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## FOUNDATIONS FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

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### Organic

- a. Having systematic co-ordination; organized; as, they formed an organic whole.
- b. Pertaining to, or inherent in, a certain organization; constitutional; not secondary or accidental.

### Macro View

**Design is an inevitable occupation.** A definition of design could be as follows: Design is an expression of "creative order" by a person of reason to satisfy a need. As created and creative beings, in every solution to a problem we express our creativity.

**Man's creativity comes from God.** We are created in the image of God and one way in which we can acknowledge Him is through the expression of our creativity.

**The discovery of systems will guide our design exploration.** Systematic order is the result of rules and the use of rules enables a person to realize the full potential of expression. Within guidelines there is direction. Without direction there can be no real progress and therefore no real creativity. An approach to design that allows for unrestricted influence of intellectual, emotional and spiritual factors in what might be considered a free inquiry will result in a chaotic outcome. The world has been designed to function, both spiritually and physically, in a specific way, according to certain rules. These rules are expressed in nature by the laws of physics, in society by civil laws and in morals by moral law. This can guide our critique of architecture as well resulting in critique that is both objective and subjective. The influence of personal bias and emotive experience is important but they are not the final basis to determine success. Architecture should have standards that reflect the balance of:

- Creating - Architecture has value in itself, the act of doing.
- Expressing - Architecture can relate a message and more importantly a worldview (in the body of a complete set of works of an architect). This also implies the ability of the viewer to understand the message as intended.
- Technique - Architecture can be evaluated on the grounds of appropriate techniques: color, proportion, balance, selection of media, etc.
- Function - Architecture can, and should, fulfill a need such as satisfying a functional requirement or communicating a message.

**Nature is a viable source for artistic ideas.** There is a wealth of resource for art and architecture in the study of nature. It can give us definition from structure to color, from

mechanics to hierarchy. Nature has been created in such a way that it causes us to be satisfied and produces in us an emotive response to its beauty.

**Nature has its source in God.** To base architecture upon nature is to accept that it is God who has created it. Nature, as the word has meaning for many people today, is a self-sustaining machine with a particular inherent beauty. In contrast to that view, I believe nature is an extension of the hand of God and provides for us an indicator that God exists.

**Man has a responsibility for nature.** Man is to subdue nature and allow it to be a vehicle of expression for his creativity. This may seem to give license to using the resources of the earth as one may wish. This is not the case. Subdue means to bring into cultivation, as a steward, and to work with its intrinsic attributes to produce benefit for all.

### Micro View

**An organizing instrument must exist.** There must be an integrating instrument for design in architecture. Randomness without constraint or a semblance of order is chaos and chaos does not benefit reasonable man. This instrument is the generator that will facilitate the following principle.

**Parts should relate to the whole.** The integrity of the design depends on the extent of purpose given to each element in the composition. An organizing instrument will allow each element to exist in a compatible and contributing way within the composition of the product. A synergy results from this. The elements should be selected or designed with respect to the organizing instrument and as a result the organizing instrument will be reflected in each element.

**The site is worthy of respect.** As the site is considered in view of the organizing instrument and the potential synergy of the elements it can become a contributing factor in the development of the design. We should embrace the land. Respecting the site entails concern for the features of the site such as the landform and topography, trees, vegetation, and geological features. The orientation of the site is important. The views and climatic conditions (sun and wind) can give design direction to the project. Light, as a result of the orientation and the surrounding shading devices such as trees and buildings, is also an important consideration of organic design.

**Complexity and Scale should be elements of the design.** Nature is made up of parts that are small and complex. Many simple parts can contribute to create a complex whole. As one looks at nature one sees many pieces in combination. This model of nature should be imitated by using variety, repetition, and a scale reflective of that in nature.

**The user is to be satisfied.** The user is the primary purpose for architecture. Therefore it is imperative that there be a positive response, on the part of the user, to the scale, function, and feeling of the product. However, it is important that the resolution of these three aspects occur congruently.

**All resources are worthy of respect.** There are many sources of input to the design

process. These sources include the owner, the user, the site, current technology, history, precedents, and programmatic requirements. This necessitates more extensive study in the design process, but the outcome will be better as the result of the integration of all the valid resources of the project.

**Space.** Movement through space brings depth to meaning. The manipulation of the spatial experience adds expansiveness and intrigue. Architecture is more aptly described as forming the negative space of air rather than the assemblage of materials.

### **Implementation**

The following is a limited collection of specific methods that can be implemented in order to arrive at an organic solution to a design problem.

- Layering - Provide a “lengthy” transition from the outside to the inside. This can be done through a succession of man made outdoor spaces and nature made indoor spaces.
- Asymmetry - Asymmetrical composition of symmetrical components.
- Materials Natural - Wood and stone and their by-products.
- Appropriate use - Honesty. The expression of a material in such a way that its characteristics are enhanced both structurally and aesthetically.
- Human Scale - That which one can caress with the hands.
- Workmanship - Wherever possible, glorify the craftsmanship of the human hand and the use of tools in order to express the nature of the material and to relate the structure directly to the user.
- Extension - Use the element of extension to express a quality of embracing the land.
- Detail - The attention to detail, the small design opportunities, can enhance the integrity of a project.
- Overlap - The use of overlap facilitates integration and thus an organic architecture.