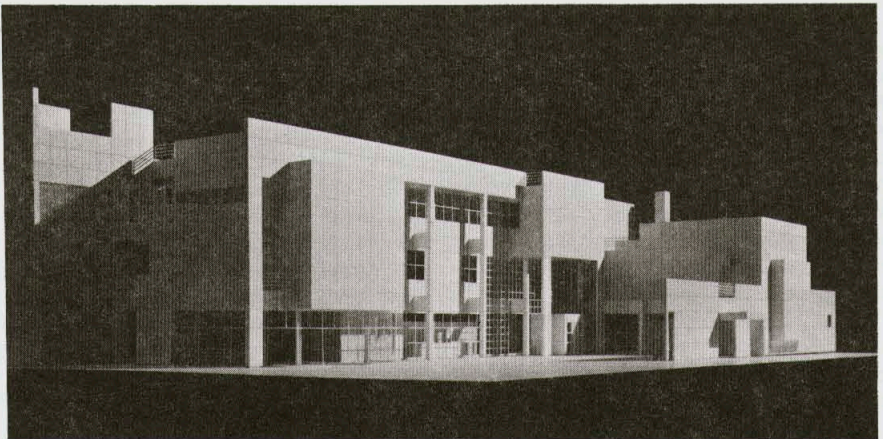


Model, The Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1979
Photograph: Wolfgang Hoyt/Esto



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Federal agency.

While the model and architectural drawings for The Hartford Seminary Foundation building, currently under construction, form the center of this exhibition of Richard Meier's work, his models, drawings and photographs of two additional structures are also included -- the Bronx Developmental Center in New York City and The Atheneum in New Harmony, Indiana. Together, these profile three major complexes by a New York architect who makes a distinctive, distinguished and debated contribution to the art and architecture of our day.

Richard Meier's architectural drawings and models not only offer visual data about particular buildings but, in addition, they can be enjoyed for their intrinsic beauty, as works of art. It should not surprise visitors to MATRIX 58 that Richard Meier began as a painter and was a friend of Barnett Newman and that he is associated with other artists of the New York School. Meier's preoccupation with the spatial relationships of void and solid and with the precise balancing of simple, elegant shapes is a characteristic he shares with the finest sculptors and painters of the modernist idiom. The axonometric drawings, elevations and sections, with their delicate delineation of interior and exterior wall patterns, give a kind of x-ray view into the spatial configuration of the buildings. At the same time, they can assist the viewer to visualize the interiors of the spaces which the models show us from the outside.

The Hartford Seminary Foundation building, to be completed in late 1980, occupies a level site in an urban setting, with residences at one side and the neo-Gothic buildings of the old Seminary campus adjacent on the other. The Seminary's current mission provides research and consultative services for churches, degree programs for lay and clergy (some of which are in relation to other Hartford area schools) and an emerging program in public policy. Since none of

these programs are for resident students, the many buildings of the old campus were sold and a single structure serving many functions was commissioned. The Seminary's needs include a meeting room for larger groups, library, bookstore, curricular facilities and service areas, several classrooms, a chapel, and faculty and administrative offices. The building itself is set back from the street. The line of its walls will be paralleled by the handsome row of oak trees to the north. Large expanses of green lawn will surround the elegant, rectilinear structure. The exterior, sheathed in white porcelain-enameled steel, will reflect the seasonal changes, partaking of summer green and winter white. From the street, a wall partially encloses a courtyard before the entrance. This wall continues beyond the exterior of the chapel, forming a second outdoor space. Walking through the entrance to the court, the entire facade is visible -- a precisely balanced composition of transparent glass and opaque white panels, uniting the exterior and interior spaces.

Speaking of his design for The Hartford Seminary Foundation building, Richard Meier said, "The organization is representative of the truly democratic principles upon which the Seminary is based. The only hierarchy is an architectural one, in which public spaces dominate private ones. One can really think of this building in two ways. In one sense, it is a partially cloistered, inward-looking organization of spaces. A heads down, contemplative place. On the other hand, it is the center of a larger domain. It reaches out to the world in which it finds itself. It invites that world to take part. The building forms a courtyard which is receptive to the community and the major public spaces open out in various directions."

The Bronx Developmental Center (1970-77), commissioned for the New York State Department of

Mental Hygiene, was built to accommodate 380 physically disabled and mentally retarded children. The triangular site occupies part of an industrial no-man's-land -- an island bounded by the Hutchinson River Parkway to the east and a network of railroad tracks to the west. In this blighted area, Meier's silver gray, reflective exterior and the longitudinal and vertical linear design of the complex of buildings, broken by rounded windows, present an entity of such self-complete, stylish tranquility that it has the character of a mirage, almost awakening a sense of unbelief. Meier's design attempts to create "a sense of place" which responds to the special feelings and needs of the residents, while yet providing for the technical and support services required for the facility. The architectural design is thus bi-nuclear along its lateral axis, with residential units on one side and support services on the other.

The commission for The Atheneum for New Harmony, Indiana, presented Richard Meier with an unusual historical context and setting. The town was a utopian community in the nineteenth century, inspired by the principles of Robert Owen and Owen's French contemporary, Charles Fourier. Owen and Fourier both aimed "to find the architectural conditions most appropriate to the needs of individual and social life." Richard Meier sees this problem as the conflict between an "ordered" Utopia and "disordered" reality, and remarks that this dichotomy has always been of special interest to architects, who have tended to solve real problems with "ideal" solutions. The New Harmony Atheneum, which was dedicated in October 1979, is one of Meier's most intricate architectural conceptions, making use of diagonal ramps to connect the horizontal levels of the building. The Atheneum is intended as a center for visitor orientation to the rebuilt town of New Harmony. It is an official place of arrival, an orientation center and the

starting point for the tour of the town. The building serves as a link between the past and the present.

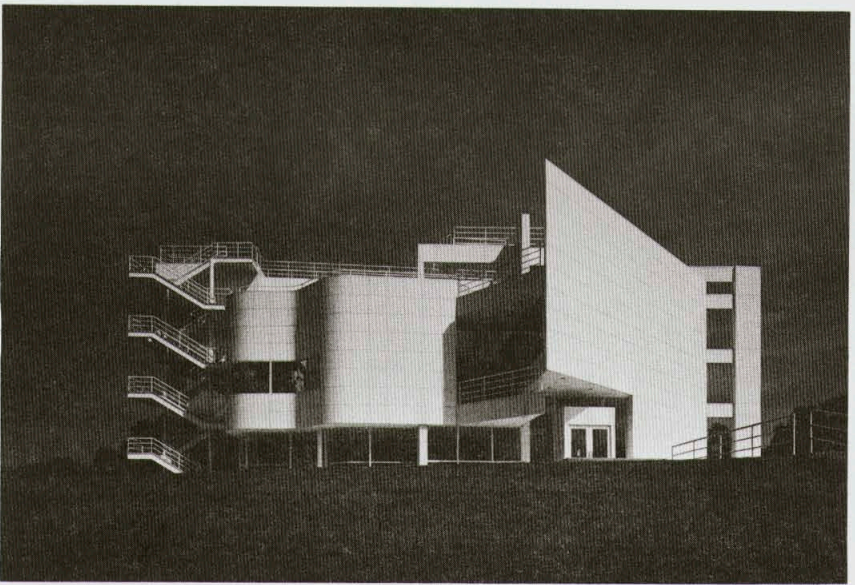
Meier believes that "the sense of spiritual activity" which the past historic styles of architecture have had can be achieved in present-day architecture through architectonic forms "elevated to maximum clarity."

By the exquisite balancing of solid and void, of open and closed areas and patterns of light and dark, by the elegance of finish of fine materials, he has achieved a contemporary style which indeed partakes of a timeless classicism

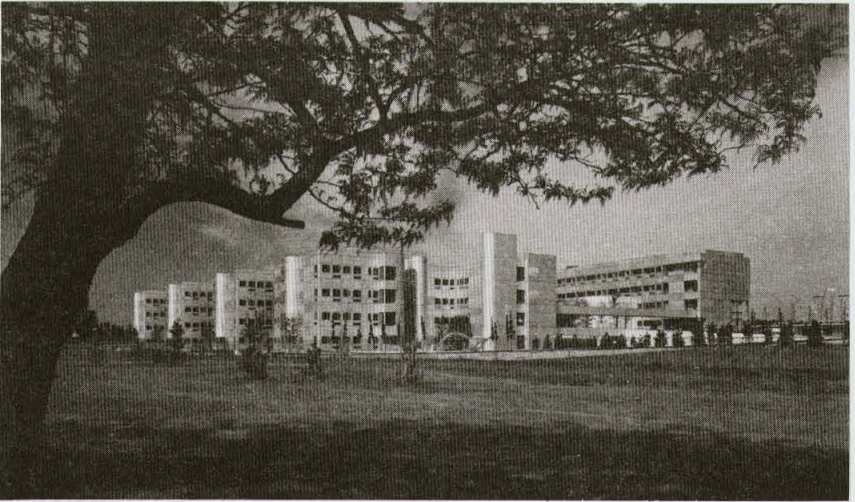
Richard Meier received his architectural training at Cornell University. He established his own office in New York City in 1963 and since that time his private practice includes residences, multi-family housing, medical facilities, museums, cultural facilities, commercial and industrial buildings and town plans. Among these buildings, his Twin Parks Northeast Housing, Smith House, Westbeth Artists' Housing, Douglas House and the Bronx Developmental Center have won National Honor Awards from the American Institute of Architects. An Adjunct Professor of Architecture at Cooper Union from 1964 to 1973 Mr. Meier has also served as the William Henry Bishop Visiting Professor at Yale University in 1975 and 1977 and was Visiting Professor of Architecture at Harvard University in 1977. He lives in New York City and is the founder and principal of Richard Meier & Associates Architects.

Jane Dillenberger
Guest Curator
The Hartford Seminary Foundation
Hartford, Connecticut

PLEASE NOTE: Richard Meier will give a MATRIX Evening Lecture at the Wadsworth Atheneum on April 24, 1980 at 7:30 p.m. Special guests at this event will include members of the Connecticut Society of Architects (AIA) and the Cornell Club of Hartford.



The Atheneum, New Harmony, IN, 1975-79
Photograph: Ezra Stoller/Esto



Bronx Developmental Center, New York City, 1970-76
Photograph: Ezra Stoller/Esto

Works in MATRIX:

HARTFORD SEMINARY FOUNDATION

(Hartford, Connecticut)

Model, 1979, plexiglas, 19" x 32" x 47 3/8".

East Elevation, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 17" x 24" (sight).

South Elevation, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 17" x 24" (sight).

North Elevation, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 17" x 24" (sight).

West Elevation, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 17" x 24" (sight).

Section through Chapel and Meeting Room, early version, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 17" x 24" (sight).

Axometric Drawing, 1979, ink on mylar, 54 1/2" x 40 1/2" (sight).

Section through Chapel and Meeting Room, final version, 1980, watercolor and ink on paper, 24" x 32 1/4" (sight).

THE ATHENEUM (New Harmony, Indiana)

Model, 1975, plexiglas, 14 1/4" x 30 1/8" x 41 3/8".

Section facing West, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 16 5/8" x 24 1/2" (sight).

Section facing North, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 16 5/8" x 24 1/2" (sight).

Section facing East, 1979, watercolor and ink on paper, 16 5/8" x 24 1/2" (sight).

Axometric Drawing, 1976, ink on mylar, 47 3/8" x 35 1/2" (sight).

Two Plan Studies, 1975, pencil on tracing paper; left: 11 3/8" x 7 1/4", right: 11 3/8" x 17 1/2" (sight).

Elevation Study, 1976, pencil on tracing paper, 7" x 25" (sight).

Plan Study, 1975, pencil on tracing paper, 21 1/4" x 17 3/4" (sight).

Plan Study, 1975, pencil on tracing paper, 23 1/2" x 20 3/4" (sight).

Site Plan and Elevations, 1979, lithograph, the first of an edition of seventy-five, 34 1/4" x 34 1/4" (sight).

Ten photographs of The Atheneum, New Harmony, 1979, by Evelyn Hofer, 20" x 16".

THE BRONX DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER (Bronx, New York)

Model, 1972, plexiglas, 15" x 30 5/8" x 66 3/4".

Elevation Study, 1972, pastel on paper, 8 1/8" x 13 5/8" (sight).

Elevation Study, 1972, pastel on paper, 17 1/2" x 35 3/8" (sight).

COLLAGES (by Richard Meier)

Untitled, 1960, mixed media, 21" x 16 1/2" (sight).

"VAN HEU", 1960, mixed media, 12 7/8" x 14" (sight).

White Collage, 1960, mixed media, 21 1/4" x 16 1/2" (sight), collection of Elaine Cohen.

Orange Collage, 1960, mixed media, 13 1/4" x 13 1/4" (sight). Collection of Elaine Cohen.

"Flagollage", 1960, mixed media, 9" x 8 7/8" (sight).

"0026", 1961, mixed media, 11 1/2" x 15 1/2" (sight).

"Sez. Strada", 1973, mixed media, 13 3/4" x 23 1/2" (sight).

"Lampo", 1973, mixed media, 20 3/4" x 17" (sight).

Untitled, 1978, mixed media,
10 1/4" x 10 1/4" (sight).

All works, unless otherwise designated, are from the collection of Richard Meier.

Selected one-man exhibitions:
New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art, New Harmony, IN
Richard Meier - Collages and Architectural Drawings '79; Modernism Gallery, San Francisco, CA Richard Meier - Architectural Drawings and Models, Furniture Designs, Collages '80.

Selected group exhibitions:
American Federation of Arts, NYC 40 under 40 '66; Princeton University, School of Architecture, Princeton, NJ Five Architects '74; The Cooper-Hewitt Museum, NYC 200 Years of American Architectural Drawing '77; Leo Castelli Gallery, NYC Architecture I '77; Rosa Esman Gallery, NYC and New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, NJ Architecture: Service/Craft/Art '78; Bronx Community College, the Bronx, NY Masterworks of Bronx Architecture '79.

Selected bibliography by Meier:
Recent American Synagogue Architecture, The Jewish Museum (NYC) '63.

Richard Meier Architect: Buildings and Projects, 1966-1976, Oxford University Press (NYC) '76.

Meier and Maki Fumihiko. "Dialogue on Architecture," also Special Feature, "White Existence - Richard Meier 1961-77," SD, no. 160 (January '78).

Selected bibliography about Meier:
Five Architects - Eisenman/Graves/Gwathmey/Hejduk/Meier, Wittenborn & Co. (NYC) '72.

Stephens, Suzanne. "The Individual: Richard Meier," Progressive Architecture, vol. 58, no. 5 (May '77), p. 60+.

Goldberger, Paul, et al. Special Issue/"Bronx Developmental Center," Architecture + Urbanism, no. 84 (November '77), p. 3+.

Huxtable, Ada Louise. "A Radical New Addition for Mid-America," The New York Times (September 30, '79), section 2, p. 1+.

"Harmonious Museum for New Harmony," Life, vol. 3, no. 2 (February '80), p. 60+.

Rykwert, Joseph. "New Harmony Propylaeon," Domus, no. 603 (February '80), p. 12+.

Goldberger, Paul. "The Atheneum: Utopia Lives," Vogue, vol. 170, no. 2 (February '80), p. 250+.