

Threshold and Process

**Carlos Jiménez Studio
and the making of the
Richard E. Peeler Art Center
at DePauw University**



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Foreword

The Richard Earl Peeler Art Center

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The Richard Earl Peeler Art Center is a first for DePauw University. One hundred and twenty-five years ago, this institution (then known as Indiana Asbury University) engaged Elizabeth Adelaide Clark to offer instruction in the elements of drawing, in crayon, water color and oil painting. After a century and more of teaching by distinguished scholars and creative artists, DePauw now has its first building specifically designed for this academic sphere. Gone are the days of adapted buildings, of advanced students doing their studio work in neighborhood houses, and faculty members having to rent or build their own studios. One of the most modern facilities ever created for the teaching and study of art, the Peeler Center offers adequate spaces for introductory classes, advanced student projects and faculty studios.

The magnificence of the Peeler Art Center is due, in large part, to the careful design and development led by architect Carlos Jiménez. A faculty member at Rice University, Jiménez carefully considered the programmatic needs and wishful thinking of the faculty members of the Art Department. Working with them, he designed a signature architectural statement for the DePauw campus, housing areas of important functionality and versatility. The large monitors facing north draw outside light to the student and faculty studios for painting and drawing; the industrial-quality studios for sculpture, ceramics and painting are separated by specialty air handling equipment from the clean rooms of the galleries and exhibition preparation spaces; the visual resources library provides expanded spaces for cataloguing analog and digital images utilized as resources for study and instruction.

Thanks to the vision and support of the principal donors, DePauw graduates Steven Rales '73 and Christine (Plank) Rales '74, the building has more than enough room to meet current and future needs of the Art Department. The Peeler Art Center includes luminous studios for painting and drawing, a computer lab for graphic design classes and another for digital video, as well as a small auditorium that can accommodate other artistic events. Eight thousand square feet of gallery and exhibition space permits DePauw to host, for the first time, major touring exhibits, while also providing exhibition areas suitable for

multimedia and community presentations. Four classrooms and seminar rooms are equipped with a variety of technologies for the use of visual images from slides and digital databases, serving the instructional needs of classes and faculty colleagues from across the campus.

The donors hope this building and its facilities will serve, too, as a campus gathering place, visited often by students, faculty members, alumni and members of the wider DePauw community. Rest assured, DePauw will strive in the days and years ahead to take full advantage of the innumerable opportunities afforded by the Peeler Art Center.

Robert G. Bottoms
President, DePauw University

Home at Last

Reflections on the History of the Art Department on the Threshold of Now

*The young people
everywhere must learn the
forgotten art of seeing life
with their own eyes.*

– Oskar Kokoschka

In its March issue of 1958, the *DePauw Alumnus* magazine announced that, in tandem with the completion of Roy O. West Library, the administration had approved the conversion of the Andrew Carnegie Library, built in 1908, to become the new art center, and that renovations were already under way.¹ By this time in its 80-year history, the art department, still under the leadership of painter A. Reid Winsey (1935-70), had survived no less than seven temporary homes, ranging from the confined but elegant to the spacious but insect-infested. It had only been 10 years since the last move, but already the need for additional space, for both studio work and exhibitions, had become pressing. Any change at all would have therefore been welcome, but when the University unveiled its plans for the new facility, all expectations were thrillingly exceeded. The way toward an extraordinary future had been paved overnight, as the magazine proudly reported:

Upon completion ... the structure will give the University one of the finest campus centers of art and culture in the Middle West ... In addition to providing the finest facilities for the instruction of art courses, the Art Center will feature a spacious gallery where exhibits can be displayed at their very best. ... It is anticipated that the gallery will attract not only DePauw students, but alumni, parents, Greencastle residents and, in fact, visitors from throughout the surrounding area.

It was, in short, “the realization of a long dream” for the department, for the University, and especially for its students, who would “now have, for the first time in the university’s history, facilities comparable to those of other departments.”² Completed and readied on schedule for classes that fall semester, the newly renovated art center at 309 South College Avenue was dedicated, in fine DePauw tradition, on Old Gold Day. Framed by the building’s sturdy columns, John Walker, director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, delivered the dedication speech to an excited crowd. It was a banner cultural event, as auspicious a rebirth for the department as for the building. (Eventually, in 1986, following a gift from the Emison family, the facility was re-dedicated as The William Weston Clarke Emison Art Center.)

Looking back across the span of 44 years that separates the opening of the stately gray limestone edifice on College Avenue from that of its modernist successor, the elegant brick, glass, steel and limestone structure by Carlos Jiménez, I am struck by how those

1950s dreams expressed in the alumni magazine are now mirrored in the present: the optimistic plunge into newly minted studios and classrooms, the buzz over state-of-the-art technologies and equipment, the promise of brilliant new gallery spaces, the wish to provide a new cultural light onto a neglected corner of the region – and beneath it all, the reaffirmation of the vital place studio art and art history, the sister disciplines of visual education, occupy in a liberal arts institution such as DePauw.

Much, of course, has changed since 1958 – the age of Sputnik, existentialism and abstract expressionism – and not least of all the philosophy and pedagogy of art and art history. What Siegfried Kracauer called the “pictorial deluge” – the bombardment of the individual’s lifeworld by images – has assumed even broader dimensions with the advent of the Internet, and art educators have had to retrench and rethink the goals of visual education. One wonders what our faculty predecessors of 1958 would think of the diverse technical innovations and aesthetic riches the new art center offers the educators of today. One wonders if they would see them as signs of progress or merely as superfluties, distractions from their essential mission, the nature of which was expressed so succinctly by the painter Oskar Kokoschka in the early part of our century.

One approach to these questions can begin with the acknowledgement that good architecture, as the quintessential environmental art, is capable of working, behind the scenes of consciousness as it were, to direct perception and silently structure the human activities it houses. For students and teachers involved in the creative processes of making art, no less than the intellectual processes of interpreting it, architecture *matters*: It situates our activities in the shared, perceptible here and now. Carlos Jiménez is acutely aware of this fact and the awesome responsibility it casts upon his own practice. Among the most crucial goals toward which an architect must gear his activity, he has been heard to say, is the goal of *making place*. When one experiences something profoundly – whether a feeling, an insight, a connection to another person – it is often the sensual ambience of one’s surroundings, one’s “sense” of place, that most powerfully conditions memory. This makes architecture a force in shaping future perceptions and actions – space effecting time. For the architect, however, this presents a dilemma, since a building can do no more than provide the stage upon which these dramas of connection unfold. Too often in modern architecture the stage steals the show. Only by avoiding the “formal games” with which many architects ply their trade, can the building, in Jiménez’s view, humbly provide “for the development of life” rather than trumpeting its own greatness as a work of art.³ “A work of architecture,” Jiménez has said, “is always present and at the same time absent, it is an interchange between being and dreaming, and we realize that life goes on between the walls and beyond them.”⁴

Communities, like individuals, make and remake themselves in the context of specific places; collective memories and mythologies are infused with the ambiances of place which a group has known. To appreciate where our own community of artists, scholars, students

and friends has been before they found themselves at the threshold of this particular place, it is worthwhile to revisit briefly the history of the visual arts at DePauw.



Instruction in art came to Indiana Asbury University 40 years after the school's founding in 1837 (and, not coincidentally, 10 years after the college admitted its first group of women students in 1867). Under its president, Alexander Martin, the school in the 1870s was going through a general expansion of its curricula, thanks in large part to a \$600,000 gift from Washington C. DePauw and his family. This expansion was taking place at a time when public interest in the arts was blooming across the state. Already in 1872 the State Normal School in Terre Haute had established an art department, and by 1878 Purdue University was offering its first courses. In October of the same year in which art courses were first offered in Greencastle, John Love and James F. Gookens opened Indiana's earliest School of Art in Indianapolis.

The beginnings at Old Asbury were quite modest: A space was apportioned in the anteroom off the stage of Meharry Hall, in the neo-gothic East College (begun in 1870), and it was here that Mrs. Elizabeth Adelaide Clark, who was hired in the fall term 1877, began to offer instruction in "the elements of drawing, and in crayon, water color, and oil painting."⁵ By 1884 interest had swelled, prompting the trustees to appoint a committee to oversee the creation of a new School of Art within the University. Professor Henry A. Mills became its first dean. In Indiana as elsewhere in the United States during this time, academic art instruction borrowed its philosophy from Victorian England, where the anti-industrial platforms of men like John Ruskin and William Morris set the agenda for theory both high and low. As in Europe, appreciation of art was coming to be seen as a part of a student's moral training, their cultivation of "taste" as a mark of distinction and, by extension, as a pendant to civic virtue. This, at least, was the theory. On a practical level, the new curriculum was also designed to prepare students to become public school teachers of art, a vocation suddenly found to be in increasing demand.

By 1900 the School of Art had already been uprooted three times: Between 1884-85 the program moved to the building then known as West College (on the site of present-day Harrison Hall); following this it was Music Hall, once located on the corner of Locust and Hanna St. (and left standing until 1976), where the School of Music had to play reluctant host to the School of Art for about two years. Finally, in 1887, the program found its first semi-permanent site in the remodeled Simpson House, the former home of Old Asbury's first president, Matthew Simpson, a building which occupied the site of present-day Rector Hall and faced Hanna Street. Art courses were taught there until 1913.

It is significant that Simpson Hall had a gallery, for the growth of the School of Art can hardly be separated from the birth of the University's art collection. Among Washington C. DePauw's many gifts to the school were a series of lithographs and a set of

anatomical plaster casts purchased for the School of Art; he also provided a number of marble and alabaster statues. Already in 1884, according to one printed catalogue, the school possessed “very superior collections of paintings, engravings and imperial photographs and statuary.” Initially, the “Museum” was housed in an East College room known as A. C. Downey Hall, and it was later moved, along with the easels, benches and anatomical models used for classes, to Simpson. Enlargements to the collection may have also contributed to the introduction of an art history curriculum in 1914. With academic art history in the United States still in its infancy, it fell to the head of the Greek Department, Rufus T. Stephenson, to offer the first courses in Greek, Roman and Renaissance art. These courses proved popular, and Stephenson continued to teach art history until his retirement in 1946.

By 1934 the list of courses had sufficiently expanded, and the curriculum had become well enough entrenched, that the School of Art was ready to be transformed into an academic department. Within four years, the number of students in all art courses more than quadrupled. However, despite this newfound institutional luster, the “art department” continued to wander from location to location. For a time, it was located in the basement of East College. In 1940 the department once again straining against the limits of its allotted space. This time, however, the art faculty may well have regretted what they wished for, since the quest for space now led them to a World War I-era, barracks-style building on Olive Street, near the present site of Bishop Roberts Hall. Students dubbed the place “Termite Terrace.” True to its name, the infested building was soon consumed – and finally abandoned in 1948. But even this was not the last temporary home the department would live through. In September of that year, the University, then under president Clyde E. Wildman, announced the purchase of the C. H. Barnaby House at 603 East Washington Street for use by the art department.⁶ The plan called for workshops and staff offices, an art gallery, a room for Kappa Pi (the student art league), as well as space for home economics classes, which had long been integrated with the art curriculum.

Barnaby House seems to have acquired something of a cult status on campus, perhaps because it was off-campus. According to Professor of Art Ray French, the location helped engender a “camaraderie and esprit de corps” among the art students (and, it is said, the Halloween parties held there were fabulous). But soon this location, too, proved inadequate for the needs of the department. It is unclear when Winsey and his colleagues began to lobby for yet another increase in space and capacities, but within nine years the plans for relocating to the converted Carnegie Library were moving forward. The department was poised to expand. This it did, and one year later consolidated its gains by successfully introducing a studio art major for the first time in the school’s history.

The last three decades of the Cold War passed in relative peace for the art department. Winsey brought on board a succession of talented and inspiring studio professors – all

of them men – to deepen the department’s offerings in its traditional areas of strength: drawing, painting, printmaking and ceramics. Garrett Boone Jr. (1955-71) had already been hired in 1955, and 16 years later he was succeeded by a fellow DePauw graduate, Willis “Bing” Davis (1971-76), the first African-American artist to teach in the program. Painter and graphic designer William Meehan, whose antics and exploits fill many pages of department lore, arrived in 1963 and later became chair, a position he held for many years.

The story of ceramic arts at DePauw opened a significant new chapter with the arrival of Richard Peeler (1958-72), who replaced Helen Leon (1946-58). Guided by Peeler’s enormous energy and commitment to arts education – he traveled to Japan and produced a series of instructional films on pottery making that gained a wide audience across the state – the ceramics program became the epicenter of a surge in statewide interest in the work of Indiana artist-craftsmen. In 1959 Peeler inaugurated an annual juried ceramics exhibition, a tradition kept up for years by his successor, David Herrold (1972-). The male pantheon of professors was enriched once again in 1976 when figurative painter Robert Kingsley replaced Bing Davis, and he began a career-long quest for higher standards that won the department many talented converts to the cause of *l’art pour l’art*.

But the most dramatic transformation of the department’s ethos and image surely came with the hiring of art historian Catherine Fruhan, a specialist in Italian baroque art, in 1984. Since the mid-1940s, art history courses had been handled by the studio faculty, who were able to sustain a major by having students travel abroad and take a variety of cognate courses. Legend has it that it was Roger Gustavsson, professor of philosophy, who first declared the lack of a full-time art historian at a liberal arts college of DePauw’s caliber a scandal, and his protest bore results, paving the way for Fruhan’s arrival. By all accounts, the new professor cleaned house soon after arriving, injecting a new rigor and professionalism into the program and setting in motion the drive to hire a full-time gallery director. By 1988 the program needed a second scholar to offer courses in ancient and medieval art, and Leslie Busis, a medievalist, was hired. Two years later, Busis was replaced by the author, likewise a medievalist, and soon the art history curriculum expanded further. Benefits from this consolidation of the art history curriculum accrued to the entire department. Not only could studio professors concentrate their energies in their areas of expertise, they could expect a greater awareness of art’s history and theory from their students. A natural symbiosis developed between the two programs, studio and art history, enhanced by a camaraderie and sense of common mission that the department has long enjoyed.



Fast forward to 1996. From the very start of the process that led to the creation of the new art center on Hanna Street, the art department rallied around a core principle that they took to be, to borrow a phrase, self-evident and true – namely, the principle that

architectural form should express the building's function and, in so doing, set up meaningful relationships between the human activities that go on there and the built environment itself. The new art center would have to house not one prevailing function, but several: Studio art production, academic art history instruction, gallery display, lectures and performances. That form follows function has been one of the key tenets of architectural modernism since the 1920s, when Bauhaus architects first harnessed the principle to the utopian program of redefining modern life through a fruitful interaction between art and industry. Though challenged at the formal level by a variety of postmodernisms from the early 1960s onward, the idea has maintained its currency. By 1996, when the process of developing designs for the new art center project began in earnest, no art faculty member would have thought the idea to be in the least controversial. Rather, they believed that a successful new building, harmonizing its form with the myriad activities of its users, might ideally rise to the level of a total work of art, a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, capable of inspiring the hearts and minds of its users – students and faculty alike. On a more practical level, of course, they also realized that the new building would have to incorporate the best technologies for air exchange and climate control, sound isolation, artists' safety and collections security. The art department was seeing itself very clearly in a building of contemporary design, expressive of its own uniquely polytechnic and multi-disciplinary identity among the liberal arts.

But university buildings, they were soon made aware, are always contextual. To envision the creation of a boldly designed, modernist structure on a college campus like DePauw's, where an established tradition of campus planning had made the classicized forms of Georgian Colonial and neo-Georgian brick architecture (with its symmetrical plans, gabled roofs with dormers, pedimented entries, belfries and so on) emblematic of the good old values a DePauw education had long stood for, would mean a break with that local tradition. Making that break, the department realized, would not be easy, architecturally or politically. One could say that it was here, in the tension between tradition and innovation, between campus planning and visionary design, that the genesis of the new art center is to be found. Here was the first threshold the department, playing the role of modernism's missionaries, had to cross.

In fall 1996, the department sought permission from President Robert G. Bottoms to put out a national request for proposals, in the hope of attracting to campus an architect, or architectural firm, capable of negotiating the tangled thicket of issues and problems the project presented. To hold such a competition at all, and to grant an academic department these kinds of consultatory powers, was itself unorthodox, but the promise of bringing a "name" architect to DePauw proved irresistible, and the process was approved. Over the course of two days in late September 1997, a special committee, consisting of art department faculty and staff, then-Vice President of Finance and Administration Tom Dixon and trustees Richard Wood and William Welch, met at the Emison Art Center and heard presentations.⁷

The group listened carefully as each firm outlined the approach it would take to the project: all emphasized the importance of the campus context and kowtowed to the idea of a collaborative working process with the art faculty (one presenter went so far as to call it “co-authorship”). A bewildering array of design concepts confronted the committee – everything from trellised porticoes to glass exterior walls to radiused roofs, all accompanied by solemn vows to utilize state-of-the-art engineering to tackle the problems of cooling and heating, sound-isolation and environmental safety. By the end of the second day, five of the six architects had presented, and many tantalizing possibilities had been laid before the committee. The group was perhaps a little jaded by then, thinking they had seen it all. But number six was Carlos Jiménez.

Stylish and well-groomed (as architects often are), soft-spoken yet captivating in his use of language, projecting an attitude at once philosophical and deeply heartfelt – Jiménez re-vitalized the energies of the committee. As he spoke, the excitement in the air became palpable. Illustrating his points with photographs of earlier projects in Houston and Williamstown, he outlined his approach. In the process three stated ambitions, or *desires*, resonated strongly with the group. First was Jiménez’s desire to *make place* by setting up a sophisticated dialogue with the site and neighboring structures; this demanded, he explained, that the architect gain an intimate understanding of the campus “narrative” his building would join and subsequently inflect, and entailed treating the physical site as a “vocal presence” in the design process. Already he had performed a careful reading of the future site and immersed himself in its specificities. Jiménez’s sensitivity to the conditions of the site and the surrounding buildings thus went far beyond the facile invocations of “context” the committee heard from the other presenters.

Second was the architect’s fascination with light, its properties and its potentialities for modulating space and mood inside the building. Listening to Carlos Jiménez talk about architecture is like listening to a sonnet-writer rediscovering the beauties of his beloved, experiencing them as if for the first time. It became immediately clear that, in his search for meaningful relationships between architectonic forms and human activity, Jiménez was in the process of articulating a very personal poetics of light and space. For all the committee members, this represented a new way of thinking about architecture: An approach which, although visionary in its expression, never strays into the metaphysical, but rather finds concrete expression in the subtle play of window heights, shapes and proportions, balanced intersections of lines and planes, and sequences of volumes. Against the tendency of some architects to channel light into a space by simply putting in a lot of windows, Jiménez first “reads” light as a property of the site, weighs its potentialities on a finely calibrated scale, and only then welcomes it into a concrete situation. Third, the group noted, was the architect’s commitment to “good construction,” beginning with materials chosen for their durability, strength and honesty, and ending with exacting standards for workmanship throughout the structure.

With no dissenting votes the committee, sensing that a tremendous opportunity was at hand, moved quickly to recommend Jiménez to the administration and trustees. Trumpeting the consensus, one colleague at the time rejoiced over the selection of Jiménez as “a Mozart among Solieris.”⁸ Thus began a process of creative collaboration between Jiménez and the art faculty that would extend over four years, over the many stages of design and construction, to the present.

Under Jiménez’s leadership, the design process began with a discussion of *program*, encompassing the requirements of space and function for each cluster of rooms. Painters would need northern exposure to obtain just the right kind of diffused – not direct – sunlight, a luminous and refined space with high ceilings and expansive blank walls for hanging and critiquing their work. The potters and sculptors, by contrast, would require a tougher space, more akin to an industrial workshop, capable of accommodating a wide range of technical processes, with separate studios for advanced work; clay and glaze mixing; a kiln room; wood, metal and plaster shops; and large instructional areas. For the photography program, now led by Cynthia O’Dell (1998-), a complex suite of darkrooms and processing labs for both black-and-white and color work, adjoined by classrooms and a flexible lighting studio, would be needed. In each of these studio clusters, the department proposed, studio faculty would be ensconced in both an office and an artist’s studio – a way of providing for professional development while bringing students into direct daily contact with practicing artists. Among the art historians, now joined by Anne F. Harris (1998-), a vision of the ideal teaching spaces quickly emerged: Generously sized rooms with broad projection surfaces, flexible seating for lectures and discussions, traditional projection equipment complemented by a full range of analog and high-resolution digital imaging systems. Jiménez, himself a professor at Rice University’s School of Architecture, listened sympathetically and patiently to these ideas, and brought to the table a complementary vision of how a single building might accommodate these myriad functions. In time all grew fond of his characteristic wiry-line sketches and fascinated by his meditations on site conditions. A mutual trust soon developed.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, an inspired patron – who chose to remain anonymous – stepped forward as the project’s principal donor. What we learned about the donor’s twin dreams for the new building astonished and delighted the department: on the one hand, a vastly expanded exhibition space, built to the exacting standards of a modern museum, a semi-autonomous temple of art that would be the jewel in the building’s crown; on the other hand, an elegant 90-seat auditorium with state-of-the-art acoustics, designed for public occasions, films and recitals. Soon the department was referring to this mysterious friend of the arts as “our enlightened donor.” When Jiménez finally revealed his ingenious design for the large gallery space, it was confirmed that this was to be no ordinary modernist “white cube” – and no ordinary university gallery. In a smart reversal of the traditional relationship between a building’s central and flanking spaces – think of

the high nave and lower aisles of most basilican churches – Jiménez proposed a formal square space flanked by side spaces that rose dramatically up the entire interior elevation. Lit by frosted clerestory windows, these luminous side spaces would frame the central space and suffuse it with light. A second story would appear to hover above the first and enclose a more intimate space, a *sancta sanctorum* for art.

To guide the project into the construction phases, Jiménez and DePauw were eventually joined by CSO Architects of Indianapolis, a team of designers, planners and engineers headed by Dan Moriarity (principal in charge) and Terry May (project manager). The University also availed itself of no less than six separate consultants and subcontractors, who contributed valuable information and guidance on such diverse matters as environmental safety, darkroom and sculpture studio design, technology and visual resources planning, and museum programming. By the time DePauw broke ground on the Hanna Street site in the spring of 2001, the original program, which called for a 40,000 square-foot building on two levels, had grown to twice the square footage and included a full basement covering the entire footprint of the building. With general contractors Shiel Sexton at the helm, the six-year dream of bringing a world-class modernist structure to the DePauw campus slowly began to materialize into concrete, steel, glass, limestone and brick.

IV.

Much of consequence has been left out of this brief account of the creation of the DePauw art center. Fortunately for the reader, the greatest of those omissions, a description of the creative process of the architect himself, forms the focus of the conversation between Carlos Jiménez and architectural historian Stephen Fox in the pages that follow. Among the many pearls you can find there, one in particular deserves special polishing. It is a statement dear to the heart of a department that has struggled long and hard to bring diversity to the architectural landscape of its campus:

I strongly feel that an art institution should be its own thing, the expression of its unique program. My desire was to create a building that complemented the campus but emphasized other possibilities for its future development. I believe that campuses should reflect the enormous vitality of their academic constituencies in a varied set of buildings.

For both this architect and his collaborators, the future of a liberal arts institution such as DePauw must be envisioned as a path leading to greater diversity, not only of its people, its academic and cultural constituencies, but of its buildings, too. That path is now cleared. Framed by the subtle, luminous, magically “disappearing” architecture of the new art center, generations of DePauw students and faculty will learn to look, with their own eyes, beyond the finished forms of their world. In so doing they will stand on a different kind of threshold, the threshold of the *not yet*.

- ¹ Brochure for dedication of new art center, 1958 (DePauw University Archives and Special Collections, Roy O. West Library, henceforth abbreviated as ASC).
- ² “The DePauw Art Center,” *DePauw Alumnus* 22, n. 5 (March 1958): 3.
- ³ See the interview with María Isabel Navarro Segura, “Entrevista a Carlos Jiménez: Los Momentos de la Arquitectura,” *Basa: Publicación del Colegio de Arquitectos de Canarias* 23, no. 2 (2000): 11, translation on B002.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 35, with translation on B004.
- ⁵ Brochure for the art department’s Centennial, 1977, with text by Ray H. French, unpaginated (ASC).
- ⁶ Press clipping from unknown newspaper, dated Sept. 17, 1948, in Ray French scrapbook (ASC , D.C. 1003).
- ⁷ Art department committee members included David Herrold, Robert Kingsley, Catherine Fruhan, Mitchell Merback, photographer Nicola Feldmann-Kiss (1997-98) and then-gallery director Martha Opdahl.
- ⁸ Written evaluation of the RFP and interview results by Martha Opdahl, undated document [September 1997].

Threshold and Process

Carlos Jiménez's Art Center for DePauw University

An Interview
with
Carlos Jiménez

SF: What is the "threshold" of the exhibition title?

CJ: This word came about during a lunch meeting with Mitch Merback, the chair of the art department. We had just visited the building site, and I mentioned how exciting it was for the department to be at the threshold of a new beginning, at a point of departure, at the awareness of new prospects – all because of the new building. The building is a first step into amazing possibilities for the department's future and for the study of art at DePauw. Mitch decided to include the word "threshold" in the title of the exhibition. I like this word very much. It is a lyrical way of describing a building.

SF: Many of your commissions are tied to art: buildings for artists, collectors, dealers, schools of art, galleries and museums. What is it that people involved with art find so resonant about your architecture?

CJ: My connection to the art world began serendipitously. Soon after finishing my house and studio in 1983, I received a call from the owner of the Houston Fine Art Press. He brought a set of architectural drawings to see if they could be reworked to fit a new vision for a building he wanted to build. We spoke at length about art and the work of certain artists. We discussed the soft lines of Francesco Clemente's portraits and the sensual chiaroscuro in the drawings of Francisco Zúñiga, an artist from Costa Rica. As he was about to leave, he told me he wanted me to design an entirely new building for his press. The design and construction of this 9,000-square-foot building was very important for me. Until that time, my house and studio were the largest construction I had embarked on, so the Fine Art Press commission became a challenging new experience. It exposed me to artists whose work I only knew peripherally: Richard Diebenkorn, Michael Heizer, Jasper Johns, Brice Marden, and other artists who worked with the Houston Fine Art Press. When the building was finished, it launched me in an unforeseen direction as I began to design spaces for making, enjoying and exhibiting art. One client led to another; one building led to another. I mention this story because I think the artists, curators and collectors I have worked with found a convergence with my perceptions of architecture. I have enormous respect for the work of artists, curators, and art students. I want to con

tribute to their objectives without getting in their way. My aspiration is to create spaces where works of art can be at ease, undisturbed and intensified, so that they engage viewers with their singular presence. Certainly a building can be a work of art. But it does not need to remind you of its existence every single moment. I greatly admire the anonymity of spaces appropriated for the display of art and the studio atmosphere found in most artists' spaces. Perhaps my art clients sense the joy I derive from such spaces and in turn allow me to imagine such spaces for them.

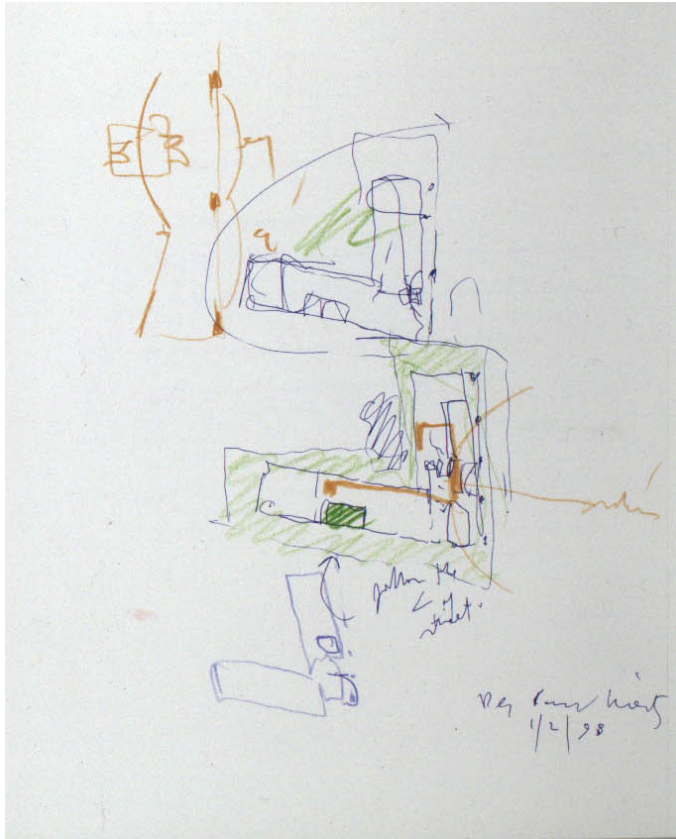
SF: What have you learned from your previous buildings that affected the design of DePauw's art center?

CJ: The art center continues and expands some of the lessons I learned with such projects as the Spencer Studio Art Building at Williams College and the Houston Fine Art Press workshop. The configurations of these buildings are the expression of extreme site conditions and compacted programs. The Spencer building is a highly site-specific structure, carefully placed to negotiate the difficulties of a multi-sided site whose topography varied in every direction. Although these tensions seem to want to pull the building apart, the architecture aspires to piece it all together as a cohesive and integrated whole. At the Houston Fine Art Press, the strict limits of a narrow, yet deep, site inspired an architecture of incremental and sequential volumes as the building moves toward the rear of the property. Light marks these transitions as if each was part of one continuous volume. The art center at DePauw benefited from my struggles with these projects. Placing a building in what appears at first not to be an ideal setting is a balancing act. It is an achievement when the building emerges from the site as a seemingly inevitable resolution of a complex set of circumstances.

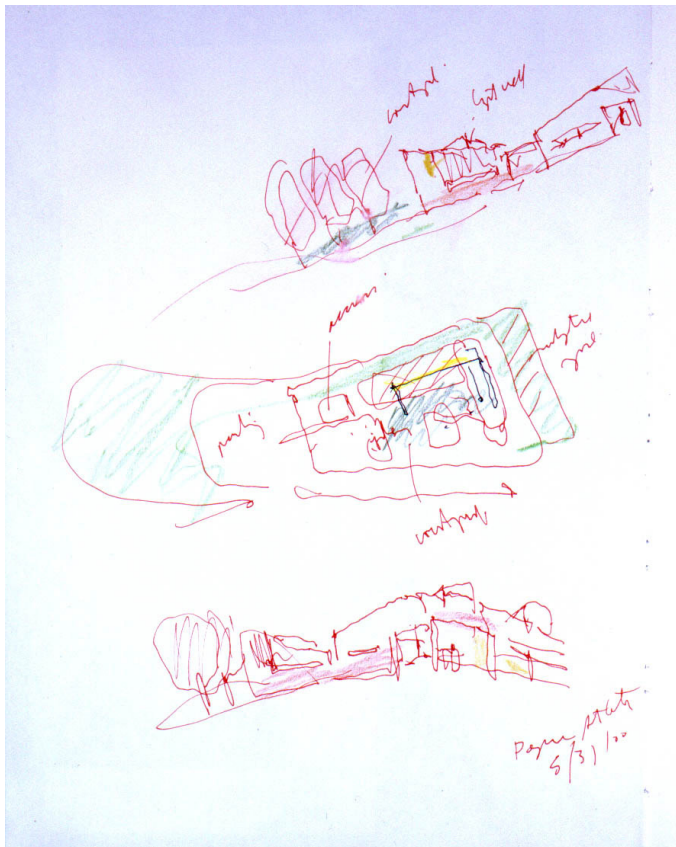
SF: When did this process start? How did you obtain the commission for the art center? Why do you think your clients chose you to design this building?

CJ: In July 1997 I received a letter requesting a submission of credentials for designing the art center. After a short list of five firms was compiled by DePauw's building selection committee in early September, I was invited for an interview. I gave a short lecture on my work and then sat for an engaging session of questions and answers. I remember that after my interview I was told that Michael Graves was one of the other finalists. I assumed that the commission would go to him. It was a pleasant surprise when I received the news that we had been selected to design the new art center. The selection committee, which consisted primarily of the faculty and Mr. Thomas Dixon, then vice-president of finance and administration, was, as I found out later, very supportive and responsive to my insights about a place for making art. A level of mutual confidence and understanding was

continued on page 33



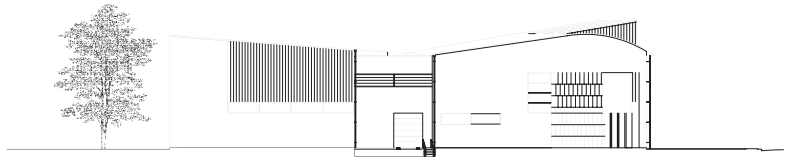
Carlos Jiménez, DePauw University Art Center, preliminary sketch, blue ink and colored pencil, January 2, 1998.



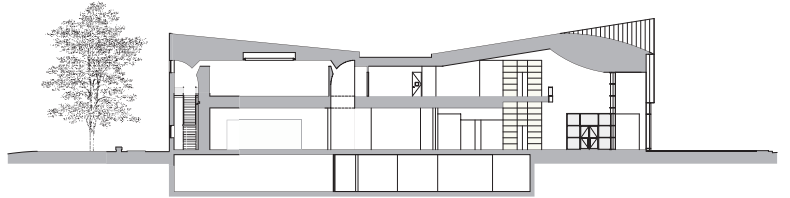
Carlos Jiménez, DePauw University Art Center, preliminary sketch, blue ink and colored pencil, May 31, 2000.



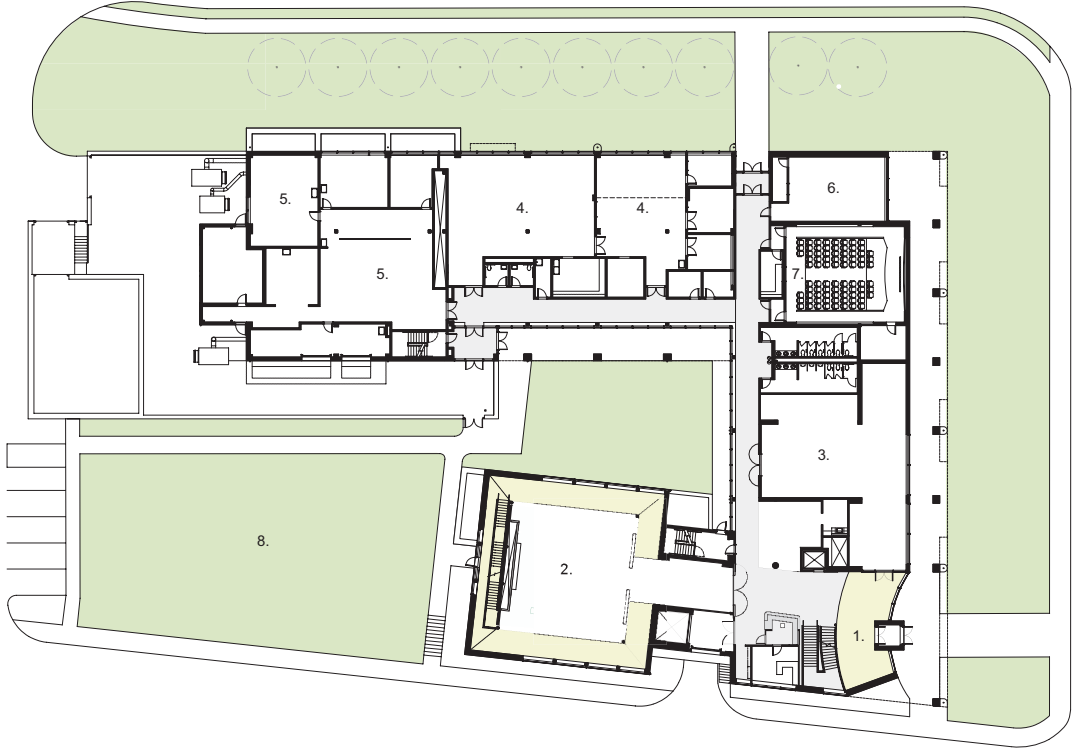
DePauw University Art Center Model, view of east elevation (Indiana St.), basswood model, Carlos Jiménez Studio, June 2000.



East Elevation



Section Through Main Entry and Gallery



DePauw University Art Center, first floor plan (final design), Carlos Jiménez Studio, March 2001.



View of building at corner of Hanna and Indiana streets



Detail of main entrance portico viewed from the east



Corner detail of lightwell at university art gallery stair's landing



Upper chamber of second stairwell



View of east colonnade and interior courtyard



Southeast view of university art gallery volume and sculpture garden



View of west façade from adjacent park



View of northwest façade at the intersection of Hanna and Jackson streets



Detail of main entrance colonnade



View of northwest painting studio



Detail of east façade



East façade viewed from Indiana Street



Close-up detail of main gallery volume at interior courtyard.

generated during the interview. In subsequent dealings with other faculty and administrative officials, I always encountered this support and understanding, which is essential in designing a building as complex as an art center. The faculty shared my hope that we could allow the design to be a process of discovery, rather than a certainty established by an *a priori* design language. For me this faith is fundamental yet not easy to communicate, as it might be too subtle. I greatly appreciate Mr. Dixon and the faculty for supporting me at the inception of the project.

SF: Most of your buildings have been in Houston and Texas. Yet you now have four buildings in Indiana. How has Indiana affected your architecture?

CJ: Indiana has been a revelation to me. It is a beautiful state whose people charm me with their gracious manners. With each visit I have become fonder of the rolling topography and the splendor of agricultural fields found practically everywhere in the state. Returning to a place always makes for more perceptive readings. I have been coming to Indiana since 1994, particularly to Columbus, Indianapolis and Greencastle. I have also traveled the state with architecture students from Harvard and Rice. On one of these visits, we drove from Columbus toward Bloomington on a clear night, trying to find what had been described to us as a mythical restaurant. We got lost a couple of times, which didn't matter as the landscape kept up its sublime vigil. Showered with moonlight, the endless fields of wildflowers became earthly stars and the scattered haystacks emitted an unforeseen iridescence. After an amazing meal, I remember telling my students that Indiana was a blessed land, fertile and magical in the release of its natural bounty. Working in Indiana has nurtured my appreciation of place and its relationship to architecture. I thrive on surveying the unique features of a place so that the architecture can contain them in subtle and delayed ways. The opportunity to reveal the uniqueness of a place, or of a quality of light, or of a "wedge of circumstance" – to use Tadao Ando's piercing phrase – is present in each of the four buildings I have designed in Indiana. I feel the same way toward any locality in the world. Architecture is primarily the resolution of local conditions, facilitated by the influx of global interactions, such as the use of imported materials, techniques and expertise. An awareness of locality guarantees responsibility in reading a place and contributes to the success of the architecture to come.

SF: How do you begin the process of designing a building? How did the process of designing the DePauw University art center begin?

CJ: When I begin the design of a building, intuitive and immediate readings of the site and the program play a critical role. These readings might insinuate a strong or a subtle configuration of the plan, the section, or an elevation. At other times these readings help establish a conceptual framework for the project. The creative, open manner of these

readings are tested against the givens of the site. Slowly, or swiftly, an architectural concept emerges, or a spatial idea might become the mediator between the particular conditions of the site and the program. I find this merger of site and program to be the most challenging in making architecture, as each set of conditions is unique. Throughout the design process, sketches are a constant means of exploration and discovery. For me, sketches are like short notes through which the project is revealed and gradually unfolds.

Generative metaphors are as important to me as the power of words; they have the same evocative fluidity as sketches. Sometimes a word enters my imagination as a quicker type of sketch. By nature the sketch has an urgency; it is not a slowly rendered drawing. A word can often be faster and more accessible than a sketch. For instance, a word, let us say “sanctuary,” can generate a project for me by its intimation of a feeling, a temperature, a massing, an enclosure, a remoteness, a material. Words are never exiled from any aspect of my design process. When I began to design DePauw’s art center, certain words intercepted the sketches, words like “promenade,” “lanterns,” “tree branches,” “west fields,” “publicness,” “intimacy” and “openness.” Sometimes these words arrive as swift notations or as random thoughts, which might become important at a later development of the design. Sketches, words and their reverberating world sometimes appear quickly and leave quickly. That is why their distinctive mark is the trace or the echo of their reverberation.

SF: What is the role of the sketch in your process?

CJ: I’ve alluded to this, but I would like to add a more personal perception. Apart from its fundamental implication in the design process, the sketch is for me a direct extension of the joy of drawing. I particularly like to draw in a sketchbook, which travels with me, wherever I go. As a constant companion, this sketchbook is there for me to meander through from page to page. Sometimes I like to sketch something that I find suddenly and that memory alone will not retain. When I travel, I try to sketch a particular moment in my journey, a mental postcard of an instance that might summarize the entire journey. I do not have a prescribed discipline of sketching. It simply arises from a need to record, to search, to remember. I can be working on several projects across the pages of my sketchbook in the freedom of a very wide and personal world.

SF: DePauw University has a highly visible tradition of 20th-century neo-Georgian architecture. How does the design of the art center respond to this campus tradition?

CJ: The neo-Georgian style reflects not only a tradition of place at DePauw but a concern for detailed attention to the scale of new buildings. This concern can be understood as a reaction to the New Brutalist style buildings of the 1960s and 1970s, examples of which exist at practically every campus in the country. The attraction of the neo-Georgian style

is of vital interest to the University trustees, as I was reminded at the beginning of the art center's design. I argued, though, that it was possible to create a building that had intimations of scale and detail similar to those of the Georgian style exteriors without literally reproducing them. I strongly feel that an art institution should be its own thing, the expression of its unique program. My desire was to create a building that complemented the campus but emphasized other possibilities for its future development. I believe that campuses should reflect the enormous vitality of their academic constituencies in a varied set of buildings. Rather than responding literally to a set of stylistic determinants, I looked at the campus as a legacy imbued with a particular scale, materiality and color. The art center makes direct but subtle references to the textural and material composition of other buildings on the campus without explicit stylistic interpretations.

SF: You have used red brick with red mortar, aluminum-and-zinc-coated steel panels, and Indiana limestone to face the exterior of the art center. Why did you choose this combination of materials? What role does each material play in your design?

CJ: The combination of these materials sprang from my desire to maintain the palette of other buildings on the campus. I was particularly drawn to the material composition of East College, the University's most significant building and the centerpiece of the campus. I like East College's mix of beautiful orange-red brick with a carefully detailed limestone plinth and limestone window frames, topped by a multi-sided lead roof. Early on, we searched for this brick but could never find a contemporary match. We eventually settled for a red brick with a slight tint of orange as a substitute. I wanted the brick and the mortar to become one color to give the art center a planar sharpness. The limestone panels from Bloomington are used as a plinth, as a marker plane, by the main entrance. The limestone is articulated with deep joints to create a rhythmic textural pattern and to contrast with the smooth planes of brick. The aluminum roofing and wall panels have a subtle patina that complements the other materials.

SF: How has the functional program for the art center affected its design?

CJ: The design for the art center began in the fall of 1997. The original program called for a 40,000-square-foot building. As completed, it is now almost 90,000 square feet. This substantial increase in program affected the design in positive ways by broadening the art department's cultural and academic missions. The building grew to accommodate a variety of studio and exhibition spaces, which will enrich the use of the center. The size of the sculpture, photography and ceramic studios was increased dramatically and designed to meet the most stringent safety factors. The exhibition spaces of the building now include a museum-quality gallery for traveling and specially organized exhibitions, giving the art

center a distinct public profile. Most of the increased program space is located in a full basement level, where the digital media labs, gallery services, storage and areas for future expansions have been distributed. This was intentional, so as to keep the height of the building to two stories.

SF: Can you describe the organization of interior spaces and how these relate to the ground plan of the art center?

CJ: The placement of specific studios and spaces on the ground floor was a constant consideration from the beginning of the project. The ceramic and sculpture studios were located on this level early on. The weight of equipment in these studios was a determinant, and they needed to have direct access to outside work spaces. The same is true of the galleries and small auditorium, as these are the most public spaces of the program. The upper-floor studios are by nature lighter and higher in section. The photography studios, which occupy the southwestern corner of the building's second floor, are in an ideal location because they need no windows, decreasing the building's exposure to intense afternoon sunlight and heat from the west. The location of each space or studio responds to the optimum distribution, or appropriation, of daylight and weight. The tightness of the site necessitated adjacencies between certain rooms and studios. I think that this situation has added more interest to the building as a community of spaces. There is a distinct division between the studios, yet they are also interrelated.

SF: How has the center's site affected its design?

CJ: The building's configuration responds explicitly to the angled geometry of the site. The two-story height restriction was a requirement from the start of the project. When the project began, the site was a much smaller piece of property. The original site was a narrow L-shaped tract with prominent corners on the northeast and northwest. The northwest corner is bounded by Jackson Street, a major traffic thoroughfare that leads into downtown Greencastle, while the northeast corner is bounded by Indiana Street, a quieter street that is slightly skewed, making the site a trapezoid rather than a rectangle. Hanna Street, which bisects the campus on an east-west axis, bounds the north side of the site. Hanna is the principal vehicular access way to the campus from the west. The site's coordinates and the angled skew of Indiana Street played a significant role in the configuration of the art center. A critical priority was to locate the painting and drawing studios to face the north light, which meant facing Hanna Street. This also led me to place the main entrance at the Hanna-Indiana corner, reinforcing the prominent character of these streets. As the building's program expanded, the site was extended to the south, allowing the north side to remain as initially designed. The art center's footprint traces and telegraphs every

allowable setback from the three surrounding streets. The site is rather constricted when you consider the amount of square footage the center ended up containing. The courtyard inserted between the two wings of the building alleviates the constriction generated by the limits of the property. It establishes a large light well in the center of the building, a green void that infuses the interior spaces that surround it with south light.

SF: Characterize the landscape setting of the art center. How do you see what goes on around the exterior of the building as affecting what goes on inside?

CJ: When the project was a smaller building, we intended to keep three existing large trees along Hanna Street. The building made reference to them, and, perhaps unconsciously, the three large windows became an echo of their presence. As the project got bigger and a full basement was added, it was determined that the trees could not survive the impact of construction. To make matters worse, one of them was already diseased. The loss of the trees produced a feeling of absence along Hanna. As time passed, this absence came to clarify the building's relationship to its landscape. There is more daylight for the north studios. There is also an amazing view of much larger trees across Hanna Street and beyond. Being inside the drawing and painting studios is a true pleasure as the panoramic views extend the domain of each studio. Along the Jackson Street side of the center, there are only a few discreet windows that partake of the splendid landscape in this part of the campus. As selective vantage points, these windows surprise you as they reveal the rolling hills to the west. As the building progressed, the landscape around it became more abstract. The courtyard, for instance, is not only a lightwell but also a plane of vibrant lawn, a circumscribed, natural "light fixture" reflecting all hues of south light into the building. As construction nears completion, we are working with the south garden by the main gallery as a place for a landscape piece, perhaps a commissioned work from an artist.

SF: How does the light of Greencastle affect the center's design?

CJ: The light of Greencastle is typical of this part of Indiana, a soft yet saturated light. It is a light that reflects the changing hues of seasonal crops found in the vicinity. On my visits, I have noted memorable light conditions. I particularly like the light in winter with its hazy lead colors, as I also like the delicate tones of fall light. Driving around Greencastle in summer is quite revealing as light becomes a festival of surprising tonalities. The art center is designed to take maximum advantage of natural light without creating the discomforts of glare and overexposure. The placement of windows has been carefully considered to maximize or decrease the abundance of local light. North light is amplified in the second-floor painting and drawing studios via large windows. South light is generously admitted to the building by a system of linear modular windows wrapping around

the courtyard lightwell. The west elevation along Jackson Street is discreet in its exposure to light. A line of shade trees has been planted to filter and diminish the harsh afternoon light entering these particular windows.

SF: How would you describe the character of the center's primary spaces: the galleries, auditorium, entrance portico and vestibule, studios? What do you hope people will feel when they inhabit these spaces?

CJ: The character of the building can be described as one shaped by light and open flows of space. Although at times the building's program generates a condensed grouping of spaces (as in the ceramic studios), my desire was to maintain an overall feeling of openness. Windows have been placed to expand this feeling and remove any sense of being in a compacted space. There is a purposeful generosity of volume deployed throughout hallways, vestibules and galleries. My intent is to promote spaces for publicness and to encourage students to linger and meet casually. I will be pleased if those who work and study in the building, or who visit the premises, can feel a sense of community without sacrificing the singular life of each studio. I hope that those who come in contact with the building feel the excitement of this community, engaged in making art and reflecting on its universality.

SF: How do the curved geometries of the front roof plane and the entrance vestibule and the diagonal skew of the university art gallery affect the occupants' sensation of its spaces?

CJ: I like to speak of geometry as a system of traces, of hidden or obvious lines that emerge in making a work of architecture. I make an enormous effort to find these lines and justify them at each turn or point of trajectory. Even when a certain line might appear as unexpected in the composition of the work, I have to find justifiable reasons for the necessity of its placement. For me, lines in space are sensual and figural gestures that emanate from internal volumetric impulses. These lines become evident in the profiles of each elevation. At the art center, the geometries of the curved roof plane and the diagonally skewed university art gallery work in counterpoint to each other. Their angles are the same, but their volumetric lines are not. This particular location in the building is a critical moment, as the entrance vestibule and portico, the university art gallery and the visual arts gallery all intersect as one distinct volume. There is a spatial complexity in negotiating the scales of program and densities of public access that converge in this area of the building. The geometry generated to organize this space seemed to me the most logical solution and one that encouraged a sense of invitation and excitement at this corner. Visitors to the art center might not venture beyond this part of the building, so it is meant to engage their attention and awareness of space and volume.

SF: What role does contour play in your imagination? The art center has deliberately shaped contours and an almost figural north elevation, where the painting studio windows break through the front of the building. How do you anticipate that contour will affect occupants' experience of the art center? Did you deliberately pursue a figural composition for the painting studio windows?

CJ: Contour for me is the result of internal spatial gestures and the means to dissolve the rigorous geometry of a building. In the case of the art center, the four painting and drawing studios on the second floor enjoy a volumetrically interrelated section and elevation. From the beginning of the design, I felt that the four upper studios oriented to the north should be identified by their light-admitting windows. These apertures are quite large and provide an expansive view of the campus. I thought of them as dormer windows – attic windows – that break and animate the taut composition of the front of the art center, adding a shift in scale to the front of the building. I recently overheard a student describe the building to another student: “Are you looking for the art center, the building with the three big windows?” As windows are one of my favorite architectural features, I took it as a compliment.

The curved, glazed entry wall at the Hanna-Indiana corner is the grounded counterpoint to the three, large, elevated windows. Here, the building invites you to enter its double-height vestibule. The main entry provides a direct, level access from the sidewalk, in contrast to most other buildings on campus, whose entrances are elevated on pedestals. This ease of access to, and of traversing through, the building is very important. I thought that students, not just art students, could use the north side of the building along Hanna as a connecting promenade, a passage to the west side of the campus where all sports facilities are located. If, as you mention, the north elevation has this figural aspect to it, it is the result of integrating the various concerns and aspirations that informed the front elevation of the art center.

SF: What changes occurred over time in your design? What stayed the same?

CJ: The most dramatic change that occurred, other than increasing the number of individual studios and exhibition areas, was the addition of a small auditorium and the university art gallery. This change was initiated by the donors to expand the reach of the art center beyond the art department. Such spaces changed the configuration of the building as other spaces were rotated to accommodate the new requirements. The university art gallery was placed on axis with the main entrance to facilitate direct public access and to avoid disturbing the activities of adjacent art studios. The small auditorium was placed off the main interior street and adjacent to the visual arts gallery. The visual arts gallery engages visitors by displaying the work of student, faculty and visiting artists as visitors pass by.

The north elevation and its spaces stayed the same since north orientation was from the beginning a non-negotiable condition. All changes that occurred during the design and construction have been positive contributions to the fulfillment of the art center's mission: to create a place for making and encountering the ever-expanding need for art.

Stephen Fox is an architectural historian and a fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas. He is author of the *Houston Architectural Guide*.

Carlos Jiménez

Born in San José, Costa Rica (1959). Moved to the United States in 1974. Graduated from the University of Houston School of Architecture in 1981, receiving awards for best thesis project and best portfolio. Established Carlos Jiménez Studio in Houston in 1982. Visiting professor at Rice University (1987, 1994, 1997), Texas A & M University (1987, 1989), Southern California Institute of Architecture (1990, 1991), U.C.L.A. (1990), University of Texas at Arlington (1990-1996), University of Houston (1991, 1994), Williams College (1994), University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain (1995), Harvard University Graduate School of Design (1996, 1997), Tulane University (1996), University of Texas at Austin (1997), University of California, Berkeley (1999), University of Oregon (2000). Tenured professor at Rice University School of Architecture. Jury member of the Pritzker Architecture Prize since the year 2000. Lecturer, juror and visiting critic at universities and cultural institutions throughout the United States, Canada, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Switzerland, Chile and El Salvador.

Awards for excellence in design from Architectural Record (1990, 1994, 1996), Progressive Architecture “*Young Architects*” (1987), the Architectural League of New York “*Young Architects*” (1988) and “*Emerging Voices*” (1994), “*Forty under Forty*” (1995), Tulane University’s “*First Favrot Chair in Architecture*” (1996), University of Texas at Austin’s “*McDermott Visiting Professor*” (1997), Harvard University’s “*Eliot Noyes Visiting Design Professor*” (1997), Universidad del Diseno’s “*Doctor Honoris Causa*” (1998), University of California, Berkeley’s “*Friedman Visiting Professor*” (1999), University of Oregon’s “*Pietro Beluschi Distinguished Visiting Professor*” (2000). Work exhibited at museums and galleries in Houston; New York; Los Angeles; Montreal; Santa Monica, Calif.; Austin, Texas; Mexico City; Manhattan, Kan.; Williamstown, Va.; New Orleans; Fort Worth, Texas; Chicago; Cambridge, Mass.; Arrecife - Lanzarote, Canary Islands; and Kansas City, Mo.

Principal built works include the Houston Fine Art Press, Lynn Goode Gallery, Central Administration/Junior School Building for the Museum of Fine Arts (Houston), Spencer Studio Art Building at Williams College, and the Cummins Engine Child Development Center in Columbus Ind.

Built work published in two books (Barcelona – 1991, New York – 1996), and four monographic issues (Tokyo – 1996, Buenos Aires – 1996, Seoul – 1996, Barcelona – 2000). Work also published in specialized books and catalogues, national and international journals, such as *Progressive Architecture*, *Architectural Record*, *Architecture*, *Ottagono*, *A+U*, *The Architectural Review*, *Quaderns d’Arquitectura y Urbanismo*, *L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui*, *Casabella*, *A&V*, *Arquitectura Viva*, *Arquitectura*, *Hauser*, *Basa* and *Lotus International*.

Richard Earl Peeler

1926-98

Born on Aug. 8, 1926, in Indianapolis, Richard Peeler began formal studies in art at the city's Arsenal Technical High School, where he graduated in 1944. With World War II still raging, Peeler joined the military service and, at the age of 19 in the closing months of the conflict, qualified as a master sergeant.

Upon his return to Indiana, Peeler studied English at Butler University from 1946-48; he then transferred to DePauw University, receiving his A.B. degree in art in 1949. Moving on to graduate work in education at Indiana University and Butler University, Peeler earned his teacher's certificate from I.U. in 1951. Peeler later continued his studies, receiving his M.A.T. from I.U. in 1960. Following his certification, he accepted a faculty position at Arsenal Technical High School, teaching courses in art, photography, ceramics and sculpture until 1958, when he returned to DePauw to teach.

A member of the University's Art Department for 14 years, Peeler was first appointed instructor in art, promoted to assistant professor in 1961 and subsequently to associate professor in 1965. During his tenure at DePauw, Peeler assumed duties in art education, crafts, sculpture and photography, but he exerted his chief influence on the Art Department by expanding its offerings in ceramics, developing them into a popular and coherent program located in the basement of Emison Art Center.

Seizing another opportunity to further develop his skills as an artist and educator, Peeler served as a visiting lecturer at Kyoto City College of Fine Arts in Japan during the spring term of his 1965-66 sabbatical. He taught another six years at DePauw before resigning to pursue his creative and artistic interests full-time alongside his wife, Marj, also a ceramics artist, in a studio near their home in Reelsville, Ind. There, the husband and wife team created functional stoneware pottery, which, in turn, provided the livelihood to pursue their creative work. In addition, Peeler made lathe-turned wooden vessels as well as metal and hand-carved wooden sculpture.

In a project that continues to have an impact on ceramics education world-wide, Peeler produced from 1965-68 eight educational films entitled the *Ceramic Art Films Series*. His four instructional films examine the what, why and how of ceramics, outline the techniques of two shaping methods, and explore the variety and versatility of ceramic tiles and mosaics. Two segments of the series, shot on location in Japan, look at the Japanese origins of many universal ceramics techniques and give insights into that culture through the ceramics methods and philosophies of 10 potters, five featured on each film. Each is seen carrying on the work of his ancestors, and the film includes footage of the multi-chambered Japanese kiln being fired. Eight outstanding American potters are highlighted

in the final two films, each observed in the artist's own studio while discussing his/her personal philosophy and demonstrating a variety of forming and glazing methods. During his long artistic career, Peeler was the author of numerous articles in *Ceramics Monthly*, including, "First DePauw Ceramic Show" (April 1960), "Coiling Building" (October 1960), "Throw a Hundred Pots" (April 1962), "A Ceramic Screen" (October 1963), "Tall Pots from Short Kilns" (February 1964), "DePauw Ceramic Show" (February 1965), "No Custom Orders" (April 1984), as well as "Flattened Pots" (October 1961) and "Ceramic Wall Mosaic (May 1964, with Peeler providing the cover photographs for the latter two issues. His work also was featured in *Who's Who in American Art, Mosaics* by M.L. Stribling (Crown Publishers, New York 1965) and in many other books and periodicals.

Elected president of the National Council on Education for the Ceramics Arts in 1970, Peeler had previously served the group as a board member, director-at-large, vice president and president-elect. He had also been director of the Indiana Artists-Craftsmen and the Indiana Potters Guild.

Long after Peeler left the faculty, he remained a staunch supporter of DePauw and remained active in the University's art community. His work was displayed in the May 1999 alumni reunion art show, along with the work of Garret Boone '54 and Willis H. "Bing" Davis '59 (who also taught in the Art Department), and during a retrospective exhibit for DePauw's Sesquicentennial in 1987. In a labor of love for alma mater, Peeler filmed DePauw football games for the coaching staff, completing his 39th season shortly before his death in December 1998.

The Richard E. Peeler Art Center
is a gift to DePauw University
of
Steven M. Rales '73 and Christine Plank Rales '74

*Gifts in support of the new art facilities and the
expanded art program were received from:*

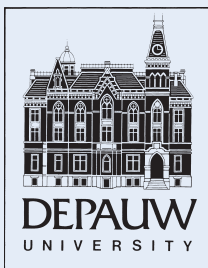
Joseph Butler '51, Janet Butler Spadoni '78,
Amy Butler Beseth '79, William J. and Kim Klinger
Butler '81, '82 in memory of Gail Wagner Butler '51;
Rhett W. and Kay Burney Butler '62, '62;
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