should therefore design based on what he or she can know, for a real situation with measurable dimensions and an understandable context. Scott Brown finds, however, that Giurgola’s buildings do not necessarily follow his own advice, particularly the small ones that “may be too frail to take the weight of so much philosophy.”²⁶

A little over a decade later, David Bell again addresses the theoretical underpinnings of Giurgola’s work, particularly his MDRT Hall at American College in Bryn Mawr and the Penn Mutual Life building in Philadelphia.²⁷ Bell’s article is on the use of incompleteness in architecture as a symbol of the ability of all things to become something else. For Bell, this appearance of incompleteness denies conventional perceptions of time, by being finished and yet unfinished. These buildings therefore emphasize the continuous process of developing, mirroring the complex and perpetual development of human communities and cities. While this is only one way of approaching Giurgola’s work, this idea of incompleteness can also be seen in Giurgola’s own writings, as he often discusses the nature of buildings as fragments,

²⁶ Denise Scott Brown, “Team 10, Perspecta 10 and the Present State of Architectural Theory,” *American Planners Journal* 33 (1967): 47-48.

²⁷ David Bell, “Unity and Aesthetics of Incompletion in Architecture,” *Architectural Design* July 1979: 175-182.

and the importance of a dynamic and continuous relationship between a building and its surroundings.²⁸

An exhaustive overview of the work of the firm, including presentation photographs and drawings of their major projects, is provided by a monograph of the firm's work that was published in 1983, containing a foreword by Kenneth Frampton.²⁹ Frampton describes Giurgola's work as affected by, but quite separate from, that of Louis Kahn, and also notes the influences of Alvar Aalto and Eero Saarinen on Giurgola's earlier buildings. Frampton discusses Giurgola's idea of architecture as fragment, as well, leading to the construction of "narrative landscapes" in the buildings, and especially the campuses, designed by Giurgola, which are experienced as a series of views and elements as one moves in and around the compositions. Like Scott Brown, Frampton recognizes that Mitchell/Giurgola's projects do not always uphold Giurgola's theories.

The monograph is divided into five sections: meeting places, houses, places for work, places for study, and urban places. The categories are not mutually exclusive and it is sometimes difficult to determine how certain projects were classified. For example, the academic wing added to the University Museum at the University of Pennsylvania was considered a meeting place rather than a place for study. Despite this confusion, the monograph nevertheless successfully highlights the public or institutional nature of many of Mitchell/Giurgola's projects, supporting Frampton's claim that Mitchell/Giurgola was rare in that it "succeeded

²⁸ Romaldo Giurgola, "Reflections on Buildings and the City: The Realism of the Partial Vision," *Perspecta* 9/10 (1965): 107-130.

Romaldo Giurgola, "The Aesthetic of Place," *Process Architecture* Oct. 1977: 34-37.

²⁹ Kenneth Frampton, "Foreword," *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983) 8-13.

in creating a large body of *public* work which is sensitive, appropriate, economic and beautifully built.” The use of the words public and sensitive seem particularly appropriate to the discussion of the work of Mitchell/Giurgola during the 1960s and 1970s.

Throughout this time, Giurgola himself published several articles in architectural journals and magazines and an entire book on the work of Louis Kahn.³⁰ These works address a number of related ideas, such as architecture as fragment and the idea of the partial vision, noted above, and the importance of context and designing for specific places. Evidence of an architect’s own thoughts and the theories that he considered central to his design process is always valuable information when seeking an understanding of the architect’s work.

Reviewing the existing literature on the subjects of the preservation of recent architecture and the work of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates demonstrates the need for further research in both of these areas. By addressing the preservation of three, specific post-war buildings designed by Giurgola, this thesis provides a concrete application of preservation principles to architecture of the recent past, while remaining informed of the challenges that this entails. At the same time, the thesis expands the body of literature on Mitchell/Giurgola, an important and understudied architectural firm of the mid to late twentieth century.

³⁰ Romaldo Giurgola, “Architecture in Change,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 17 (1962): 104-106.

_____, “Early Stages in an Idea in Architecture,” *Dimension* 15 (1964): 16-25.

_____, “Reflections on Buildings and the City” 107-130.

_____, *Louis I. Kahn* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1975).

_____, “Architecture is both image and reality...,” *Space Design* Dec. 1975: 2-3.

_____, “The Impetus to Build,” *Christian Science Monitor* 21 Apr. 1977: 24-25.

_____, “Aesthetic of Place” 34-37.

_____, “Notes on Architecture and Morality,” *Precis* II (1980): 51-52.

_____, “The Producing Moment,” *Inland Architect* Jan.-Feb. 1981: 39-42.

_____, “Notes on Buildings and Their Parts,” *The Harvard Architecture Review* Spring 1981: 172-175.

1. MITCHELL/GIURGOLA ASSOCIATES

From small, almost crystalline pavilions to massive parking garages of brick and exposed concrete, the work produced by the firm Mitchell/Giurgola is marked by its apparent diversity. This is not unexpected for a large, mid-twentieth-century firm, whose volume of work, number of staff, and variety of clients could understandably lead to a sizeable body of work encompassing many different manners and approaches. Even within the more limited scope of this thesis – the Philadelphia-area projects designed by Giurgola in the decades prior to his move to Australia – the firm’s body of work is visually diverse. A deeper understanding of their major projects reveals, however, similarities that lie beneath the differing exteriors. The *New York Times* architecture critic Paul Goldberger once wrote that the firm has been particularly capable of creating cohesive buildings out of a number of disparate parts.³¹ Similarly, the firm’s seemingly disparate buildings are successfully unified into one body of work by the consistency and integrity with which the firm pursued their guiding principles and themes.

Biographical Information

Although by the 1980s the firm Mitchell/Giurgola Associates consisted of many individuals and operated offices in three major cities on two continents, it began in 1958 with just two men: Ehrman Mitchell and Romaldo Giurgola.

³¹ Paul Goldberger, “Works of Mitchell/Giurgola,” *Architecture + Urbanism* Dec. 1975: 121-123.

Ehrman B. Mitchell

A native Pennsylvanian, Ehrman Burkman Mitchell, Jr., left his childhood home on a dairy farm in Harrisburg to study at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1940s,³² where he was a member of the Architectural Society, a cheerleader, and a member of the Beta Theta Pi Greek-letter organization.³³ He received a bachelor of architecture degree in 1948 and shortly thereafter began working at the local Philadelphia firm of Bellante and Claus.³⁴ Soon transferred to a leadership position in the firm's London office, Mitchell's years in Europe during the 1950s gave him the experience in managing projects and working with clients that would be central to his role at Mitchell/Giurgola in coming decades.

Following years of skillful and successful management of Mitchell/Giurgola, Mitchell was elected the national president of the American Institute of Architects in 1979. Ehrman Mitchell died in January, 2005.³⁵

Romaldo Giurgola

Romaldo Giurgola, known as Aldo, was born in Rome in 1920, the son of an architect who was himself trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition.³⁶ Giurgola graduated from the School of Architecture at the University of Rome with a bachelor's degree in architecture in 1949 and earned his master's degree in the same field at Columbia in 1951. After briefly teaching at Cornell and serving as the editor of *Interiors* magazine, Giurgola became a member of the

³² Inga Saffron, "Ehrman B. Mitchell, 80, Phila. architect," *Philadelphia Inquirer* 23 Jan. 2005: B5.

³³ University of Pennsylvania Yearbook, 1948.

³⁴ Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2000).

³⁵ Saffron, "Ehrman B. Mitchell" B5.

³⁶ "Questionnaire to Romaldo Giurgola," *Architecture + Urbanism* Dec. 1975: 119+.

faculty of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania in 1954, where he taught for twelve years. He left Penn for Columbia in 1966, having been asked to head their architecture department. Once at Columbia, Giurgola established a branch of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates in New York.

Giurgola received the Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture from the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1966³⁷ and a gold medal award from the AIA in 1982.³⁸ In order to lead the firm's Canberra Parliament project, Giurgola moved to Australia in the 1980s, where he lives and practices today.

The Creation of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates

Mitchell and Giurgola met in the 1950s when Giurgola was working as a consultant for the firm that employed Mitchell.³⁹ Their career as a formal partnership began in 1958, when the pair received a commission for a visitor center from the National Park Service. Mitchell left Bellante and Claus either during or shortly after this project and the two established the Philadelphia office of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates.

Although both men had been trained as architects, and both did influence the designs of the firm's projects, Giurgola quickly emerged as the firm's principal designer and theorist. Mitchell, drawing on his previous management experience at Bellante and Claus' London

³⁷ "Romaldo Giurgola wins Brunner Memorial Prize," *Architectural Record* June 1966: 36.

³⁸ Paul Goldberger, "AIA Medal Gives a Clue to Architecture's Other Agendas," *New York Times* 3 Jan. 1982: 4.8.

³⁹ "Dialogue: Romaldo Giurgola + Ching-Yu Chang, Editor," *Process Architecture* Oct. 1977: 245-255.

office, became the firm's primary promoter and negotiator.⁴⁰ The personalities, and the responsibilities, of the two men reveal themselves in the pair of essays Mitchell and Giurgola wrote for the firm's first monograph. Mitchell discusses the importance of the firm's working methods and professional organization, while Giurgola, as has been mentioned, addresses the theoretical underpinnings of the firm's designs.⁴¹ The talents of both men were essential to the success of the firm, however, as Giurgola's designs would not have existed without the commissions that required them, and Mitchell was particularly successful at gaining those commissions and ensuring Giurgola's buildings were built.⁴² In fact, the firm is notable for the number of commissions it successfully procured, and the number of projects that were successfully completed.⁴³ Mitchell/Giurgola enjoyed a popularity and a business during their career that many of their talented colleagues at the time did not – something that was achieved not only by Giurgola's skill but also by Mitchell's business acumen and the complementary relationship that existed between the two.

The Philadelphia School

While a member of the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, Giurgola taught alongside Louis I. Kahn, one of the most talented and celebrated American architects of the twentieth century. The influence of this master on the ideas and work of the younger architect cannot be ignored. Along with other contemporary architects with ties to Philadelphia and Kahn,

⁴⁰ Dean 58-61.

⁴¹ Ehrman B. Mitchell, "A Reflection," and Romaldo Giurgola, "Constants," *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983) 14-17.

⁴² Saffron, "Ehrman B. Mitchell" B5.

⁴³ Paul Goldberger, "Innovative Firm Puts Its Imprint on Philadelphia," *New York Times* 6 May 1976: 78.

such as Robert Geddes and Robert Venturi, Mitchell/Giurgola was one of the leaders of what became known as the Philadelphia School.⁴⁴ This group of architects, who began practicing in the middle decades of the twentieth century, followed, but did not imitate, the example set by Kahn in his departure from the prevailing tenets of orthodox Modernism.

Although often viewed as a group, the various members of the Philadelphia School were very different from one another, as was their work. Indeed, it is almost a sense of diversity that links the architects together, as each was challenging the constraints of recent architectural practice in his own way. For some, like Venturi, this meant reaching back into the past and reintroducing historic elements into architecture. Mitchell/Giurgola also believed in the importance of reclaiming tradition in architectural practice, but did so in a less overt way, without the specific historicized elements that Venturi often used in his work.⁴⁵ Giurgola believed in a more abstract use of history, expressed in his statement that essential to “productive” architecture is “a sense of the past, to which the modern movement in architecture belongs as well, and an awareness of history not as a fashionable and disposable commodity, but as a space for humanity which will endure and expand as long as there are people on earth.” Perhaps Mitchell/Giurgola’s greatest departure from orthodox Modernism is their resolute belief that architecture should not exist in a vacuum, driven and shaped only by abstract ideology. Instead, Mitchell/Giurgola practiced an architecture that was firmly rooted in the individual needs, characteristics, and circumstances of every project’s site.

⁴⁴ Jan C. Rowan, “Wanting to Be: The Philadelphia School,” *Progressive Architecture* Apr. 1961: 131-163.

⁴⁵ In his writings, Giurgola refers to the use of historicized elements as “using the past as a ‘grab-bag’ from which the memory of a few details is occasionally extracted....” Giurgola, “Constants” 17.

The Work of the Firm

Influences

The various influences affecting an architect are inevitably a combination of numerous conscious and unconscious forces. When directly asked which architect and which building had influenced him the most, Giurgola mentioned Kahn and the Woodland Crematorium by Gunnar Asplund.⁴⁶ As Giurgola was a member of the Philadelphia School, as discussed above, the influence of Kahn on Giurgola's work is well-documented and undeniable. Giurgola, in fact, has written a book on Kahn, evidence of the esteem in which Giurgola holds him and the amount of thought that Giurgola has given to the man and his work.⁴⁷ Kahn's ideas about internal order, underlying geometry, the expressive potential of form, and, in particular, the importance of natural light in the shaping of space are all evident in Giurgola's writings and designs.

Giurgola's acknowledgment of Asplund's work, as well as the short pieces that he has written on other architects such as Alvar Aalto⁴⁸ and Erich Mendelsohn,⁴⁹ reveal his interest in and awareness of recent architectural practice, particularly those architects working outside of the more mainstream Modernist approach. The Woodland Crematorium may be evident in specific designs of Giurgola's as a general appreciation for the dramatic potential of simple spaces, the idea of traveling through architecture, and the desire to adapt buildings to a specific setting rather than impose them on that setting.

⁴⁶ "Questionnaire to Romaldo Giurgola" 119.

⁴⁷ Romaldo Giurgola, *Louis I. Kahn*.

⁴⁸ Romaldo Giurgola, "On Aalto," *Progressive Architecture* Apr. 1977: 54.

⁴⁹ Romaldo Giurgola, "Eric Mendelsohn, 1887-1953," *Interiors* Dec. 1953: 76-77.

In addition to these explicitly stated influences, there is the fact that Giurgola was raised and had his first architectural training in Italy. Giurgola spent a large part of his childhood near Aquileia, a small ancient Roman city, and has credited the ruins of that town as being instrumental in the development of his own interest in architecture.⁵⁰ It is perhaps too easy to imbue architects born in the Old World with a greater sense of history and tradition, and a more tolerant view of the re-use of older structures, than is often found among architects raised in America. Nevertheless, it is clear that the importance of context and historical continuum, as well as the fragmentary nature of architecture, are important themes throughout Giurgola's work, and it may be possible to trace these ideas back to the ruins and great historical architectural tradition of his native Italy. Although written retrospectively, and possibly presenting a somewhat romanticized view of the past, Giurgola's published recollections of exploring Rome as a child reveal the centrality of light and interior spaces to his experience of architecture.⁵¹ Interestingly, however, Giurgola more often references the architecture of ancient Greece in his writings, believing it had a greater sophistication, stemming from a stronger connection to nature and tradition, than that of ancient Rome, which, in Giurgola's eyes, viewed the past as disposable and so forsook the lessons it offered.⁵²

Giurgola believed that "[a] building is a fragment of the larger environment which includes other continuously growing structures and the natural scape. As a meaningful fragment it

⁵⁰ "Questionnaire to Romaldo Giurgola" 119.

⁵¹ Romaldo Giurgola, "The Producing Moment."

⁵² Giurgola, "Constants" 16-17.

Giurgola, "Forces Shaping Current Design" *ALA Journal* May 1979: 161-162.

should have its own inner structure in order to be able to relate to others. In this sense a building is not a passive element of a larger composition. The point of architecture is to unfold and formulate a relationship often hidden between elements and the events that make an environment.”⁵³ Because of this belief in the importance of responding to the characteristics of the site, the immediate surroundings of every individual project provide their own influences on that project’s design. There are also, certainly, the unforeseeable inspirations that the program or needs of a specific building might provoke, as well as the unique preferences of every client.

General Chronology

Despite the focus of this thesis on Mitchell/Giurgola’s work in the Philadelphia area, it will nevertheless be necessary to include in this overview a few additional projects that are essential to an understanding of the firm, regardless of their geographical location.

Although the firm was responsible for a number of buildings in the late 1950s, such as a residence for Ehrman Mitchell and a public health center in Philadelphia, these were minor projects and were not the designs of Giurgola.⁵⁴ Their first major commission was for the Wright Brothers Memorial Visitor Center in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, in 1958 (*Image 1*). Part of the National Park Service’s Mission 66 program, which sought to bring better facilities through modern architecture to the nation’s parks, the new and essentially unknown firm of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates won the commission largely by “being in the right

⁵³ “Questionnaire to Romaldo Giurgola” 119.

⁵⁴ Romaldo Giurgola, letter to Brendan Beier, 21 Dec. 2005.

place at the right time.”⁵⁵ Mitchell and Giurgola took this lucky opportunity, however, and transformed it into an important success, establishing many of the features, such as a sensitive response to the program and a meticulous attention to detail, that would be characteristic of their future work. More pragmatically, the success of the project also paved the way for additional large-scale and public commissions.

With its clean lines, use of twentieth-century concrete building technology, and low, boxy form, the Visitor Center clearly stems from the Modernist tradition. Mitchell protests, however, that their design did not arise from any pre-conceived ideological approach, but rather was a direct response to the needs of the program and the qualities of the site.⁵⁶ On a spot chosen by the National Park Service, the center was to provide visitors with a straightforward place to view the historic site of the Wright brothers’ flight and participate in a limited interpretive program. The center also had to contain necessary facilities, such as restrooms, and be able to be built inexpensively. Finally, the design and materials of the structure were supposed to reflect the concepts of science, technology, and progress that are fundamental to the significance of the site. Eero Saarinen’s famous TWA terminal at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York, begun in 1956, is a common comparison because of the similar goal of using architectural forms to suggest flight, although Mitchell/Giurgola’s solution is less sculpturally expressive than Saarinen’s. It is a compact structure that lies low to the ground, emphasizing and harmonizing with the horizontality of the flat, coastal landscape. It is capped by an elevated dome, which contributes some loftiness to the

⁵⁵ Allaback 70.

⁵⁶ Allaback 72-73.

building and gives it a futuristic and technological appearance appropriate to the event and people it was meant to memorialize.

Following the success of their design for the Wright Brothers visitor center, the firm received a number of other commissions, both from the National Park Service and additional new clients. The firm also began establishing their reputation by entering a number of architectural competitions. Mitchell/Giurgola did not always win, and even when they did their designs were not always constructed. Nevertheless, the high profile of several of the competitions, such as those for the new Boston City Hall in 1962, in which the firm was awarded second place, and the AIA national headquarters in Washington, DC, in 1965, which they won, ensured a great deal of attention from the media and the architectural community. Mitchell/Giurgola was a relative fixture of many of the time's architectural journals, establishing their reputation and giving them the publicity they would need to garner additional commissions.

Nowhere, however, was their practice more successful than in the firm's hometown. During the 1960s and 1970s, the majority of the firm's completed projects were located in and around Philadelphia, securing their reputation as a local firm and creating a strong physical presence in the city. Early in the 1960s, two Philadelphia-area institutions sought the help of the firm in designing and developing their suburban campuses: the Academy of the New Church, a Swedenborgian religious center in Bryn Athyn, and the American College of Life Underwriters in Bryn Mawr. Both of the campuses reveal the firm's interest in working with the characteristics of a site, which, in these cases, also included the incorporation of existing

buildings. The campus of the Academy of the New Church was a disparate compilation of buildings constructed during at least three discrete building campaigns. Mitchell/Giurgola's administration building, one of their first projects for the institution and begun in 1960, was a small, pavilion-like building revealing the influence of Kahn's Goldenberg house, with three distinct axes that served to reference and unify the pre-existing sections of the campus (*Images 2 and 3*).⁵⁷ The campus of the American College was more of a blank slate, although one building, the Myrick Pavilion, did incorporate a pre-existing carriage house. During their work for this institution, beginning in 1960, the firm responded to the natural topography of the site, using low buildings placed on the ridges and high points of the campus to clearly define the space, yet maintain visual openness and public access (*Image 4*).⁵⁸ The American College remained an important client of the firm for the next decade and a half, and their campus can be viewed as a collection of the firm's often diverse ideas and development over time.

Over the following decades, projects for institutions comprised a major portion of the firm's work. Mitchell/Giurgola designed buildings for a number of major East Coast universities. The firm created a campus plan and a gymnasium for Swarthmore College, as well as a new music building in 1973 that will be used as a case study in a later chapter. In addition, the firm designed a student union at SUNY Plattsburgh in 1974, a residential complex for Yale in 1975 (unbuilt), a biology building for Columbia in 1977, and a geology library at Princeton in 1980. Projects that are particularly illustrative of the firm's work were undertaken at the

⁵⁷ "Dialogue: Romaldo Giurgola + Ching-Yu Chang, Editor" 246.

⁵⁸ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 115.

University of Pennsylvania, where they designed several buildings, and Williams College, for which they built a large dormitory.

The firm was responsible for a number of small projects on the Penn campus, such as additions and alterations to classroom buildings throughout the 1960s. They also designed several large buildings for the University: two parking structures in 1963 and 1970, one of which will serve as a case study later in this thesis, and a substantial academic wing attached to the University Museum in 1971.

The existing museum was a sprawling structure designed by Wilson Eyre and Cope & Stewardson in the 1890s and incorporating a mixture of Italian Romanesque and Renaissance motifs.⁵⁹ In order to house expanded anthropology and archaeology departments, as well as a library, office space, and a restaurant for museum visitors, Mitchell/Giurgola was hired to design an addition to the building in 1971.⁶⁰ Their solution employed the contextual sensitivity that is perhaps the primary hallmark of the firm. Using similar massing, roof pitches, and cornice heights, and the same color brick exterior, the addition extends the lines of the original building rather than competing with them (*Image 5*). At the same time, however, the addition is clearly differentiated from the old museum by the planarity of its exterior surfaces, the large rectangular and band-like windows, and its different, but sympathetic, rhythms. The interplay between the original and the addition is further emphasized in the interior courtyard created between the two structures. Here, the

⁵⁹ George E. Thomas and David B. Brownlee, *Building America's First University: An Historical and Architectural Guide to the University of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000) 226.

⁶⁰ "Giurgola's Graft," *Architectural Review* Mar. 1972: 189.

buildings are connected by two elevated walkways, which were constructed of concrete, thus differentiating them from the brick buildings and emphasizing the connection between old and new (*Image 6*). The architects viewed these bridges as a literal representation of the nature of the museum, which is, itself, a tool for emphasizing the connections between the old and new.⁶¹ The walkways are set at diagonals to the axes of the two structures, employing a characteristic motif of the firm and imparting a greater dynamism to the composition. The result is an addition that neither overpowers nor concedes to the old museum.

Connections of a more human variety are emphasized in the 1972 Mission Park Residential Houses at Williams College. The dormitory had to adhere to the college tradition of suite-style living, with individual rooms grouped in a system of ever-larger units. The building houses approximately 300 students on four levels that extend outward in a V-shape to encompass and enclose the neighboring Mission Park (*Image 7*). Although a building of not many stories, its large footprint makes it massive. Its human scale is maintained, however, by the articulation of its exterior, which results from the internal arrangement of living quarters.⁶² The building is arranged around its most essential component – the bedroom. Each bedroom is reflected on the outside by a large window, providing the natural light that is both important to the use of the space and a characteristic concern of Mitchell/Giurgola (*Image 8*). These bedrooms are grouped in suites, which form the stepped sections of each arm of the building. These suites are, in turn, grouped into clusters, which share dining and

⁶¹ Mitchell/Giurgola Architects 22.

⁶² David, Morton, “Complimenting the Past,” *Progressive Architecture* Feb. 1973: 56-61.

recreational facilities.⁶³ The architects intended the composition of the building, essentially a grouping of distinct individual units, to help maintain the readability and human scale of the large complex.⁶⁴

It may not be unexpected for universities to experiment with young architects and new architecture. What is perhaps more surprising, and a testament to the skill and management of the firm, is that Mitchell/Giurgola was commissioned by many corporate clients, as well, and that most of these projects were actually completed.⁶⁵ In particular, the many insurance companies that were a major force in commercial Philadelphia at the time, although traditionally considered conservative, were the clients for a number of the firm's largest and most well-known projects. The first in 1962, a small office building annex for the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company, is a mere "sliver" of a building,⁶⁶ but so elegant and expressive of the firm's design principles that it remains one of Giurgola's best buildings. It will be discussed in greater depth as a case study in a following chapter.

The Penn Mutual Tower and the Insurance Company of North America (INA) Corporate Headquarters were completed in 1975 and are both large-scale, high-rise office towers located in the heart of Center City Philadelphia (*Images 9 and 10*). Following the example set by the firm's United Way Headquarters, constructed a few years earlier in 1971, each of the façades of these two buildings exhibits a differing treatment in order to respond to its

⁶³ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 55.

⁶⁴ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 43.

⁶⁵ Goldberger, "Works of Mitchell/Giurgola" 121-123.

⁶⁶ Inga Saffron, "Sorry days for an elegant trio – Uncertainty about Convention Center expansion has left North Broad a mess," *Philadelphia Inquirer* 8 Aug. 2003: E1.

particular environmental characteristics. This environmental sensitivity is taken to the greatest degree in the United Way building and the Penn Mutual Tower, where, for example, south-facing façades have deep and elaborate concrete sunshades, while façades that receive less direct sunlight make more extensive use of glass (*Images 11 and 12*).

The Penn Mutual Tower is particularly representative of the firm's concern with context and use. Like the museum academic wing or the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company office annex, the Penn Mutual Tower was an addition to an existing historic structure, in this case a neoclassical office tower designed by Edgar Seeler in 1913 and expanded by Ernest Matthewson in 1931.⁶⁷ The new tower complements the scale and massing of the original building, and also creates a balanced backdrop for Independence Hall just a block away (*Image 13*). Although a very large building, Giurgola explained in an interview that he attempted to maintain a connection between the building and its occupants by having the building's physical boundaries be defined by its human users, who walk along its ground level or ascended to a rooftop observation deck, until its closure, by an elevator that ran up the exterior of the building's primary façade.⁶⁸ Street-level visual interest and human scale are also maintained by the incorporation of an early nineteenth century Egyptian Revival building façade by John Haviland in the design of the new office tower. Although an early example of what came to be called "façadism" in the United States, it differs from much contemporary practice in that the façade is easily discernible as just that. It is detached from

⁶⁷ Edward Teitelman and Richard W. Longstreth, *Architecture in Philadelphia: A Guide* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1974) 31.

⁶⁸ "Dialogue: Romaldo Giurgola + Ching-Yu Chang, Editor" 247.

the office tower, serving as a screen or art object rather than a deceptively historic front to a modern building (*Image 14*).

The size and complexity of the Penn Mutual Tower is in direct contrast to Mitchell/Giurgola's other building in the immediate neighborhood – the Liberty Bell Pavilion on Independence Mall, which was also completed in 1975 (*Image 13*). The loss of this structure, demolished in the spring of 2006, deprives the public of an important example of the firm's work, as well as the city of one of its most elegant modern buildings. The pavilion was built as part of the city's and Independence National Historical Park's preparations for the United States Bicentennial in 1976. Due to the anticipated increase in visitation, it was decided that the Liberty Bell should be moved from its former location inside Independence Hall to a place that would be more accessible to the public. A proposition to move the Bell into the specially-designed bell tower of the new park visitor center, designed by Cambridge Seven, was defeated by public opposition to the idea of moving the Bell so far away from Independence Hall. Thus, Mitchell/Giurgola was commissioned to design a structure to house the Bell on Independence Mall. The necessity of finishing the structure before the impending bicentennial celebrations meant that the firm had only a year to design and construct the building.⁶⁹

The result was a simple and small pavilion, driven by the specific needs of the program and the significant context of the site. The materials used were white oak, glass, and lead-coated copper – all traditional materials that were used in many of the historic buildings nearby, but

⁶⁹ Constance Greiff, *Independence: The Creation of a National Park* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987) 230-231.

combined with steel and used in a way that was distinctly modern. The building itself consisted of three spaces: two triangular rooms, one for housing the Bell and one for holding waiting visitors, and a narrow central corridor connecting the two. The plan allowed for a large number of people to circulate through the building, and see and touch the Bell (*Image 15*). No additional gallery space or room for interpretive exhibits was included in the structure, leaving the Bell in an atmosphere of powerful simplicity. This lack of accommodation for supporting interpretive materials was one of the primary reasons behind the construction of a new Liberty Bell Center in 2003, along with the National Park Service's desire to develop a master plan for Independence Mall that was less rigidly axial.⁷⁰ The pavilion, although appreciated by many members of the architectural community, received a lukewarm reaction from the public, who originally likened its appearance to that of a drive-through bank. Giurgola purportedly did not take offense at this comparison, stating that he had hoped to create a building that was accessible and not intimidating, one with which the public would be immediately familiar and comfortable.⁷¹

Particularly leading up to the Bicentennial year of 1976, the 1970s were a time of many large commissions for Mitchell/Giurgola, as has been discussed. Most of these projects were in the institutional and commercial tradition that the firm had cultivated over the preceding decades. Throughout its existence, however, the firm designed and continued to design several private residences, although these formed only a small percentage of the firm's total

⁷⁰ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Abbreviated General Management Plan; Environmental Impact Statement: Independence National Historical Park* (Philadelphia: National Park Service, 1997) 1-3.

⁷¹ Greiff 230.

body of work. In their residential designs, the firm showcased their characteristic flexibility, respect for history and tradition, and understanding of human needs and desires.

In Giurgola's design notes included in the firm's monograph, he states

A house is a human intention expressed in architectural and poetic terms. Through the architect man's collective memory of the past should be related to the individuality of the owner's life. Thus a true house, within a common language, becomes unique and is incapable of being reproduced.⁷²

He also writes, "The design of houses cannot be approached from a fixed perspective, since our homes reflect our changing patterns of existence. Rooms must be capable of being the reality from which our aspirations extend."⁷³ Finally, he refers to houses as "fragments of memories." He thus connects his ideas about residential architecture to his theory about architecture in general – more specifically, that architecture, like all reality, is both experienced in pieces and, in fact, is pieces, fragments of some larger context. Private residences offer the most personal reflection of this theory, inextricably tied to the characters and actions of their inhabitants.

Despite this dependence upon the individual natures of the homeowners and Giurgola's assertion about the uniqueness of houses, the firm's residential designs, as a group, seem to display a more consistent approach than the rest of their body of work, despite the many years by which they are separated. This may be because there are relatively few of them, or perhaps because the programmatic requirements for a private home are likely to be rather similar, despite the different characteristics of the clients. This is not to say, however, that

⁷² *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 41.

⁷³ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 41.

the houses are all the same. Interestingly, several of their houses, particularly the 1963 White residence in Chestnut Hill and the Dayton residence in Wayzata, Minnesota, of 1970, display a closer adherence to the International Style than any of the firm's other buildings, or at least on the exterior (*Images 16 and 17*). Goldberger suggests, however, that the interior of the Dayton house is based upon a sprawling plan and massing more reminiscent of domestic architecture like the shingle style houses of the early twentieth century (*Image 18*).⁷⁴ Elsewhere, Goldberger continues this thought by suggesting that the firm's adoption of elements from rather divergent architectural styles and schools of thought, including such recent traditions as Corbusian modernism, illustrates the firm's flexibility and pragmatism, as well as their postmodern approach.⁷⁵

The Kasperson residence built several years later in 1979 in Conestoga, Pennsylvania, is similarly a merging of traditions. Set amidst farmland and sited to take advantage of the available natural light, the house, while decidedly modern, embraces aspects of traditional domestic architecture (*Image 19*), such as four-square windows, clapboard siding, and a central brick hearth and chimney. In addition, the entire house was constructed by Amish builders using local materials.⁷⁶ The Newman home also constructed in 1979, but located in the rather different setting of an affluent New York suburb, was designed to provide privacy for the various members of a family with several children.⁷⁷ The design is reminiscent of the firm's early administration building at the Academy of the New Church, which is perhaps

⁷⁴ Goldberger, Paul. "Elegant Hybrid." *The New York Times Magazine* 30 Mar. 1975: 58-59, 62.

⁷⁵ Goldberger, "Works of Mitchell/Giurgola" 121.

⁷⁶ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 49.

⁷⁷ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 52.

appropriate as that building, too, attempted to unify related, but distant, units. The house also shows the influence of Kahn's Goldenberg house and Jewish community center, with a central communal space surrounded by subordinate pavilions, although Giurgola's design is not as strictly geometric as those by Kahn (*Images 20, 21, and 22*).

The firm also designed a number of urban homes, primarily townhouses in the Society Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia, a community of well-preserved eighteenth century row houses that was undergoing significant revitalization and redevelopment during the 1960s and 1970s. Unlike the firm's country and suburban house designs, which frequently employed International Style elements and expansive, window-filled façades, the urban houses are necessarily more compact. In addition, they present to the street rather heavy brick fronts with limited fenestration, ensuring their occupants privacy despite the dense urban environment (*Images 23 and 24*). Through a use of similar materials and massing, the Society Hill houses blend into the pre-Revolutionary surroundings, although they are clearly discernible as modern buildings. Thus, this thread of residential architecture that runs throughout the career of Mitchell/Giurgola reflects many of the same principles as the firm's more public buildings, but on a limited scale, perhaps appropriate to the more limited scale of the buildings themselves.

The firm's number of repeat clients over the years may be particularly indicative of their success at meeting their clients' needs and the manner with which they executed their projects. The National Park Service, in particular, as well as being their first major client, was also a frequent client over several decades. In addition to the Wright Brothers visitor

center and the Liberty Bell Pavilion, the firm designed a number of other projects for the Park Service, including a visitor center for Acadia National Park in Maine, which was never built, and a maintenance facility for Independence National Historical Park in 1981. The maintenance facility is essentially a large warehouse, with space for storing equipment, as well as some offices, workshops, and worker accommodations.⁷⁸ The amount of space needed, as well as the most logical configuration of that space in a utilitarian structure and the necessary proximity to the rest of the park, threatened to result in a building that was radically out of scale and character in relation to the historic neighborhood. Mitchell/Giurgola's solution was an admittedly large building, but one whose rooflines were variegated and gabled in order to interact more sensitively with the surrounding area (*Image 25*).

The strength and reputation the firm developed over its first few decades of existence led to what was arguably the firm's most important, but certainly the firm's largest and most publicized, commission: a new Parliament House for Australia. Mitchell/Giurgola's entry in the design competition was selected in 1980 out of a pool of 329 entrants.⁷⁹ Construction began on the Canberra complex in 1981, and Giurgola moved to Australia to establish a local office with the Australian architect Richard Thorp and oversee the project. This project, and Giurgola's departure, signified a new chapter in the life of the firm. The original firm's two offices in Philadelphia and New York have continued to operate separately, under the guidance and leadership of many of the architects who once worked under Mitchell and

⁷⁸ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 104.

⁷⁹ *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects* 237.

Giurgola. The many skillful and interesting projects produced by these firms since the 1980s fall outside the scope of this thesis.

Key Themes

Mitchell/Giurgola produced a significant amount of work over the roughly two decades prior to Giurgola's relocation to Australia, ranging from large-scale, mixed-use redevelopment projects to modest private residences to very small public buildings. While their emphasis on meeting the needs of each building's unique program and context has produced a body of work that appears disparate to some observers, these principles also provide cohesion to their work. While some may see the firm's flexibility as the beginnings of a sort of postmodern relativism, this does not mean that their approach was the result of a lack of theoretical discipline. Instead, their work was based upon an equally valid set of essentially modern principles, but ones that were pragmatic, optimistic, and even, perhaps, good-natured.

Contextual Sensitivity / Architecture as Fragment / Partial Vision / Historical Continuity

Despite his belief that architecture should not be driven by theory alone, many of the firm's buildings are united by Giurgola's own theories about architecture, particularly his ideas about the building as fragment.⁸⁰ This concept may sometimes mean, literally, that buildings are unfinished, evolving parts of a greater landscape, such as the Walnut Street parking garage, which was planned to be expandable to meet its owner's future needs, or the Lang

⁸⁰ Giurgola, "Aesthetic of Place" 37.

music building, which was intended to become part of an entire arts complex. More commonly, however, this idea is expressed in his architecture through an emphasis on contextual sensitivity and interrelatedness – each building is a part, a piece, of its surroundings and is therefore not complete on its own, just as the surrounding landscape might be incomplete without it. For Giurgola, becoming part of the landscape meant respecting that landscape and responding to it in direct but sensitive ways.

This idea is developed in one of Giurgola's longer articles, entitled "Reflections on Buildings and the City: The Realism of the Partial Vision." He writes about the role of the 'partial vision,' the idea that buildings and places, because of their complexity and changefulness, cannot be grasped in a single moment from a single viewpoint.⁸¹ This was largely a critique of contemporary city planning methods, which attempted to redevelop areas in a single sweep in order to solve urban problems or create new communities. These planning methods

...reduce design to a search for evidence of predetermined theories. This search transforms the urban organism into a demonstration and in consequence kills it, in destroying the human phenomena within it. This search destroys the very idea of a city, and, too often, it makes the architecture an end in itself rather than a means.⁸²

Instead, Giurgola wanted architects and planners to realize that their visions were inevitably limited, and would change with time.

⁸¹ Romaldo Giurgola, "Reflections on Buildings and the City: The Realism of the Partial Vision," *Perspecta* 9/10 (1965): 107-130.

⁸² Giurgola, "Partial Vision" 108.

This complex notion of the partial vision encompasses not only the impossibility of knowing all at once, through abstract theory, how a place should be, but also the idea that architecture is something that should be experienced as an itinerary, with different views and brief glimpses together combining into one's perception of a building. To Giurgola, both cities and the individual buildings within them are "places made of a succession of 'conscious presences' rather than efforts toward totality."⁸³ Similarly, he writes that for "the single structure in the urban context, a complexity of partial visions is sought rather than a fixed image of the totality in an urban environment."⁸⁴ As a somewhat literal expression of this, the firm's buildings often cannot be wholly understood from a single viewpoint. Like the United Way building or the Penn Mutual Tower, where each façade is different, a reaction to its unique environmental and social settings, their buildings often seem to invite the viewer to move around and through the building, experiencing architecture as an itinerary, a series of incomplete or changing images. The emphasis in the Liberty Bell Pavilion on the surrounding vistas, an appropriate strategy given the importance of the nearby buildings, and achieved through the use of fully-glazed walls allowing views of Independence Hall and the Mall from many, and sometimes unexpected, vantage points, also seems to be a literal interpretation of this philosophy, although other manifestations of this idea are present in many other works of the firm.

⁸³ Giurgola, "Partial Vision" 109.

⁸⁴ Giurgola, "Partial Vision" 109.

Emphasis on Form / Program

Perhaps the most important way in which Kahn influenced the work and ideas of Giurgola was in the emphasis on form, and the belief that the building's form and order should be suited to the building's specific use. Far from the uniformity and repetition that was characteristic of much Modernist architecture of the mid-twentieth century, Giurgola's buildings are almost idiosyncratic responses to a large number of concrete factors:

Order must not be confused with theory elaboration and its consequence: visual formalism. Order comes, rather, from a realistic apprehension of the facts that make the city – facts that extend from the historical experience of human events to the functional logic of its structures.⁸⁵

Thus, in addition to the external contextual factors discussed above, the internal factor of the program was of the utmost importance to the eventual design of the building. Most twentieth century architecture was largely program-driven in some sense, but Giurgola believed that the program should influence the very form of the building, unlike in much modern architecture where, he felt, the differentiation between an office “box” and a residential “box” was largely left as the task of the interior decorator.⁸⁶ Giurgola believed that “[o]rder is generated from within. Theories are imposed from without. Thus order can be mysterious as a labyrinth, where the principle is secret, hidden, to be revealed rather than demonstrated.”⁸⁷ This reliance on the individual program of the project naturally leads to

⁸⁵ Giurgola, “Partial Vision” 108.

⁸⁶ Romaldo Giurgola, “The Evolving Environment,” *Interiors* 120 (1960): 184.

⁸⁷ Giurgola, “Partial Vision” 109.

the idea that all buildings will be different, in appearance as well as function.⁸⁸ This helps explain the apparent variety of the firm's work.

'Publicness' / Invitation / Human Scale

In several of his articles, Giurgola expressed a desire to create architecture that was not a reflection of the world as it is – disjointed, isolating, often chaotic – but rather a vision of what the world could be.⁸⁹ Whether or not he succeeds in creating a utopian future through his architecture, this belief at the very least displays a sense of hope and sincere optimism that can often be seen in his work. Although the design for the Penn Mutual Tower, which creates a monumental backdrop behind one of the nation's most revered buildings, and the Liberty Bell Pavilion, which then provides through its large windows a framed view of that Tower, may be seen as displaying an unusual egotism, generally Mitchell/Giurgola's architecture can be called anything but self-indulgent. Their work is a marked and refreshing departure from the at times overly theorized and almost posturing work of many architects of the previous decades. Though never losing sight of architecture's role as an art, Mitchell/Giurgola nevertheless recognized its necessarily functional aspects, as well. This acknowledgment of the practical makes their work uncommonly accessible to a general public, who are able to use and appreciate their buildings with ease and without a sense of being patronized.

⁸⁸ Goldberger, "Works of Mitchell/Giurgola" 121.

⁸⁹ Giurgola, "Constants" 16.

Giurgola, "Producing Moment" 40.

Perhaps their smaller buildings have been so particularly successful because their architecture is essentially one of invitation, rather than intimidation. Giurgola himself measured the quality of architecture by “how well it promotes human accommodation.”⁹⁰ While they have designed their larger buildings to maintain as much as possible their human scale and livability, the smaller buildings necessarily have an advantage in that regard that the larger buildings, no matter how skillfully designed, cannot match. It may be this sense of invitation that gives much of the work of Mitchell/Giurgola a feeling of ‘publicness.’ Indeed, the majority of their body of work consists of public buildings owned by the municipal or federal government, large commercial structures, or institutional buildings and campuses – all places used and experienced by large numbers of people. Giurgola believed in the role of architecture as a bridge between public and private,⁹¹ a “personal act” with a “public end in view.”⁹² This ‘publicness,’ whether in the sense that the buildings are actually for public use or are instead part of the public sphere because of their size and location, despite their private ownership, is an important characteristic of much of the firm’s work, largely because it highlights how much use and users were considered in the development of their designs.

Formal Elements / Materials

The emphasis on the diversity of the firm’s body of work, although driven by unifying principles of contextual sensitivity and response to individual program, does not mean that there are no common formal elements imparting some visual cohesion among the firm’s various buildings. A reliance on striking diagonals, and to a lesser extent curves, to impart

⁹⁰ Giurgola, “Aesthetic of Place” 36.

⁹¹ Giurgola, “Aesthetic of Place” 36

⁹² Giurgola, “Producing Moment” 40.

dynamism and vitality to otherwise geometric compositions are common in many, but not all, of the firm's projects.⁹³ Large *brises-soleil*, usually made of concrete, are a regular feature on the façades of several of the firm's buildings, an illustration of their concern for the environmental characteristics of their building sites as well as a reflection of their interest in controlling natural light to create architectural environments.

There is also some consistency in the use of building materials, such as a preference for the exposed concrete that is a feature of the majority of Giurgola's designs, but this too varies widely based on the individual building and its location. The Liberty Bell Pavilion, the 1971 Philadelphia Subway Concourse Entrance at 8th and Market Streets, and the 1972 MDRT Foundation Hall at American College, for example, make extensive use of glass, while some of the urban private residences designed by Mitchell/Giurgola are almost monolithic in their reliance on exterior brick masonry.

Contradictions and Unsuccessful projects

Mitchell/Giurgola, working with the admirable intentions of creating usable, environmentally sensitive buildings that respond to the needs of their users, has given to the world, and to Philadelphia in particular, many good and several great buildings. Not all of their designs, however, have been successful at meeting the needs of their clients or living up to their own design principles. The firm's proposed addition to Kahn's Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, in the late 1980s, is perhaps the firm's most publicized

⁹³ Goldberger, "Works of Mitchell/Giurgola" 122.

failure. The project was, in fact, canceled because of the vehement opposition to Giurgola's design, which, it was felt, was based upon a serious misunderstanding of Kahn's own design and intentions. Giurgola intended to expand the museum by replicating the signature barrel vaults of the original building, but critics felt this plan did not recognize or appreciate the finished quality of Kahn's structure and would blur distinctions between the original and the addition. Petitions and letters signed by numerous major figures in the architectural community, such as Frank Gehry, Philip Johnson, James Stirling, and Robert Venturi, were sent to the museum in opposition to the project, which was eventually abandoned.⁹⁴

Yet there have been less sensationally problematic projects as well, which are often pointed out by critics who see an apparent contradiction between the stated philosophy of the firm and the character of some of their finished designs. There is always the danger in espousing strong theories that one might not be able to live up to them. This may be particularly the case for a firm like Mitchell/Giurgola that, rather unusually, combined a large amount of theory with a large amount of commercial success. Simply put, because of their many projects, they had many more opportunities to make a mistake than some of their contemporaries. Denise Scott Brown notes that some of their buildings, such as the Walnut Street parking garage, do seem like objects placed in a landscape, rather than evolving pieces of that landscape.⁹⁵ This relationship between the garage and its surroundings will be further discussed in one of the following case studies. Paul Goldberger, in his analysis of the firm, sees the firm's shortcoming as not necessarily a failure to execute their theories but an

⁹⁴ Barbara L. Koerble, "Giurgola's Kimbell Addition Draws Fire," *Architecture* Jan. 1990: 35-36.

⁹⁵ Scott Brown 47-48.

inability to always achieve the potential of their intentions, such as in the creation of interior spaces at the student union for SUNY Plattsburgh.⁹⁶

Both of these seem to be somewhat qualified criticisms, as they acknowledge the underlying capability of the firm. In addition, achieving the architect's theories or potential may not always be necessary for a building to be great architecture. While important to consider, the architect's own intentions and beliefs are not the ultimate measure for the success of a building. Certainly not all of Mitchell/Giurgola's projects are consistently successful, or equally significant. Nevertheless, the firm's body of work taken as a whole represents the important legacy they have created, from which individual buildings stand out as particularly illustrative of Mitchell/Giurgola's most defining characteristics and theoretical principles.

Legacy and Significance

The most recent chapter of the history of the firm's early work is a bittersweet one. Many of the firm's best buildings are their smallest ones, yet these small structures are also the easiest to demolish, the most apparently expendable. In addition, many of their buildings are located in Philadelphia, a city that is currently experiencing increasing development pressures and that has long prioritized its colonial-era heritage over its more recent architecture. As has been mentioned, the Liberty Bell Pavilion has been demolished during the writing of this thesis. Other buildings, although not yet facing demolition, are confronted with more indirect threats to their character. The small office building annex constructed for the

⁹⁶ Goldberger, "Works of Mitchell/Giurgola" 122.

Philadelphia Life Insurance Company presently sits vacant and deteriorating, and in the path of the expanding Pennsylvania Convention Center a few blocks east. Expansion plans for the Convention Center initially called for the demolition of all of the buildings between its current site and Broad Street, although more recent versions suggest that some buildings may be saved, but most likely only their façades. After several months of preparation, and opposition from the preservation and architectural communities, the exposed concrete surfaces of the exterior of the United Fund building have been painted as a means of covering the weathered appearance of the walls. Paint, however, no matter how similar in color, will never match the texture and appearance of exposed concrete, which was a key characteristic of much of the firm's work, and architecture in general, during the mid to late twentieth century.

This bleak vision of the future of the firm's work is somewhat tempered by one significant success story. Like the Liberty Bell Pavilion, Mitchell/Giurgola's visitor center at the Wright Brothers Memorial Park, another National Park Service-owned building, was also slated for demolition a few years ago, due to changing conceptions of the appropriate treatment of historic sites and the building's alleged inability to handle increased visitation. These plans aroused so much opposition from the architectural community and from the local public, however, that the building has been saved. It was even designated a National Historic Landmark in 2001 for its contribution to the Park Service's Mission 66 program. It is perhaps fitting that it was the firm's first major work that has been the first to be awarded such a distinction, and so has found recognition in the preservation world. It must be

acknowledged, however, that the building earned designation primarily for considerations other than its architects. Nevertheless, it sets an important precedent for recognizing the significance of the work produced by Mitchell/Giurgola, despite its recentness.

For, issues of temporal distance aside, it is clear that Mitchell/Giurgola is a significant firm. A leader of the Philadelphia School, a group that signaled a marked change in architectural thought, as well as a skilled and prolific firm that has had a substantial impact on the face of Philadelphia, Mitchell/Giurgola has achieved an international reputation as well as solid local support. Their work is reflective of a time of important change in architectural ideas, and much of it maintains its usefulness and aesthetic appeal in today's world.

In addition, a creative and talented firm such as Mitchell/Giurgola that is, itself, interested in ideas of historical continuum and contextual sensitivity also has much to offer to the field of preservation. Preservationists often prefer 'contextual' architecture in places like historic districts or areas with a high percentage of historic structures. While this is sometimes logical, so as not to detract too much from extremely significant neighboring buildings or drastically alter an otherwise cohesive historic neighborhood, placing too much of an emphasis on contextual new architecture may also prevent some great new architecture from being built. What is so attractive to a preservationist, then, about much of the work of Mitchell/Giurgola is that it is contextually sensitive while also still being individually distinguished, illustrating that perhaps the best complement to existing good architecture is not anodyne or historicized infill, but simply more good architecture.

Determining the significance of the firm and acknowledging the lessons it can teach are not, however, the only tasks facing preservationists attempting to plan for the future of Mitchell/Giurgola's buildings. There are, of course, the challenges facing anyone attempting to objectively assess and preserve any buildings of the recent past. More than that, there are the challenges that stem from the individual characteristics of the work of Mitchell/Giurgola. It is interesting that Giurgola said, during various interviews and design processes, that he consciously intended not to create monumental architecture.⁹⁷ While these comments may have at least partially been referring to the scale or size of some of his buildings, his work generally seems designed to complement rather than dominate its surroundings. Therefore it becomes difficult to know what constitutes appropriate treatment when these almost self-effacing buildings become themselves the focus of attention, existing now as testaments or, in a sense, monuments to the skill and sensitivity of their architect. If one views these buildings as surviving evidence of their creator's intentions and design theory, is it appropriate to fight to save them unaltered when part of their fundamental philosophy was that they are meant simply to be parts of an ever-evolving landscape? Also, if the buildings draw much of their significance from their relationship to their immediate environment, do the buildings lose significance if the surroundings, but not the buildings themselves, change?

The individual case studies in the following chapters will attempt to address these and other questions concerning the appropriate method of preserving the work of Mitchell/Giurgola

⁹⁷ "Dialogue: Romaldo Giurgola + Ching-Yu Chang, Editor" 252.

Associates. A case-by-case approach is the only way to adequately address the particular circumstances surrounding any individual building, but it is hoped that, out of these independent case studies, more general recommendations can emerge for the treatment of the firm's work overall.

2. CASE STUDY: LANG MUSIC BUILDING SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

The Building's History

Swarthmore College, a small and prestigious school located in a suburb of Philadelphia, was founded in 1864 by members of the Religious Society of Friends. Approximately one hundred years later, the publication of *Critique of a College* in 1967, a reflection on the College's history and current state prepared by specially designated College committees, led to a period of debate about the future of Swarthmore College and its educational system.⁹⁸ A significant part of this discussion was on the role of the fine arts in post-secondary education and whether they should be more fully integrated into the College's existing liberal arts curriculum.⁹⁹ Several art departments, most notably music, already existed at Swarthmore, and were growing. When the College decided that these departments needed larger and improved facilities, the philosophical debate over the future of the arts at Swarthmore took on a concrete, visual form.

In the late 1960s, Mitchell/Giurgola was already working on a campus plan for Swarthmore, addressing traffic and pedestrian circulation, the visual identity of different components of the campus, and the need for a women's physical fitness facility. In 1969, the firm was

⁹⁸ *Critique of a College: Reports of the Commission on Educational Policy, the Special Committee on Library Policy, the Special Committee on Student Life* (Swarthmore, PA.: Swarthmore College, 1967).

⁹⁹ John Lawson, conference memo to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 14 Oct. 1969, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

asked to design a means of providing the College with additional space for the fine arts that would be in keeping with the character of the College and its new ideas about arts education. Initial discussions about the design focused on whether this new arts facility would take the form of a single building, a complex of buildings, or several buildings spread throughout the existing campus.¹⁰⁰ It was felt that the selected approach would be indicative of the new role that the arts were to play in the college: formal or informal, centralized or dispersed, isolated or incorporated. Responding to the recommendations of *Critique of a College*, the College, with the participation of Mitchell/Giurgola, decided early on that the arts facilities should be interwoven with the rest of the campus' academic facilities to support the broad and well-rounded ideal liberal arts education that the College strived to provide. Furthermore, spreading the facilities throughout the campus allowed the new structures to be built near pre-existing buildings with complementary uses and also allowed existing buildings, such as Clothier Hall, one of the College's main performance spaces, to be renovated and easily incorporated into the new, campus-wide system of arts facilities.

Selecting the Site

Swarthmore originally intended to construct new facilities for music, drama, the visual arts, and art history.¹⁰¹ Although the site of an old baseball field on the edge of campus was proposed by the College as a potential location for the new arts buildings, Mitchell/Giurgola instead selected sites that were set among the existing buildings and were of more varied

¹⁰⁰ John Lawson, conference memos to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 14 Oct. 1969, 20 Nov. 1969, 25 Nov. 1969, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

¹⁰¹ Lawson, conference memo, 14 Oct. 1969.

topography. These sites were preferable because, as well as illustrating the desire to mix the arts with the existing curriculum, they were not simply open fields. According to Giurgola, a flat site like the proposed baseball field generally leads to a “neat package” of a building, one that is an isolated and self-contained monument. He felt this was at odds with the desire of the College to promote the arts as an everyday activity. In addition, a “monolithic building” would present the idea of the arts as a unified, institutionalized discipline, rather than a collection of diverse and ever-changing practices. To Giurgola, an informal “village” was more in keeping with the nature of the arts, and he therefore proposed a number of smaller scale buildings, related to each other through either physical proximity or positioning along strong axes.¹⁰²

The visual arts complex was to be built on the east side of campus and the music and drama buildings would be located on the west (*Image 26*). This would create a strong central axis perpendicular to the campus’ primary existing axis, which was formed by the College’s main administration building and the linear greenway at its entrance.¹⁰³ The scheme therefore became part of the firm’s overall campus plan, which attempted to give greater identity and structure to the rural campus. In January of 1970, however, several months into the planning and development of the design, the College determined that the music facility alone was a current priority. At that time, the departments of drama and fine arts were without directors and the future of the departments and their requirements were unclear as the College was adjusting its curriculum. The music department, however, was more established

¹⁰² John Lawson, conference memos to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 20 Nov. 1969, 2 Dec. 1969, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

¹⁰³ Lawson, conference memo, 20 Nov. 1969.

at the College and was critically in need of improved and expanded facilities.¹⁰⁴ Mitchell/Giurgola was therefore asked to focus exclusively on the new music building, which would be funded by and named for Eugene Lang, a prominent alumnus of the College. The music building would be built on the firm's selected location, near the former site of the Hall Gymnasium on the west side of campus. Although now only one building was being constructed, it was still envisioned as part of a larger complex that would be built at a future date. Thus, Giurgola's concept of an arts "village" rather than a monolithic structure persisted in his theory and design.¹⁰⁵

The Building's Design

The program for the music building was extensive, and was partly guided by the perceived successes and limitations of other recent music buildings built at peer institutions like Amherst College and Mount Holyoke.¹⁰⁶ Swarthmore required new practice rooms, classrooms, offices, a music library, several auditoriums of varying capacities, and substantial space for instrument and equipment storage. In addition, some members of the College expressed concern that the building be appropriate to the Quaker roots of the institution. It should therefore stress function over aesthetics, and not be too sophisticated, in keeping with the College's "country" location.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, it was felt the interior should be elegant,

¹⁰⁴ John Lawson, conference memo to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 16 January 1970, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

¹⁰⁵ Lawson, conference memo, 16 January 1970.

¹⁰⁶ John Lawson, conference memo to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 9 July 1970, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

¹⁰⁷ John Lawson, conference memo to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 4 Dec. 1970, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

but not plush or luxurious.¹⁰⁸ Mitchell/Giurgola's design was a sensitive response to these requirements, the existing campus, and particularly the surrounding landscape – a straightforward and functional solution to the needs of the music department and the characteristics of the site. Although sophisticated, the design's sophistication stemmed from its simplicity, economy, and deftness, rather than any sense of urbanity or opulence.

The building site was sloped, leading away from the central core of the existing campus into a wooded valley. Such a site meant that the auditoriums that were a necessary part of the building's program could be built into the side of the valley, exploiting the natural slope of the site and eliminating the need for expensive grading (*Image 27*). These larger, public spaces of the auditoriums and adjoining lobby would be covered by a "tray" of smaller, private spaces, such as practice rooms, offices, and classrooms.¹⁰⁹ This allowed for a compact design that maximized usable square footage, while still providing a distinct sense of separation between the different components of the building. The various service spaces were inserted between these other components, adding to the sense of separation of uses, but also helping to separate them acoustically, an important concern for a building in which many musical performances would be occurring simultaneously. The use of concrete for the structure of the building, popular during the time period and commonly used by Giurgola, had the added benefit of contributing to the acoustical quality of the building, due to the material's physical properties. On the exterior, the grey color of the exposed concrete is a modern version of the local stone used to clad most of the campus' older buildings. The

¹⁰⁸ John Lawson, conference memo to Swarthmore College and Mitchell/Giurgola Associates, 24 Nov. 1970, Presidential Papers of Robert D. Cross, Swarthmore College Archives, Swarthmore, PA.

¹⁰⁹ Lawson, conference memo, 24 Nov. 1970.

several separate and simultaneous benefits imparted by the use of concrete are indicative of the multi-functional nature of many of the spaces and components of the music building.

The building's main auditorium is, in particular, characterized by its flexibility. Acoustically engineered as a space for musical rather than dramatic performance, the arrangement of the seating was designed to allow for performances of various sizes and scales. Rather than designing a conventional balcony, entirely separate from the orchestra level, Giurgola extended and sloped the balcony to meet the orchestra level on the south side of the auditorium. This essentially splits the orchestra seating into two sections, creating a more intimate, almost enclosed section on the eastern side of the room that can be used when the entire seating capacity of the auditorium is not needed (*Image 28*).

The most remarkable characteristic of the auditorium space, however, is the large glass wall behind the stage, offering a view of the surrounding wooded landscape (*Image 29*). This unusual design element for a recital hall, which are usually windowless spaces, was an attempt by Giurgola to further integrate the building with the landscape and maximize the potential that such a beautiful landscape offered. This glass wall, which was reduced in size during discussions with the College about the design, was one of the most controversial elements of the building, provoking concerns that it would not be acoustically sound or that it was a prioritization of aesthetic desires over Quaker-like functionalism. The representatives of the College eventually conceded to the architects' design intention and what resulted was a dramatic space that is an expression of many of the defining

characteristics of the building: it is finely attuned to the surrounding landscape, it is a flexible and accommodating space, and it skillfully makes use of available natural light.

The presence of natural light was an important design feature of the rest of the building's rooms, as well, particularly the many practice rooms. One representative of the College referred to the horizontal band of windows in the upper parts of the practice room walls as a clerestory that is a "signature of the architect's work."¹¹⁰ While this type of window arrangement can be seen in many other projects by Giurgola, as well as much architecture of the time period in general, it seems more likely that the desire to draw light into the interior spaces of his buildings is the truer characteristic of Giurgola's work rather than the specific means by which he does so. Indeed, Giurgola himself mentions the presence of light in the building as one of the primary reasons why he considers the project successful.¹¹¹

The Building Today

Although the presentation drawings for the building make it appear as if the building is completely set apart from the campus in a tranquil wooded setting, a visit to the Lang Music Building today reveals the building's true context. The surroundings are more densely built up than might be expected, including an adjacent performing arts center that was eventually built in the mid-1980s by the Philadelphia firm of Dagit/Saylor. Peter Saylor had been an associate at Mitchell/Giurgola and had worked on the beginning stages of the music building project. The performing arts center, somewhat true to Mitchell/Giurgola's plan, is physically

¹¹⁰ Lawson, conference memo, 9 July 1970.

¹¹¹ Romaldo Giurgola, letter to Brendan Beier, 21 Dec. 2005.

linked to the music building and is on or very near the site originally proposed for a drama building.¹¹² In addition, there are the pre-existing campus buildings to the east contributing to the density around the music building. All of these surrounding buildings are higher on the hill and so, from a distance, seem to crowd and overshadow the music building.

When one draws nearer to the music building, however, the other structures, now behind and up the hill, seem to give way. The music building's low and expansive mass takes on a clearer form as an extension of the paved forecourt, the ground, out into the woods. Although with an undeniable exterior solidity, imparted by the extensive use of exposed concrete, a glimpse into the interior shows an unexpectedly light space perforated by a number of openings and windows.

In its three decades, the building has achieved the look of being inhabited – that roughness that is the result of years of active and not always careful use. The effects of generations of students can be substantial, and the scratched floors and soiled walls give the sort of appearance that one would expect of a hard-working university building, one that serves a practical rather than ceremonial purpose. Despite the intense use, the building has remained largely unaltered since its construction, with a few exceptions. An entranceway and elevator were altered to meet accessibility requirements and the shelving system of the library has been replaced, although with no changes to the library footprint.¹¹³

¹¹² Giurgola himself believes that the later construction disrupts the music building's original relationship with its site. Giurgola, letter to Brendan Beier, 21 Dec. 2005.

¹¹³ Janet Semler, Director of Planning and Construction, Swarthmore College, e-mail to Brendan Beier, 4 Mar. 2006.

The design of the building has, however, resulted in some more serious challenges. As has been the case at other Mitchell/Giurgola buildings, most notably the Liberty Bell Pavilion, the large number of windows and extensive use of glass has led to some difficulty controlling the interior climate of the building. This was particularly the case in the third floor instrument storage area, where, with its south-west facing windows, the temperature was often 15-20 degrees higher than in the rest of the building, resulting in the cracking of some of the delicate wooden instruments kept in the area. Although the original design called for insulated and semi-reflective glass in the windows, these precautions were not sufficient to prevent the increased temperatures and so interior Mylar shades were installed.¹¹⁴

As well as the glass, the frames of some of the building's windows and doors have posed their own problems. The difficulty in controlling the interior temperature has made the operability of many of the windows a particularly important and useful feature for the comfort of the building's users. Yet the windows, hinged at the top and without any safety mechanisms or springs to assist in their opening, are often unwieldy to manage. The College's director of maintenance suggests that this style of window may have been used to make window-washing easier considering the difficult surrounding terrain.¹¹⁵ Although they may be a safety hazard for the building's regular occupants, none of the windows have yet been replaced.

A few of the building's original ground-floor doors, however, have already been changed. The original design included a center mullion between each set of double doors that was

¹¹⁴ Ralph Thayer, Director of Maintenance, Swarthmore College, e-mail to Brendan Beier, 6 Mar. 2006.

¹¹⁵ Thayer.

removable when large instruments needed to be transported, but that, when in place, aided the acoustical separation of spaces in the building. The need to remove the center mullion in order to move instruments was so frequent, however, that the sets of doors were replaced with a newer, less complicated system. An additional set of doors was inserted in a ground-floor hallway in order to maintain the original level of acoustical separation.

Wood was used extensively throughout the interior of the building, both for its acoustical properties and for its warm and natural appearance that helped further tie the building to its forested surroundings. A dark carpa wood was chosen for the floor of the lobby and was originally laid in parallel strips. The wood absorbed so much moisture during the humid Pennsylvania summers, however, that severe buckling and unevenness of the floor occurred. The floor was ultimately relaid in a herringbone pattern, which was selected to equalize the pressures exerted by expanding floorboards and has largely resolved the problem. The building's air-conditioning system is also now used more extensively during the summer months to help control the level of moisture inside the building.¹¹⁶

Perhaps the most serious problem that has been associated with the building during its existence does not actually affect the building itself, but the surrounding environment that was so important to the building's design. The siting of such a large, impervious structure on a steep slope with little provision for drainage has led to significant run-off problems around and below the building. This run-off has caused erosion along the hillside itself and carries topsoil into the creek at the bottom of the valley. Although entirely legal at the time,

¹¹⁶ Thayer.

the building could not be built under today's environmental ordinances without a more elaborate water management system to help avoid the negative impact on the surrounding environment.¹¹⁷ It is an unfortunate and unexpected consequence of a building that was so carefully designed to harmonize with its natural surroundings. Overall, however, the relatively small number and minor scale of the alterations that have been made to the building are a reflection of the success with which the building's design has met the needs of the Swarthmore music department for the past thirty years.

The Building's Future

Swarthmore does not maintain an extensive master plan, but a land use analysis undertaken in 2002 stated that it was expected that the College would preserve the use of all of its major buildings for the foreseeable future.¹¹⁸ The music building remains an actively used part of the Swarthmore College campus and seems to be generally appreciated by both the music department and the community at large. As such, the Lang music building is not currently threatened with demolition, an insensitive addition or alteration, or any of the other actions that often make preservation seem so urgent. Instead, the relative security of the building at present offers an opportunity to consider and plan for the preservation of the building without the frenzy and heightened emotion that a crisis often brings.

¹¹⁷ Semler.

¹¹⁸ Swarthmore College Land Use Planning Committee, memo to the Swarthmore Borough Planning Commission, Swarthmore, PA, 3 Oct. 2002.

Character-Defining Features

For a building such as this one, which is in no immediate grave danger, it is important to assess the character-defining features of the building and then consider how those features can be preserved in the future if the use or context of the building changes. According to the national model outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act and developed by many subsequent National Park Service publications, which has been adopted on most state and local levels as well, the formal criteria for assessing significance are a building's association with people or events of historic importance, being representative of a particular architectural style, type, or work of an important architect, or being likely to yield archaeological information in the future.¹¹⁹ Some local ordinances expand this list to also acknowledge the importance of structures that have become recognizable symbols of a place or neighborhood – landmarks in the dictionary, rather than preservation, sense of the word.

The Lang music building has not been associated with any world famous musicians or been the site of any musical performances of great consequence – or at least not yet. It can be unequivocally stated that the building's current significance is a result of its architecture. More specifically, the building's architecture is not the first appearance of a new style or building technique, or particularly representative of some type such as a music or classroom building. Instead it is representative of the quality and career of the firm Mitchell/Giurgola. While, from a preservation perspective, it is the building as actually built that is of concern, the physical building's value stems from the extent to which it is a reflection of the concept

¹¹⁹ National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, revised as of July 1, 2004, 36 CFR 60 §60.4.

of the architect. As such, the building's character-defining features are largely a result of its appearance, plan and form, and relationship with the surrounding environment.

The building's exterior appearance is marked by its low, horizontal form, exposed concrete surfaces, and the use of clerestory windows both to emphasize the lightweight steel structure of the roof, in contrast to the heavy concrete walls, and to provide large amounts of natural light in the interior (*Image 30*).¹²⁰ The use of natural light to illuminate and define the interior spaces of the building is an extremely important characteristic of all of Giurgola's work.

The firm's buildings are known for their contextual sensitivity, and this sensitivity is a large part of what makes their buildings so successful. The importance placed on the environment, however, also poses a challenge to the preservation of individual buildings. The woods surrounding the music building were integral to the selection of the building site and to the building's design process.

With an architect like Giurgola and particularly a building like the Lang music building, the use of the building is also an important element of its character. The building's plan was specifically designed for various musical functions, with the emphasis on the building's acoustical qualities and the separation of spaces to allow for different musical performances to be held simultaneously.

¹²⁰ Undated description of Music Building, Swarthmore College, with no source listed. Clippings, 015.IV.046, Mitchell/Giurgola Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

Place within Overall Body of Work

The Lang music building was constructed approximately fifteen years after the creation of the firm. By that time, they had established their guiding design principles and had had several projects during which to refine them. Many of the firm's larger and more recognized projects, such as the Penn Mutual Tower, however, were still to come.

Designed and constructed immediately following the firm's United Way building in Philadelphia, the two projects are both particularly illustrative of the firm's commitment to designing for particular places. The United Way building offers an example of the firm's sensitivity to the needs of a complex site in an urban environment, while the Lang music building is a response not only to the surrounding built environment but to the beautiful natural surroundings, as well. In addition, the United Way headquarters, while certainly a skillful accomplishment of the firm, is an office building, a building type whose program and major features have become essentially standardized in the twentieth century by economic factors. The design and form of the Lang music building, however, is a specific solution to a unique program, emphasizing the sensitivity and skill with which Mitchell/Giurgola acknowledged the needs of their clients and formulated clever and functional solutions.

In addition, the flexibility of the building, and the project's beginning as a multi-part arts complex, is emphasized by the building's potential to be linked to additional arts building as they are built in the future. It is only a part of what was initially planned and what may eventually be. Thus, while the music building is itself unquestionably finished, it still can be seen to reflect Giurgola's theory of building as fragment. Through its extensive use of

exposed concrete for both its structure and exterior appearance, its reliance on natural light for the illumination and definition of interior spaces, its relationship with the particular characteristics of the site, and its form being largely driven by the programmatic needs of the client, the Lang music building stands out as an excellent example of the qualities that distinguish the work of Mitchell/Giurgola.

Challenges and Recommendations

If, as is the case with the Lang music building, it is the building itself, rather than the building's associations with an historic event or person, that is significant, a more rigid approach to the preservation of the building's appearance and materials is appropriate. At the same time, however, buildings, except perhaps those specifically designed as monuments or memorials, are meant to be used, and too rigid an approach to its preservation too early in a building's lifetime could prevent the kinds of changes that are likely to be necessary during the initial phases of the building's use, the sort of trial period that every building needs. Not allowing these changes from the very beginning could place an undue burden on the building's users and prevent the easy use and user appreciation that are valid measures of a building's success.

In the case of the Lang building, however, this trial period has already occurred, and the few alterations mentioned in the previous section were a response to the fact that no architect, however carefully and thoroughly the building is planned, can foresee all issues or potential conflicts. Following these minor alterations, which have not substantially altered the character or integrity of the building design, the building has settled into a comfortable and

stable pattern of use. This does not mean, of course, that the building can be said to be perfectly and eternally stable. From the day of its construction, every building deteriorates at some rate. Additional alterations and repairs will doubtlessly be necessary in the future. In order to preserve the integrity of the building's original concept, however, it is important that these repairs be executed in a manner as close to the original as possible.

The building's windows, both their glass and frames, seem to be a particular problem. Although none of the building's windows have yet been replaced with easier to use or safer models, this is an alteration that is extremely foreseeable. Because the windows are a simple design, future replacement windows that replicate the external appearance while perhaps being hinged at the bottom would allow safer functioning of the windows in the future while not sacrificing the integrity of the building's design. If it is determined that the windows must be replaced, researching window types and costs in advance, while there are no direct threats to the building or any of its components, would allow the College to be aware of and prepare for the costs associated with a high-quality window replacement project, or begin a phased program of replacement that would enable the costs to be spread out over time.

This advance research could also investigate the potential of using different, more technologically advanced types of glass in the windows to help decrease the problem of maintaining a constant interior temperature. Although the installation of Mylar shades on windows in critical areas of the building has seemed to resolve the building's temperature control problems without changing the building's appearance too significantly, it would be

preferable to find a solution to the problem that entirely retains the original transparency of the windows, an important characteristic of the building.

It is easy, from a preservation perspective, to prioritize the building itself over its users. It must be remembered, however, that maintaining the original use of the building is a means of promoting the sustainable preservation of a building and minimizing the number of future alterations that will likely have to be made. Thus, preservationists must be flexible and judicious in the battles they choose to fight. Exacting standards must not be enforced to the point of the building becoming unusable. If, for example, thermal control issues persist, the installation of darker sunshades should be permitted, as long as they are reversible and windows are not blocked up completely, because it is more important that the building continue to be used than that the windows remain completely transparent. Of course, where possible, other options that avoid the issue altogether should be pursued, such as moving the instrument storage to a less thermally volatile location, like a basement choral practice room that was included in the original design at the request of a faculty member but has since fallen into infrequent use.¹²¹

Fortunately, the existing problems of the building are not serious condition issues, and a program of regular maintenance, such as the College employs, will do much to prevent the escalation of any problems caused by the everyday use of the building. It will admittedly be impossible for regular maintenance to entirely prevent the weathering and discoloration of the exposed concrete of the building's exterior. While some might see the mottled grey-

¹²¹ Thayer.

brown appearance of the aged concrete as an attractive or at least appropriate part of the surroundings, suggesting an earthier version of the grey stone prevalent around the campus and paralleling the sun-dappled, organic character of the nearby woods, most modern viewers are probably unlikely to see it as anything other than dirty concrete. Aging concrete has been a problem for many modern buildings, not only people's perceptions of it, but also how to clean and care for it. This is a legitimate challenge facing the preservation of post-war architecture, which made frequent and extensive use of exposed concrete. While conservationists will surely make great strides in discovering new and improved methods of caring for the material in coming years, the issue of perception is a less easily definable and approachable problem. It may be that concrete simply is, objectively, unattractive as it ages, and it will be difficult to convince the general public of the importance of preserving unattractive buildings. Or it could be that the public simply has not yet had enough time to grow accustomed to the appearance of aged concrete and that, as visual references increase and become more common, people will develop emotional associations with old concrete just as often exist with aged wood, brick, and stone. Unfortunately, only time will tell, but until that time, all efforts should be made to maintain the original appearance of exposed concrete in significant buildings of the post-war period. Although the porous nature of concrete lends itself to blotchiness and discoloration, painting concrete, no matter how closely the paint color matches the original, hides many of the characteristic qualities of the material, such as its texture, that are critical components of the overall building design and appearance.

Another critical component of the music building's design, the neighboring woods, which are now somewhat threatened by the erosion caused by the location of the building, should be regularly monitored by specialists capable of assessing the needs of that environment and determining the severity of the erosion problem. A Crum Woods Stewardship Committee, composed of students, faculty, and administrators, helps to ensure that this environment, which is important to the campus overall as well as the Lang music building in particular, remains healthy and protected. While asking the College to dedicate the woods surrounding the music building to the public in perpetuity might be an attractive way of preventing future development on surrounding sites, which would deprive the building of the natural setting it was designed for, current environmental ordinances offer a similar, and already existing, level of protection.

More than any condition issues, the specificity of the building's program, despite the amount of flexibility incorporated in many of the interior spaces, could be the most significant threat to the building's future, as it is an obstacle to the building's reuse as anything other than a musical and instructional facility. The productive future use of the building will, therefore, require a commitment from the College to keep the building in productive future use. University campuses are unique places, and the Lang music building's location on one offers it a mixed range of threats and protections. Universities are frequent patrons of new and controversial architecture, and this appreciation for artistic and intellectual innovation seems to ensure a respect for the future treatment of the important buildings they have paid large sums to have built. At the same time, however ancient and enduring an academic institution may be, the academic world is still subject to great swings of fashion, and universities feel

immense pressures from a broad range of stakeholders, each with very different agendas. These forces, combined with an eternally tight budget, can easily lead to the neglect or devaluing of campus buildings that seem to represent outdated styles or now unpopular ideas.

Although university campuses may be places of intense and often contradictory pressures, university administrations must also realize that buildings are substantial and long-term commitments. This may seem like common sense, and it is, but particularly with buildings of recent construction, it is not uncommon for universities to treat buildings as temporary tools rather than lasting parts of their physical environment. This may be partly a result of the relative ease and economy with which many buildings today can be built. Perhaps a commitment to the building's future should be viewed as the non-negotiable price for the prestige that the institution receives from having commissioned a prominent architect in the first place. Many colleges, of course, do realize this, and Swarthmore has shown every sign of being emotionally and financially invested in the maintenance of the Lang music building.

3. CASE STUDY: THE WALNUT STREET PARKING GARAGE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Building's History

Like many colleges across the nation, the University of Pennsylvania experienced a flurry of construction on campus in the post-war years as a result of the strong economy, swelling enrollments, and growing support for scientific research. Master plans developed for the campus in 1948 and 1960 signaled important shifts toward broader, regional planning for the neighborhood, the increasing importance of the automobile, and a newfound appreciation for modern design. The hiring of several innovative theorists and practitioners such as Robert Geddes, Romaldo Giurgola, Louis I. Kahn, Robert Venturi, and others to teach at the University's graduate school of architecture also contributed to the University's shift away from revival styles toward newer forms of expression.¹²²

In addition to new building styles, the changing times meant that new building types were needed, as well. One component of the University's building campaign was a system of perimeter parking facilities, providing necessary parking space for commuting students, staff, and faculty at the edges of the existing campus.¹²³ Following a trend of hiring architects with connections to the University, Mitchell/Giurgola was hired by the University in 1961 to design a parking structure for the corner of Walnut and 32nd Streets.

¹²² Thomas and Brownlee 111-132.

¹²³ University of Pennsylvania Proposed Off-Street Parking Plan: An Element of the University of Pennsylvania Development Plan; A Report to the President (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Planning Office, 1961).

Complications of the Site

The location selected for the parking garage was a site very much in transition. Construction was nearing completion on the Laboratory for Research on the Structure of Matter designed by Martin, Stewart, Nobel, and Class at the far west end of the block. The laboratory building, one of the earlier modern buildings constructed on campus, broke with University tradition in terms of color as well as style, and used shades of brown and blue as opposed to the red brick and limestone that had been preferred in previous decades.¹²⁴ The rest of the block, however, was an open, paved parking lot that served as the eastern edge of the campus, adjacent to the railroad tracks and industrial buildings closer to the river. The University planned to construct a number of additional buildings on that block of Walnut Street in later years, such as a particle physics lab and a research office tower (*Image 31*). In addition, the city was planning to raise the level of both Walnut and 32nd Streets, which would dramatically alter the appearance of any future building and its relationship to the site.

The Design of the Building

The needs of the University were straightforward, however, providing some simplicity to the project to compensate for the complexity of the site. As the garage was intended for faculty and students who would be storing their cars there for full days or longer, rather than members of the public on short visits or errands, higher capacity was prioritized over quick turnover.¹²⁵ The other primary requirement of the University was simply that the building be economical.

¹²⁴ Thomas and Brownlee 215.

¹²⁵ "University Parking Garage for University of Pennsylvania," *Progressive Architecture* Dec. 1964: 146-151.

Mitchell/Giurgola, whose buildings are generally economical and who rely on form and skillful detailing rather than lavishness to impart elegance to their work, met the restrictions of the University in a number of ways. First, a simple one-way circulation system was planned for the building, with access ramps located only at the ends of the parking decks (*Image 32*). This allowed most of the interior floor area to be used for parking spaces, rather than additional ramps or circulation aids. The simplicity and ease of this circulation system resulted in a less complicated, and therefore less expensive, structure and also required less supervision by staff. As an additional economic measure, steel forms were used for the poured concrete structure, which produced a sufficiently smooth surface on the concrete requiring no further finishes or treatment.

Perhaps most significant of their responses to the needs of the program, the firm designed a structure that was expandable. While only four and a half levels were built, additional floors could be added in the future if the University's needs grew and their budget allowed (*Image 33*). Elevator shafts were included in the original design of the building for the installation of elevators when those additional floors were constructed, and the building's footings were made large enough to support the increased load of additional floors.¹²⁶

In addition to providing for possible future expansion, Mitchell/Giurgola incorporated a great deal of flexibility into their design in other ways, attempting to foresee the various problems that the changing site might create. Preliminary design sketches for the parking garage show that a great deal of attention was paid to the height of the building in relation to

¹²⁶ "University Parking Garage" 146-147.

the presumed heights of the proposed neighboring buildings and to the street level, as a means of predicting and preparing for the visual impacts these changes would have. The raising of 32nd Street would be particularly problematic, because it would block one of the garage's main entrances. To prepare for this, the level above grade was built with the same column spacing as the entrance level, allowing the entrance to be merely shifted upward once the street was raised.¹²⁷

Beyond these technical and programmatic considerations, however, designing for a site that involved so much uncertainty and change must have been particularly challenging for Mitchell/Giurgola, who, in their previous projects, had displayed their interest in contextually sensitive designs. Perhaps driven by this interest, the firm did identify a few fixed contextual elements of the project that affected the design, such as its relationship to the campus building traditions and its proximity to the University's massive athletic facilities, particularly the football stadium, Charles Klauder's 1922 Franklin Field.

Giurgola explicitly acknowledged the influence of the stadium on his own approach to designing the parking structure, and a sketch of the stadium is included as the view from the parking garage in one of the project's presentation drawings.¹²⁸ The influence of the stadium, as well as the existing University building conventions, can be seen in the more traditional color palette Mitchell/Giurgola employed for the parking garage – the dark red brick and the exposed concrete paralleling the red brick, limestone, and concrete of Franklin Field and many other campus buildings. In addition, the series of diamond-shaped openings

¹²⁷ "University Parking Garage" 149.

¹²⁸ Design and presentation drawings, 015.I.A.259-269, Mitchell/Giurgola Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

of the structure of the parking garage is reminiscent of the row of arches along the second level of the stadium's exterior. Finally, both structures have a similar weightiness, stemming at least partly from the structural requirements of both buildings and their comparable functions as, essentially, containers.

Despite the fact that Mitchell/Giurgola acknowledges these as contextual influences, and although some evidence of them is visible in the design, campus tradition and Franklin Field seem to have only minimal relevance to the completed parking garage. The brick used in the garage is, after all, much more purple than that used in older campus buildings and is not laid in Flemish bond, which would have been a more conventional way of referencing tradition. Franklin Field, although clearly providing some influence, is only barely visible from the upper level of the parking garage, and not at all to most pedestrians walking past the garage, undermining its importance as a part of the immediate surroundings of the site. It seems, instead, that the firm was reaching for major contextual elements for a site that had few and was expected to experience great change in the coming years. Perhaps the site's relative lack of an established context explains why this project is more representative of another important characteristic of the firm – their interest, influenced by Kahn, in the expressive possibilities of structure.

As may not be surprising in light of the emphasis placed on the garage's structure in the completed building, a great deal of attention was paid throughout the development of the design to the way in which the various parking levels would be supported. Design sketches show a number of different schemes using more traditional structural systems, although this

structure is emphasized by several series of arches in one sketch. Another sketch shows a façade that, with its large square openings alternating with narrow bands, is reminiscent of the façade designed for the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company Annex discussed in another case study.¹²⁹

The structural system that was actually used, with its massive concrete X-shaped trusses displayed along the east and west façades of the building, provided the structural benefit of being able to create large interior spaces uninterrupted by load-bearing piers (*Images 34 and 35*). This allowed for more room for parking spaces and fewer interior obstacles around which cars would be forced to maneuver. Beyond these practical considerations, however, the exposed structural system also has a significant visual impact, and the expression of the structure in such a dramatic way becomes the primary aesthetic element of the building.

The ramps that connect each parking level and the necessary pedestrian accommodations, such as stair towers and elevator shafts, flank the northern and southern sides of the central parking decks. Unlike the exposed concrete structure of the parking decks, these building components are grouped behind large, flat brick expanses (*Image 36*). The interior organization of these spaces is only hinted at by the slight angles at the top of the brick façades, which follow the levels of the ramps, and the long vertical openings that serve as delineations between the pedestrian and automobile spaces. These vertical openings allow natural light into the interior of the structure and are angled to prevent the light from ever being directly in the eyes of drivers using the ramps. The views through these openings also,

¹²⁹ Design and presentation drawings, 015.I.A.259-269, Mitchell/Giurgola Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

however, emphasize the thinness of the brick façades, in contrast to the solidity of the concrete structure. They appear to be almost like folding screens, propped up against the parking decks for protection and privacy at the more public ends of the structure and allowing through their narrow openings shifting and fragmentary views of the rest of the garage as one walks past.

The completed building won widespread acclaim from a number of diverse sources. Included in *Fortune* magazine's "ten buildings that point the future" in 1965, the Walnut Street parking garage also received a gold medal from the Philadelphia chapter of the AIA in 1964.

The Building Today

The Walnut Street parking garage continues to serve the function for which it was designed and has remained largely unaltered over the years. The surrounding environment, as well, remains similar to what it was when the structure was designed, as few of the additional plans for the site were ever executed. While Walnut Street was raised by the city, 32nd Street never was, and the University did not construct the additional buildings on the block that they had planned. The land adjacent to the parking garage has remained an open parking lot. As such, the site is in the interesting situation of being very similar to what it was when the building was constructed, but very different from what it was expected to be by this time. In particular, the block is less dense than the one for which Giurgola had been ultimately designing.

The building's position, on the corner of an intersection and adjacent to a parking lot, makes it seem physically isolated, perhaps prompting the criticism by Denise Scott Brown, mentioned in a previous chapter, about its object-like appearance. This isolation allows viewers, particularly those from the west, to see and comprehend the building all at once. It also accentuates the size of the building and the drama of its design, conferring on the building a monumental quality that is unusual for the firm's work. This monumentality, combined with the starkness of its design and the roughness of its exposed concrete, give the structure an almost primitive quality, despite its clearly modern materials and design.

The building has had few alterations. In addition to the installation of additional security equipment at its entrances and wire fencing at its exterior openings, minor repair projects were undertaken on the deck and the concrete structure in 1987, 2001, and 2002.¹³⁰ Other than some painted and patched areas of concrete, these projects have not had a major effect on the building's appearance. What has had more of an effect on the appearance of the building, particularly the exposed and unfinished concrete surfaces, is the air pollution that is an inevitable consequence of the building's use and urban location. Darkening caused by the large amounts of car exhaust that the concrete is regularly exposed to, as well as streaks of rust, uneven discoloration, and chips and cracks, have accumulated on the concrete over the years, resulting in an aged and weathered appearance. The brick façades have better withstood the vicissitudes of time and remain smooth, even, and virtually unblemished.

¹³⁰ Walnut Street Parking Garage, Records of the Office of the University Architect, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

The Building's Future

Following its purchase in 2004 of fourteen acres along the Schuylkill River that formerly belonged to the United States Postal Service, the University has embarked on a new master planning campaign that will have a dramatic impact on the campus and the surrounding West Philadelphia neighborhood. Although the master plan has not yet been finalized, it is extremely likely that it will include several new parking lots and parking structures on the newly purchased land.¹³¹ The expansion of the campus, combined with the construction of new parking facilities, will not only make the land closer to the center of campus more desirable for academic or social uses, but may also make existing parking structures more dispensable.

Character-Defining Features

Like warehouses or many other industrial structures, parking garages are, essentially, very stripped down buildings. There are minimal interior finishes and few interior features of any kind. This is particularly true in parking garages, which people are not expected to spend much time inside and are often largely open to the elements. As such, parking garages are little more than their structures and whatever exterior elements contribute to their appearance. In the case of the Walnut Street parking garage, the structure itself is used as the exterior element that defines the character of the garage's appearance.

The poured-in-place concrete structure of the garage is innovative and unusual, but it is not the first example of its kind. Other architects were also experimenting with poured concrete

¹³¹ "University of Pennsylvania Campus Development Plan 2006 Interim Report," *University of Pennsylvania Almanac Supplement* 7 Feb. 2006: I-IV.

and its expressive potential around the same time. Paul Rudolph's Temple Street parking garage in New Haven was completed in 1962 and also takes advantage of the potential of a poured concrete structure, although in a more sculptural way. Giurgola's innovation is in how he exploited an unusual grid-like support system to define the form and character of the building. The brick end pieces of the garage act as a foil to highlight even further the structure of the central section of the parking decks.

To a certain degree, the materials used help tie the building into the larger context of the University and are also characteristic of the work of the firm in general. The openness of the parking decks reveals the supporting nature of the exterior concrete grid, as well as allows natural light into the interior of the parking decks.

Place in the Overall Body of Work

The Walnut Street garage is very different from most of the firm's work. Although, like many of their buildings, it can be considered a fragment, as it is only a piece of the full and expanded design, it nevertheless reads as a complete building. It stands out as a monumental presence among a body of very contextual work. Perhaps the site's lack of an established context gave Giurgola greater freedom to pursue aspects of his architecture that were less outwardly focused. Certainly the building's celebration of structure is a reflection of an internal characteristic of the building, as are the brick façades, which subtly reveal the order of the interior spaces they conceal.

The garage is certainly different from the small-scale subtlety of the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company annex, which was completed only a few years earlier. Some of the

firm's residential projects that were of the same time as the garage, such as the Patzau and White homes, may perhaps display some of the strength and vigor of the parking garage, but they do not have the same structural expressiveness. Perhaps, like at the Wright Brothers visitor center, some part of the design was influenced by the ideas of technology and science that were associated with the development of the University in general at the time and the project in particular, as a relatively new building type developed for an increasingly important invention of the twentieth century. A parking garage, unlike a home or an office building, was an emblem purely of the twentieth century, and the technology, speed, and force that were now a part of everyone's life. Perhaps some of this force and technology are incorporated into the design of the garage, which, in clearly expressing its structure, prioritizes the technological aspect of a building above all others.

The firm designed a second parking garage for the University just a few blocks to the south several years later in 1968 as part of the firm's project for the expansion of the University Museum, which seems an obvious example for comparison with the earlier garage. This second garage, however, shows the firm's more characteristic contextual approach, which seems to have become their preference over the intervening years. Here, too, a concrete parking deck structure is fronted with a brick façade, but the concrete structure is made of pre-cast panels, in a conventional post and beam arrangement, and built around a central light well. Located in a more built-up area of the campus, the parking deck structure is also less visible than at the Walnut Street garage. Instead, the brick façade is most of what a viewer experiences, and it is much more articulated than the one at Walnut Street. Sections of it are curved to follow the interior ramps, and large windows let light into the stairwells.

The later garage, which is directly across the street from Franklin Field, displays the stadium's influence more explicitly. Thomas, for example, believes that a curved shape taken from the cornice of the stadium was adapted as a motif for the profile of part of the parking garage's façade.¹³² This later project, then, reflects the emphasis on contextual sensitivity, historical continuum, and natural light that are characteristic of much of the firm's work. Yet, although the later garage seems to be more representative of the style of the firm and their guiding principles, it lacks the power of the earlier garage, which is itself important for showing the influence of Kahn on Giurgola's own approach as well as being, simply, a good piece of architecture produced by the firm.

Challenges and Recommendations

Modern, particularly post-war, architecture includes a number of building types that were altogether new, products of the innovations and lifestyle changes of the twentieth century. Often these new building types, like drive-through fast food restaurants or parking garages, were a result of the growing importance of the automobile in the daily lives of most Americans. Determining which buildings should be preserved as representatives of these various new building types will require, first, a broader appreciation for these building types as historical resources and therefore worthy of preservation, and also extensive research and context studies that outline the development and key characteristics of each new building type. A thesis solely on the subject of parking garages would be better suited to evaluating how the Walnut Street garage fits into the development of the parking garage in American history, and which of its features might be particularly character-defining and in need of

¹³² Thomas and Brownlee 230.

preservation from that perspective. This thesis, instead, focuses on the parking garage as the work of Mitchell/Giurgola, and an important example of Philadelphia School architecture.

As such, the overall design of the building and the concept behind it are the things that must be preserved. Fortunately, the repairs and alterations that have already occurred have been minor. Some areas of the concrete have been filled with a sealant that, while presumably functional, has not been colored to match the concrete and detracts from the appearance of the garage's main character-defining feature, the structural grid running along its western façade (*Image 37*). Areas of the concrete closer to ground level have also been painted to cover graffiti. While painting concrete is never ideal, because of the loss of the original textural and surface qualities, the painting in some areas has been done more sensitively, using a color that is very close to the original concrete. Other areas, however, have been painted over with white shapes, which have an almost decorative, and extremely inappropriate, effect on the otherwise bare façade (*Image 38*). Alternate means of removing graffiti from the exposed concrete should be investigated to prevent the necessity of painting more sections of the building.

An additional way of obscuring the character-defining features of the building would be to develop the surrounding land so fully that the western façade of the garage is no longer visible. The University still has plans to erect a laboratory building on the site of the open parking lot next to the garage. Any building that is designed for the site, however, should be carefully planned so as not to block views of the garage's unusual and dramatic structure. It is interesting to consider that, if the site had been developed in the way the University

initially intended and of which Mitchell/Giurgola were aware, contemporary viewers would not be able to see the garage as they do now. Full views of the western façade, in particular, would be impossible. Perhaps this would have reduced the monumental, or object-like, quality of the building and made it seem more like the rest of the firm's work, which often must be experienced in glimpses and pieces. As the garage was designed with the knowledge that a building might be built on the adjacent parking lot, it may seem unfair or inappropriate to prevent any building from being constructed on that site in order to preserve views of the parking garage. At the same time, however, the original intentions of the architect, although important, are not the only factor that should guide a preservationist. The building as it was built and has been experienced for the past several decades may have achieved a significance that has little to do with the architect's intentions, or might best be preserved in a way that is contrary to them. This particular issue will depend a great deal on the design of any structure proposed for the site next to the parking garage, and it is hoped that sufficient consideration of and appreciation for the character of the garage will be part of the design selection process.

Similarly, it is also hoped that the University, as owner and steward of the building, will appreciate it not only for its national significance as an important example of the new type of architecture promulgated by the Philadelphia School, but also because of its additional local importance as having been designed by a Philadelphia firm whose principal architects were an alumnus and faculty member of the University. The building is thus physical evidence of the intellectual and artistic contributions made by members of the University to the University and the city. Although a new expanded campus might make this site attractive for

other uses or lessen the need for parking structures in general, the parking garage has a value that extends beyond its function. Adaptively reusing a structure like a parking garage would be a challenge, as it seems especially, and perhaps exclusively, suited to its sole and original function. It would not be impossible, however, as its bearing capacity should be adequate for almost any potential use, including storage. Glass curtain walls, inserted behind the concrete grid to ensure it remains unobstructed visually, would make the interior space more inhabitable, although insulation may be a problem. In addition, the large, open interior spaces offer a great deal of flexibility. Certainly, however, any alteration of the building would require a great deal of effort and expense.

The fact that there is some undeveloped land adjacent to the garage, however, in addition to the fact that additional parking, particularly close to the central campus, will probably always be desirable, may mean that maintaining the original use of the garage will be a viable possibility for the future. The garage's capability for expansion also means that it can grow to serve the needs of the University, and provide a more efficient use of the space it already occupies. As Mitchell/Giurgola designed the structure with the potential to be expanded, and as there is no historic significance to the fact that only part of it was built, it would not be objectionable, from a preservation perspective, to expand the garage according to Mitchell/Giurgola's plans. In fact, the expanded design would give greater proportional prominence to the concrete grid structure and perhaps be even more expressive than the building as originally built.

The broader challenge for preservationists assessing the Walnut Street garage is how to evaluate this building within the firm's overall body of work. As has been mentioned, it is very different from most of their other buildings. It is still good architecture, but is it anomalous? Anomalous may be too strong a word, as the same general themes are present in the garage as in most of their work, although different ones are emphasized. The building places less emphasis on contextual sensitivity and is, instead, more reflective of the influence of Kahn and Giurgola's belief in the fragmentary nature of architecture. Even if the building is anomalous, however, should that matter if it is still good architecture? With twentieth-century firms like Mitchell/Giurgola who produced a large number of buildings, many of which, because of their recentness, are still extant, it is impossible, and perhaps not desirable, to preserve them all. Focusing preservation attention on those buildings that are the best representatives of the firm's characteristic approach seems appropriate in order to preserve the essence of the firm's body of work, but doing so might leave open to demolition or insensitive alteration those interesting other projects that show less known or more experimental sides of the firm. It is important that preservation maintains a full historical record, however, including those buildings that might be unexpected or difficult to classify but that add depth and interest to a culture's architectural legacy. The Walnut Street parking garage is just such a building and, in addition, because its significance is largely self-contained, may be a better candidate for traditional local designation than many other buildings by Mitchell/Giurgola.

4. CASE STUDY: OFFICE BUILDING ANNEX PHILADELPHIA LIFE INSURANCE CO.

The Building's History

The Philadelphia Life Insurance Company, incorporated in Pennsylvania in 1906, was experiencing a period of financial success during the mid-twentieth century. Their existing headquarters, a mid-rise neoclassical office building located just north of Philadelphia's City Hall on Broad Street, had been designed in the Beaux-Arts tradition by Adin Lacey in 1915.¹³³ By the 1960s, the building had become too small to house the growing company adequately and a new headquarters was necessary. The ornate main entranceway of the building, however, had become a recognized symbol of the company, referred to as the "Doorway to Protection."¹³⁴ Substantial alterations to the original existing building were precluded by the company's desire to retain this signature characteristic and so the company looked to neighboring land for room to construct an addition to their original headquarters.

To the immediate north was a very narrow infill building between the insurance company and the large Odd Fellows Temple built in 1893 by Hazlehurst and Huckel. That narrow building had been owned by the life insurance company since 1920, but had not yet been put to constructive use. The company therefore decided to raze the existing building and build on its narrow footprint a structure that would be more integrated into their

¹³³ "Philadelphia Life Insurance Co. Building," *Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission*, online, Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, 6 Mar. 2006.

¹³⁴ "Companies with a Designing Eye," *Fortune* Mar. 1966: 161-162.

original headquarters.¹³⁵ For the project, the company turned to Mitchell/Giurgola, which was then a small firm only a few years old, but which had to their credit the recent success of their visitor center for the Wright Brothers Memorial Park.

The site was challenging not only because of its physical limitations, but also because of its surroundings. The building needed to be an appropriate addition, sympathetic to the insurance company's original building and creating strong visual and functional connections between the two. Squeezed as it was, however, between two much larger and more ornate buildings, the new structure would also need to hold its own against these potentially overwhelming neighbors. The design would have to find a delicate balance between sympathy and assertiveness.

Giurgola's solution displays a marked assuredness and established a number of important design principles that would persist through the rest of his career. The office annex is a design that is clearly modern, yet a fitting addition to the older building (*Image 39*). By maintaining the same proportions and vertical rhythm, the addition appears like an updating or modern translation of the original structure. Although separated from the original by a slight recess in the addition's façade, the similar scale and coloring allow the two buildings to be read as a unit, now with the company's signature front door located directly in the center. A slender railing running in front of the new building emphasizes the fact that the addition has no entrance of its own, and must be accessed through the original headquarters next door. The railing also prevents passersby from leaning against the large glass windows of the

¹³⁵ "Companies with a Designing Eye" 161.

ground floor, windows which are repeated on the three floors above and allow into the building the large amount of natural light that was a characteristic concern of the architect.

Although the addition is physically and financially linked only to the original insurance company building to the south, a relationship also exists between the new building and its unaffiliated neighbor to the north, the Odd Fellows Temple. Because of the similarity in proportions between the original insurance company headquarters and the Odd Fellows Temple, the Mitchell/Giurgola addition also maintains many of the lines and rhythms of the Odd Fellows Temple, particularly the ground floor height. In addition, each building has paired rectangular windows in its central floors and has strong horizontal bands on its façade to counteract the building's overall verticality. The addition thus responds not only to the building it is attached to, but to the broader context of the site. It creates a bridge between the two existing buildings and completes the streetscape. At the same time, however, with its vertical projections extending above the building's roofline on either side of its lot, the building seems to assert its independence and declare its own place on the street.

The building was completed in 1962 for a cost of \$615,000.¹³⁶ It was built on top of the masonry foundation that survived from the structure that previously occupied the site.¹³⁷ Other than the foundation, which was augmented by new steel framing, and some pieces of the original party walls, the rest of the addition is an entirely new building. The adjoining wall of the original company headquarters was modified and, in some areas, removed to provide connections with the new building. The floor levels of the addition were carefully

¹³⁶ "Companies with a Designing Eye" 161.

¹³⁷ Design and construction drawings, 015.I.A.168, Mitchell/Giurgola Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

planned to meet the floors of the original building exactly, maximizing the amount of usable space that was obtained through the construction of the addition.¹³⁸

Just a few years later, Mitchell/Giurgola was asked to plan another addition for the insurance company, this time on land extending east behind the existing two buildings. The addition would have dramatically increased the footprint of building and preliminary design sketches show a building that was visually very similar to the earlier annex and included a courtyard area and accommodations for parking.¹³⁹ Although the project was never built, the insurance company's desire to hire Mitchell/Giurgola again is evidence of the success of their first project for the company.

The Building Today

Following a series of mergers and acquisitions in the 1970s and 1980s, the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company was merged into Consec Life Insurance in 1998.¹⁴⁰ They had sold their headquarters to the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development several years earlier in 1982, who, in turn, sold it in 1986 to a parking company based in New York. The entire complex currently sits vacant, with the large ground floor windows of the Mitchell/Giurgola annex boarded up with plywood (*Image 40*). The ground-level railing has been removed, and the space around the base of the building patched with new concrete. The disuse of several buildings nearby further contributes to the sense of emptiness and neglect in a formerly thriving part of the city's central business district. Nevertheless,

¹³⁸ "Companies with a Designing Eye" 161.

¹³⁹ Design and construction drawings, 015.I.A.168, Mitchell/Giurgola Collection, Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

¹⁴⁰ *Moody's Bank and Finance Manual* (New York: Moody's Investors Service, 2000).

although perhaps a little dingier, the Mitchell/Giurgola addition and its two flanking buildings still retain their original forms and primary features. As such, the relationship between the three remains strong and clearly visible.

Because the company that originally built the building no longer exists and the current owner is inaccessible, little is known about any interior alterations made to the building.

The Building's Future

The Pennsylvania Convention Center is currently located just one block to the east of the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company building. Since the late 1990s, the Convention Center has entertained plans to expand west to Broad Street, potentially threatening the Mitchell/Giurgola building and its immediate context. Although the plans are not finalized and no completed design has been released, rumors have circulated stating that several of the buildings currently on Broad Street, including the office annex, will not be entirely demolished. Instead, their façades and even possibly large portions of the original buildings may be incorporated in the future design of the expanded Convention Center.¹⁴¹ The most recent public presentation of the Convention Center's plans shows the Broad Street face of the Center only from oblique angles and does not specifically address the future of the buildings presently located there. Thus, it is not clear if the Mitchell/Giurgola annex is itself directly threatened. Nevertheless, the context of the building is surely endangered and it is imperative to plan what actions, if any, should be taken.

¹⁴¹ Inga Saffron, "Sorry days for an elegant trio."

Character-Defining Features

As a small office building in a row of larger office buildings along an urban street, the front façade is the only readily visible part of the annex. The interior, according to the original plans, was a simple, open floor plan, whose most notable characteristic was likely its large amount of natural light. Even this light, however, was primarily a result of the design of the façade, with its large paired windows.

The façade is almost an exemplar of the Mitchell/Giurgola approach. Using modern materials and no historicized or applied ornamentation, the design nevertheless relates to and extends the qualities of the neoclassical building to which it is attached through the use of proportions and rhythms. Exploiting the small scale of the site, the building exhibits a refinement and delicacy of touch that are appropriate to its urban setting and successful commercial tenant.

It is interesting that the building is set behind a street-level railing. Although the railing may serve practical functions as discussed above, such as providing a sort of transition between building and street that a stoop or threshold normally would, it nevertheless has some additional social connotations. It makes the building seem like an exhibit or piece of artwork, something to be viewed. It may be a reflection of Giurgola's interest in movement through architecture, being a very clear statement that no movement occurs through this building façade. In any case, it is a distancing element that seems unusual for a firm whose work is generally inviting and accessible.

Place in Overall Body of Work

Although more sleekly modern than many of their later works, the office annex nevertheless declared many of the principles that would guide the firm for several decades. Built economically, with a simple elegance and refined details, the annex shows the firm's willingness to engage with the particular context of a site and the historical continuum that is a part of that context. One of the earlier, if not the earliest, of Giurgola's designs in Philadelphia, the annex is critical to understanding the development of the firm's work.

Challenges and Recommendations

A small, high-quality, flexible office space located in the heart of central Philadelphia, the Mitchell/Giurgola annex to the Philadelphia Life Insurance Company building seems to be an ideal candidate for reuse as office or retail space, most likely for small or young companies that do not require large floor plates and are looking for unique spaces. The extensive natural light and the quality of the elegant design are features that will always be desirable. As the building is fully integrated with the neighboring older structure, it might be difficult to separate the spaces – although the annex does have its own staircases and restrooms. Adding a front entrance to the building would disrupt its symmetry, but it might be possible to insert a glass door in one of the ground-floor windows without losing much of the building's overall character. Doing so would certainly bring the building more into the life of the street, but would be a dramatic change to its original character. It would be preferable to find a tenant who would take both of the buildings, helping to maintain the link between the two, for it is only with the continued existence of the original life insurance

company headquarters that the design of the Mitchell/Giurgola annex can really be appreciated.

Unfortunately, the current owner of the buildings is letting them sit abandoned, waiting, perhaps, to be bought out by the Convention Center as it begins its expansion. The challenge for this particular building, then, is not to find a way to continue using it or find a reuse. Instead, the challenge is to find a way to retain the building's integrity in the face of the impending Convention Center expansion.

Designation as a local landmark on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places would be the conventional means of protecting such a building. Because the Philadelphia Register does not have an age requirement, as the National Register does, and because Mitchell/Giurgola has had such an undeniable local impact, it might seem that achieving designation would not be difficult. As in any city, however, politics will always have a role in decisions made by the municipal government, and the building's location in the path of the Convention Center's expansion could potentially be an obstacle to its designation.

Even the protection offered by designation is not absolute, however. There is the added complication, with this building, of determining what should be designated – just the annex, the annex and the original headquarters, or the annex, the original headquarters, and the Odd Fellows Temple that also has a relationship with the annex. Even if all three were designated, alterations could still be made to them if the alterations were approved by the Historical Commission's review board, although these alterations would presumably only be approved if they were sensitive to the character of the designated buildings.

It is possible, however, that the expansion of the Convention Center could result in alterations to the buildings that are not wholly inappropriate, even without the traditional safeguard of designation. There has been some outcry from the architectural and historical community, and the Convention Center's supposed desire to incorporate many of the existing buildings in their design perhaps reveals some willingness to compromise. Although façadism is generally not considered valid preservation practice, as it leaves only the face of a building and destroys most of its historic fabric and character, the Mitchell/Giurgola annex might be a case where façadism is acceptable. It is the façade of the building, after all, that is its most distinguishing feature. The structure, construction, and materials of the building are not notable, and are unlikely to yield substantial information in the future.

Giurgola himself used an existing historic façade in his Penn Mutual Tower as a way of illustrating the evolving nature of urban locations. Preserving the façades of the three related buildings on North Broad Street might be another opportunity to do so, acknowledging the contributions of the recent past to the historical continuum of the city.¹⁴² The relationship between the three buildings, however, could be undermined by obvious connections created between them as a result of the new Convention Center. The success of Mitchell/Giurgola's design is a result of the relationship that is created by the use of subtle architectural features and design elements, and it would be unfortunate to lose this subtlety by, for example, incorporating all three existing façades into one large, new façade. As at the Penn Mutual Tower, the new Convention Center should be designed with some sort of separation or setback that allows the original streetscape created by these three

¹⁴² The large size of the Odd Fellows Temple building may admittedly be a challenge to the reuse of its façade.

buildings to be read independently, preserving the character of the Mitchell/Giurgola design, if not necessarily its fabric or function.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Over one hundred buildings were completed by Mitchell/Giurgola Associates before Giurgola left the United States for Australia in the 1980s, not including their many temporary structures, competition entries, and unbuilt projects. It is unlikely that sufficient resources could ever be found to actively preserve all of these buildings. Determining which buildings out of the firm's body of work should be prioritized is the only way to deal with the prolific output of many twentieth century architectural firms, much of which, because of its recentness, is still extant. Focusing preservation attention on selected buildings will greatly increase their chances of being preserved, rather than spreading preservation's authority and measures of protection too much to remain effective. This thesis is the beginning of the research and context study necessary for gaining the understanding of Mitchell/Giurgola and their work that must inform a more exhaustive study of their buildings.

It was determined through the research and writing of the case studies that the three buildings discussed are all deserving of preservation attention, although different actions are appropriate for each. Thus while all of the buildings are significant representatives of the firm's work, the case studies demonstrate the numerous differences between the three and the importance of studying each building individually in order to understand its significance and place in the firm's body of work. While there are overarching themes that provide common elements between the buildings, the firm's deliberate avoidance of a universal approach to creating architecture means that there are few specific preservation

recommendations that will be applicable to the firm's body of work as a whole. Instead, the information provided by the preceding chapters reveals a number of broader issues that are central to considering the preservation of the work of Mitchell/Giurgola – issues that relate specifically and solely to the work of Mitchell/Giurgola, and broader issues that apply to the firm's work as both post-war architecture and architecture of the recent past.

The intention of the architect, when definitively known, is something that must be considered when planning for the preservation of that architect's work. It is not, however, the sole consideration. Giurgola's belief that buildings should be ever-evolving parts of their surroundings might imply that any alteration or addition, or even possibly demolition, would be an extension of the architect's own view of the importance and inevitability of change in a landscape. While this theory influenced the design concepts that make Mitchell/Giurgola's buildings significant, there is an important moment, upon the project's completion, when the building becomes part of the community's historical record, and no longer solely the realization of the architect's original intention. Therefore, additional factors become necessary considerations in the planning for these buildings' preservation, factors such as the interests of the various stakeholder groups of the community, as well as historical circumstances that may have affected the building as built, and the role it has played and the way it has been perceived throughout the building's lifetime, however brief.

These are, of course, considerations for the preservation of any building. Perhaps the flexibility and flux that Giurgola perceived to be vital characteristics of built environments, and which characterized his own treatment of historic buildings, should be adopted to a

certain extent by preservationists, to ensure that Giurgola's buildings remain used and dynamic parts of their surroundings. At the same time that a traditionally rigid approach might be inappropriate, however, being too lenient about changes that are made to Giurgola's buildings will eventually obscure the architect's original concepts and remove that link from the historical continuum that was also important to Mitchell/Giurgola.

This historic continuum is part of every site as a result of the layers of use, architecture, and landscape features unique to that location. As has been shown in the preceding case studies, Mitchell/Giurgola was particularly adept at creating designs that were direct and sensitive responses to these contextual qualities, an approach that differentiated the firm from more orthodox practitioners of Modernism and characterized them as members of the Philadelphia School. While this approach was instrumental to the success and quality of many of their buildings, it also has proven to be, and will remain, a challenge to the preservation of their work. Although the preservation field long ago acknowledged the importance of surroundings as contributors to the character of a building, and so began designating historic districts as well as individual landmarks, there is only so far the regulatory scope of preservation can expand before it becomes ungainly or inappropriate.

The preservation field has come to recognize that traditional landmark or district designation is often insufficient to ensure the protection of significant buildings and places. The Walnut Street parking garage is a rare example of a Mitchell/Giurgola building whose significance may be adequately preserved by landmark designation. At the same time, being designated may potentially prevent expansion of the garage that could help maintain the viability and

use of the structure in future years. Certainly in the case of the Lang music building it is beyond the authority and capability of a preservationist to control the woods surrounding the building, however important a part of the building's context as those woods may be. Instead, contemporary approaches to preservation often require the appreciation and participation of a number of different stakeholder groups, leading to an interdisciplinary approach that seems appropriate to the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Ultimately, it is only this collaboration with other specialists and cooperation with the numerous interested groups, as well as a certain amount of luck, that can result in the preservation of all qualities of a site and its surroundings. This would also be a fitting reflection of Giurgola's own belief in the "interdependence of human institutions" as "the very substance of the city."¹⁴³

While it does not offer guarantees in the way that designation and easements do, education is an equally important tool, and responsibility, of the preservationist, particularly for inspiring the public appreciation that will be necessary for the long-term preservation of Mitchell/Giurgola's buildings. It is often difficult to explain to the public the importance of preserving buildings that do not conform to conventional definitions of historic or beautiful, but it will also always be the responsibility of the preservationist to do so. This public perception challenge is perhaps exacerbated in cases of preserving buildings from the recent past. To some, the expertise of the preservationist seems undermined when the buildings in question are still part of living memory, and the general public has a right, however limited, to consider themselves knowledgeable about these buildings. The specialized knowledge of the preservationist is, of course, very different from the knowledge of the general public, but

¹⁴³ Giurgola, "Partial Vision" 111.

only additional education, about the nature of preservation as well as the buildings themselves, will make this apparent and accepted.

It is hoped that the accessibility and sense of invitation that are part of most of Mitchell/Giurgola's work will help instill in the public the appreciation that makes the buildings' preservation both possible and worthwhile, for the firm was always particularly concerned with their buildings' users. As well as being responsive to the qualities of the site, Mitchell/Giurgola's buildings were also responsive to the needs of their client and program. This is a quality of much modern and post-war architecture, when building types became increasingly differentiated in order to meet the needs of increasingly specific programs. While such buildings were very well suited to the needs of their original occupants, they face the danger of becoming obsolete or irrelevant if their occupants, or their occupants' needs, change. The case of the Liberty Bell Pavilion highlights the fact that when the program of such a specific building changes, demolition may shortly follow.

The methods of a preservationist seeking to preserve a significant building, working essentially for the public good, should not be dictated solely by the private interests of the building's occupants. At the same time, however, a method of preservation that does not acknowledge these practical factors cannot result in a realistic and long-term solution. The house museum approach is largely irrelevant for buildings of the recent past, as, for example, a re-creation of a late twentieth century office building would have little educational value for today's audiences. In addition, the scale of many post-war buildings greatly decreases the financial feasibility of maintaining such large structures as museums. Except for perhaps the

most significant buildings, they will need to continue producing income in order to be sustainable and not be perceived as wasteful. Continuing the original use of these buildings, or as similar a use as possible, is a means of maintaining the building's role and participation in a community, and in a way that potentially minimizes the amount of alterations that must be made to it.

The recentness of these buildings may, in fact, prove to be a benefit in this regard, as their original uses are likely to be still viable in today's world. There will not be, for example, the challenge of maintaining an active smithy in a community that has not needed one for many decades. It is likely that concert halls, office buildings, and parking garages will be needed for many years to come. The importance of maintaining a building's original use is already recognized by many preservation organizations, but perhaps the issue of use should be particularly prioritized for post-war buildings. Acknowledging the importance of a concept of authenticity, or continuity, of use, and being more flexible about other considerations that may enable the continuation of that use, would result in a preservation that is more relevant to this specific group of buildings and to the current day. At the same time, however, prioritizing active use of post-war buildings may result in a faster rate of deterioration for many of the building's materials. While these materials might not currently have historic significance or educational potential, they may in the future and so pursuing a form of preservation more relevant to the present must be careful not to undermine the building's future preservation value.

Discussion of the unique physical properties of the materials first or characteristically used in post-war architecture, and how best to conserve them, is the subject for another thesis. Yet the materials of post-war architecture also offer theoretical, as well as scientific, challenges for the preservationist. Mitchell/Giurgola used many traditional building materials in their designs, primarily brick and wood, but also experimented with the possibilities offered by modern materials, such as aluminum panels and, most characteristically, exposed concrete. The appearance of these modern materials as they age has already prompted some building owners to paint aged and soiled concrete to give it a fresher appearance, as has occurred at the United Fund building and the Walnut Street parking garage. It is undeniable that this changes the character of the buildings. It is not so certain, however, that the viewpoint that provoked these alterations will ever change. Questions such as whether modern materials will age in a way that contemporary viewers will ever find attractive, or whether the public will tolerate an aged appearance in modern buildings that were built to be futuristic and perpetually new, can only be answered by time.

While it is the conceptual and design value of landmarks of the recent past, such as many buildings by Mitchell/Giurgola, that is often important today, that significance is likely to change over time. Substituting failing materials in modern buildings may seem acceptable because the recentness of their construction may mean that the same or similar materials are still available, and replacing materials will better preserve the original design concept. At the same time, however, extensive substitution of materials may undermine the future archaeological value of the building, providing a short-sighted solution for what should be a long-term field.

It cannot be known, after all, what significance, or additional significance, a building may attain in the future. Perhaps the way to deal with the lack of temporal distance, and therefore perspective, that is an incontrovertible obstacle to preserving architecture of the recent past is to begin addressing the preservation of the recent past slowly, necessarily following an approach to preservation now considered old-fashioned that focuses on, for example, architectural masterworks rather than the vernacular. It is currently fashionable in the preservation field to address a number of building types and issues that were once considered beyond the purview of preservationists, such as vernacular buildings, architecture representing aspects of popular culture, and even community planning issues. While it is important for preservationists to continue valuing the built heritage of all cultural groups and the architectural legacy of all kinds of social movements, these are more liable to being the things that only time can reveal. What may be more immediately obvious are the important works of architecture, which have significance primarily because of their original concept rather than other factors which necessarily can only accrue over time. Taking decisive preservation steps, like designation, for architecture from the recent past should be viewed as an early opportunity to protect significant buildings, not the sole opportunity. Just as the field overall has moved from only addressing the high-style buildings by prominent architects to architecture that is reflective of broader social phenomena, the preservation of the recent past should follow a similar trajectory as the recent past turns into the distant, and more understood, past.

Perhaps the ultimate challenge involved in preserving the recent past is the amount of pressure that is involved. Starting the preservation process so early in the building's lifetime

provides an unparalleled opportunity to do it “right.” In few fields, however, is there an absolutely right way of doing things, particularly in a field as young as preservation, which is constantly learning and changing. Even though it is now generally accepted that preservation is about managing change rather than preventing it, any conscious manipulation or control, such as preservation represents, must necessarily alter the building’s character as an objective and natural record of history. Beginning to preserve a building so shortly after it was completed will possibly prevent major losses, but may also prevent the haphazard, unexpected, organic developments that so often give buildings the history and character that are what the preservation field has always been trying to maintain. It is important, therefore, that preservation of the recent past remains extremely selective and perhaps more flexible than the preservation of buildings from more distant periods.

These limitations seem to be appropriate compensation for the benefits that preserving buildings from the recent past entails – for there are benefits, as well as challenges. As has been mentioned, there is the opportunity to choose the best buildings rather than the remaining buildings, to begin preservation before the buildings have experienced much alteration, and even a greater chance of including the input of the original architect as a potential consideration in the preservation process. In addition, there is the opportunity to renew preservation’s focus on the buildings themselves, the foundation of the field, but one which is sometimes eclipsed by a contemporary emphasis on broader urban planning issues.

It must always be remembered that the recent past will not be recent forever, and that the preservation of any building should be an iterative process, reassessing the actions taken and

the actions necessary as the buildings and the people who use them change over time. A judicious approach to the preservation of the recent past will ensure that most of the preserving of buildings from that time period will occur in the future, when people are inevitably more capable of doing so. At that point, the post-war years will simply be one more time period. The preservation of post-war architecture, as separate from the preservation of the recent past, does not or should not intrinsically differ from the preservation of any other time period. Certainly the post-war period has its own particular architectural theories, attitudes, materials, and approaches. This statement, however, is equally true of virtually all other historical periods.

Despite the increasingly site-specific approaches currently adopted for the preservation of individual buildings, one thing remains universally true of appropriate preservation practice: it must be founded upon extensive research and sensitive understanding. This thesis is a step toward a greater appreciation of the work of Mitchell/Giurgola and an attempt at understanding the specific and particular preservation challenges their buildings may face.

IMAGES

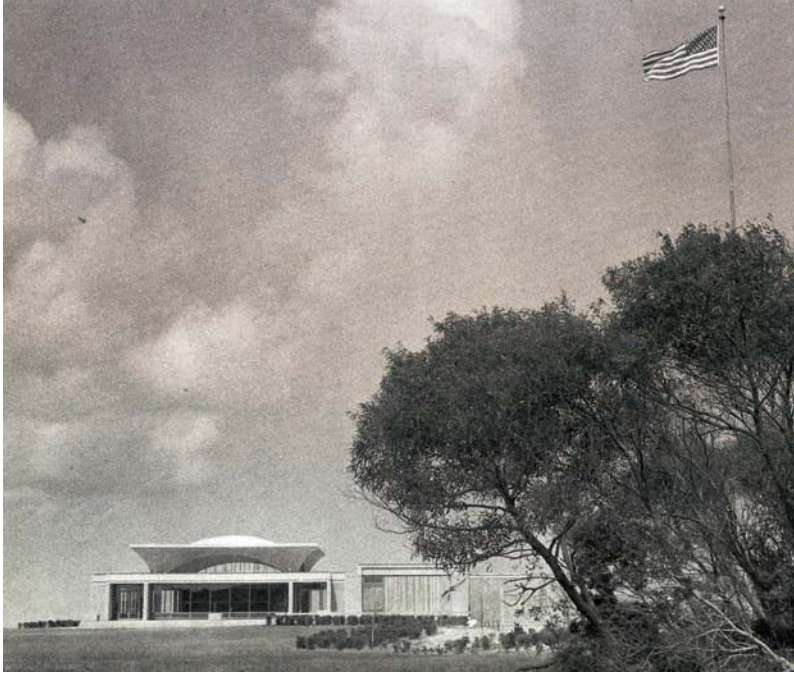


Image 1: Wright Brothers Memorial Visitor Center



Image 2: Academy of the New Church, Administration Building

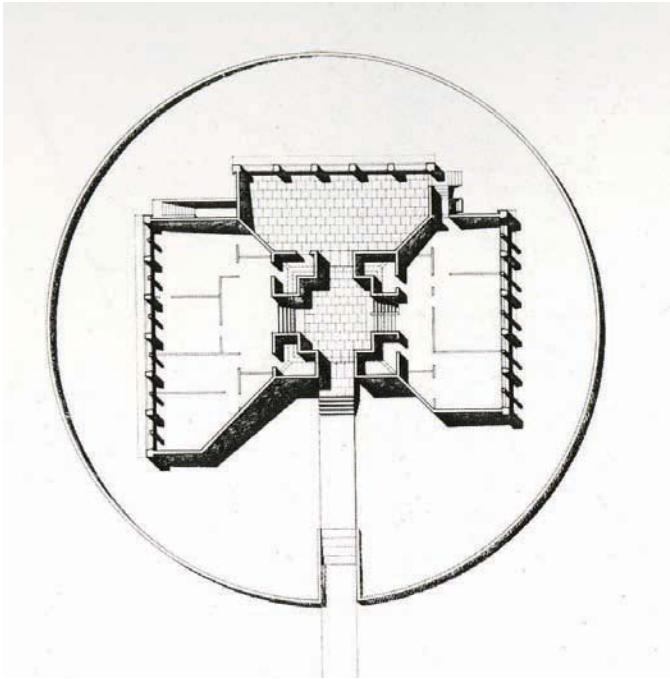


Image 3: Plan of the Administration Building



Image 4: Campus of American College



Image 5: University of Pennsylvania Museum Academic Wing



Image 6: Courtyard of the museum academic wing

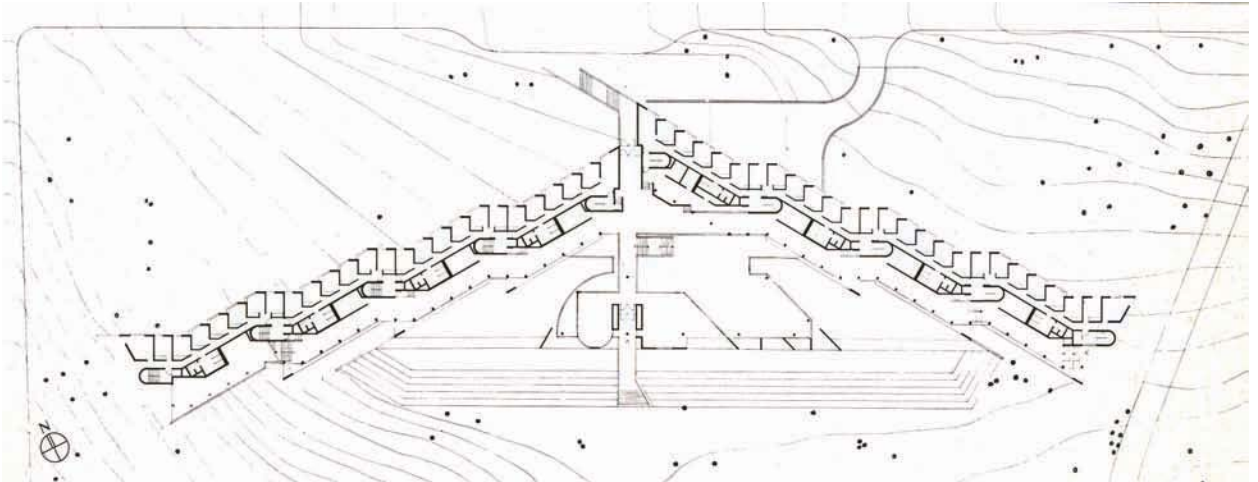


Image 7: Plan of Mission Park Residential Houses, Williams College

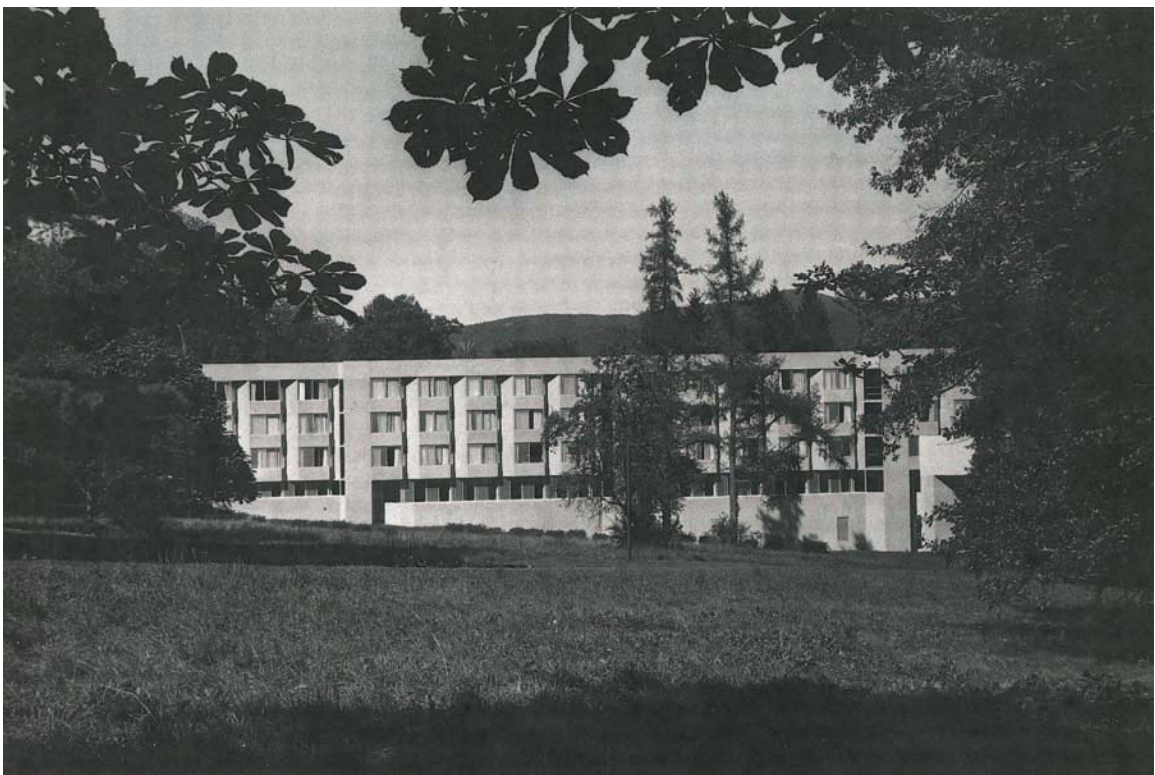


Image 8: Exterior of Mission Park Residential Houses, Williams College

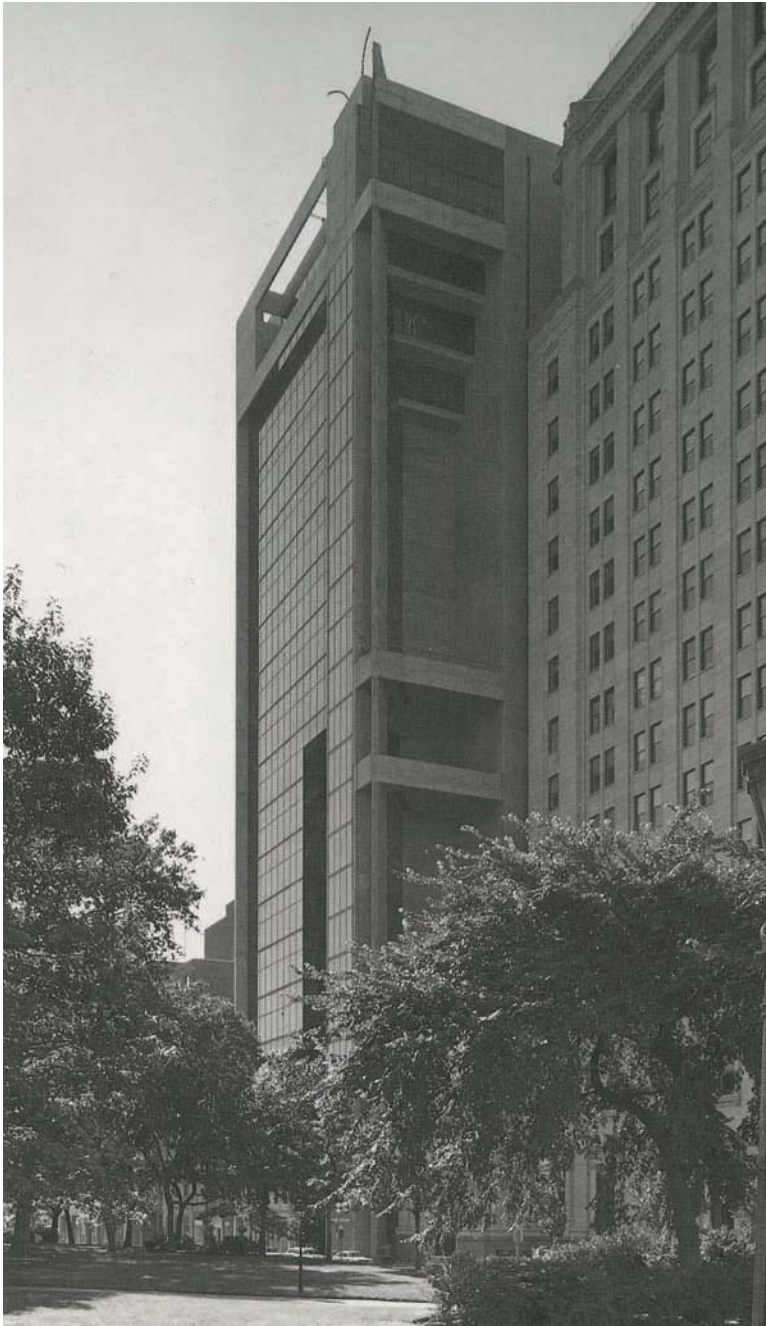


Image 9: Penn Mutual Tower



Image 10: Insurance Company of North America Tower



Images 11 and 12: Different facades of the United Way building



Image 13: Penn Mutual Tower as the backdrop for Independence Hall,
with Liberty Bell Pavilion in front

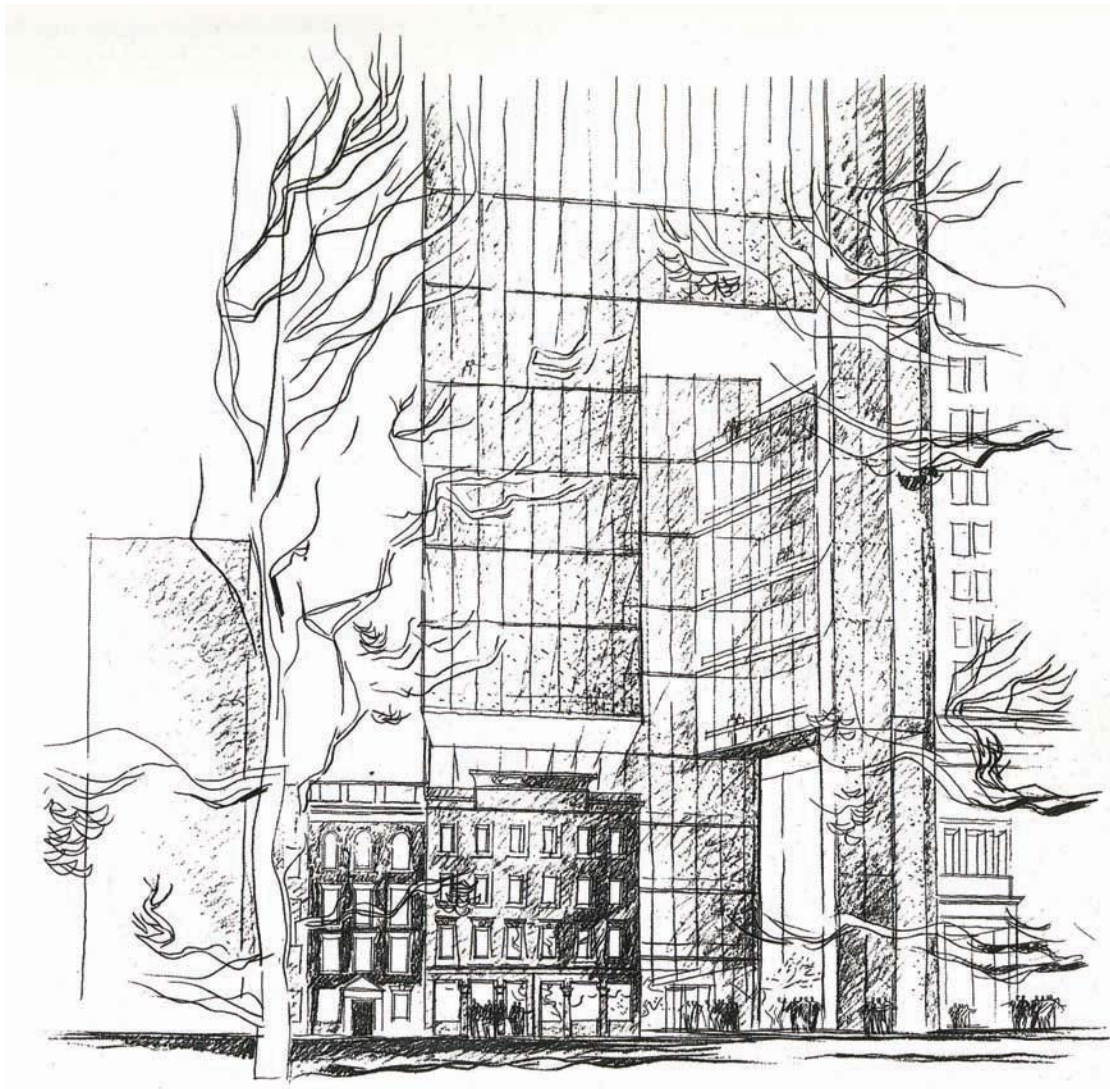


Image 14: Presentation drawing of Penn Mutual Tower, showing early nineteenth century façade incorporated into the design



Image 15: Interior of Liberty Bell Pavilion

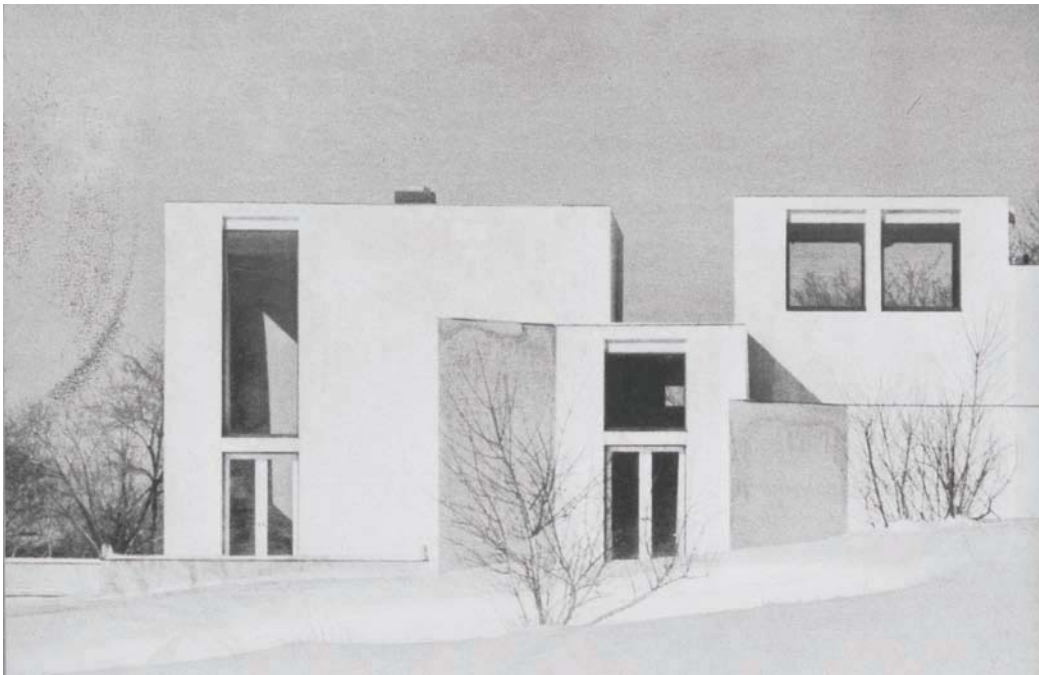


Image 16: Exterior of White residence



Image 17: Exterior of Dayton residence

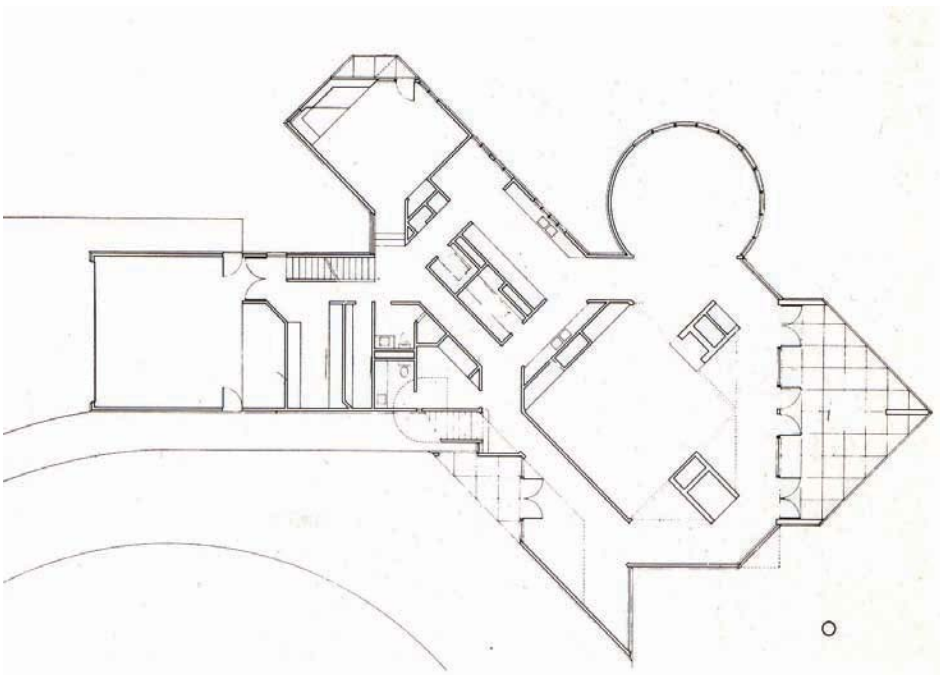


Image 18: Plan of Dayton residence



Image 19: Exterior of Kasperson residence



Image 20: Exterior of Newman residence

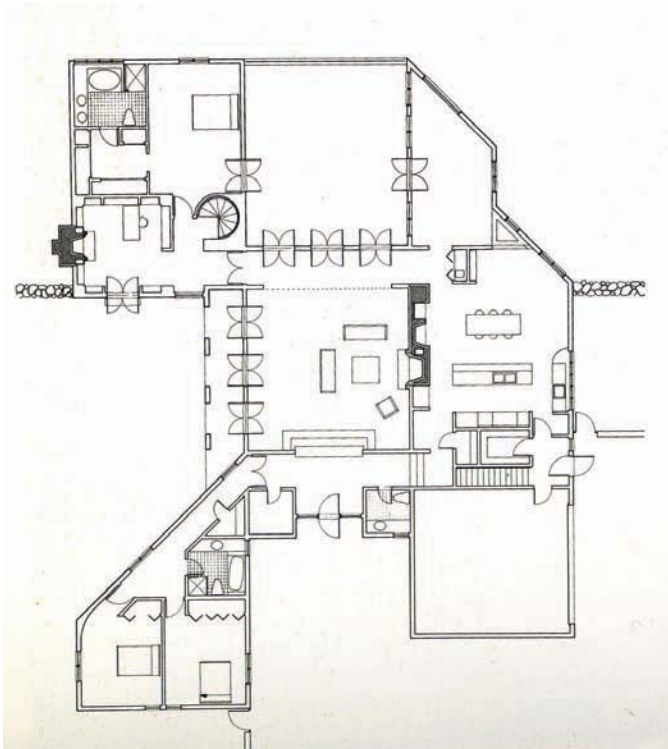


Image 21: Plan of Newman residence

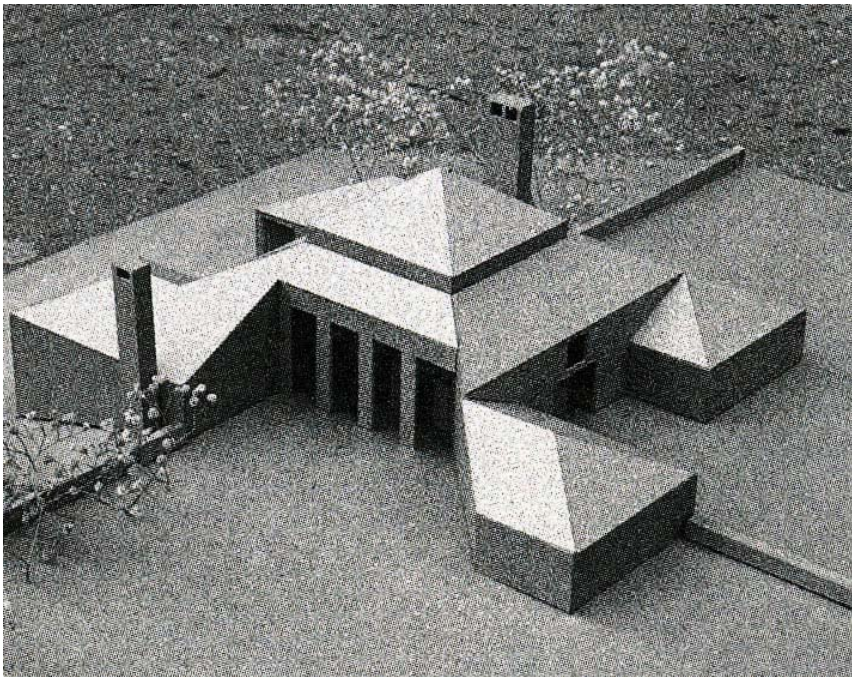


Image 22: Model of Newman residence



Image 23: Exterior of Roberts residence



Image 24: Exterior of Zebooker residence



Image 25: Independence National Historical Park maintenance facility

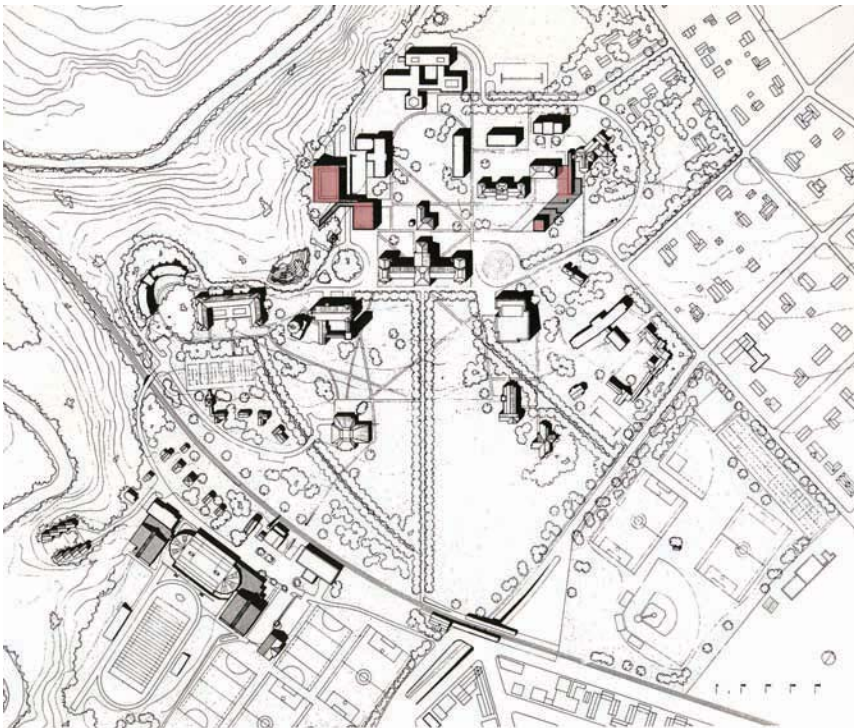


Image 26: Location of proposed arts buildings on Swarthmore campus

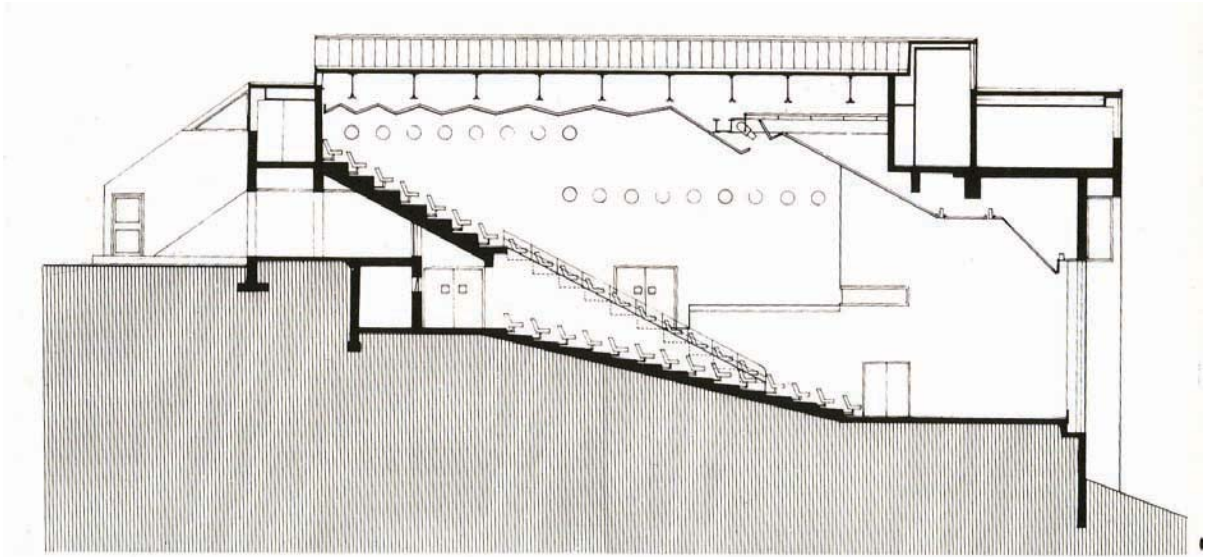


Image 27: Section of Lang music building



Image 28: Interior of main auditorium showing the unusual arrangement of seats



Image 29: Glass wall in main auditorium

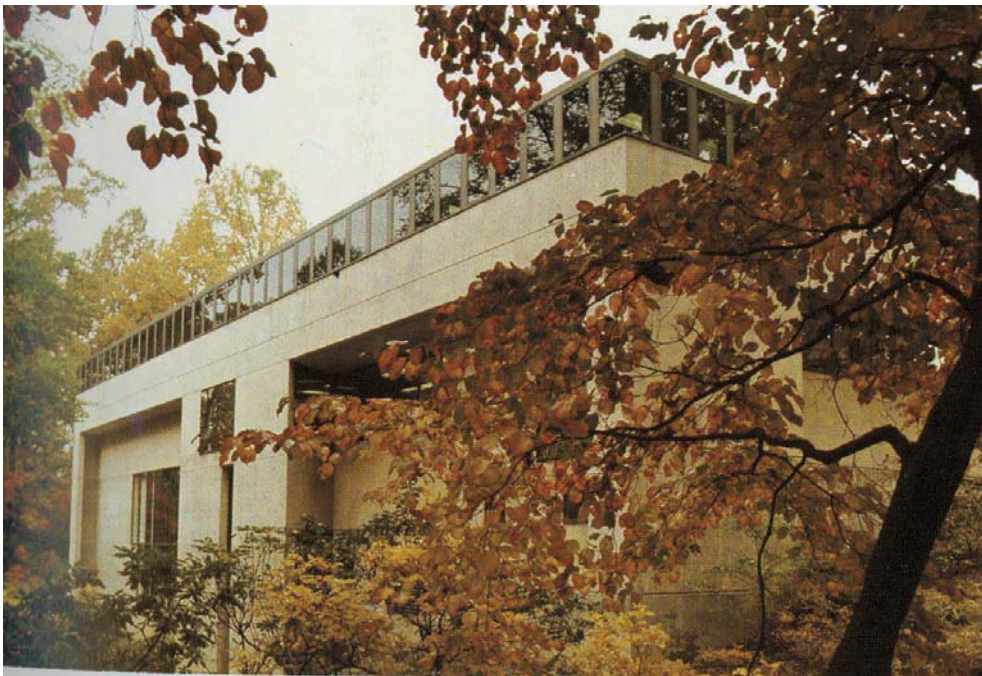


Image 30: Lang music building, showing its exterior features and relationship with surrounding woods

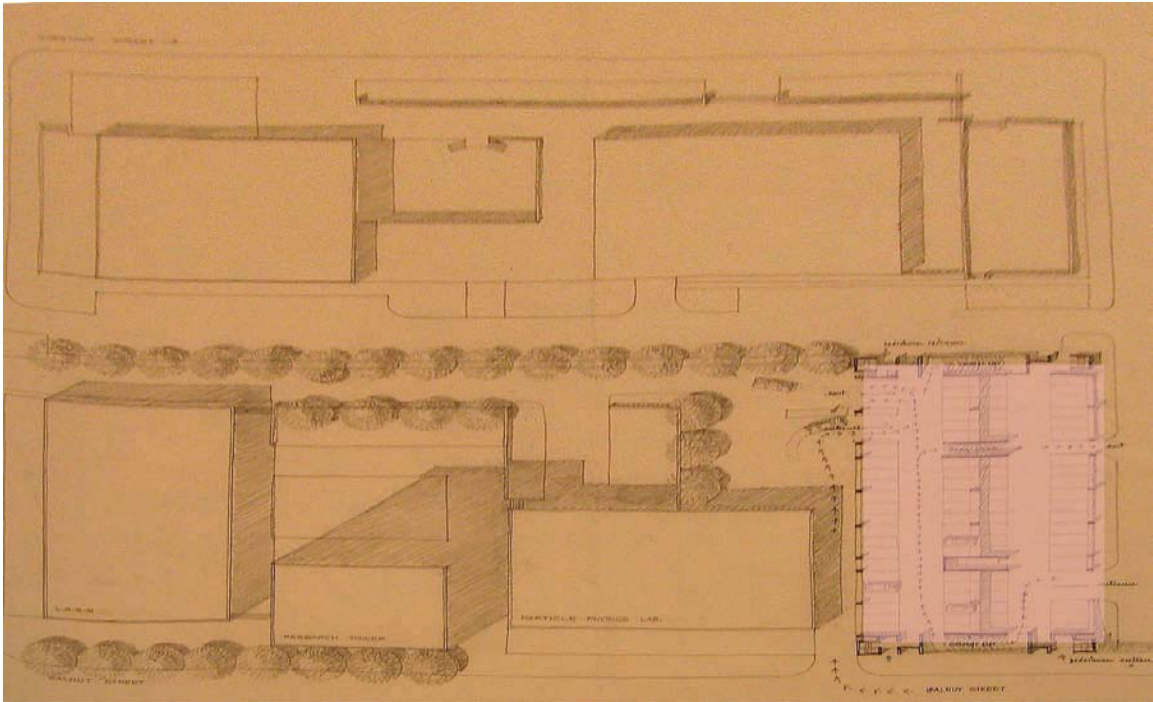


Image 31: Site plan for garage (highlighted), showing locations of other buildings proposed by the University

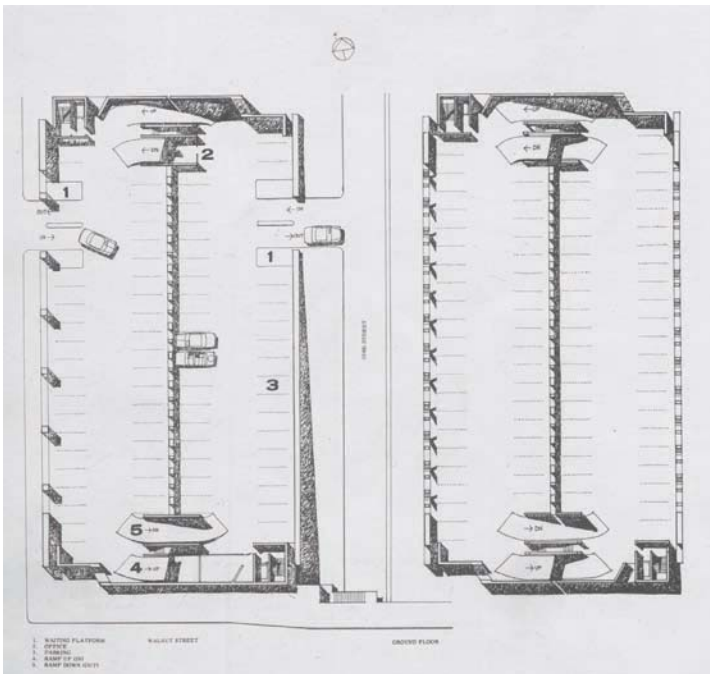


Image 32: Plan of Walnut Street garage

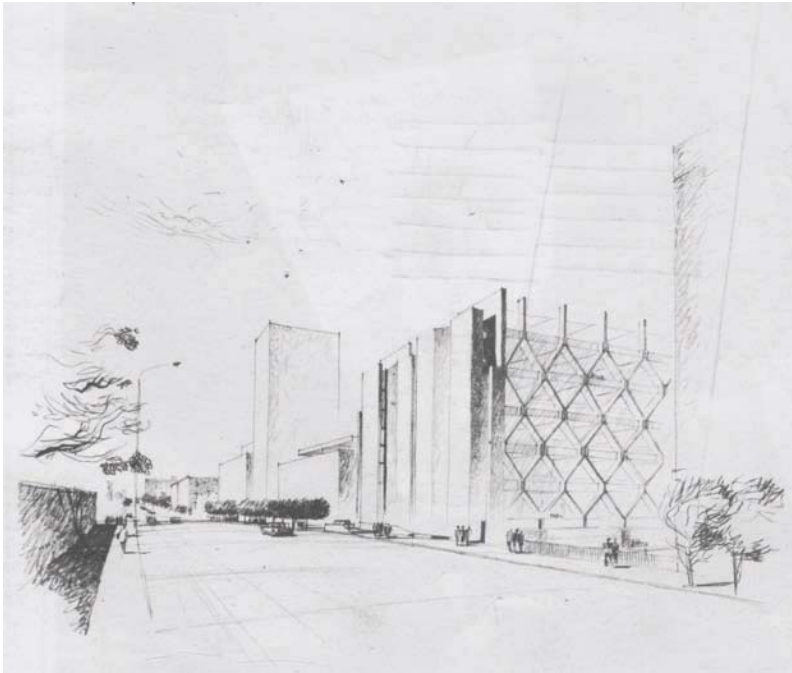


Image 33: Presentation drawing of south and east façades of the garage

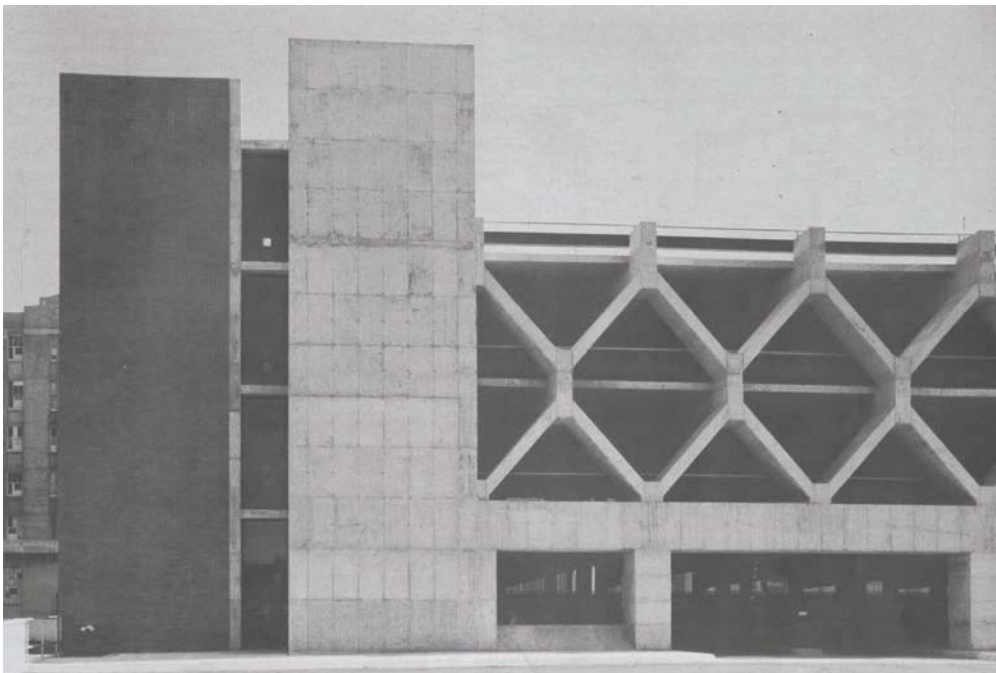


Image 34: Exterior of Walnut Street garage showing the concrete grid structure



Image 35: View of concrete grid from the interior of the garage

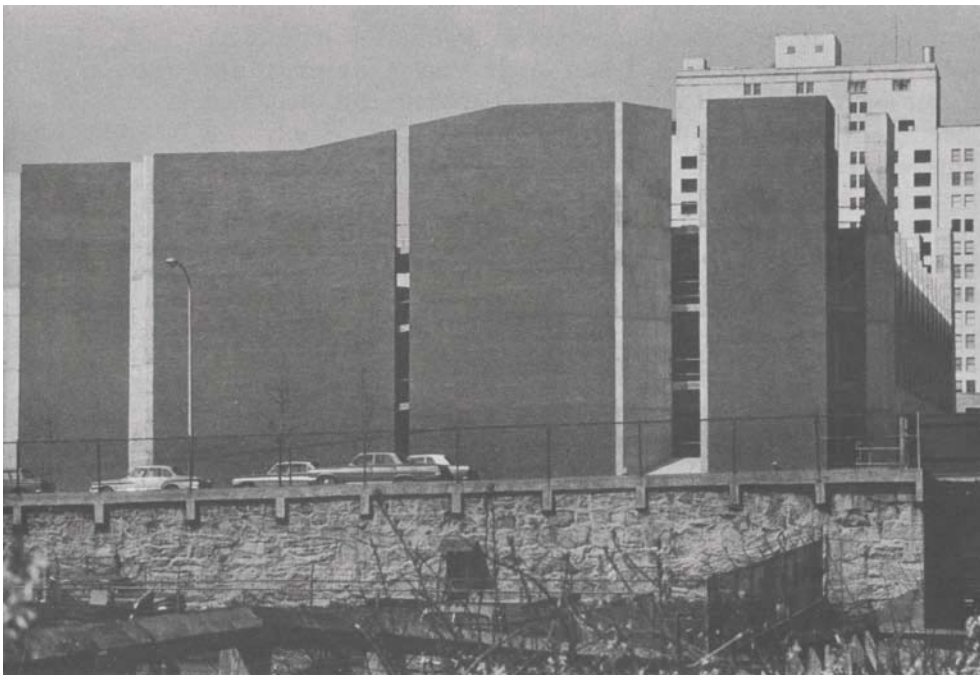


Image 36: Brick façade of garage along Walnut Street



Image 37: Current appearance of concrete grid structure



Image 38: Painted sections of exposed concrete at Walnut Street garage



Image 39: Office annex to Philadelphia Life Insurance Company headquarters



Image 40: Current condition of office annex

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APPENDIX A:

MITCHELL/GIURGOLA ASSOCIATES EDITED PROJECT LIST

The attached project list was compiled from: *Mitchell/Giurgola Architects*; www.philadelphiabuildings.org; and the Mitchell/Giurgola Collection at the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

For the scope of this thesis, the list was then edited to include only those projects that were built in the greater Philadelphia area prior to 1985.

Mitchell/Giurgola Architects Edited Project List

Project Name	Year	City	State
Mitchell Residence	1958	Lafayette Hill	PA
Offices and Warehouse	1959	Valley Forge	PA
Public Health Center No. 9	1959	Philadelphia	PA
Penn Flex	1959	US Route 30	PA
Eastern Express Terminal	1960	Philadelphia	PA
Heubner Hall	1961	Bryn Mawr	PA
Mednick Residence	1961	Philadelphia	PA
Philadelphia Life Insurance Company	1962	Philadelphia	PA
Childs Hall, Academy of the New Church	1962	Bryn Athyn	PA
Pitcairn Hall, Academy of the New Church	1963	Bryn Athyn	PA
Andale Company Office Building	1963	Lansdale	PA
Frankford Arsenal Metrology Laboratories	1963	Philadelphia	PA
Patzau Residence	1963	Philadelphia	PA
Walnut Street Parking Garage	1963	Philadelphia	PA
White Residence	1963	Chestnut Hill	PA
Garage	1964	Bryn Mawr	PA
Solmssen Residence	1964-65	Philadelphia	PA
Myrick Pavilion	1965	Bryn Mawr	PA
Perkins Residence	1966	Philadelphia	PA
McCahan Hall	1966	Bryn Mawr	PA
Curriculum Building, additions/alterations	1967	Bryn Mawr	PA
Roberts Residence	1968	Philadelphia	PA
Zebooker Residence	1968	Philadelphia	PA
Museum Parking Garage	1970	Philadelphia	PA
Subway Concourse Entrance	1971	Philadelphia	PA