

## Summary

Instant City  
Jon Jerde  
p. 69

During the 1960s and 1970s, shopping center design was both excellent and poor. From an industry standpoint, there were no problems with design in early shopping centers. No matter what the center looked like, it drew traffic and retailers. But these designs were poorly done. They did not address the concerns of the consumers, the constant reusers of the mall. We have since found out that the way a mall competitively wins in this industry is when its design "talks" to the consumer. The challenge was to marry the two extremes. Back then, our culture was totally consumer oriented. Consumption was the whole reason you got out of bed in the morning. So the shopping center was not designed to be an enduring moment in your life; it was built to be a convenience. Issues such as easy-in and easy-out, parking and store location were all important. People wanted to get in quickly, buy and get home. In some ways, this is still true today.

Our culture has swung around, however. We have gone from a suburban culture that liked to eat in the backyard and entertain at the country club to a public culture that likes to see and be seen, to go out, hang out, watch and window shop.

We almost lost the communal aspect of life when we all pushed to the suburbs. One of the few vestigial lights of our former communal life was the shopping center. And now that the newness has worn off suburban living and people are returning to former cycles of life, shopping centers are pointing the way.

Horton Plaza was my first big project as an independent designer. I wanted to design a center that would be an experiential place. I wanted to build a center so special that it would offer a great human experience.

The idea was to build a fabulous consumer palace, something on the scale of Saville Row in London, the Left Bank in Paris or Venice, Italy. Someplace where the consumer could have a similar experience to being in Europe while still being here.

But I did not want to create a mock European experience. I wanted an eccentric street setting with outdoor ambience. Shopping centers need to be infinitely logical in design. However, this often makes them boring. The whole point to Horton Plaza was to create a surprise, a big event for the community.

Horton Plaza is a compilation of all the buildings already existing in San Diego. What we did is we went around the city and took certain facades and features and incorporated them into our design. However, the verticality of Horton Plaza led me to use some design elements common in Italian hill villages. I wanted to recreate the phenomenal feeling you have when walking through a steep Italian village, so I borrowed some elements. But this Mediterranean style just happens to fit the vernacular style of architecture for Southern California. I would not build a hill village type of center in Tokyo or Kansas City, for example. Horton Plaza has

become a beloved landmark for the city of San Diego. It's known to people as the part of downtown where you have all the fun. It drew 25 million people last year. That's two and a half Disneyland.

First off, Horton is uniquely San Diego. It couldn't be in any other location but that. We do a lot of Mediterranean-style projects, but that's because the products just happen to be in places where that theme is the prevailing style. The projects we are doing in France are not like our Projects in Minnesota, and our Projects in Minnesota are not like what we have done in California. We try to make centers distinct for a region.

Wherever someone is, whether they want to be there or not, they have this fantasy about what happened. There is a fantasy about being in New York. There's a fantasy about owning a ranch out in Irvine, Calif. There is a fantasy about being in a San Francisco park. What I try to do is deliver the theater that reinforces this fantasy, so this fantasy can occur. We try to build an extension of the person's lifestyle who lives in that area. This makes a center more attractive to them. When we designed Georgetown Park in Washington, D.C., we created a very "Georgetown" design. Had the design been that of a standard shopping center, it would have been repulsed by the local community and retailers. If it had been a California-style center the shopper never would have gone in, since they hate California style there. So the object is to let the host city tell us what to do in terms of style.

How does that philosophy translate into a project like Mall of America?

Mall of America is such an unprecedented project. It is really a global project, and our design will reflect that. Outside, there will not be any evident architecture, just department stores and parking lots. Inside, however, we will design quintessential streets and districts. There will be very hip zones, traditional all-American zones, garden zones and so on. Each place within the mall will reflect a theme. The intention is to make each one of the zones very different from the other.

I am not sure bigness is a virtue in shopping centers. People are daunted by the size and scale. A center the size of Mall of America will have to be broken down and humanized. You have to design the center so the consumer always knows where he or she is, so they can say, 'Boy, I can't wait to go back to the garden court.' At Mall of America in Minneapolis, our idea is to create a complete city with complex fragments rather than a shopping center. The mall will have distinctive quarters and districts.

At the Times Square project we're doing for The Hahn Co., we're developing an off-the-wall design literally. We're developing the center as a habitable sign, as if it fell off one of the great buildings in New York City. The consumer is allowed to crawl inside and, in so doing, encounters theaters, shops and restaurants.

Fashion Island in California is a good example of what we are trying to accomplish with retail and design. Fashion Island sits just seven miles from South Coast Plaza, one of the most successful shopping centers in the world. Despite having a great lineup of department stores, Fashion Island really wasn't competing all that well. The idea was to renovate the center so it becomes the re-

tail heart that Irvine and Orange County never really developed. We wanted to create a city, a heart that the community could identify as being its "downtown." However, this town center had to be a reflection of the lifestyle of the Irvine area. We did not want a mall-like structure. We wanted more of a town village design. So we renovated the center around a main boulevard, a perambulating, free-flowing street. And off this main street we offer smaller, more charming streets with theme retail. So in one area you may have a booksellers street, in another area a New Age street, in another area an entertainment street and on and on.

In a sense it's a concentration of retail designed to attract a specific type of shopper. For example, in New York City Madison Avenue attracts yuppies. Fifth Avenue is for the 'got rocks.' Third Avenue is for evening entertainment. Canal Street is for surplus. In this fashion, Fashion Island and New York are very similar. A city is a series of fitted, thematic settings that reflect not only retail but the sensibilities of the people living there. Basically, we're trying to re-create these weaves that within them have the variety to attract a wide variety of people. The carriage trade will not shop or locate in an area known for populist shopping and taste. What we are doing, within a shopping center, is creating the opportunity for both tastes to co-exist side by side and feed off each other, much the way they do in a large city.

The minute a shopping center opens it starts to change. In the early months and years tenants come and go at an alarming pace. For this reason, you want to design a center that is fluid and forgiving, that will attract retailers and consumers yet allow changes to take place without a major overhaul.

We now find ourselves going back and updating centers we did 20 years ago. All centers need to be reconfigured in a way that brings them up to date.

The World in a Shopping Mall  
Margaret Crawford  
p. 73

Larger than a hundred football fields, the West Edmonton Mall is, according to the Guinness Book of Records, the largest shopping mall in the world. At 5.2 million square feet, the world's first megamall is nearly twice as large as the runner-up, the Del Amo Mall in Los Angeles, which covers only 3 million square feet. Other Guinness titles the mall holds are World's Largest Indoor Amusement Park, World's Largest Indoor Water Park, and World's Largest Parking Lot. Besides its more than 800 shops, 11 department stores, and 110 restaurants, the mall also contains a full-size ice-skating rink, a 360-room hotel, a lake, a nondenominational chapel, 20 movie theaters, and 13 nightclubs. These activities are situated along corridors of repeated storefronts and in wings that mimic nineteenth-century Parisian boulevards and New Orleans's Bourbon Street. From the upper stories of the mall's hotel, the glass towers of downtown Edmonton are just visible in the distance.

Seen from above, the mall resembles an ungainly pile of oversized boxes plunked



down in the middle of an enormous asphalt sea, surrounded by an endless landscape of single-family houses. Inside, the mall presents a dizzying spectacle of attractions and diversions: a replica of Columbus's Santa Maria floats in an artificial lagoon, where real submarines move through an impossible seascape of imported coral and plastic seaweed inhabited by live penguins and electronically controlled rubber sharks; fiberglass columns crumble in simulated decay beneath a spanking new Victorian iron bridge; performing dolphins leap in front of Leather World and Kinney's Shoes; fake waves, real Siberian tigers, Ching-Dynasty vases, and mechanical jazz bands are juxtaposed in an endless sequence of skylit courts. Mirrored columns and walls further fragment the scene, shattering the mall into a kaleidoscope of ultimately unreadable images. Confusion proliferates at every level; past and future collapse meaninglessly into the present; barriers between real and fake, near and far, dissolve as history, nature, technology, are indifferently processed by the mall's fantasy machine.

Yet this implausible, seemingly random, collection of images has been assembled with an explicit purpose: to support the mall's claim to contain the entire world within its walls. At the opening ceremony aboard the Santa Maria, one of the mall's developers, Nader Ghermezian, shouted in triumph, "What we have done means you don't have to go to New York or Paris or Disneyland or Hawaii. We have it all here for you in one place, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada!"

### The Science of Malling

The WEM's nonstop proliferation of attractions, activities, and images proclaims its uniqueness; but, beneath its myriad distractions, the mall is easily recognizable as an elephantine version of a generic type - the regional shopping mall. Indeed, the WEM is only the latest incarnation of a self-adjusting system of merchandising and development that has conquered the world by deploying standardized units in an extensive network. And, as the state-of-the-art mall is continually redefined, the WEM's jumbled collection of images is already on the verge of becoming obsolete. More seamless alternative worlds are coming off the drawing boards. Disney "imagineers" have recently designed an entertainment center and shopping mall for Burbank inspired by the "lure and magic of the movies." The cinematic medium, inherently fragmented and unreal, structures a sophisticated fantasy world that will be both more complex and more coherent than the WEM.

Although it is, for the moment, unrivaled in size and spectacle, the WEM is not exempt from the rules of finance and marketing that govern the 28,500 other shopping malls in North America. These rules date from the golden years between 1960 and 1980, when the basic regional mall paradigm was perfected and systematically replicated. Developers methodically surveyed, divided, and appropriated suburban cornfields and orange groves to create a new landscape of consumption. If a map of their efforts were to be drawn, it would reveal a continent cov-

ered by a wildly uneven pattern of overlapping circles representing mall-catchment areas, each circle's size and location dictated by demographic surveys measuring income levels and purchasing power. In a strangely inverted version of central-place theory, developers identified areas where consumer demand was not being met and where malls could fill the commercial voids. Dense agglomerations of malls would indicate the richest markets, and empty spots the pockets of poverty: West Virginia, for example, has the lowest shopping-mall square footage per inhabitant in the country.

The size and scale of a mall, then, reflects, "threshold demand" - the minimum number of potential customers living within the geographical range of a retail item to enable it to be sold at a profit. Thus, neighborhood centers serve a local market within a two-mile radius; community centers draw from three to five miles. The next tier of 2,500 regional malls (at least two department stores and a hundred shops) attracts customers from as far as twenty miles away, while an elite group of 300 super-regional malls (at least five department stores and up to three hundred shops) serve a larger, often multi-state, area within a hundred-mile radius. At the peak of the pyramid sits the West Edmonton megamall, an international shopping attraction. The system as a whole dominates retail sales in the United States and Canada, accounting for more than 53 percent of all purchases in both countries.

The concept of the mall is based on the "mix" - each mall's unique blend of tenants and department-store "anchors." The mix is established and maintained by restrictive leases with clauses that control everything from decor to prices. Even within the limited formula that the mix establishes for each mall, minute variations in the selection and location of stores can be critical. Detailed equations are used to determine exactly how many jewelry or shoe stores should be put on each floor. Since branches of national chains are the most reliable money-makers, individually owned stores are admitted only with shorter leases and higher rents. Mall managers constantly adjust the mix, using rents and leases to adapt to the rapidly changing patterns of consumption. The system operates much like television programming, with each network presenting slightly different configurations of the same elements. Apparent diversity masks fundamental homogeneity.

The various predictable mixes are fine-tuned to the ethnic composition, income levels, and changing tastes of a particular shopping area. Indexes such as VALS (the Values and Life Styles program), produced by the Stanford Research Institute, correlate objective measures such as age, income, and family composition with subjective indicators such as value systems, leisure preferences, and cultural backgrounds to analyze trade areas. For instance, Brooks Brothers and Ann Taylor are usually solid bets for areas populated by outer-directed achievers ("hardworking, materialistic, highly educated traditional consumers; shopping leaders for luxury products") and emulators ("younger, status-conscious, conspicuous consumers"). But since

climate, geography, and local identity also play a role in spending patterns, these stores may not succeed in areas like Orange County, California, where good weather allows more informal dress. Sustainers ("struggling poor; anger toward the American system") and belongers ("middle-class, conservative, conforming shoppers, low to moderate income"), on the other hand, tend to be "value-oriented," making K mart or J. C. Penney good anchors for malls where these groups predominate. Shoppers' perceptions of themselves and their environment furnish more accurate predictions of shopping habits than income. According to the Lifestyle Cluster system, an alternative index, even with identical incomes, the black enterprise and pools and patios groups will exhibit very different consumption patterns.

Through a careful study of such spending patterns, mallbuilders can generate a mix that makes the difference between a mere profit maker and a "foolproof money-machine" such as Southdale, outside of Minneapolis, the most successful of Equitable Life Insurance's one hundred shopping malls. Southdale's managers are constantly adjusting its mix to reflect increasingly refined consumer profiles. They know, for example, that their average customer is a 40.3-year-old female with an annual income of over \$ 33,000, who lives in a household of 1.7 people. She is willing to spend more than \$125 for a coat and buys six pairs of shoes a year in sizes 5 to 7. Southdale's mix reflects this ideal consumer; women's clothing stores and upscale boutiques have now replaced Woolworth's and the video arcade. The mall's decor and promotions target her tastes through "psychographics" - the detailed marketing profiles which identify the customer's aspirations as well as her stated needs in order to chart "identity" as well as income.

Such precision in locating and satisfying consumers has become increasingly important since 1980, when malls approached the saturation point. The system demonstrated a surprising adaptability: in spite of its history of rigidly programmed uniformity, new economic and locational opportunities prompted new prototypes. Specialty malls were built without department stores, allowing a more flexible use of space. To fit urban sites, malls adopted more compact and vertical forms with stacked floors of indoor parking, as at the Eaton Center in Toronto and the Beverly Center in Los Angeles. To insure financing in uncertain markets, developers formed partnerships with redevelopment agencies. The Grand Avenue in Milwaukee and the Gallery at Market East in Philadelphia are both joint ventures by HUD, municipal redevelopment agencies, and the Rouse Company. To survive in high-rent downtown locations, malls added hotels, condominiums, and offices to become omni-centers, such as Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue, or Water Tower Place and Chicago Place on North Michigan Avenue.

Existing malls renewed themselves by upgrading their decor and amenities. Future archaeologists will read Orange County's social history in South Coast Plaza's successive levels: the lowest floors, featuring Sears and J. C. Penney's, recall the suburbs' original lower-middle-class roots; the elaborate upper levels, with stores such as Gucci and Cartier, reflect the area's more recent affluence.



Open-air plazas, once thought obsolete, have been revived and a new generation of consumers now stroll uncovered walkways.

Virtually any large building or historic area is a candidate for reconfiguration into a mall. Americans regularly browse through renovated factories (the Cannery and Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco), piers (North Pier in Chicago), and government buildings (the Old Post Office in Washington, D.C.). The imposing neoclassical space of McKim, Mead, and White's Union Station, which once solemnly celebrated entry into the nation's capital, now contains a shopping mall. The city of New York has even considered developing the Brooklyn Bridge as a historic shopping mall, with the brick arches of its Manhattan approach enclosing retail shops and a health spa.

Although by 1980 the American landscape was crowded with these palaces of consumption, the rest of the world was still open for development. The form could be exported intact into third-world economies, with local developers providing enclosed shopping malls as exotic novelties for upper-class consumers in Caracas or Buenos Aires. Planners of new towns such as Milton Keynes, England, and Marne-la-Vallée, outside Paris, followed the example of Columbia, Maryland, to create state-sponsored social-democratic malls, combining government and community facilities with retail space to create new town centers. Asian versions in Hong Kong and Singapore adapted local marketplace traditions, filling vast malls with small, individually owned shops. The enormous new market opening up in Eastern Europe will surely place Warsaw and Budapest on Shopping Center World's list of hot spots ripe for development. The variations are endless, but whatever form the system adopts, the message conveyed is the same - a repeated imperative to consume.

### The Utopia of Consumption

The ethos of consumption has penetrated every sphere of our lives. As culture, leisure, sex, politics, and even death turn into commodities, consumption increasingly constructs the way we see the world. As William Leiss points out, the best measure of social consciousness is now the Index of Consumer Sentiment, which charts optimism about the state of the world in terms of willingness to spend. The decision to buy a washing machine or a fur coat depends less on finances than on subjective reactions to everything from congressional debates to crime and pollution. Consumption hierarchies, in which commodities define life-style, now furnish indications of status more visible than the economic relationships of class positions. Status is thus easy to read, since the necessary information has already been nationally distributed through advertising. Moreover, for many, the very construction of the self involves the acquisition of commodities. If the world is understood through commodities, then personal identity depends on one's ability to compose a coherent self-image through the selection of a distinct personal set of commodities.

As central institutions in the realm of consumption, shopping malls constantly restructure both products and behavior into

new combinations that allow commodities to penetrate even further into daily life. Most directly, the mall, as its domination of retail sales indicates, functions as an extremely efficient agent for the circulation of large numbers of goods. However, the rigid financial and merchandising formulas that guarantee and maximize its profits restrict the range and variety of goods it can offer. Retailers and shoppers are equally subject to a commercial logic that forces both to constantly justify themselves by concretely realizing the abstract concept of consumption in money terms. These economic imperatives are clearly expressed in the inescapable measurement of mall success in terms of dollars per square foot.

Faced with such restrictions, the mall can realize its profits only by efficiently mediating between the shopper and the commodity. The process of shopping begins even before the shopper enters the mall, in the commercialized contemporary social environment that William Leiss has characterized as the "high-intensity market setting." Primed by a barrage of messages about what he or she "needs" (before the age of twenty, the average American has seen 350,000 television commercials), the shopper arrives at the mall with "a confused set of wants." Presented with a constantly increasing range of products, each promising specialized satisfaction, the shopper is forced to fragment needs into constantly smaller elements. These are not false needs, distinct from objectively determined "real" needs; rather they conflate material and symbolic aspects of "needing" in an ambiguous, unstable state. Because advertising has already identified particular emotional and social conditions with specific products, the continuous fracturing of emotions and artifacts forces consumers to engage in intensive efforts to bind together their identity and personal integrity. Consumption is the easiest way to accomplish this task and achieve at least temporary resolution.

Similarly fragmented attributes make up the commodities themselves. These bundles of objective and imputed characteristics and signals are in constant flux, rendered even more unstable by the consumer's fluctuating desires. As Leiss observes, "the realm of needs becomes identical with the range of possible objects, while the nature of the object itself becomes largely a function of the psychological state of those who desire it." The shopping mall prolongs this exchange by offering a plethora of possible purchases that continuously accelerate the creation of new bonds between object and consumer. By extending the period of "just looking," the imaginative prelude to buying, the mall encourages "cognitive acquisition" as shoppers mentally acquire commodities by familiarizing themselves with a commodity's actual and imagined qualities. Mentally "trying on" products teaches shoppers not only what they want and what they can buy, but also, more importantly, what they don't have, and what they therefore need. Armed with this knowledge, shoppers can not only realize what they are but also imagine what they might become. Identity is momentarily stabilized even while the image of a future identity begins to take shape, but the endless variation of objects means that satisfaction always remains just out of reach.

The shopping-mall mix is calculated to organize the disorienting flux of attributes and needs into a recognizable hierarchy of shops defined by cost, status, and life-style images. These shops, in turn, reflect the specific consumption patterns of the mall's marketing area. Merchandise contextualized by price and image orients the shopper, allowing the speculative spiral of desire and deprivation to be interrupted by purchase. The necessity of this double action - stimulating nebulous desire and encouraging specific purchases - establishes the mall's fundamentally contradictory nature. To survive profitably, it must operate within the enormous disjuncture created between the objective economic logic necessary for the profitable circulation of goods and the unstable subjectivity of the message exchanged between consumers and commodities, between the limited goods permitted by this logic and the unlimited desires released by this exchange.

The physical organization of the mall environment mirrors this disjuncture; this is one reason why conventional architectural criticism, a discourse based on visible demonstrations of order, has not been able to penetrate its system. All the familiar tricks of mall design - limited entrances, escalators placed only at the end of corridors, fountains and benches carefully positioned to entice shoppers into stores - control the flow of consumers through the numbingly repetitive corridors of shops. The orderly processions of goods along endless aisles continuously stimulates the desire to buy. At the same time, other architectural tricks seem to contradict commercial considerations. Dramatic atriums create huge floating spaces for contemplation, multiple levels provide infinite vistas from a variety of vantage points, and reflective surfaces bring near and far together. In the absence of sounds from outside, these artful visual effects are complemented by the "white noise" of Muzak and fountains echoing across enormous open courts. The resulting "weightless realm" receives substance only through the commodities it contains.

These strategies are effective; almost every mallgoer has felt their power. For Joan Didion the mall is an addictive environmental drug, where "one moves for a while in an aqueous suspension, not only of light, but of judgment, not only of judgement, but of personality." In the film *Dawn of the Dead*, both zombies and their victims are drawn to the mall, strolling the aisles in numb fascination, with fixed stares that make it difficult to tell the shoppers from the living dead. William Kowinski identified *mal de mall* as a perceptual paradox brought on by simultaneous stimulations and sedation, characterized by disorientation, anxiety, and apathy. The jargon used by mall management demonstrates not only their awareness of these side-effects, but also their partial and imprecise attempts to capitalize on them. The Gruen Transfer (named after architect Victor Gruen) designates the moment when a "destination buyer," with a specific purchase in mind, is transformed into an impulse shopper, a crucial point immediately visible in the shift from a determined stride to an erratic and meandering gait. Yet shoppers do not perceive these effects as negative: the ex-



pansion of the typical mall visit from twenty minutes in 1960 to nearly three hours today testifies to their increasing desirability.

### Retail Magic

Malls have achieved their commercial success through a variety of strategies that all depend on "indirect commodification," a process by which nonsalable objects, activities, and images are purposely placed in the commodified world of the mall. The basic marketing principle is "adjacent attraction," where "the most dissimilar objects lend each other mutual support when they are placed next to each other." Richard Sennett explains this effect as a temporary suspension of the use value of the object, its decontextualized state making it unexpected and therefore stimulating. Thus, placing an ordinary pot in a window display of a Moroccan harem transforms the pot into something exotic, mysterious, and desirable. This logic of association allows noncommodified values to enhance commodities, but it also imposes the reverse process - previously noncommodified entities become part of the marketplace. Once this exchange of attributes is absorbed into the already open-ended and indeterminate exchange between commodities and needs, associations can resonate infinitely.

At an early stage, malls began to introduce a variety of services, such as movies and restaurants, fast-food arcades, video-game rooms, and skating rinks, which, while still requiring expenditure, signaled the mall's expanded recreational role. As "mall time" has become an increasingly standard unit of measure, more and more promotional activities have appeared; first fashion shows and petting zoos, then symphony concerts (the Chicago Symphony performs regularly at Woodfield Mall), and even high-school proms. Hanging out at the mall has replaced cruising the strip; for teenagers, malls are now social centers, and many even find their first jobs there. Now malls have become social centers for adults as well. The Galleria in Houston has achieved a reputation as a safe and benevolent place for singles to meet, and "mall-walkers" - senior citizens and heart patients seeking a safe place to exercise - arrive at malls before the shops open, to walk a measured route around the corridors. Popular culture also attests to the incorporation of the mall into daily life. Recent films such as *Scenes from a Mall* and *Phantom of the Mall* suggest that virtually any cinematic genre can be successfully transposed to this familiar setting. Beverly Center, the first novel named for a shopping mall, recounts the torrid adventures of retail employees in a place "where everything is for sale and nothing comes cheap." Proximity has established an inescapable behavioral link between human needs - for recreation, public life, and social interaction - and the commercial activities of the mall, between pleasure and profit in an enlarged version of "adjacent attraction." As developer Bill Dawson sums it up: "The more needs you fulfill, the longer people stay."

Indirect commodification can also incorporate fantasy, juxtaposing shopping with an intense spectacle of accumulated images and themes that entertain and stimulate and in turn encourage more shopping. The themes of the spectacle owe much to Disneyland and television, the most familiar and effective commodifiers in American culture. Theme-park attractions are now common-

place in shopping malls; indeed, the two forms converge - malls routinely entertain, while theme parks function as disguised marketplaces. Both offer controlled and carefully packaged public spaces and pedestrian experiences to auto-dependent suburban families already primed for passive consumption by television - the other major cultural product of the fifties.

While enclosed shopping malls suspended space, time, and weather, Disneyland went one step further and suspended reality. Any geographic, cultural, or mythical location, whether supplied by fictional texts (Tom Sawyer's Island), historical locations (New Orleans Square), or futuristic projections (Space Mountain), could be configured as a setting for entertainment. Shopping malls easily adapted this appropriation of "place" in the creation of a specialized theme environment. In Scottsdale, the Borgata, an open-air shopping mall set down in the flat Arizona desert, reinterprets the medieval Tuscan hill town of San Gimignano with piazza and scaled-down towers (made of real Italian bricks). In suburban Connecticut, Old Mystic Village reproduces a New England Main Street, circa 1720, complete with shops in saltbox houses, a waterwheel, and a pond. Again, the implied connection between unexpected settings and familiar products reinvigorates the shopping experience.

The larger the mall, the more sophisticated the simulation. The West Edmonton Mall borrowed yet another design principle from Disneyland: the spatial compression of themes. To simultaneously view Main Street and an African jungle from Tomorrowland was a feat previously reserved for science fiction. By eliminating the unifying concept of "land" - Disneyland's main organizing principle - the WEM released a frenzy of free-floating images. If Disneyland's abrupt shifts of space and time suggested that to change realities could be as easy as changing channels on a television, the WEM, as one writer observed, was more like turning on all the channels at once. Again, the principle of "adjacent attraction" ensures that these images will exchange attributes with the commodities in the mall. The barrage of diverse images, though, may heighten the unstable relationship of commodity and consumer needs to such a degree that the resulting disorientation leads to acute shopper paralysis. This discouraging prospect makes oases of relative calm, such as the water park and the hotel, necessary for recuperation. Even the all-inclusive mall must acknowledge perceptual limits.

The contrived packaging, obvious manipulation, and massmarket imagery of formula malls was not without critics, particularly among affluent and educated shoppers. To please this more demanding audience, developer James Rouse expanded the definition of "adjacent attraction" to incorporate genuinely historic and scenic places into the world of the mall. Rouse's successful packaging of "authenticity" made him a legend in development circles. "Festival marketplaces" such as Faneuil Hall in Boston, Harborplace in Baltimore, and South Street Seaport in Manhattan reject the architectural homogeneity of the generic mall in favor of the unique character of a single location enhanced through "individualized" design. These scenic and historic areas use cultural attractions

such as museums and historic ships to enliven predictable shopping experiences. Festival marketplaces, then, reverse the strategy employed at the WEM - imagery is reduced and activities focus on a single theme rooted in a genuine context - but with comparable results, the creation of a profitable marketplace. Faneuil Hall attracts as many visitors each year as Disneyland, confirming Rouse's slogan: "Profit is the thing that hauls dreams into focus."

### Euro Disney Park Marc Bédarida p. 92

Located on the outskirts of the new town of Marne-la-Vallée, 32 kilometers to the east of Paris, Euro Disney Resort covers an area of 1,943 hectares, or around 1/5 of the total area of Paris. Although, today, only a third of the site is being used, on completion of the operation it will extend over an area much larger than the one freed by the dismantling, in 1919, of the military precincts of Thiers, girdling Paris over a distance of 35 kilometers. In its present configuration, it is made up of the inevitable park or Magic Kingdom that contains a group of around thirty attractions in an area of 55 hectares. In parallel to this a holiday center is being laid out, consisting of six hotels with a total capacity of 5,200 rooms, a camping and caravan site (camp Davy Crockett), an 18-hole and soon 27-hole golf course, as well as an amusement center of 18,000 square meters, the whole accompanied by a multitude of parking spaces and 160,000 newly planted trees. With a program intended to run until 2017, the development of Euro Disney Resort envisages the opening of studios for cinematographic and audiovisual production in Europe in 1995, in association with the opening of a second park of attractions devoted to the cinema. This complex will also be complemented by 13,000 hotel rooms, a huge convention center, an aquatic park, a second golf course, and a new camping site, offices, apartments, and other facilities necessary to the effective functioning of such a venture.

The site, formerly under the jurisdiction of five small communes, at the gates of the Brie country, has a polygonal shape, notched here or there in order to avoid a village. It is accessible, in a few hours, from the majority of Western European countries thanks to an excellent network of expressways, railroads, public transport (Réseau Express Régional), and international airports. Responsibility for the infrastructures has been assumed by the French government, which put all its weight into the balance to make certain that Marne-la-Vallée was selected as Disney's bridgehead in Europe. Great pains have been taken over the internal organization of the immense territory owned by the American company. One finds there a variety of points common to the whole set of its amenities. An expressway feeder occupies the median axis of the site. It ends at the Magic Kingdom situated at the other end, in the far north. The park of attractions and the hotel sector with which it is associated are each organized on a radial plan, surrounding both a railroad track and a circular boulevard. There is nothing remarkable about the composition of the general plan. Although it proceeds from a



formal disposition connoted by its concentric plan, it is in no way based on the utopian ideas of such planners as Ebenezer Howard. The settled general organization, the distribution of the activities, relies on a sort of zoning by sector and then on a division into lots that is not based on any particular arrangement.

#### Distributing the Roles and the Themes

Within this vast parcel of land, only the part to the north and the camping site to the south have legible forms. While the Davy Crockett camp disappears beneath a thick forest and the Magic Kingdom is laid out in the usual manner of the parks created by Disney, the hotel sector with its six establishments of five hundred to one thousand rooms turns out to be the point where, today, the success of this European complex is at stake. All the more so in that, ever since the nineteenth century, in both big cities and vacation resorts, the gigantism of the hotels and the magnificence of their decor have created a genuine myth that brings together the sentiments associated with elegance, exoticism, and entertainment. Thus special care has been taken over the disposition of the hotels. Three are located along the edge of the Buena Vista lake and two set one on each side of the Rio Grande, its tributary. To realize this program, the works supervisor has turned, from the Orlando complex onward, to architects of international renown. So during the summer of 1988, the chairman of the Disney Corporation came to Paris and summoned, together with their recently appointed American architects like Frank Gehry, Michael Graves, Antoine Predock, and, above all, Robert Stern, the elite of European architecture, Hans Hollein, Rem Koolhaas, Aldo Rossi, and Bernard Tschumi, as well as three Frenchmen, Antoine Grumbach, Jean Nouvel, and Christian de Portzamparc.

The discussions quickly assumed the shape of a competition. Six commissions were at stake and almost twenty architects assembled. From model to model, the configuration of the site was outlined and the preferences of the chairmen became clear. Like a patient game of construction, they saw a number of pieces assembled before deciding on their arrangement. Too heroic and too specific, the propositions of the Europeans worried the shareholders. Undoubtedly they were also lacking a certain cultural connivance. Each architect laid claim to a "theme" as a foundation for his project, although when all was said and done Disney remained to some extent the final author. This was the reason for the rejection of Hans Hollein and his circular castle, Christian de Portzamparc and his poem in celebration of Rio de Janeiro, Aldo Rossi with his excessively serious style, Rem Koolhaas and Bernard Tschumi with their great celibate machines, Jean Nouvel and his huge and excessively high-tech naval complex, and even Robert Venturi with his proposition cum signature taken straight from Learning from Las Vegas. The fact is that a theme does not refer solely to external appearance. The iconic principle also has to determine the interior appointments, the decoration of rooms, the background music, the menus proposed, the uniforms or fancy dress worn by the staff, and so on. Thus a theme is declined in a multitude of ways, as well as having to be able to carry the kind of imagery that Disney con-

siders suited to a European public. Michael Graves, Robert Stern, and Antoine Predock seemed to be fully in step with what the Hollywood company was asking them to do, as if "entertainment architecture" or the neovernacular formed a natural stage in the development of their professional careers. We are still waiting for the projects by Arata Isozaki and by Gwathmey and Siegel, but so far only Frank Gehry has fared the venture well by coming up with a personal style that does not exclude some subtle work on metonymy. With a few exceptions, the concern for producing a work of architecture does not appear to have been an end in itself. The feeling of evasion stirred by these themes depends more on scenographic procedures than on the spaces provided.

#### The Six Successful Candidates

At the end of a selection process that was never called by its true name, six concepts had been settled on for the creation of "the most wonderful place in the world." At the northern extremity of the lake, Michael Graves's New York Hotel can be recognized by its five towers recalling Manhattan, framed by two lower wings. One of these refers to the houses of Gramercy Park while the other evokes the brownstones of the East Side. Between the two is located a stretch of water that turns into a skating rink in winter, in reference to the outdoor facilities of the Rockefeller Center, while a convention center is set on its bank. At the other end of the lake stands the most imposing of the hotels, the Newport Bay Club designed by Robert Stern and taking its inspiration from the bathing establishments of New England. On the east bank, the Sequoia Hotel is reminiscent of the rustic constructions to be found in American national parks. Antoine Grumbach wanted its sole image to be that of a roof emerging above the forest. To the rear a series of pavilions provides a link with the two complexes on the banks of the Rio Grande. On one side, Robert Stern's Cheyenne Hotel reconstructs the atmosphere of a Far West town in a very mimetic fashion, while opposite it Antoine Predock's Santa Fe Hotel conjures up the arid climate and desert sun of New Mexico with its series of pueblos covered with adobe in traditional colors. Behind the entrance to the park rises the most extravagant and flashy of the constructions, the Disneyland Hotel designed by Wimberly, Allison, Tong & Goo.

A short distance from this stands the Festival Disney or amusement center, for which Frank Gehry is responsible. A sort of commercial center covering 18,000 square meters, it is intended principally for use in the evenings by visitors on their way out of the park or by people in search of different surroundings.

Given the diversity of the intervention, there is no question of Disney creating an illusion by overlaying an arbitrary idea of harmony. Each of the themes is to be carried to its extreme without having to submit to a higher order. The organization of an entire sector is based on the juxtaposition of different sequences linked together by a skillfully designed backdrop. To avoid this close proximity creating a cluttered effect, a great deal of work on the external spaces, pathways, and lines of view has been entrusted to the landscape architects. This cinematographic

concept of interlaced sequences and discontinuities between the themes prohibits any analogy with the uniform arrangements typical of the seaside resort based on a coordinated plan and architecture, as at Cabourg on the Normandy coast.

#### From the Park to the Territory

Observing the scale of the project for the Euro Disney Resort, one is tempted to speculate about the true nature of the American group's aims. And if the objective of the Disney Corporation is not so much the creation of theme parks for the young and old but the thousands of square meters of constructions around them? After all Disney is selling, without discrimination, "a new style of leisure and entertainment"; it could be that the parks are nothing more than a pretext for major developments on a territorial scale. There can be no doubt that behind Mickey's large black ears is concealed one of the most formidable of investors and property developers, whose technique and success ought to give pause for reflection to more than one developer, especially those of the new towns. In addition it is no accident if, for its part, the corporation is considering the adaptation of its know-how in matters of development to the creation of complete towns out of nothing, even if they are devoted to tourism at the outset.

#### See You in Disneyland

Michael Sorkin  
p. 100

The Disney strategy inscribes utopia on the terrain of the familiar and vice versa. The economy of its representations depends on a careful calculus of degrees of difference. Like any other consumer operation, it thrives on algorithms of both the desirable and the attainable. Thus, its images never really innovate, they intensify and reduce, winnowing complexity in the name of both quick access and easy digestibility. What's being promoted is not the exceptional but rather the paranormal. Just like the real thing, only better. In an essay on montage, the Soviet film maker Lev Kuleshov describes a scene shot in the early 1920s with the actors Khoklova and Obolensky:

Khoklova is walking along Petrov Street in Moscow near the "Mostorg" store. Obolensky is walking along the embankment of the Moscow River - at a distance of about two miles away. They see each other, smile, and begin to walk toward one another. Their meeting is filmed at the Boulevard Prechistsensk. This boulevard is in an entirely different section of the city. They clasp hands, with Gogol's monument as a background, and look - at the White House! - for at this point, we cut in a segment from an American film. 'The White House in Washington.' In the next shot they are once again on the Boulevard Prechistsensk. Deciding to go farther, they leave and climb up the enormous staircase of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. We film them, edit the film, and the result is that they are seen walking up the steps of the White house. For this we used no trick, no double exposure: the effect was achieved solely by the organization of the material through its cinematic treatment. This particular scene demonstrated the incredible potency of montage, which actually



appeared so powerful that it was able to alter the very essence of the material.

Kuleshov called this technique "creative geography." Like gene-splicing, the point is to create a new organism from the substance of the old. Indeed, in another famous experiment, Kuleshov used the technique to "fabricate" a new, recombinant woman, from fragments of several "other" women. The question here is whether the perpetrator is Prometheus or Frankenstein. To distinguish monstrosity from coherence, the practice of montage - and the practice of urbanism, its three-dimensional equivalent - requires a theory of juxtaposition. For the cinema, the theory is either about narrative or its interruption, about a sequence of images bound to time. Montage begs the question of the logic of this arrangement. The city is also joined in sequence. Both its construction and its politics devolve on principles of aggregation. The idealization of such principles creates utopia.

As a utopia, Disneyland's innovation lies not in its fantasy of regulation but in the elision of its place-making. Disneyland is the Holy See of creative geography, the place where the ephemeral reality of the cinema is concretized into the stuff of the city. It should come as no surprise that the most succinct manifestation to date of this crossover is the "Disney-MGM Studios" theme park, recently opened at Disney World. Here, the agenda of dislocated authenticity is carried back to its point of origin. The attraction (much indebted to its precursor Universal Studios Tour back in Los Angeles, now also in Orlando) is explicitly about movies, both the space of their realization (the "studio") and about the particular narrative spaces of particular movies.

Although the attraction is in Florida, at Disney World, and although its recreational agenda is precisely to purvey "creative geography," Disney-MGM is at pains to locate itself in a particularly referential space: Hollywood, the locus classicus of movie-making. Main Street's axial introduction is accomplished with an imaginative recasting of Hollywood Boulevard, heavy on the deco. Visitors enter through a gateway borrowed from the now-incinerated Pan-Pacific Auditorium, past a replica of the famous Crossroads of the World tower, a reincarnate Brown Derby, and a welter of familiar Los Angeles architecture, here scaled down and aggregated with an urbanity unknown at the unedited source.

At the head of this axis stands a re-created Grauman's Chinese. No longer exactly a movie palace, however, it's the queuing zone for the main event at the theme park, the Great Movie Ride, a forty-two-minute trip through scenes from well-known Disney and MGM movies, recreated by Animatronic robots. This is a fabulously compact rendition of the larger experience of Disneyfication, the suspension of the visitor in a serially realized apparatus of simulation. Like the global-corridor traveler, the visitor is propelled past a series of summary tableaux which stand in for some larger, sloughed-off, memory of reality. Of course, the Great Movie Ride goes the system one better, mechanically reproducing a mechanical reproduction.

One of the main effects of Disneyfication is the substitution of recreation for work, the production of leisure according to the routines of industry. Now, one of the products of

postindustrialism is not simply the liberation of vast amounts of problematic leisure time, it's the reinvention of labor as spectacle, what Dean MacCannell has called "involved differentiation." The positivist myths having withered, culture turns in on itself, simply aestheticizing its internal operations, romanticizing especially those bygone. The tourist travels the world to see the wigged baker at the simulacrum of Colonial Williamsburg drawing hot-cross buns from an "authentic" brick oven or the Greek fisherman on the quay on Mykonos, mending his photogenic nets, or the Animatronic Gene Kelly "singing in the rain."

At the movie theme park this spectacle is multiplied. The "work" at Disney World is, of course, entertainment. The 26,000 employees of the place are all considered by management to be "cast-members." Transforming workers to actors presumably transforms their work into play. This plugs nicely into a familiar mode, an endless staple of the talk-show circuit: the performance of some over-compensated Hollywood sybarite talking about his or her "work" as if the activity were somehow comparable to the labors of the assembly line. It's the same grotesque operation found in the seasonal public negotiations (with frequent strikes) of overpaid sports figures which create a themed version of "oldfashioned" labor relations rendering union-management relations ridiculous by exaggeration.

But the most important aim of this inversion is not to encourage delusional thinking by some harried cafeteria worker at Disney. It's rather to invent the empire of leisure that still differentiates Disneyworld from everyday life. Visitors to the Disney parks, polled about what they like best, cite first the cleanliness, next the friendliness of the employees. This is surely the redemption of the industrial metropolis: hygienic, staffed with unalienated workers apparently enjoying their contributions to the happy collectivity. The movie ride takes this theory of labor a logical step further. One imagines, to begin with, that the Gene Kelly automaton is working for considerably less than scale. The representation goes the "ideal" worker one better: entertaining itself - fun in the first place - has been fully automated.

Consider a further recursion. In all likelihood, as the tram rolls through the Animatronic Temple of Doom, a hundred videocams whirringly record the "event" for later consumption at home. That tape is an astonishing artifact, unprecedented in human history. If postmodern culture can be said to be about the weaving of ever more elaborate fabrics of simulation, about successive displacements of "authentic" signifiers, then the Japanese family sitting in front of the Sony back in Nagasaki, watching their home videos of the Animatronic recreation of the creative geography of a Hollywood "original," all recorded at a simulacrum of Hollywood in central Florida, must be said to have achieved a truly weird apotheosis of raw referentiality. Interestingly, several years ago, the inventor Nolan Bushnell proposed a further efficiency in this circuit. His notion was to place little self-propelled robots, each with a video eye, in major tourist cities - Paris, Rome, London, perhaps even Disney World. These could then be driven around by folks in Phoenix or Dubuque, giving them the experience of

prowling the Champs Elysées, Regent Street, or the Via Veneto, without actually leaving home. But this is just an incremental advance, economizing only on human mobility, still premised on an old notion of the superiority of old-style "reality."

Disney's ahead of this. The Disney-MGM studio tour offers a third order of re-creation, another involuted riff on the nature of place. Part of the complex is a functioning movie studio, affording visitors the authentic frisson of a brush with living stars, an actual "production." Strolling the backlot, tourists might pass down a set for a New York City street. Although this set is constructed in the same way and with the same creatively interpolative geography as nearby "Hollywood Boulevard," the spectator's relationship to it is different. Success here depends on the apprehension of this space not primarily as a zone of leisure (as on the Great Movie Ride or the stroll down the Boulevard) but as a workplace. It's another order to tourism, like watching the muffin-bakers and glass-blowers at Colonial Williamsburg, the addition of the pleasures of voyeurism to those of mere recreation.

If visitors are permitted the pleasure of circulation "backstage" at the movie studio, there's yet a further backstage that remains inaccessible. In true rational modernist fashion, the Disney parks are built on giant platforms. Underneath the attractions, a labyrinth of tunnels provides service and staff circulation for the public activities above. These areas are strictly off limits to visitors although they're often discussed in publicity as one of the keys to Disney's marvelous efficiency, and photographs - daffy shots of giant Mickey Mice padding down fluorescent concrete corridors - are widely disseminated. This subterranean space inevitably conjures up other, more dystopian images, most notably the underworld in Lang's Metropolis, its workers trapped in carceral caverns dancing their robotic ballet like Martha Graham on Thorazine.

But - perhaps in part because a man in a mouse costume is a more genial image of dehumanization than a prole in chains - this "servant space" (in Louis Kahn's locution) has a generally happier reputation. It is, in fact, what makes Disneyland "clean." Not simply is this a venue for the efficient whisking away of the detritus of fun - the tons of Popsicle sticks and hot-dog wrappers generated daily - it divides labor into its clean, public face, and its less entertaining, less "magic" aspects. Like the tourist-popular sewers of Paris, this underworld is both alien and marvelous, "peopled" with strange denizens, inconspicuous yet indispensable, supporting the purer city of being above. It is the dream of each beleaguered city dweller: an apparatus for keeping every urban problem out of sight. In fact, though, it reverses the Langian schema. This disciplinary apparatus is not above but underground, a subterranean Panopticon, ready to spring up innumerable concealed passages to monitor and service the vast leisure army toiling at fun up above. Such reveries of self-discipline are historic. Stuart Ewen cites a variety of sources celebrating the self-modified behavior of visitors to the White City of 1892. "Order reigned everywhere," wrote one, "no boisterousness, no unseemly merriment. It seemed as though the beauty of the place brought a gentleness, happiness, and self-



respect to its visitors." Observed another, "No great multitude of people ever showed more love of order. The restraint and discipline were remarkable." And another, "Courtiers in Versailles and Fontainebleau could not have been more deferential and observant ... the decorum of the place and occasion than these obscure and myriads of unknown laborers." Even Charlotte Brontë, visiting the Crystal Palace in 1851, opined that "the multitude ... seems ruled and subdued by some invisible influence."

Jeffrey Katzenberg, head of Disney's movie division, suggests that we "think of Disney World as a medium-sized city with a crime rate of zero." Although the claim is hyperbole (petty larceny mainly leads to expulsion from the kingdom, more serious infractions to the summoning of adjoining police forces), the perception is not: the environment is virtually self-policing. Disney World is clearly a version of a town ("Imagine a Disneyland as big as the city of San Francisco," goes a recent ad). And it's based on a particular urbanism, a crisp acceleration of trends everywhere visible but nowhere so acutely elaborated. The problems addressed by Disneyzone are quintessentially modern: crime, transportation, waste, the relationship of work and leisure, the transience of populations, the growing hegemony of the simulacrum.

But finally, Disneyzone isn't urban at all. Like the patent-medicine-plugging actor who advertises his bona fides as "I'm not a doctor but I play one on TV," Disney invokes an urbanism without producing a city. Rather, it produces a kind of aura-stripped hypercity, a city with billions of citizens (all who would consume) but no residents. Physicalized yet conceptual, it's the utopia of transience, a place where everyone is just passing through. This is its message for the city to be, a place everywhere and nowhere, assembled only through constant motion. Visitors to Disneyzone are reduced to the status of cartoon characters. (Indeed, one of the features of the studio tour is the opportunity for visitors to cinematically interpolate themselves into 'Who Framed Roger Rabbit?') This is a common failing in utopian subjectivity, the predication on a homogenized, underdimensioned citizenship. However, it's also true that there's probably no more acquiescent subject than the postindustrial tourist. And there's surely no question that a holiday-maker wants a version of life pared of its sting, that vacationing finds its fulfillment in escape. The Disney visitor seeks and delights in the relationship between what he or she finds and its obverse back home, terrain of crime, litter, and surliness.

In the Disney utopia, we all become involuntary flâneurs and flâneuses, global drifters, holding high our lamps as we look everywhere for an honest image. The search will get tougher and tougher for the fanned-out millions as the recombinant landscape crops up around the globe. One of the latest nodes appears about to be sprung at Surajkund, near New Delhi, where India's first theme park gleams in the eye of the local tourism department. "We have a whole integrated concept of a fun center," as the New York Times quotes S.K. Sharma, state secretary for tourism. "Like all big cities, Delhi is getting polluted. It is getting choked with people. People need amusement and clear air."

Marcuse called utopia "the determinate

sociohistorical negation of what exists." Disneyzone - Toon Town in real stucco and metal - is a cartoon utopia, an urbanism for the electronic age. Like television, it is a machine for the continuous transformation of what exists (a panoply of images drawn from life) into what doesn't (an ever-increasing number of weird juxtapositions). It's a genetic utopia, where every product is some sort of mutant, maimed kids in Kabul brought to you on the nightly news by Metamucil, Dumbo in Japan in Florida. The only way to consume this narrative is to keep moving, keep changing channels, keep walking, get on another jet, pass through another airport, stay in another Ramada Inn. The only logic is the faint buzz of memories of something more or less similar ... but so long ago, perhaps even yesterday.