Experiencing Interior Design History:
Regional Case Studies
Fall 2011
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The University of Texas at Arlington Interior Design Program merges History of Interior Design and Interior Materials to create a diverse learning experience that encompasses regular academic studies and hands-on participation. The class visits several sites in the Dallas/Fort Worth area and documents significant features. This book is a collection of our best works from the class.
Site Visits

Ball-Eddelman-MacFarland House

Scottish Rite Cathedral

1936 Moderne Residence

Texas & Pacific Railroad Station

Marty Leonard Chapel

St. John's Episcopal Church

Bass Residence

UT Arlington Engineering Research Building

Wyly Theater

Dallas Chop House

Herman Miller Showroom
Ball-Eddelman-MacFarland House

In 1899, when this house was completed by architect Howard Messer on a bluff overlooking the eastern bank of the Trinity River, it was designed not to face the river but rather downtown Fort Worth. This neighborhood, known as Quality Hill, was the home for bankers, cattle barons, and other members of Fort Worth high society. It was built in the Queen Anne Victorian Style, using a rich assortment of exterior materials: buff brick, red sandstone, copper, and stained glass. Organized around a central hallway, the house features an impressive double parlor, formal dining room, an elaborate entry vestibule, receiving room, and a magnificent oak staircase. One highlight of the house is the blonde Honduran mahogany in the front parlor, that covers wall, ceiling, and floor. The back parlor and dining room feature elaborate parquet floors composed of different woods. The house was built during a transitional moment of lighting technology, featuring fixtures that were designed for both gas and electricity.
Scottish Rite Cathedral

The Scottish Rite Cathedral, designed by Herbert M. Greene, is not a cathedral but a fully functioning Masonic lodge that employs a variety of architectural styles and motifs to create a myriad of individual environments inside. As one enters, a grand double staircase surrounds one, leading upstairs to the largest room in the building, the theater, which is in an Egyptian style. The major room on the first level is the Crystal Room, a banqueting hall that features Louis XVI plaster decoration on the pillars and ceilings. Numerous crystal chandeliers illuminate the space in such a way that the room is flooded with the colors of the rainbow. Across the lobby is the library, which is designed in a modified Gothic style with an elaborate plaster ceiling with Gothic decorations. Throughout the building, the use of fine materials characterizes the high civic values of the Masonic order.
1936 Moderne Residence

This 1936 Moderne residence was designed by Luther Sadler and features a curved stair tower with several tall windows of glass block that is dramatic both inside and outside. Continuing the drama is the entrance, which brings people underneath the staircase into the foyer. An entire corner of the living room is dematerialized through the use of steel casement windows that wrap around the corner. Industrial railings are found not only on the staircase, but also on an upstairs terrace above one of the first concrete garages in Dallas.
Texas & Pacific Railroad Station

The Texas & Pacific Railroad Station, designed by Wyatt C. Hedrick, could be considered a little-known gem of downtown Fort Worth: opened in 1931, it closed in 1967 and remained shuttered until being redeveloped and reopened in 2002. This is not merely a single structure but three: the passenger terminal, an office building, and a warehouse/storage facility, all designed in the zigzag style of Art Deco. Details inside and out utilize aluminum, creating a complete decorative program that even extends to the HVAC vents.
Marty Leonard Chapel

In the Marty Leonard Chapel, E. Fay Jones has created an interior space that is not only remarkable and beautiful but also encompasses complex geometry in a truly handcrafted building. Although built in an urban area, the chapel becomes an inner space all its own, giving the visitor a complete sense of serenity, a place for thought and meditation. A large butt-glazed ridged light opens the interior to the sky and allows a play of sunlight through the elaborate wooden structure.
St. John's Episcopal Church

The most striking features of St. John's Episcopal Church, designed by Arch Swank and O'Neil Ford, are the oval plan and hyperbolic paraboloid roof. In the sanctuary, the original floor and altar have been replaced, changing the character of the space by using different materials and colors from the original versions. The cylindrical alcoves along the sides however remain intact, with light flowing down their walls from skylights, creating small shadows in the brickwork. Two circular skylights in the hyperbolic paraboloid roof create points of light over the font and the altar.
The class was privileged to take a private tour of the Bass Residence, where no photographs or drawings were permitted.
Bass Residence

As soon as one enters the Bass Residence, designed by Paul Rudolph, a sequence of intimate volumes defined by interlocking spatial geometries becomes evident. Floor-to-ceiling glazing visually extends space to the patios and terraces outside. Terrazzo floors, which feature aggregates of uniform size, were left unpolished to create a distinctive texture. All the furnishings were custom-made, including many built-in pieces.
UT Arlington Engineering Research Building

Designed by ZGF Architects, the UT Arlington Engineering Research Building utilizes the brick, glass and steel that define surrounding campus buildings, but its use of shell stone on the ground level differentiates it from its neighbors. Inside the entrances, multicolored terrazzo floors provide visual drama, as do staircases that are wrapped with steel railings and glass panels.
Wyly Theater

In the Wyly Theater, designed by Joshua Prince-Ramos and Rem Koolhaas, spaces are stacked vertically instead of horizontally, and the main theater can be reconfigured to support any seating/stage arrangement, even clearing all seats out of the space by raising or lowering them. The mechanisms and cables of this machinery are exposed. When blackout curtains are withdrawn, complete glazing on three sides of the performance level permits the audience and performers to see the city outside.
Dallas Chop House

The Dallas Chop House interior, designed by 5G Studio, reflects the western culture of the city of Dallas. It is divided into one exterior and four interior spaces, each offering a different experience. Interior materials include burnished Venetian plaster, tooled leather, hot-rolled steel plate, end grained wood block burned with a branding iron, and slabs of back-lit onyx.
Herman Miller Showroom

The Dallas Herman Miller Showroom, designed by Krueck and Sexton, greets visitors with a spacious, open reception area that features several iconic pieces by famous designers who have worked with the firm over a half-century. The showroom is defined on one side by a large, gently curving wall painted a pale sea foam green against which are arrayed the firm’s selection of coffee tables, dining tables, and corresponding seating, once again imparting an aura of gracious, relaxed living.