ARCHITECTURE AND THE MOVIES:
TWO EXAMPLES

by
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Abstract

This thesis is a speculative inquiry into the relationship
between movies and architecture, both of which are forms
of expression simultaneously particular to the artist who
created them and general, illustrative of a larger cultural
sensibility. Both reveal a cultural condition: its
authorities, its emphases, its concerns. And yet, as forms
of expression, they are very different: architecture is
tactile and spatial, it is the world constructed; movies are
two dimensional depictions, they are "the world
viewed."

But in this, we see that a relationship between them may
go beyond the parallels and distinctions of their existence
in the culture. Movies are unique among forms of
depiction in that, through the arrangement of images in
sequence, they represent movement. In this, they evoke
our own experience in the world and suggest the dynamic
complexity of man's relation to built form and space.

This thesis will examine two American movies made
twenty years apart, for their revelations of a cultural
understanding of built form and space. This thesis also
has a second intent derived from the first. If we can
think of movies as a kind of mirror of popular
understanding, can we also think of them as a model, as
influencing that understanding?

Thesis Supervisor: Rosemary D. Grimshaw
Title: Assistant Professor of Architecture
Acknowledgements

To those of you about to read this expecting or hoping for brevity, I offer the warning voiced by the Cowardly Lion in the Wizard of Oz:

I'd turn back if I was you.

I'm a little disconcerted as I write this, well maybe not a little, let's say a lot, generally, and a little, in particular. (Does this give you an idea of what you are in for?) I'm disconcerted in particular, because the front wall of my porch, three feet by thirty feet of shingles and posts, is now lying on the lawn. It ought not to be there. But some act of God decreed it and plunk, there it fell, landing between the peonies and the rose bushes. It didn't harm a thing, but I take it to be a sign.

I'm disconcerted, in general, (if one can be disconcerted in general) by this thing called thesis, this culmination-transition—last thing before I leave, last one out please turn off the lights—process and product. I have no idea what it says, which I attribute to my, shall we say, closeness to the thing, my lack of perspective, to speak euphemistically. Since I began this process in February, I have been enamoured of the title of a book recently published. Its all about neurological disorders, not psychological ones, but I thought it emblematic of my state of mind. It's called The Man who Mistook His Wife for a Hat. It makes sense to me.

I write this in Jamestown, Rhode Island, land of falling porches which is nonetheless some psychic, if not geographic, distance from Cambridge. I write it with cigarettes and beer in hand, sitting at what once was a kitchen table that I put here by the window for just this purpose, to write my thesis, though all I have written at this desk is what you have read up till now. I write it while looking out the window at the bridge and the ocean, at the clouds overhead, waiting for it to rain. I write it in consideration of my tendency to be "dramatic" in the words of Kim Sammis and "philosophical" in the words of Rosemary Grimshaw, though each of them was being polite: melodramatic and wordy might be more appropriate terms. And I write it for the very reason I took the bus to get here, to acknowledge that this difficult transition from one way of life to another, which is this thesis, will soon be over and summer will soon be here.

But mostly I write this to thank the zillion or so people without whose help I wouldn't have made it through this place ("Maybe that wasn't such a good idea after all.") or through this thesis. This litany of thanks will resemble an Academy Awards speech, but this may be as close as I ever get to the Dorothy Chandler pavillion and anyway, its an appropriate metaphor.

I owe tremendous thanks:

First and foremost, to Jane Gitlin, who has gotten me through more scrapes than I can count, by virtue of her inexhaustible kindness and wisdom. She has helped to preserve whatever sanity I still have left, which may not be much, but is enough to acknowledge my debt to her, which is enormous, and for which the word thanks seems too paltry a recompense. In addition to everything else she's done for me, she
taught me to word process (such a nice phrase) which is a fact that is going into next month's issue of Ripley's Believe It or Not.

To Hassan Abouseda for a generosity of heart and mind which astounds me; "it plays you least false."

To Gabriel Berriz "Oh Strether!" words don't work sometimes.

To David Vaughan who patiently listened to a never ending saga of complaints, hopes, angry outbursts, denials, and chronic whining (sounds like fun huh?) and quite simply helped me through a very hard time with wise counsel and good friendship.

To Kim Sammis for all those lessons in life I'd forgotten or neglected to learn but, "Even in a perfect world, where everyone is equal, I'd still own the film rights and be working on the sequel." "We've been through hell together but..." It's not Yeats; its only rock n roll, but....

To Leigh Olson Snow for listening oh so long and still smiling.

To Karen Swett for sharing her kindness, perseverance and energy when I had none.

To Louise Hara and Paul Lukez for proving collaboration not only possible, but when all is said and done, wonderful, too.

To John Felix, Shirley Ransom and everybody else doing their thesis now: "This is not my beautiful house! How did I get here?"

To all of those friends who have sheltered me, fed me, listened to me during this ordeal, and still talk to me, especially: Mary Jane Daly, Dr. Doyle and Dr. Day, David Fechtor, Edith Freedman, Michael Guy, Ted Hirsch, Trina Johnson, Amy Kravitz, Chris Macy, Judy Dayton Mitchell, Jennifer Sage, Rebecca Spivack, David Zarowin, and especially the wondrous Caroline Labiner Moser, my gratitude for their warmth and generosity.

To my family, Sean Suzy Derry Andy Pat Tim, since I won't be getting the academy award this year, let me just say thanks. Some movie.

And to my Aunt Kitty, who I think took me to my first movie and whose kindness to me over so many years I haven't come close to repaying, my love and thanks.

And lastly, I want to thank my teachers for teaching me how to learn: Rebecca Nemser, John Whiteman, the folks from Toronto: Peter Prangnell and Carmen and Elin Corneil, and in particular, Rosemary Grimshaw, my thesis advisor and Lois Craig, my thesis reader. I am honored that both Rosemary and Lois agreed to work with me on this thesis and appreciate their contributions. But their influence upon me goes far beyond the domain of this thesis; in their very presence, their intelligence, their humor, their compassion and their style, I find inspiration.
This Thesis is dedicated to three people:

To Louis J. Bakanowsky, whom I am honored to call a friend and who is the best teacher I have ever known. He is a wonder and a hero. And heaven forbid, an architect.

To my father, who is a hero too, whom I love very much though I don't seem able to tell him so.

And to my mother, who, I hope, knows how much I love her, because she is always there.
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This thesis is an exploration of the relationship between movies and architecture. It is a speculation, an inquiry into these two forms of expression for what they can tell us about each other, or at least what movies can tell us about architecture. It is inspired by my love of the movies, my delight in the wonders of them and my interest in their apparent power, along with all the other forms of mass media, in our culture. And it is inspired too, by my perplexity about making architecture in this culture and my concern for what I see being made.

Both movies and architecture exist within a basic definition of culture: "the ideas, customs, skills etc., of a given people in a given time." Both are forms of cultural expression simultaneously particular, specific to the person(s) who created it, and general, illustrative of a larger sensibility of "a given people in a given time." Both movies and architecture reveal a culture's condition, its authorities, its emphases, its concerns. Both comprise three essential elements: the thing itself: the building or the movie; the audience: the user or the viewer; and the creator(s), which in both is often a collaborative effort.

Yet, of course there are distinctions. Architecture is built form and space; it is the world constructed. It is tactile and immediate. We see it, we feel it, we know it in the way we know to walk down the street. We are more than viewers, we are participants; we use it. Critics attempt to "decipher" architecture, but in an essential and practical way, as a physical presence, it is immanently understandable. Movies are also constructed, but as depictions they are "the world viewed," even if that world is one precisely created for the movies. Among forms of depiction, movies are unique because they represent movement, through the arrangement of images in sequence. Movies suggest our own experience in the world, a seductive evocation that makes them both a powerful art form and a popular entertainment.

In this, we see that a relationship between movies and architecture might go beyond the parallels and distinctions of their existence in the culture. Movies depict people and their stories not only by locating them in space, as photography does, but by describing their relationship with the built world, dynamically. They are descriptions that represent our relationship with the three dimensionality of architecture.

As popular depictions, movies give evidence of contemporary attitudes toward built form, primarily those of the filmmaker, in his choice of material and in the form of
his representation, but also those of the audience, to whom he 'speaks' through images he hopes will be understood. In this we may think of movies as revealing the shared understandings which denote a culture.

From among the thousands of movies one could examine in an inquiry of this kind, this thesis will examine only two, made in Hollywood twenty years apart, for what they tell us of a cultural understanding of built form and space. This thesis also has a second intent derived from the first. If we can think of movies as a mirror of our understanding of built form and space, in both content and form, can we also think of them as a model, as influencing that understanding? To a similar suggestion about photography, the philosopher and critic Stanley Cavell responded:

...to say that photography has changed the way we see strikes me as something like the reverse of the truth. The remark does not explain the power of photography but assumes it. Photography could not have impressed itself so immediately and pervasively on the European (including the American) mind unless that mind had at once recognized in photography a manifestation of something that had already happened to itself. (2)

In my question is a tacit acceptance of a similar assumption about movies. Such an assumption acknowledges the simultaneity in the power of the medium to act as both mirror and model. Movies give evidence of the cultural conditions in which architecture is also created. As forms of depiction and as popular entertainments, movies may respond to cultural shifts more immediately and more dramatically than does architecture. Movies are "a manifestation of something that has already happened" in our culture; in their content and form lies the possibility of influencing that culture. We acknowledge that possibility everyday when, amid the excesses of television (movies' stepchild,) advertising, and consumerism, we wonder if we have made this monster "mass media" or it has made us.
1 The Constructs of Movies

To begin to understand the power of movies, what Stanley Cavell calls their "strangeness," we need to look at their "parts" which contribute to their power.

1.1 The Photographic Image

Throughout history the visual arts presented, among other things, a record of life in the world. In the nineteenth century, this compelling "duty" of documentation, for so long the province of painting, fell to a form of depiction that seemed ideally suited to the task, photography. The photographic process requires the world as its subject. As John Szarkowski describes, in discussing photography in the nineteenth century:

Paintings were made – constructed from a storehouse of traditional schemes and skills and attitudes – but photographs, as the man on the street put it were taken. (3)

Photographic images are appropriations of what is known to be real; the mechanism of their reproduction implies the existence of their subject. Painting is a constructed view of the world; in it, a selected representation is built up through pigment and marks. Photography is largely an act of selection in which neither brush strokes nor autographic marks interfere.

Photography overcame subjectivity in a way undreamed of by painting, a way that could not satisfy painting...by automatism, by removing the human agent from the task of reproduction(4)

It is the authority of automatism which contributes to the faith of the public that a "photograph cannot lie." (5) We acknowledge that a photograph is a re-presentaion of reality, of some thing, place, person, which exists or has existed; yet the correspondence between image and reality appears so faithful, we believe it to be true.

Movies are constructed of photographic images. We are perhaps even more convinced of their reality, as Robert Warshow describes:

No film ever quite disappears into abstraction: what the camera reproduces has almost always, on the literal level, the appearance of reality, that is one reason why movies can afford to be so much more banal than the theater: when we complain of their "unreality" we do not mean exactly that they fail to carry conviction but more probably, that they carry conviction too easily. In the blankest moments of "Death of a Salesman" one sees, if not Willy Loman, who is always more a concept than a human being, at least the actor Fredric March, brought so close and clear that his
own material reality begins to assert itself outside the boundaries set by his role... the actor as an object of perception is real and important irrespective of whether we believe in the character; the screen permits no vacancies. It will be filled one way or the other(6)

It is a wonderful phrase: "the screen permits no vacancies." It suggests both the material reality represented in the photographic image and our acknowledgement of that reality. This acknowledgement is the first and perhaps most important step in the act of believing what we see. It's a kind of faith that fills the vacancy.

If we can do this with characters, as Warshow describes, believing in the material reality of the actor, how much more faith do we have in the depictions of landscape, cities, built form and space, which we recognize from our experience in the world? The critic and photographer Tod Papageorge eloquently describes both the ambiguity and the power of a photograph when he says:

A photograph, however, is just a picture.... 'The illusion of a literal description of time and space.' It is as wanton a fiction as any description, but it also is a particularly convincing one because it so specifically locates and describes what it shows. As a poet knows that the words he chooses for his poem will, by their particular combination, resonate with a power that is the gift of language itself, so a photographer has at his disposal a system of visual indication that, even without his conscious deliberation, will describe the world with a unique mimetic energy. (7)

Papageorge describes the illusion that is the photograph itself. It is just a picture. And in the movies, that illusion is propounded by those illusions constructed on the backlots and studios of Hollywood: rooms, buildings, streets, cities, entire worlds created. We see that the possibilities for fiction abound in movies. We see too the realm in which conventions and types are used, created on these backlots to evoke our experience or knowledge of the world. We might think of these constructed locales as synonymous of the contrivances of characterization, "the boundaries of the role." Yet again, the material reality asserts itself through the image. Even the most outlandish or fantastic of Hollywood's constructions exist "in the world" if only temporarily, if only to be filmed. The photographic image so specifically describes them, that it gives proof of their existence in the world. They are not so much transformed as transcribed, located in space and time. As Warshow suggested, we are willing to invest a faith in what the screen reveals in spite of its contrivances. It gets much easier for us when it reveals what we know to be real, the world itself or a plausible replication of it. But it is an illusion, it's only a picture. Yet it's the essential illusion of film, upon which all other illusions build. We have to keep reminding ourselves "It's only a movie."
1.2 Sequence

The term "movie" comes from "moving pictures," that colloquial, dated, yet entirely appropriate definition of what, early in the century, no one had ever seen before nor perhaps quite understood. We can imagine someone back then asking, "What is it?" and someone else responding, "It's like moving pictures." (It helps to put on a Walter Brennan accent when you do this.) We can imagine too, Tod Papageorge nodding his head at the essential truth of this definition; they understood: they are pictures that move. David Bordwell is a bit more precise, describing them as "images in illusory motion."(8) We can be even more precise by calling them images arranged in sequence, projected on a flat surface, rendering movement of some kind.

Such a definition gets a bit flaccid in its last part, perhaps because "rendering movement of some kind" requires a description of the artifice by which movement is created.

For cinema to exist, a series of images must be displayed to the viewer by means of a mechanism which presents each image for a very short period and which inserts between successive images an interval of blackness. If a series of slightly different images of the same object is displayed under these conditions, physiological and psychological processes in the viewer will create the illusion of seeing a moving image. Such conditions for "moving pictures" exist only rarely in nature. Like most human artifacts, a film depends on particular technological factors.(9)

The intervention of such factors serves to illustrate the process involved in making movies, one which is an application of the characteristics and possibilities of the photographic medium. If we believe in a photograph, if only to acknowledge the existence of its subject, then the illusion of movement affirms this belief by representing the world in all of its dynamic complexity. Movies possess a mimetic energy all the more unique and powerful for the evocation of our experience and understanding of the world. They move just like we do, or rather, show things that move, just like we see.

As much as it suggests our experience in the world, this arrangement of images in sequence also affirms the illusion of the photograph. The composition of the photographic frame (what's put in, what's left out) testifies to photography as a process of selection, "taken," not generation, "made." This is the basis of the medium. The picture created is clearly a subjective selection of one view chosen from among many. Film affirms this subjective selectivity by repeating it; the single image of a
photograph becomes, in film, several of the same image or the "slightly different images" of Bordwell's description.

1.3 Time

The representation of movement requires a sequence of images and so involves another construct as powerful as the photographic image itself: time. Just as the act of moving from one place to another requires a specific duration of time in which to do it, so too does the description of such an action or the rendering of other kinds of movement in movies.

But as Alfred Hitchcock stated, "There is no relation whatever between real time and filmic time."(10) Filmic time is an artificial construct that emerges from the arrangement of images in sequence; time is manipulated (or can be) in the organization of such sequences, as Francois Truffaut illustrates in response to Hitchcock: "For instance, a fast action has to be geared down and stretched out; otherwise it is imperceptible to the viewer." (11) Implicit in this description, in gearing down—stretching out, is the material to do so; not merely a single string of images but several sequences, so arranged as to create the proper effect. This is what Hitchcock described as the "cinematic way—a succession of shots with bits of film in between." (12) The organization of sequences of images is the essence of cinema. Clearly evident in any arrangement is the subjective intervention of the filmmaker; he or she imposes a structure on the sequences which serves an external concern. As Alfred Hitchcock describes:

"Sequences can never stand still. They must carry the action forward just as the wheel of a ratchet mountain railway moves the train up the slope cog by cog...." (13)

This manipulation of sequences and consequently, of time, impinges on the depiction and consequent understanding of space. In the world, we exist in time and space, each arbitrary yet simultaneous and inseparable in our experience and comprehension of it. We might be said to understand space through/over time; we might also be said to understand time through space, through the organization of space by form(s) which mark our passage through space. Movies lack this mutuality; time serves another master, as Hitchcock described: the action, a story, a narrative, a fiction. The continuum of time and space through which we understand the physical world does not apply to movies; they construct their own continuum.
1.4 Point of View

Implied in the verb "understand," as it is used above to mean the comprehension of one's experience in the world, is a cognizance of one's location in space and time, one's point of view. It is an awareness which can be said to prevent, ultimately, our alienation from the world in that it affirms our presence in the world. Cavell would call it our "subjectivity." For John Berger, our essential subjectivity in the world is clarified by the presence of the alternative that is photography and film:

The camera showed that the notion of time passing was inseparable from our experience of the visual.... what you saw depended on where you were when, what you saw was relative to your position in time and space. (14)

But as we watch movies, the "experience of the visual" is a created one; it is the artful arrangement of sequences, Hitchcock's "succession of shots with bits of film in between." But implied in the arrangement of sequences is not only a singular view over time but the possibility of several views. Berger describes this in comparison to perspective:

Every drawing or painting that used perspective implied to the spectator that he was the unique centre of the world. The camera – and more particularly the movie camera – demonstrated that there was no centre. (15)

The photographic image is of course the ultimate in a perspectival, monocular view. Yet, when several such views are juxtaposed, as in movies, the result is a multiplicity of views, albeit revealed over time. It's a kind of ubiquity; we are everywhere. Through the power of images and the evocation of movement, this ubiquity overwhelms (if only temporarily) our own point of view. The philosopher Walter Benjamin described this state:

By closeups of the things around us, by focusing on hidden details of familiar objects, by exploring commonplace milieus under the ingenious guidance of the camera, the film on the one hand, extends our comprehension of the necessities which rule our lives; on the other hand, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action. Our taverns, our metropolitan streets, our offices, our furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appeared to have us locked up hopelessly. Then came the film and burst this prison world asunder by the dynamite of a tenth of a second, so that now in the midst of its far flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go travelling. (16)

Travelling out of our own control, you might say we are everywhere; but one might also ask, where are we?
1.5 The Power and Ambiguity of Film

This disruption of the space time continuum, which is the result of the organization of sequences, "a succession of shots with bits of film in between," might best be illustrated by a comparison of film with theater. The two are often associated as examples of the performing arts. But in a play, actors and audience, stage and seats exist together in space and time. The artifice of the play's plot can change the hour, the day, the year, the light, the setting up there on stage; the actors assume names and characterizations not their own, but still they exist with us in our time and in a known (though potentially mysterious) space. Moreover our point of view of the action which occurs in this time/space is established. It is our own view of the performance. One might even say that this mutuality of presence allows for the contrivances of drama, that the presence of an audience allows for the construct that is a performance.

For all of their similarities to theater, movies aren't quite like this. As Stanley Cavell writes:

Photography maintains the presence of the world by accepting our absence from it. The reality in a photograph is present to me while I am not present to it; and a world I know, and see, but to which I am nevertheless not present (through no fault of my subjectivity), is a world past. (17)

Movies play with this absence, though one is tempted to say they mitigate it by the very constructs of motion and time which disrupt the space time continuum. Yet one is likely to agree with Cavell when he says:

It is because I see what is not before me, because our senses are satisfied with reality while that reality does not exist, that ...I call film a moving image of skepticism." He defines skepticism as "some new or new realization of human distance from the world." And he concludes, "This vision of hallucination is not exactly mad, but it suggests, as skepticism does, my capacity for madness." (18)

We sit in a movie theater, in the dark, having rescinded control in a way, giving ourselves over to the constructs of movies, "our senses satisfied." We are seduced (Cavell uses the word enfold) into or by a description of the world, which is made complete by the powers of the illusions it uses: the photographic image to which we give credence, and the arrangement of images in sequence, which suggests our experience in the world or, at least, invests in these images a powerful mimetic energy, one which is complemented and amplified by sound. To these we might add
the illusions of filmic time, which suggest a structure outside of our control, most likely a narrative, complete with plot, into which we also descend. We await only the refinement of "odorama" (to which Liz Taylor holds the patent) and the palpable assurance rendered by the sense of smell that we are in the presence of that which stinks.

But we are not present to it. In rescinding control, "our senses satisfied" or titillated by movies, we give up or over our subjectivity, our point of view, the very thing that makes us present to the world. Movies simultaneously displace or remove us from the action they present and seduce us by representing that action in forms evocative of life itself. They seem so real.

But, of course, movies aren't real. We know that. "It's only a movie," after all. We leave the theater and continue our normal lives. Yet, like all forms of art and entertainment, they interrupt our normal lives. As we sit, eyes alert in the dark, movies resonate with a kind of power, which David Hockney ascribes to all forms of depiction:

...The urge to depict and see depictions is very strong and very deep within us. It's a ten thousand year old longing - you see it all the way back to the cave paintings, this need to render the real world.... We depict it, we try to understand it. And a longing like that doesn't just disappear in one generation. Art is about making correspondences - making connections with the world and to each other. It's about love in that sense - that's the basis of the truly erotic quality of art. We love to study images of the world...(19)

Movies resonate most powerfully in memory. After we watch a movie, it enters that storehouse of material which is our memory. It resides there with dreams, experiences, images, stories, to be recalled in that powerful and mysterious act of remembering. The process of recalling a film, of reconstituting it, is a subjective one; by entering our memory, it has become a part of us. In remembering, consciously or unconsciously, we call up evocations of a mood, a sense, a type. But the stuff of movies -- the look on someone's face, the walk through the park, the arrival home -- is the construct of image, sequence and time; it's an illusion. But in the act of memory, this illusion has the power again like dreams. Certain moments from films viewed decades ago will nag as vividly as moments of childhood. It is as if you had to remember what happened before you slept. Which suggests that film awakens as much as enfolds you. (20)

* "Oh, Dinah! No! Never say stinks, dear. If absolutely necessary say smells, but only if absolutely necessary."

Mrs. Seth Lord to her younger daughter Dinah, in the movie The Philadelphia Story
I bring all of this up to suggest both the power and ambiguity of film and its effects. I believe the power of film as a medium of depiction, a mirror, lies within the simultaneous projection of credibility and illusion that is developed by the constructs of the medium. This power ultimately rests upon the credible image of the photograph, which acts as the threshold in the journey known as "the suspension of disbelief."

If we are to look at depictions of built form and space in movies, the 'document' we have is a photographic record. Its images can be compared with other images of what existed, with memories, with what still exists. We can see what's been put in the movie and what's been left out. It acts as a mirror of the world itself. And it reveals too, something of the filmmaker's attitudes as well as those of the audience to whom he/she is trying to communicate. This is particularly telling when the images record reality. But even a replication of reality or a rendition of it makes reference to the real, if only to react against it. Picasso once said, "There is no abstract art. You have to start with something." (21) This is true in the movies whether what's represented is reality itself, a sense of it or the evocation of it through the use of a visual type. Film, like the novel, often requires the type for the exposition of narrative. Types emerge from a cultural understanding, they speak to our individual sensibility from a universal one. But the type in film is a visual one, something almost immediately recognizable.

We can examine the constructs of film with the same perspicacity we bring to any form of depiction: the arrangement of sequences in time and its suggestion or denial of our experience in the world, the continuity or lack of continuity of such sequences, the point(s) of view represented over time and its inclusion or denial of our presence; as well as the constructs of the photographic image: content, light and shadow, color, size of objects and the constancy of their size, the arrangement of objects in the frame, balance, equilibrium. We acknowledge the subjectivity of the filmmaker and film as a constructed and directed vision of the world. Yet the filmmaker exists in the world; to the extent that he/she wants his/her film to be understood, he or she relies upon shared cultural understandings, if only to react to them. Such subjectivity perhaps makes film less a reflection than a revelation.

Image, sequence, time and point of view comprise the essential parts of film, but are also the sources of its illusion. Film presents the world to us in ways which are different from our experience in it. In this, it can be likened to perspective that
began as a method of organizing pictorial space, a structure for depiction. As Berger wrote, perspective so ordered the world it depicted, that the spectator "was the unique centre of the world." In consequence, or perhaps in tandem, perspective influenced the way that world was constructed in reality.

Can we say that movies, unique to our time and immensely popular, are having a similar influence? Probably, and probably in ways we are only beginning to recognize. And yet, we might recall Cavell's statement about photography, that it "could not have impressed itself so immediately and pervasively on the European (including the American) mind unless that mind had at once recognized in photography something that had already happened to itself." (22) Similarly, perspective can be seen as a manifestation of something that had already happened in the culture in which it emerged. It was evidence of the presence of man, as "the unique centre of the world," and his conscious assertion of control over the environment. The rational and scientific methodology of perspective is emblematic of such an assertion.

We might not propose so ambitious a program for movies. But we might see in their parts: the photographic image, which is credible but is only a picture; motion that suggests our experience but is a constructed illusion; the manipulation of time, space and point of view; and the sum of their parts: the description of a world we know and see, but to which we are "nevertheless not present," an emblem of our cultural condition. Cavell calls film

a moving image of skepticism.... [of] some new or new realization of, human distance from the world, or some withdrawal of the world, which philosophy interprets as a limitation in our capacity for knowing the world....The advent of photography expresses this distance as the modern fate to relate to the world by viewing, taking views of it, as from behind the self. It is Heidegger who calls it distance; Thoreau rather thinks of it as the oblivion of what he calls our nextness to the world/ nearness to it; Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein say, in different contexts, that we are "away": others speak of alienation. (23)

All around us we see expression of this condition of alienation and distance: in painting, in novels, in the words of our social and spiritual arbiters. Perhaps nothing so clearly expresses "the modern fate to relate to the world by viewing" than film. But, we might ask, what of architecture?
Chapter 2: Architecture

In looking at the movies, we looked at the formal constructs through which it describes the world. Its important then, too, to look at architecture, as a contemporary form of cultural expression. But in so doing, it is as if we are looking at the world itself. Architecture's forms are known to us, though the motivations behind them may not be, and so it requires an exposition that is perhaps less formal than historical.

And yet we must ask: if architecture is also a form of cultural expression does it also represent this cultural condition? We might expect of architecture the antithesis of what movies represent, this concept of absence, for architecture is a constant expression of presence. It exists in the world, giving definition to space and so contributing to our demarcation of time, to the space time continuum we have described. Its constructs need not convince us, they exist. It is not the appearance of reality, it is reality. Architecture is man's intervention upon the landscape. Next to the landscape itself, it is man's most essential shared understanding. After all we live in it. We might think of it as we think of the landscape, in the larger sense as the physical locus for our existence in the world, but one which includes a wide range of climatic, topographic and physical distinctions. Architecture, in the larger sense man's shelter, also reveals the distinctions and variations of cultures.

Architecture is the organization of material in space to provide at its most basic level, shelter. It is defined by the properties of material as well as its structural requirements. It is also defined by the requisites of shelter, in that it is the organization of space and material form in some way appropriate to use.

But of course it is much more than these limited definitions describe.In the materials themselves, texture or its absence, transparency or opacity, weight or lightness, there are qualities which, for lack of a better word one would call expressive or evocative. The character of this expressiveness varies from culture to culture, in fact, helps to denotes a culture. Materials in combination start to suggest characteristics less materially bound but descriptive of the arrangement of them: solidity, fragmentation, expressive. It also suggests the subjective intervention of a designer, who chooses these materials in the generation of form and space. His /her subjective hand is also evident in the more abstract processes of the act of designing, the organization and
integration of spaces through the deployment of material form. The abstraction of this endeavor is evident in the initial diagrams of the designer and in the final plans, as well, which are only representations of a concrete reality which is a building. So we can see a building as reflective of an individual or several individuals' sensibility. Yet, architecture is also inclusive, it is after all in the world. It is the realm of living, we bring to it our own subjectivity, we reside within it.

If we are to discuss the presence of architecture today, or in the movies I have chosen to look at, we are discussing the architecture of modernism. The buildings and cities we live in are largely the constructs of modernism, or if not, then exist within a modernist context: our experience within them is informed by the principles of modernism. In this light, a discussion which emphasizes the material presence of architecture, seems, these days almost nostalgic. I do not intend it to be so. But that it may seem nostalgic is perhaps illustrative of where modernism has brought us. I may think it appropriate to consider the architecture of the renaissance as the gorgeous exposition of materials in space, as the best example of the wonder of architecture's material presence. But it would be inappropriate to suggest that the architecture of the modern period is the opposite. In fact, the original tenets of modernism called for the clear exposition of materials and structure, the stripping of embellishments and ornament which obfuscated the essential material presence and structural clarity of the form.

Modernism represented a rupture of the established order, an order that had been handed down from the renaissance. As distinct as the many styles of architecture since the renaissance were, there was evident in all of them elements which originated in the renaissance, such as a verification and refinement of classical orders, or the constructs of perspectival space. There was a tradition of the kind described by T.S Eliot:

Tradition is a matter of much wider significance....It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man not merely to write with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. (24)
The modernists, in contrast, sought to break this ideological continuity, to posit themselves against traditions whose forms they found stultifying. This challenge to tradition occurred in all of the arts: literature, drama, music, painting, sculpture as well as architecture. One might describe the advent of photography and film as a sign of the emergence of a modern age. But to describe Modernism, in architecture, as simply an ideological break with tradition would be incomplete. It also represents the coincidence of technological breakthroughs and the rise of new political and social expectations prompted by the advent of socialism marxism and, on a different front, the opportunities apparent in the egalitarian democracy of the United States.

The nineteenth century witnessed the development of new materials, processes, and forms derived from industrialism. In the unself-conscious manner of technological progress, through the hands of engineers who were perhaps indeed a bit self conscious, like Thomas Paxton, these forms and materials appeared in the railways, in the factories in the cities. Constructions like Paxtons Crystal Palace, celebrated the possibilities which these forms suggested. Architects were slow to come to grips with these new technologies, and the nineteenth century is characterised more by period revivals rather than the emergence of a formidable contemporary style. The appropriately titled movement called Art Nouveau represents the first attempts at the development of such a style.

In the early twentieth century, for once and for all the hegemony of perspective and the classical orders broke down with the emergence of cubism. An entirely new sensibility arose in the realm of pictorial depiction which had its equivalent and its effects in the realm of architecture, in the development of a new aesthetic of geometric purity, as well as material clarity, which combined rather nicely with both the principles and forms of a functionalist machine age to produce entirely new forms. To this coincidence, if we can call it that, of aesthetics and technique was added a third: a political and social concern so compelling that one is tempted to describe it as the driving force behind all of this. A sense of this force is evident in a passage from a book of essays by Serge Chermayeff, called Design and the Public Good, the title of which alone suggests a political/social imperative:
...Nothing need occupy our attention at this particular time in examining new materials other than those which have a direct social significance. It is my endeavor to show that new materials and new methods are, as it were, the chemicals of a new science of living. If we were to employ immediately and intelligently the materials and methods of our machine age, to supply the physical and economic needs of humanity, we would release a society of sane individuals. A sense of physical and economic well-being would make the mass of released individuals once more sensitive to the graces of life. (25)

Economics, science, functionalism, technology unite in a progressive spirit; all that is required is an architect.

There is a wonderful title to a book by Flannery O'Connor: All That Rises Must Converge. So it was with what we now call modernism: technological progress in materials, processes and forms (including those of depiction, the camera), a rupture in aesthetic sensibility and an emergence of a social imperative. The very air must have been charged with a sense of purpose rare to human endeavor. Yet under the blanket called modernism huddled sensibilities as diverse as Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Kahn and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, each of whom transformed or manipulated this progressive sense towards a justification of his own aesthetic. We have come to equate modernism with a utopianism that suggests similarity; perhaps a more appropriate term would be Olympian, as Arthur Drexler once described Mies. It is a term which conveys the same sense of urgency and enormity, but does not disguise the individual intent.

Whether these individuals (or their historians, such as Siegfried Gideon) sought to wrap themselves in the mantle of progressivism is perhaps of little consequence; we recognize the diversity in these legendary figures. But to the man on the street, its not diversity which characterizes modernism, but sameness. This is perhaps a result of the rupture of modernism, its clear break with architectural forms and materials of the past. Often, in the face of such a rupture distinction is lost; in the face of the wave, one doesn't count fish. It is also testimony to the size and scale of modernist endeavors, particularly after World War Two, in which entire cities required rebuilding in Europe; in which entire cities suffered rebuilding in the urban renewal projects in America.

But essentially the man on the street is right, it does all look the same or nearly so. And that is because in the early 1930's, there emerged amid the eclecticism of early modernism a specific style: the International Style. Where modernism was a sensibility
which could withstand diversity, the International Style was a style, prescribing specific dicta, as Henry Russell Hitchcock and Johnson describe in their catalogue for the exhibit of the International Style in 1932:

There is first, a new conception of architecture as volume rather than as mass. Secondly, regularity rather than axial symmetry serves as the chief means of ordering design. These two principles, with a third proscribing arbitrary applied decoration mark the productions of the international style....Style is character, style is expression; but even character must be displayed, and expression may be conscious and clear or muddled and deceptive. The architect who builds in the international style seeks to display the true character of his construction and to express clearly his provision for function. He prefers such an organization of his general composition, such a use of available surface materials, and such a handling of detail as will increase rather than contradict the prime effect of surface of volume. (26)

And the exhibition provided examples. We see in the work of J. P. Oud, the expression of volume in an organization of geometric form that is still startling in its clarity. In Neutra’s Lovell House, that form is articulated, penetrated and defined in a...
The white second storey appears weightless on its round piers. Its severe symmetry is a foil to the fluid line study in abstract form, unencumbered by structure, of the blue and rose windshelter above. The second storey, as shown by the plan, includes the open terrace within the general volume. Thus the single square of the plan contains all the varied living needs of a country house.

As this was a pavilion at an exposition, aesthetic rather than functional considerations determined the plan. The walls are independent planes under a continuous slab roof, which is supported on light metal posts. The absolute regularity in the spacing of the supports does not prevent wide variety in the placing of wall screens to form separate rooms. Rich materials: travertine, various marbles, chrome steel, grey, black, and transparent plate glass.
manner expressive of the cubist sensibility. Le Corbusier's early work reveals some of the essentials of the style: the planar quality of surface material, the taut skin, the bands of windows. In it, the integration of space and volume proposes much more than his vaunted "machine for living," but the process of moving through and residing in its realm. But it was Mies van der Rohe who came to exemplify the style, in the Barcelona Pavilion and later at IIT and in the Seagrams tower, the clarity of formal elements, in Seagrams reduced to pure structural expression, creates in Arthur Drexler's words: "the poetry of beautiful form, disdaining the trivial and the transient." (27)

After the cataclysm that was World War II, the International Style became the dominant form of architectural expression, both in the United States and Europe. But the forms built after the war, which constitute the major presence in our cities today, in themselves, and in the repetition of their presence, deny the vitality of those exhibited by Hitchcock and Johnson.

From such beginnings, well intended, well constructed we must ask what happened. We might acknowledge the influence of particular people, Walter Gropius for example, who propagated, in the words of H.R. Hitchcock, an "anonymity" of style that was "merely an important part of the broader International Style, as that is practised by the third generation of modern architects in the North Eastern United States." (28) Vincent Scully saw Gropius' influence in less benign terms:

His anti-historical bias was stronger than ever, and since architecture at its true urban scale is largely history, he helped lay part of the groundwork for the general destruction of American cities which some of his pupils were to undertake in the following generation. (29)

We might look also at the dominance of particular elements of the style as opposed to others. Arthur Drexler describes Mies work and its influence:

The open plan, in which free standing walls are arranged in a continuous free flowing space, has yet to be given the kind of study and adaption it undoubtedly can sustain. On the other hand, Mies' use of vertical mullions applied to the facades of high rise buildings resulted in thousands of repetitions. The idea has not proved adequate to so vast a production. (30)

But we need not hang the shroud of the failure of the International Style solely on the shoulders of Gropius and Mies, there are plenty of culprits, but more importantly, there are plenty of reasons. The tenets of the International Style led to a kind of
abstraction, as Johnson and Hitchcock describe. "The development of free planning, particularly with the use of curved and oblique screens...gives to modern interiors a new kind of abstract space design unknown in the architecture of the past." 31 One thinks immediately of Le Corbusier, but also of Mies van der Rohe. Mies' work also approaches a kind of abstraction in the interplay of clearly expressed structure amid glass which at once defines yet also dematerializes in its transparency and reflection. In curtain wall buildings, like those done by SOM or Kevin Roche or even IM Pei and Partners, the separation of systems of closure and structure pushes this sense of abstraction even further, in that it complicates the immediate and immanent comprehension of the building. The walls aren't doing any work, something else is holding the building up. Our limits are no longer imposed, it seems, by structure, it can do anything, but they are imposed nonetheless. Our space is clearly defined in these glass boxes and yet we can see through them. For the inhabitant of such buildings, the result is an ambiguous expression of possibility and constraint, that points beyond the building itself, to some master hand at the controls. That is often the case with architecture, but is particularly true of the International Style. In it, the criteria for design seemed so removed from both the inhabitant and the building's particular situation, and the materials so reduced in the service of this criteria, that it became abstracted from the reality of use. And in repetition, it proved alienating.
And repeated it was. Over and over. As Drexler says of Mies, "in the United States, there is not a city that does not have some evidence of his American presence." (32) When Mies uttered his famous phrase, "Less is more," did he realize how easily that little phrase fits into a capitalist concept of production? In the simple reduction of material, the International Style served well economic and functionalist efficiency, as Vincent Scully bemoans:

The old architecture was seen as the embodiment of upper class attitudes, the new however as yet partial and faulty, as the first signs of a proletarian language of form. Those hopes or illusions have by now been sadly deceived. Modern architecture has accommodated itself most comfortably to the objectives and methods of the capitalist entrepreneur, the ruthless developpeur (sic) at his worst. It has enabled him to build sloppily, nastily, and without love for anyone or anything, neither for those who use his constructions nor for the materials out of which they are made. Applied urbanistically in somewhat more idealistic, governmental terms, the principles of modern urbanism have produced ever more thorough — going horrors. (33)

In the forms of the late International Style, we see material form reduced, and used in the service of ideas that are external to the tangibilities of architecture. They are external in the sense that they ignore the particularities of situation and locus which make for place. In the very name International Style, we see an intolerance of
distinctions which may be cultural, geographic or climatic. Instead we see the rigidity of a standard, which made repetition easy, even, one might say, required. As Hitchcock describes in 1951:

In 1932 we were amazingly optimistic and full of faith. We wrote: Anyone who follows the rules, who accepts the implications of an architecture that is not mass but volume, and who conforms to the principle of regularity can produce buildings which are at least aesthetically sound....But it has not of course worked out that way. Many docile architects, and even builders outside the profession, have followed the rules dutifully enough, but their buildings can hardly be considered aesthetically sound. (34)

It is seductive to render modern architecture in a history that describes it as a kind of totality. It is too simple a reading which does not acknowledge the differences in form evident throughout the history of modernism, nor the intentions of architects and planners which cannot be reduced to economic expediency or other prescriptives. Yet, we need to acknowledge the dominance of a minimalist style in the post war world, for its very presence is known to us. In the popular mind, as well as in the mind of many architects, this style represented a totality, in its association with the notion of modernity and the idea of progress. This compelling association denies the eclectic beginnings of Modernism and consequently, part of its spirit. In the place of that early spirit, there emerged the rigidity of a style, dominant and alienating.

It is also important to note, that as this style emerged in the cities after the war and became dominant in the world of architectural thought and academicism, hundreds of thousands of city residents migrated to the suburbs. And the architectural forms to
which they migrated or which they built were by no means modern in the terms of the International Style. Instead, they were ranch houses or colonials or capes, expressive less of modernity, than tradition. One cannot ascribe this migration or the architectural forms it produced, solely to the alienating qualities of Modern architecture, as many have done; too many issues were involved. But the disjunction between the forms of the city and the suburb needs to be acknowledged in understanding the whole picture as well as understanding where we are now.

It is a disjunction Robert Venturi recognized early in his career:

...the limitations of orthodox Modern architecture and city planning, in particular, the platitudinous architects who invoke integrity, technology, or electronic programming as ends in architecture, the popularizers who 'paint fairy stories over our chaotic reality' suppress those complexities and contradictions inherent in art and experience. (35)

And with Venturi came a disavowal of the totality of modernism. Yet Venturi was not alone as a critic of what modernism had wrought. In 1960, the wise and prescient Henry Russell Hitchcock described both the consequences of Modernism and the project ahead:

Both the architects and the historian critics of the early twentieth century, when they were not merely seeking in the past fresh ammunition for current polemical warfare, taught us to see all architecture, as it were, abstractly, false though such a limited vision probably is to the complex sensibilities that produced most of the great architecture of the past. When we reexamine - or discover - this or that aspect of earlier building production today, it is with no idea of repeating its forms, but rather in the expectation of feeding more amply new sensibilities that are wholly the product of the present. 36

We are now, apparently, in the "post-modern" age, and see about us a plurality of architectural styles and viewpoints, although, perhaps to Hitchcock's chagrin, historicism currently seems to dominate. Yet it is toward "the product of the present" not mere historicist repetition, to which younger critics and practitioners would lead us. Hitchcock's sentiment is reiterated by John Whiteman:

The modernists made the mistake of thinking there was only one style; the post modernists make the mistake of thinking there are many, already given, from which one can pick and choose, use here and there. In fact, style is that process of looking around you, looking, really looking at what's available to you and what's happening, to create what's appropriate. (37)
In looking around us, we repeat in a way the modernist's process, looking at the materials and processes available to us. In recognition of the legacy of modernism, its successes and failures we may subsume our utopian instincts in favor of a recognition of the culture as it is, hopefully acknowledging its diversity. Michael Sorkin may describe such plurality as "really just an excuse to be weak willed about principles," (38) but our memories of the oh so principled modernists are a bit too recent to push too hard.

We look to the cultural apparati within which we reside for inspiration, for resolution. In the "experience of the visual," which forms a part of this apparati, movies, their stepchild television, and their extended family mass media, play an important role, so present are they in our daily existence. In the forms about us, in the cities but, especially in suburbia, and in the current operations of architecture, we can see their influence.

And yet, I have described movies and, by extension, other forms of photographic communication, as arising from an essential abstraction, in which the viewer is "away," not present to the reality depicted, an absence emblematic of a cultural condition. In the totality of modernism, we find a similar expression of abstraction and alienation. It is testimony to the odd duality of our times, that architects, reacting to such abstraction and alienation in architecture, should seek inspiration from the stuff of movies. In an attempt to reassert architecture's presence, they draw upon these illusions that are expressions of absence. Is there something to be made from this?
Chapter Three: The Movies and Their Directors

This thesis is concerned with a popular understanding, with images and forms of expression accessible (in the many senses of the word) to the public. I am interested in cultural emphases which speak less of the particular (the product of a specific artist and his individual consciousness) than of that product and consciousness in relation to a larger consciousness and sensibility. Every artist and every work of art exists within this relation, including the avant garde.

But mine is a bias towards popular culture, though I'm not at all sure what that means. And mine is a method of inquiry which revels in paradox. As Stanley Cavell says of one of the films he's chosen to examine, Mr Deeds Goes to Town, "It is just the sort of popular American film about which it seems most paradoxical to speak of artistic self reflexiveness." But my joy in paradox lies not in paradox itself, which only reveals a kind of reverse snobbery but as Cavell describes, that "this apparently gullible sentimental and anti intellectual film may serve to emphasize... the power and glory of a medium." (39)

But I'm aware, amid expectation, of what I think is termed the Uncertainty Principle: that history or life itself changes as a result of our looking at it. Its a phrase applicable to all parts of this endeavor, but here admonishes me that I may be endowing these films, even by the act of choosing them, with too much importance. I wish I were Cavell confident not only of my powers of inquiry but also that my choices are appropriate vehicles for the load they carry. But I take heart in the fact that, like Cavell in his discussion of movies, I'm not approaching them as a totality, neither describing them in their totality, nor expecting them to represent a totality of the world, its attitudes or its architecture. Like Binx Bolling in the novel The Moviegoer by Walker Percy, I'm on a search. So let's get on with it.

The two movies I've chosen to look at in some depth are two musicals which Feature Fred Astaire: Swingtime made in 1936, directed by George Stevens with music by Jerome Kern and Funny Face, made in 1957, directed by Stanley Donen, featuring music by George and Ira Gershwin. While many of my reasons for choosing them are idiosyncratic, there are others a bit more explicable.
Musicals are all about movement, whether its the specific dances or musical interludes they feature or the larger effect (can we call it structure?) created by the conjunction of music and "moving pictures." We might think of them as a celebration and so recognize their particularity and idiosyncracy, just as one might recognize the particularity of a Street festival celebrating St Francis as opposed to one celebrating the Irish American Youth League. But as street festivals of any kind celebrate the life of the city, musicals celebrate the essence of cinema, movement.

We might also see musicals as we see drama, as an evocation of the everyday, a transformation of the pedestrian and mundane into dramatic expression. As such they run the risk of and often fall into cliche. But cliche is interesting because it also reveals a popular sensibility; in the service of the story, filmmakers often appropriate shared collective understandings of setting and character. Musicals are all the more notorious for this reliance, because, plot, character, setting share the stage with song and dance; with so much going on, to such great effect, the narrative constructs are often reduced to forms which will simply push the narrative along. Consequently, we often (but not always) witness characterization that might best be described as thin or settings which are stereotypic.

Swingtime and Funny Face are remarkably different movies in the way they capture movement or through movement, express experience. They are also different in their invocation of conventions, their exposition of shared cultural understandings; one is almost naive, the other nearly satiric.

I make no claim that these two movies are the best musicals ever made (though Swingtime ain't bad.). But in a pinch I'd probably take Fred Astaire and almost any of his movies over most others. He brings to them a grace and elegance in movement, in his very presence, which is unmatched by any one else. And his films in turn, are constructed as to best reveal his qualities. He is the link between these films made twenty years apart. His presence provides a basis for comparisons, as does their musical structure. But neither Astaire nor his specific dances is the subject of this thesis. Rather it is the revelations these movies offer about form and space and the method with which they do so. It is their use of the constructs of film, the illusions of film, the "power and glory of the medium."
Swingtime was released in 1936, by RKO, the sixth of ten films Astaire made with Ginger Rogers. It was directed by George Stevens, with music by Jerome Kern and lyrics by Dorothy Fields. Of it, Arlene Croce says, "Its conceits are graceful, so alive to the mythical power of its subject that it seems to me the true miracle film of the series." (40) In it Fred Astaire, plays John (Lucky) Garnett, dancer and gambler. At the film's beginning he is back in his hometown with a dancing troupe, but about to marry the daughter of one of the towns fine families.

His fellow dancers delay him (a small matter of his pants being last years style); gambling distracts him; he misses the wedding. When he finally arrives at the house, he finds the guests all gone and the father of the bride furious. Dad grows less furious, however, when Fred promises to return, to win Margaret back with $25,000. Dad as we can tell is a bit of a hypocritical stiff. And Margaret, Fred's intended is no prize either. One questions our hero: a gambler, so concerned with fashion that he misses his wedding, he now appears to be nothing but a social climber.

But of course he's not. He goes to New York, meets and eventually falls for Ginger Rogers (employed as a dance instructor.) He makes a lot of money gambling but continues to to dance, mostly to provide Ginger her golden opportunity. They squabble, spat; he feels an obligation to the girl back home; Ginger prepares to marry the bandleader. Fred threatens he's "never gonna dance." but all dissolves into "a perfectly swell romance." Kiss. Credits. Croce describes it as

imaginary world of romance they live in. It is a world of nighttime frolics very much like Top Hat's, but it is also a middle class, workaday, American world. It is top hats and empty pockets: Fred as a depression dandy hopping a freight car, Ginger being sung to with soap in her hair. The antithetical strain runs through the picture. ...(41)

This antithetical strain of the workaday and the delightful is characteristic of many thirties movies, a romantic vision of optimism and pluck amidst the horror that was the depression. It is the American dream which these films promote, a New Deal sensibility of opportunity and possibility for Everyman. It was both an affirmation of the little guy and an espousal of middle class values.

This sensibility characterises the work of Swingtime's director, George Stevens. A partial list of his films reveals his democratic and egalitarian instincts:
If you know these films, you know that (with the exception of the first and the last two) they celebrate America: its cities and towns, regular folks and "high mucky mucks," its political and social constructs. And this celebration extends or perhaps more appropriately arises from the American landscape. There is in his pictures a breadth and depth of revelations of the landscape, whether they are the products of studio sets, back lots or shot on location: the sophisticated and diverse cities of Swingtime and Woman of the Year, the small towns, claustrophobic in A Place in the Sun, homespun in Talk of the Town, and the oh so egalitarian west of Shane and Giant.

I do not mean by this that Stevens is a landscape artist; He is not painstaking in his rendering of the form and space that make the cities and towns, buildings and places of his movies. But his images are telling, though always in the service of the story, and evocative despite their brevity.

In Stevens' work we find a sense of morality and moral purpose, as well as a concern for both individualism and community. If the hypocrisy of Fred's would be father-in-law is delivered lightly in Swingtime, the power of many such hypocrites, gathered as an exclusive society, to deny an individual status among them, is far more dramatically described in A Place in the Sun. In Gunga Din, the pariah gives his life to save the community; in Shane, the loner arrives to reveal to the community what its lost; in Anne Frank, a young girl symbolises the strength of the individual and the community in the face of a horrible terror.

Stanley Donen, the director of Funny Face presents a remarkable contrast to Stevens. It is not that his work represents the opposite of Stevens' moral purpose and social agenda, but simply the absence of these concerns. He is the master of the movie musical, as a list of his films attests:
On the Town 1949  
Royal Wedding 1951  
Singin' in the Rain 1952  
Seven Brides for Seven Brothers 1955  
The Pajama Game 1957  
Damn Yankees 1959  
Charade 1963  
Two for the Road 1967 (43)

Donen's work represents the apogee of the movie musical; Pauline Kael described Singin in the Rain as "the best movie musical ever." Donen's musicals are marked by a boisterous energy and physicality. Yet they are also testimony to a refinement of techniques, an improvement in filmmaking methods and technology, as well as an attitude that might best be described as "filmic." By this I do not mean to deny the filmic qualities of earlier movies, but to acknowledge in Donen's work, an abundant enthusiasm for the properties of film and filmmaking, in and of themselves. These include the artful organization of elements in the frame, the emphasis on motion, particularly of the camera within the shot, but also from shot to shot, and a willingness to disavow continuity of sequence and time in the service of, to use Hitchcocks word," the action." In Funny Face, improbable things happen, rendered in improbable ways, but the show goes on. It moves; it sings, it dances.

Funny Face is the story of Quality Magazine, its editor (played by Kay Thompson), its foremost photographer, named Dick Avery and modelled on Richard Avedon, who was visual consultant to the film (played by Fred Astaire) and its improbable selection of a young "beat" intellectual (Audrey Hepburn) as its cover girl. It opens at the Magazine, where the horrors of the current issue are expounded; inspiration is found ("pink, everything is pink") and we move on to the next issue: fashion for the woman who isn't interested in fashion. Enter Audrey into the picture, discovered as they shoot photographs in a bookstore, dressed in jumper, knee socks and loafers. "Dreadful, dreadful girl," says the editor." She has character, spirit and intelligence," says Fred, as he suggests her as the Quality Woman. The editor is convinced, but Hepburn is reluctant: "Fashion magazines are chi –chi and an unrealistic to self impressions, as well as economics...It would be a violation of my principles."

But she agrees because it will take her to Paris, the home of her philosophical mentor, Dr. Flaustra, progenitor of "empathicalism." They all go to Paris; they see the sights; she is photographed amid the sights; she falls in love with Fred, whose
love for her always seem dictated by the job they have to do. They squabble; he ridicule her philosophy; he dances; they make up. He questions the Professors intentions, they fight again, this time completely disrupting the big fashion show. She flees to her professor; Fred follows but she won't have him. Fred leaves; the professor turns out to be a lout; she goes to find Fred and goes on with the fashion show to glowing success. Fred returns. Romance. 'S Wonderful. 'S Marvelous.

The film has been described as 'stylish', a quality attributed to the presence of Avedon and to Donen in tandem. It also has pretensions to satire as John Mueller describes:

The script has ample opportunity to satirize both the extroverted pretentiousness of the fashion world and the in-group pretentiousness of Parisian intellectual society... But mostly the film passes the opportunity by. Though there are a few mild verbal swipes at the world of high fashion, the film ends up further glamorizing it. And the cafe intellectuals are simply dismissed as a group of phonies, lechers, free loaders, and hypocrites, giving the film an anti-intellectual tone...” (44)
Chapter 4: Looking at the movies

Oddly enough, though Funny Face seems the more pure movie musical in the way it swoops and swirls in all of its parts, the dance sequences within it are uninspired. In contrast, we might be tempted to think of Swingtime as a story with some singing and some dancing. But the dance sequences: Pick Yourself Up, Waltz in Swingtime, Never Gonna Dance, are among the most wonderful dances ever to appear in the movies. In a way, it is just a story, but as Arlene Croce says, the story generates from the myth of Fred and Ginger. And as she describes, "the agony of waiting (for them to dance) is part of the plot." (45)

Agonizing might be too strong a word to describe the beginning of Swingtime, but it suggests both a dullness and an expectation that's appropriate. The film begins with a long shot of dancers on a stage, far enough away that their faces are indistinct. It goes backstage, where eventually we are united with the action by a straightforward shot from the wings in which Fred dances right past us, on his way off stage. Its only a little moment in which our point of view is that of someone backstage. But for that moment our floor is his floor, we can almost sense him brush by us.
4.1 The City

The movie really seems to begin when Fred (and his cohort Pop) arrive in New York. The city is bustling and complicated; it’s filled with street wise guys and cars. It’s not even easy to cross the street. Watching them I’m reminded of Le Corbusier’s description of stepping off a curb in Paris, only to be nearly run over by a car. For him this frightening occurrence prompted a renewed faith in the possibilities of the modern city and its technological wonders, prompting eventually his designs for the Ville Radieuse. (46)

The city in Swingtime is a good bit more humane. As we walk along with Fred and Pop (the camera located as if at eye level, it moves with them, like a person walking with them,) the city we encounter at street level is not modern. It is the solid construct of the late nineteenth, early twentieth centuries. Cuoins and corbels, it is the stuff of McKim Mead and White and Frank Furness, and a bit of Art Nouveau. Upon closer look, (particularly if you watch the movie over and over on your VCR) one recognizes the faux granite and the sterility of the shrubbery. One sees that the lighting is regulated and realizes that the noise conveniently punctuates the story. But on first glance, it looks real.
When the camera remains, as if our eyes, on the street watching them walk, moving with them, the various elements of street furniture: lampposts, subway kiosks, cigarette machines, along with the cars, the cops and the passersby, act like figures, all sharing the plane that is the street. The street, to use Peter Prangnell's phrase, is "the common language" and gives to "the symbolic idea of gathering a functional ability." (47) It is not surprising that Stevens should depict this arrival to the city, to the community, from a point of view that that locates us as one among many, but equal, our feet on the ground. It is surprising when the camera rises up to some unknown or inexperienced locale above the street. We are pulled from what we know, (both in our own experience and in that of the film) in a flight perhaps only of fancy, but, also from reality. (One might take note of my inability to distinguish reality and that which is depicted on film.) These departures occur throughout the film, though rarely, and usually only when our "landedness" has been established. Up in the air, we are given the general view; we are not entirely removed from the action as is often the case in many movies or TV shows, where the city is represented from high above or far away. In this sequence in SWingtime, we are spectators, but ones of some power. We have wings, made all the more delightful for not knowing we had them.
In contrast, Funny Face begins immediately in the city, yet it begins inside. There is no "hick town" to escape from, no sense of arrival. The city is immediately known by the pace of the first scene; it is represented in microcosm by the bustle and scurrying that occurs inside the office of Quality Magazine, inside an office tower. It is an internal world and the physical construct that is the real city is only seen through the office windows.

Again it is New York. We don’t need to be told verbally, the architecture outside the office window tells us so. It is a developed construct of towers, prominent and overwhelming, despite the curtains. It affirms that the city exists, as if telling us "Okay here it is, now do you know where you are?"

When we finally hit the street (7.5 minutes later, after the world has been turned pink, nearly a month’s gone by, we visit Fred’s studio and its time for a new issue) we are not quite earthbound but hovering somewhere over Washington Square, (in 1957, before they rerouted traffic around the arch.) First, we watch two cabs navigate around the arch, then we are in the cabs with secretaries, cameras, models, assistants and Fred, scouting for the quintessential "sinister little place in Greenwich Village," a bookstore. When we find it, ("there’s one!") the street has few pedestrians, and the store, is it real or a Hollywood set? is just what we’d expect.
It's a type, simultaneously the archetypal bookstore and the stereotypical sinister little place in Greenwich Village. In showing it to us, the movie depends upon some a-priori knowledge on our part. We understand that the city is diverse, and that the presence of such diverse elements puts each simultaneously in relation to the other(s). It makes them types, that is to say a type is known, as well as clarified, only in the presence of an "other." In this vein, we are assumed to know that a bohemia exists, nestled in the little old pockets of the city, a kind of counter culture set in physical (and one presumes, intellectual) opposition to the working world uptown. We are assumed to know that there are such "sinister little places," even if we don't have them in our own hometowns or that we will know one when it is pointed out to us ("There's one.") The sinister little place seems all the more different, though hardly sinister, for our having spent the last eight minutes in an office tower, being told to think pink in words images and music.

If the movie is depending upon what we already know, its a knowledge we would have received from the media, from magazines like Quality magazine or movies, arbiters of taste and style, purveyors of what's current. Funny Face is a little ahead of its time, Dobie Gillis and the world famous beatnik, Maynard G. Krebs didn't appear on the airwaves until two
years later; (46) it's also probably a little behind the style, Naked Lunch and On the Road were published earlier. There is a self-reflexivity about all of this that borders on self-consciousness, but descends, through the broadness of its dialogue and stereotypes, into a kind of farce.

The passage, the journey we travel in Funny Face, both physically and philosophically, is from the inside out. Conventions are rendered with the broad strokes of stereotype; they are done so no doubt so that even the dumbest among us will "get it." We are thought to be in on the joke. Physically, we move from the microcosm of the city that is the office, the workplace, to the street. The method of travel in the city is not our feet, but a cab. Our point of view is never established, in fact it is a little crazy: we hover above the street, we're in the cab, we're in the street and then the same cab we were just in pulls up beside us.

Funny Face does not present the city as something to be discovered, but as something that is, something already known perhaps too well, and there to be foraged, picked clean, plundered as the folks from Quality magazine do in their search for the right location. In Swingtime the city is to be discovered; we arrive with Fred and Pop, in the city whose presence is one of materials and forms, people and things rather than typological images. Our point
of view is established both within the context of the city and the organization of the film, its narrative structure, as the camera moves with them on the sidewalk. We move from the outside in, a process akin to one's arrival anywhere. The city is the antidote to the hicktown; Fred is even dressed for it.

Of course we need to note the contrivances of plot. To make too much of these different processes of revelation of the city would be misleading. In each case, they are tied into the plot, they are the "hook" so to speak into the story. As such they are organized in cognizance of an audience's sensibility. In Funny Face, the audience of 1957 is assumed to be sophisticated enough to be thrown right into the thick of things. In Swingtime, we arrive (having escaped from another place) like so many visitors from the hicktowns of the planet to the biggest city in the world.

4.2 Inside the Buildings

While each movie acknowledges and reveals the city quite differently, the interiors of the buildings which we enter early in each movie share some similarities of form. In Funny Face, after the credits reveal to us the concerns of the movie, lightboards and cameras and models and fashion, we are confronted by the black double doors of Quality Magazine. They are immediately pushed open by a woman who enters the
frame from the left, and then resides in the center of it for the rest of the shot. We follow her, a bit pathetically as if trying to catch up, as she walks down a hallway, her footsteps evoked by a staccato drum roll. She pushes open another set of doors and enters a reception area, walking between two desks exactly the same, manned by two secretaries remarkably similar, who speak in unison. On each desk, in the same spot, is a pot of flowers.

From the tunnel that is the hallway, space expands in this reception area. It is about three times as wide as the hallway and apparently horseshoe shaped, from what we can see. The semicircular end is marked by several doors, each painted a different color; at their center, at the apex of the horseshoe is another set of black double doors. It's to these she's headed as she marches through the reception area, growing smaller in the frame. She opens these doors and the shot changes. It's been a direct and linear march, one which bisected the space she passes through, pronounced by her central location in the frame and the militaristic soundtrack.

In the next shot, she passes her own secretary with equal vehemence and enters her own office. There the city looms behind the curtains. She goes directly to her desk and switches on her intercom, which we see in closeup. Total of three shots and 26 seconds, but already a sense of the place and the tempo is established.
In Swingtime, leaving Pop on the street, Fred follows Ginger into a building. The scene jumps to the reception area of the dance studio where Ginger works. She enters through a door at the left and crosses as if in front of us sitting there. In doing so, she moves into the center of the frame where she remains as she opens another door, turns left into a hallway and leaves the picture. The image lingers, though she has disappeared, as we watch her boss (we presume) watch then follow her. It cuts to her opening another door, but we are in front of her now, she steps towards us as she enters a dressing area.

The boss soon arrives, quickly followed by another woman (soon to be known to us as Mabel the receptionist) who enters the dressing area, sits down and talks with Ginger who is offscreen. The scene cuts back to the reception area, to Fred arriving in a fashion similar to Ginger. He is intercepted by the boss, who returns to the dressing room, calls to Mabel, who gets up and leaves. We cut to Mabel entering the reception area from the inside; we are behind her as she greets Fred. After much conversation, the boss finally leads Fred through the second door and across the dance floor where he will begin his lesson. From the moment Ginger enters to that where Fred is led to the dance floor 25 shots and 3.5 minutes have elapsed.
The sequence is such that continuity is maintained, though our (the camera's) location changes. The continuity is preeminently developed in the expectation of the plot: Ginger leaves the frame, where will she go? She arrives in the dressing room. But we are in front of her now, as we were at the beginning of the scene; we've gotten there ahead of her as if we've been admitted to the club; we don't follow, anxiously trying to keep up, we are already there. The relative constancy of size of the figures also helps to establish a sense of continuity. In the shot where Ginger leaves the picture, the small size of the boss as he watches her is almost an invitation for the scene to change. People and things are kept within a limited range of sizes, a range in which the objects, figures and places are clear to us, details can be seen, nuance comprehended, the figures take possession of the frame.

Just like in Swingtime, we return to the reception area in Funny Face. The intercom barks, "Now hear this,"; we see each brightly colored door open, and women march out of all of them and file, one two three four, into the boss' office. Repeating her path at the start of the film, they too march past the now panicked secretary and into the bosses' office. There, they hear a discourse on the horrors of the current issue ("A magazine must be like a human being.
When it comes into the home, it must contribute. It just can't lie around.) and then, from a matchbook cover, inspiration: pink! " I want the whole world pink!" cries the editor (a gently ironic poke at 1950's anti-communism, perhaps.) This of course is reason for a song, "Think Pink" which lasts three minutes, during which the world quite literally does turn pink, as we are delivered from the office to a nebulous, formless world of images and models, all of whom are struck pink. We eventually return to the reception area, to find painters putting the finishing touches on the now pink doors. There's thirty seconds of high stepping from the painters and the secretaries, when the boss triumphantly re emerges through her now pink doors. She too sings of the joys of pink (34 more seconds) when the number ends and we cut to the entry of a man, not yet Fred, who has come in to report on the progress of pink around the world.

Obviously, some time has gone by here. The editor is now on to the next issue: fashion for the woman who doesn't care about fashion. The scene closes with the editor, exultant in front her pink doors. The whole sequence, from the beginning of the movie, the boss' entrance to this climax has taken 5.5 minutes and 25 shots.
In Funny Face, the reception area is the locale for the crescendo of the big number; in Swingtime, it is only the preamble and a point of reference throughout the scene. Fred is led across the dance floor to a small glassed room where Ginger is selecting records. Briefly we return to the reception area as Pop arrives. We cut back to Fred, Ginger and the boss, where, in a series of medium shots and closeups they bicker back and forth.

Boss: What kind of dancing would you like to learn?
Fred: What kind have you got?
Ginger: Sap.
Fred: Sap dancing?
Boss: Oh no! She means tap dancing.

Finally, Fred’s lesson begins. It starts out slowly: "You must learn to walk first."
They walk back and forth across the dance floor. The position of the camera changes, so that they face us as they walk up, and again as they return; up and back, up and back. We cut to the reception area, to Pop and Mabel, then return to the record room, where Ginger begins to teach him some steps. He stumbles, they try again. He stumbles, they try once more. This time he falls to the floor. Exasperated, she tells him "I can’t teach you anything!"
But he implores her, sitting there on the floor, with the opening bars and words of what will become "Pick Yourself Up, Dust Yourself Off, Start All Over Again.”

During this exchange the camera is
positioned as if it too was a figure standing on that floor, a witness to all of this. It looks on at Fred from slightly above and then pans to Ginger when she begins to sing.

It's a single shot which lasts one minute and 42 seconds. Prior to this shot, the scene between them is composed of a sequence of shots, of him, of her, of them together, shots lasting 5, 8, never more than 20 seconds. This pan is an essential device in establishing the unity between the two of them. It's a unity which extends to us, because we are with them. Our point of view is established in this shot, as if we are standing there and the camera's move is like our own would be, moving from him to her by turning our head.

Finally, Ginger agrees to try again. They do, he falls again. "No one could teach you to dance in a million years," she cries. Overheard by her boss, she's fired. We return to the reception area, to a similarly heated exchange between Mabel and Pop; the boss hears this one too and fires Mabel. Enter Fred, who protests that the boss has it all wrong; he intercepts Ginger, whisks her on to the floor and begins the number, danced to the tune of "Pick Yourself Up." Interrupted briefly at the beginning by two reaction shots (the last begins 25 seconds into the number and ends at 28) it lasts two minutes and 45
seconds. Its absolute delight. The camera follows them, from a stationary position, as we would if standing there, as we do, entranced by a wonderful dance.

In both films, the forms used to create the setting are clearly devices subservient to the story, designed to accommodate the action. Given the similarities in the action, singing and dancing, it's not surprising to find similarities in form. In both, the dances occur in public zones, centrally located, bordered immediately by forms which protect the privacies beyond: the stairs in Funny Face, the glass booths of Swingtime. These large zones, the reception area of Funny Face, the dance area of Swingtime, are semi circular and elliptical in shape respectively. The circularity is no accident as one view of Fred and Ginger will attest. The way they swing and swirl almost seems to require circular containment as much as it does the flat floor. In Funny Face, the semi circle, the horseshoe shape, with its two steps is an ideal locus for the high stepping production number. It was clearly created for it.

Funny Face takes artifice, such as the horseshoe shaped reception area, a step beyond Swingtime, a step beyond the plausible. In it we are delivered from a known locale to a world of vignettes and formlessness, then returned, to find our locale changed and much time passed. We are clearly in the realm of the fantastic.
orchestrated and artificial. The artifice that is Funny Face points to the fact that we shouldn't draw great and profound conclusions from the plans of these "buildings." The plans represent diagrams of movement and locations for action more than they represent different or similar concepts of spatial organization.

The story comes first: this column exists for Fred to dance around it. The graphic representation that is a plan ironically seems to illustrate this. It is as if the act of drawing the plans gives a solidity to a place we know to be artificial, designed and constructed for a story, a movie a number.

But in a sense, design also serves a story when it serves the program of a building. But architecture, existing in the world, serves the eight million stories of the naked city, not just one. Movies tell one story, hoping that the singular narrative has universal appeal. And its true, as Hockney described, "depiction is a ten thousand year old longing... we love to see images of the world...." Its evident that plausibility enters here, a plausibility in the story which is revealed through the sequences of images.

The implausibility of the high stepping chorus of painters and secretaries brings the reception area of Funny Face into question. It is no longer a reception area but a kind of stage set. But it could be both couldn't it? How many times have
you walked into a lobby and thought "this would make a great place for a show?" (You may have never done this. But if you aren't willing to admit the possibility, I invite you to go over to Building 13 at MIT on a Wednesday or is it Thursday? night and watch the square dancing that goes on in the lobby. It always seemed to be an implausible, odd occurrence, but it happens. Perhaps it could only happen at MIT.)

What occurs in Funny Face is an act of imagination, that the reception area could be a stage set. But what makes it odd is that this "possibility" is rendered, appears to us, through the graphic verisimilitude that is photography. It is the power of photography to "specifically locate and describe" which transforms this speculative act into an image which affirms a reality, even if that reality no longer exists and even if it was created precisely for the movies.

Of course this is what movies are all about: acts of imagination rendered through a mechanism which does not necessarily make them seem real, but gives them the credence of location, of existence. This scene in Funny Face seems to illustrate this point (and its ambiguity), though its implausibility (its silliness) distorts it. Funny Face plays with this, utilizing the credibility of the photographic image as it goes back and forth between the plausible and the implausible. If the
specificity of photographic description, its power to locate gives even the implausible credence, how much more credible does the plausible seem? How much more does it speak to us of what we know, of our own existence?

Herein we are able to accept the architectural information provided in these movies as a kind of mirror of contemporary practice, of the world itself and its attitudes. Moreover, the forms and materials used in these movies not only reveal a sensibility, they help to propagate it.

4.3 Form Space and Material: Different Views of Modernism

Despite the similarities revealed in the plans, the architecture depicted in these movies is remarkably different. One example of the difference is the use of transparency and opacity. In Swingtime, through the half glass door into the hallway there is the suggestion of space beyond because there is light beyond, evident through the glass. Once we finally get into that space, the dance area, 3.5 minutes later, this use of transparency and light is even more evident. The rooms which surround the dance area are also half glass and the outer wall is a series of windows which reveals the city beyond.
In Funny Face, the process of traveling through the interior is one marked by passage through opaque, solid doors. We arrive in the central reception area, into a stark, brilliantly white yet artificially lit pit. There are no windows and the space is very complete, symmetrical, marked at the semi circular end by all those doors.

One might say of Swingtime, that the actors move toward the light, a light which is available through transparency. The grand central space which connotes our final arrival is described by light. The grand central space of Funny Face is also described by light, but it is a brightness that is artificial. Moreover, we are not led to it, there is no promise but surprise. It remains for us to get to the boss' office, the private enclave, to get to the windows. I was tempted to call her office "the inner sanctum," as one might term that most private and authoritative of spaces. But the phrase seems inappropriate when, there looming before us is the city itself, and the view of it, of the outside, rather than an internalized privacy, affirms her power. In Swingtime, in the long horizontal row of windows in the dance area, there is a sense of the view belonging to all. They act as a kind of mitigation between the public world out there and the world (semi public, semi private?) in here.

Such grand statements perhaps push the point a bit further than it should be
taken. Yet we see the differences in two presentations and in the sensibilities they project. We see in Swingtime, a confidence in glass as a medium of transmission and transference. Other properties of glass: the irony of its capacity to separate despite its transparency, its coldness, its semblance to a mirror are not revealed here. Openness is the issue. Funny Face in its opacity, in the absence of glass, is perhaps a denial of such openness on many levels. It may merely represent the requirements of the story, a passage marked by each door way, delivering surprise. Or it may reflect an awareness on the part of architects and designers of the other qualities of glass, the irony and contradiction of its use. The fifties was the era of the glass tower, SOM’s Lever House, Mies’ Seagrams building, and the glass box: Mies’ Farnsworth house and Phillip Johnson’s own home in Connecticut. Perhaps Funny Face reveals a fatigue with the material. But, the glass skins of Lever House or Johnson’s house exist on the outside, apparently providing for a kind of exchange with the landscape. While the limits of this exchange were evident back then, Funny Face does not seem to question it. Instead, what it more clearly reveals, perhaps satirically, is the organization of the tower, its glass skin, the view given to privacies and the opaque, disorienting organization of its interior. When Hepburn arrives in the offices of Quality Magazine, she repeats the journey of the editor, but without the
forceful drumroll, looking about her as if lost, looking about her in fear amid the stark sterility of the hallway and the reception area. When she flees the office in fear, she gets lost amid the hallways, disoriented by there similarity. Its not a place for strangers.

But isnt that the way with modern office towers? Once you are in them aren't they a maze of hallways, each one the same or nearly so, offering no clues about how to go, neither by light, directional form or any distinction or heirarchy in form? And to get in them you go through these lobbies that are oversized and impersonal, a great place for a show in fact, all for show, including the symmetrical pots of flowers on the symmetrical desks?

There is little decoration or ornament in the forms depicted in Funny Face. The starkness of this environment, the workplace, only further accentuates the differences with that "sinister little place in Greenwich Village" which is old and cluttered, dusty and "movingly dismal. We couldn't have done better if we'd designed it ourselves," in the words of the editor (in another piece of self reflexivity.) The offices of Quality Magazine are testimony to the architecture of 1957, to Mies Van Der Rohe whose Seagrams building was being built at the time. Mies work reveals a clarity of expression one can only call reductive, in spite of its elegance. The
work of many of his imitators, and there were many, was merely reduced, so reduced one might describe it as depleted. It is this depletion which the interiors of Quality Magazine evoke, one might even say satirize. It is an office building in midtown like so many office buildings in midtowns everywhere, so much so that we need not even see the outside of it. It is modern architecture reduced in the service of production, and set against that dismal little bookstore, which appears as a cultural artifact.

This sense, this opposition of old and new is reiterated in a later scene, when our heroes travel to Paris. Paris itself is presented through a montage of its monuments: the Louvre, Montmartre, its statues, its gardens, its streets. The salon of the famous dress designer is a banal reiteration of the traditional, a large space that is by no means modern, but by no means much else either. Its traditional the way furniture advertised on TV is traditional, just the hint of something old. Hepburn lives in a lovely old pension, which looks out onto a delightful square that's almost medieval. The cafes, dark and sultry have a medieval quality in them also, hidden in the basements, their entries mere holes in the wall of Paris' ancient streets. But the home of the hypocritical professor, the movies bad guy, is, of course, modern. It has a large central space, with industrial like windows at one end.
It's stairway is marked by a ship like railing and the clear expression of its treads and risers. It's very Corbu. No other style would do to house the hip professor and his beatnik friends nor to simultaneously convey the faddishness, the shallowness of the avant garde.

What a difference twenty years make! The cynicism of Funny Face is nowhere to be found in Swingtime, perhaps because the thirties couldn't afford it. But more likely, it is because when Swingtime came out in 1936, Modernism was just beginning to bloom in America. It was not the rigid standard of 1957, but an emerging and vital ethos. It had begun, as I have described, in the nineteenth century, with the facility of technology to create a new kind of building, and in the early twentieth century, with the emergence of a social and aesthetic sensibility which desired one. It began with Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and the Chicago school, with Irving Gill and Schindler and Neutra. It made its presence known in the competition in 1922 for the Chicago Tribune Tower, and in the drawings of Hugh Ferriss. But it was not until the thirties that it began to establish its presence in American cities. When Hitchcock and Johnson organized the exhibit of the International Style for the Museum of Modern Art in 1932, they included, among the major contributions, only a few American examples: Neutra's Lovell House, Lescaze and Howe's Philadelphia Saving
The architecture in America perhaps did not quite fit the criteria of the International Style in 1932, but it was a kind of boisterous hybrid which celebrated modernism nonetheless. The Chrysler Building was built in 1928, the Empire State which Vincent Scully describes as "a beaux arts relic" rose to completion in 1931, both testimony to modern technology and a modern spirit, and to just being up there. Scully describes Raymond Hood’s McGraw Hill building in Manhattan (1931) as "proto juke box." (50) What could be more modern than that? In Los Angeles, this boisterous modernity is even more evident than in the cities back east, in the deco architecture of the twenties and the sleek streamlined creations of thirties moderne. But perhaps the most stirring symbol of the modernist spirit was Rockefeller Center, a massive intervention in the heart of Manhattan, that, for all of its corporate monumentality, also represents a kind of faith in the city as a social entity, providing within its realm, places not only to work, but to gather, to shop, to meet, to have fun. There's an ice skating rink for God's sake! And its all made in this assertive, virile style, its high towers of heavy construction marked by streamlined ornament and decorations: paintings, frescoes, friezes, asserting a physicality, a robustness, a kind of
bravado. That is perhaps the overriding sense one has of the place, even now, as it is surrounded by towers far less brave: a sense of confidence and strength, a faith in the social construct that is the city, a faith in the people who live and work there.

The modern spirit neither stopped nor started with architecture. Industrial Design was an even more ideal expression of this new sensibility: technology, efficiency, and style. Norman Bel Geddes, Raymond Loewy, W.D. Teague designed everything from trains to spoons: bars, cars, packaging, interiors, furniture. The Bauhaus crowd started to make its way over and its influence felt. In graphic design, product design, interior design, expressions were eclectic but celebrated the form and function of things, describing simpler geometries, expressing materials and mechanics more clearly, discarding ornament in favor of "streamlining," invoking industrialism and its products, ships, cars, and the power to move. In 1938, Gropius arrived at Harvard, in 1939, Mies came to IIT. Wright's Johnson Wax building began to be built in Racine, Wisconsin in mid decade. But more importantly in the lives of most Americans, the modern spirit in design could be found in everyday objects and both prosaic and dramatic situations: gas stations, lunchrooms, hotels, factories, billboards, furniture, automobiles, post offices, dishes
HONORABLE MENTION

DESIGNING FOR SALES PROMOTION
- Maximum display and visibility
  - Exterior
  - Interior
- Increased revenue

SIDE STREET SASH
- Show window illumination

LIGHT RECESS
- Sash pocket
- Work counter
- Exterior

MAIN STREET SASH

"MODERNIZE MAIN STREET" COMPETITION: DRUG STORE 219
and in 1939, the New York World's Fair, just about everywhere.

In Swingtime we see it in the streamlined elegance of the dance studio: its doorframes simplified to crisp, clean lines, expressing rectilinearity and defining the transparent glass. Materials are reduced in a way, but not to the extent of what’s depicted in Funny Face, where all surfaces are painted over and unnaturally lit. In Swingtime, wood or wood veneer is used in doors, doorframes and as paneling on walls, accentuating the junctions of surfaces and materials as well as marking the passage through or by them. The integration of the elements in the circular dance area with natural light suggests gathering, a sense which is reinforced by the evocation of the floor in the scenes where Fred and Ginger walk up and down, up and down and Fred falls to the floor. Again the floor represents the "common language:" flat, modest and continuous, it seems to extend to us. As counterpoint, the small fence which surrounds it recalls J.B. Jackson's description of one of the characteristic signs of streamlining: "three horizontal lines, always three, which are meant to suggest speed." (52) It seems more than a suggestion when Fred and Ginger vault over the fence in a breathtaking series of lifts and swings that brings us to the edge of our seat.

The historian David Gebhard describes Hollywood's representation of architecture
of the thirties this way:

The architecture depicted in these films solidified current taste rather than leading the way. Sets were derived from the real world of Hollywood and Beverly Hills not the other way around. (53)

Swingtime was no different as Arlene Croce describes

The two big sets in the film are both nightclubs. The Silver Sandal which is seen in two different decors, was named after the Silver Slipper on West 48th Street, one of New York’s best known night clubs. Like most of the clubs, it was gone by 1932; another club of the same name was opened in the forties. The Club Raymond was a composite of Hollywood’s Clover Club, where movie people did a lot of heavy gambling, and the Rainbow Room in Rockefeller Center which opened the same year the Silver Slipper closed. (54)

If the similarities in form are not directly evident in a comparison of the Rainbow Room and Club Raymond, they are apparent in the views of the city each place offers, a vista evocative of the glittery and glamorous world these places represent. Club Raymond is a pastiche of odd effects, a kind of rococo moderne, its ornament borrowed from the past, but oversized and overblown, pure decoration but big enough to live in. It makes us think about the post modern architecture of our own time and its borrowing from the past. Perhaps this is something we need to do from time to time, to return to the past as an antidote to the present, if only for fun, as the forms in Club Raymond suggest; as much a spoof, in a
way, of current style and its dominance, as it is a return to the safe harbor of familiar forms and historical knowledge. In this sense, it always exists 'in relation to' the contemporary style, never dominant. It provides the comfort of the familiar, but in a way it mixes things up, interweaving historical forms with contemporary ones, simultaneous and immediate in juxtaposition. When such borrowings predominate, form degenerates into historicity, to be distinguished from history itself, which has in it a contemporary understanding. Fun dissolves into appropriateness or a kind of archness in the derivation. The generation of form descends into mere selection from a catalogue.

In the movies, it's all for drama and effect; it's all for fun, the overblown ornament as well as the sleek modern gestures. Club Raymond is a combination of both: giant ionic capitals and sleek, shiny elevators. It glows in the effulgence of its materials and forms. The Silver Sandal glows too, but through forms entirely modern: sleek, articulated stairs which circumscribe its dance floor, floor to ceiling mirrors which hide doors, tables wrapped in flowing plastic mylar. Its modernity finds ultimate expression in a mural on the floor in front of the bandstand: its a view of a city seen as if we were standing above it; the towers surging up at us, lit from below it recalls
the drawings of Hugh Ferriss and all the images, so popular in the thirties, of the modern city, in its eerie light.

Swingtime revels in modernity. And its significant that modernism is expressed in the dance studio and the night clubs, in social places where people gather. Of course we would expect these places to be stylish, they require it. But it is sociability they evoke not mere stylishness. This use of modernist form to express conviviality sets Swingtime apart from many of the movies which preceded it, in which modernism was used to connote evil. (It is an attitude which still persist, evident in Funny Face and in television today; quick! who lives in the modern apartment tower in the show Dynasty, the ever so good Krystle or the evil Alexis?) In Swingtime there is an ambiguity; the Silver Sandal isn't exactly Sunnybrook Farm. The nightclubs are sophisticated places with all the sensual overtones that word implies. But they are places where our heroes (whose moral virtue is also somewhat ambiguous) thrive. Gambling is perhaps only a paean to depression hopes, to living by one's wits, to luck. And if Ginger is not exactly the girl next door, one might wish she was; she's smart and brash and streetwise, but she's no harlot. (It's interesting to note that she doesn't live in a modern apartment however, that might be going too far. Instead, she shares a nice Park Avenue, beaux arts derivative place with Mabel.) They all seem comfortable in
these nightclubs; these places 'become' them, revealing the elegance and ease in their style, accommodating perhaps even inspiring them in what they do best, dance.

Swingtime is a celebration of the new. The Silver Sandal is even remodeled during the course of the film: its stairs go from black to white, its table cloths from white to black. Its delight with the new is dramatically displayed when we visit the old. Our heroes go off to the country, "to a place my family used to go before the war," Mabel tells us. (When Pop responds "Which war?" we stop for a minute, remembering the film was made in 1936 before World War II, realizing he's speaking of the first World War and the Spanish American War of 1898, in a whole different century no less!) When we arrive there, at the New Amsterdam Hotel, it's a wreck. It hasn't been lived in for years. As we follow them about the grounds, the place unfolds as a ruin; it is not to be lived in, its the locus for Mabel's memories, the locus of the past, now in shambles. And yet like a ruin it has an idyllic quality, removed from the tempo of the city, it's the place for romance. But its not to be. Like fish out of water, Fred and Ginger can't get comfortable. They bicker, they fidget, they walk around. They sing but it's
A fine romance with no kisses,
A fine romance my dear, this is.
You never give the orchids I send a glance.
No, you like cactus plants!
This is a fine romance!

When the scene changes, we are back in the city, with Pop and Mabel at the Silver Sandal. Back home.
Chapter 5: Film Form

Fred and Ginger, Mabel and Pop have gone to the country in search of the past, in the hopes of romance. But it doesn’t work; the place of memories is in ruins; there’s no romance. The country is a different place altogether for our heroes and that distinction is evident even in the way the scene is filmed.

It begins with the hotel in the foreground and a car, barely distinguishable in the background far away. It lingers there (22 seconds) panning slightly towards the approaching car, as the car becomes large in the frame. This sequence alone is odd; though the whole movie is about waiting, individual scenes seldom are. The length of this opening shot is not extraordinary; often in the film, when a new locale is introduced, the first shot or first and second shots last longer than the average (which is about 5 seconds) to help us adjust and acquaint us with the new setting.

The scene lasts 9 minutes and 43 seconds and involves 72 shots. What distinguishes it from much of the rest of the film is not the number of shots but that our point of view is rarely stable. It changes dramatically from shot to shot. Without the sense of containment which characterizes most of the other scenes (which are interiors: the dance studio, the nightclubs) the camera acts as if freed
from constraints (even though this country idyll is obviously a Hollywood stage set confection.) The camera moves all over the place, initially moving between the points of view of the actors or that of a witness standing among them, but then rising above them and falling below them. It takes wings, as it has at other times in the film, but never quite so heartily as it does out here in the country.

Of course much of this is simply to establish locale, to give us a sense of the place and to locate them in space. But it is as if they could get lost out here in the trees and the snow; because all this space is available, they require locating; we’re keeping an eye on them through any method possible. The effect is, as it was intended to be, that we are snooping on a tender moment. One might think this is why we keep our distance (or it is kept for us) and in a way it is. But its more that, if our point of view was established, our place among them known to us, we might think we belonged there.

This is an example of the ubiquity film affords us, the depiction of something, in this case a tender moment, through many points of view, juxtaposed over time. It’s a depiction organized in the service of an external idea, in this case the tension in their romance, revealed in the tension of our snooping. (If our point of view were established, if we were there so to speak, would Fred and Ginger get along better?)
We can compare this to a scene in Funny Face, their arrival in Paris, which is very different but which delivers its subject in a similar way, through montage and ubiquity.

The scene is announced when we see an airplane take off; we see the plane in the air; we even see, through the windows, our heroes looking out at Paris and we see, too, from their point of view in the air, Paris below. Our point of view is that of a brave and intelligent bird, who knows enough to get out of the way of the plane. Its perhaps only a sign of changing times that when Fred left his hometown he did so by train, hopping a freight car dressed in top hat and tails, bound for New York. In 1957, New York is no longer so enchanting, its the work place, far too well known. Instead, our heroes from Quality Magazine fly off to the mysteries and enchantments of Paris.

The charms of Paris are then revealed to us through montage, a sequence of shots intended to represent the simultaneity of each of our threesomes different experiences in the city, as well as serve to introduce this new chapter of the movie. We might remember the scene of arrival in the city in Swingtime, but remember only to acknowledge the vast differences between these scenes. In Swingtime, our point of view as a witness was pretty well grounded, established through the constancy of size of the figures as well as our position on the street with them. In Funny
Face we are all over the place, sometimes through the wonders of modern technology, the split screen, in three places at once.

The contents of the montage are the monuments of Paris, the old and solid symbols of its history, its age, its civilization. This too sets it apart from the modernist construct of New York; Paris, like the dismal little book store in Greenwich Village, is an artifact or rather a collection of artifacts. Paris is presented to us in postcard-like views of monuments, which alternate with scenes of our heroes walking in parks, on streets, on stairs. While these last shots are meant to represent the experience of the thing, they are undercut by the montage itself: their alternation with the nearly still shots of the Louvre, Montmartre, Notre Dame you name it, and the ubiquity of our viewpoint. The camera is everywhere, below them, above them, beside them, and then it rests, picture, please, on a monument. Then we move again, with Fred on the stairs, now below Fred on the stairs, now below Audrey Hepburn on a statue, now by a fountain.

Not to mention that through all of this they are singing (Bonjour Paree) (I know. I know.) which recalls the scene in the reception area of Quality Magazine and its implausibility. Here we depend upon the monuments to give plausibility to a highly implausible action. Here is the photographic appropriation of the real to which we give credence, because we
recognize what's represented before us, the monuments of Paris, or, if we do not which is likely if you've never been to Paris, we think we should recognize them. It's the language of advertising as Peter Prangnell points out:

What this suggests is that if a product isn't unique, that is one likely to be shared by many people, you have to dress it, or lend it qualities that cause particular associations, in order to distinguish it. Advertisements appeal to those distinguishing attributes we may give to ourselves in our fantasies. Advertising picks on differences and divides people - or at least reinforces existing divisions. It persuades you to identify yourself with particular situations or qualities you ache to have. Advertisements help you confirm your view of yourself. (56)

And if we think of the advertisements which bombard us everyday, we see similarities in form. This sequence in Funny Face is a true montage; we jump from one character to the next, from one point of view to another. Its a celebration of the power of film to specifically locate and describe, yet do so in sequence and thereby suggest a multiplicity of points of view. But unlike montage used by Eisenstein, for example, where the effect of the organization of sequences is to suggest a sense of mood in the experience depicted, there is no mood here because there is very little experience depicted. The city is known to us as a sequence of images, organized in a very regular fashion, rhythmically repetitive, ubiquitous but
forever removed. It is an amazing power we have, this ability to see so much so fast, and one we never know in our own experience. But it is precisely this power which throws us back into the knowledge that, like the character in the film Being There, we are only watching.

But one might say this is more honest. The illusion of Swingtime, that we are immediate witnesses to the events, is more deceptive. That may well be true. I make no moralistic judgements here. (Oh no?) But the effect of this scene in Funny Face is a kind of touring, but one of no affect. Its not the selection of particular sequences or particular points of view to project the aura of experience, or a sense or a mood. Its the representation of the city through an homogenized sequence of images of its monuments. It's like Disneyland, which Peter Prangnell describes:

It is possible to think of Disneyland in much the same way - you put your money down and your fantasies are assured. Unless something goes wrong there'll be no hardship...usually visitors get exactly what they pay for; they buy into a confirmation that life was once cleaner, safer, more adorable than it appears now. If you have never seen a real castle, the one in Disneyland may be better than nothing....Obviously if you put your money down and demand to be rewarded and serviced by a set of experiences that are not of tremendous consequence (they have been programmed for you) you will expect them to be as convincing as possible since you have paid good money for them. ...

Such construction is supported by an industry of research and referencing, and if you put money down for such associations,
they will likely dwell on the sweeter, the laundered, the more adorable aspects of a half remembered, half hand me down life. Adorable little flower carts with charming girls who are flower sellers are a memory of real flower sellers who, in real life, were just as likely to swear at you as smile. In Disneyland, the employees cannot talk back so easily. The tension of authentic situations is eliminated. (57)

Of course, Prangnell’s critique of Disneyland decries the inauthenticity of it or one’s experience in it. As he says it “cannot contribute to your growing capacity to discern the ”real thing”. For with discernment, it is possible to realize more of ordinary experience rather than less.” And of course, movies represent the ultimate in inauthentic experience, programmed for us, we are serviced by their images. Movies cannot give us the overall sense of experience, of travelling through Paris, for example, the smell in the air, the wind in our hair. Films which represent a city or an experience through a particular point of view or choice of views may project something beyond mere images; they may utilize the constructs of the medium to suggest experience, to evoke a mood, to so satisfy the senses that we think we’ve been there. In Odd Man Out, James Mason isn’t alone running through the streets of Belfast, we right there with him, because we’ve been right there with him all along. In Days of Heaven, we’re thrown into the fires of the steel mills, and the fires on the prairies. We come out of that movie, our throats dry, our energy spent. Clearly, these may be more
devious illusions than this postcard like transcription of Paris. But I would quickly add, more powerful too.

That power, so clear as we watch, is all the more evident in memory. But if we remember Funny Face, if we recall the scenes of Paris in it, we will recall the monuments, the homogenized tourist’s view. In memory our subjectivity is involved, how boring to waste it on such a banal representation of Paris. Not that you would mind you. But memory, like a bad penny has a funny way of popping up (or is it out?) unexpectedly. Here its evident that what the filmmaker chooses to show and how he chooses to show it, might have some influence, might reinforce an understanding or suggest another. Funny Face reinforces a vision of Paris as a sequence of monuments, a collection of artifacts or perhaps only images, to be apprehended for tourist value alone, not for the experience of traveling through them. We might contrast this with themovie Diva, which presents a murky and mysterious Paris, made all the more so by the strangeness of its point of view. If Funny Face is like the postcard that wishes you were here, Diva is the letter that makes you want to go there.

But, as always Funny Face goes back and forth, from the implausible to the plausible, from an evocation of our experience in the world to a denial of it, from an inclusion of us in the action.
through the mechanics of point of view to making obvious our role as spectator. And it changes at the end of the montage of Paris, when their touring done, each of our heroes recognizes that "there's something missing." (We know this because they sing it to us.) And what could it be? The Eiffel Tower, of course. The Tower first appears in a shot which begins at the ground and rises up to scan its height. It's like so many shots in television shows, like Dallas, which begin at the bottom and rise up (or vice versa) to represent the monumentality of constructions far more banal than the Eiffel Tower. When filmed from street level, the shot resembles our own view, were we to do it, standing on the street looking upwards, craning our necks to see the top. Our physical action reinforces the building's monumentality, the sheer time involved, the deliberacy of our action, the physical effort make it a dizzying icon.

Funny Face cuts to under the tower, shot from low to the ground, as the editor approaches; she leaves the frame and it cuts to the very same shot again, as Fred approaches; he leaves and without a cut Hepburn enters and follows him to the elevators. It's a minor sequence, but temporality enters in. The distinction between the editors arrival, the cut to Fred, and Hepburn's immediate presence seems odd. A sense of immediacy is evoked in two different ways. Its one
more thing that makes us stop as we watch, throwing us into disbelief.

It cuts, then, to inside the elevator where, amid the clatter and chatter of their recognition, the elevator rises. It's a wonderful scene, though they are very silly, because they are contained within the elevator that remains constant in the frame while the background changes, moving up through the tower. It lasts only 21 seconds and it could be a mask, that is, the background might be projected as the scene is filmed in a studio. But it doesn't really matter because it's one of the few times that we seemingly share space with them and where the time involved is the real time the action requires. The constraints of the elevator are such that the camera can neither move around much nor take a view far above or below them and still remain in the elevator. And that's the point. What's represented here, through this straightforward shot, is the wonderful experience of going up through the Eiffel Tower and that experience could only be shared by us if filmed straightforwardly as if it contained us. The tower itself and the experience of being in it could be represented in many ways, through many points of view, but the sense of moving through it can only be shared this way.

And so it seems set apart from much of the film, particularly from the montage which preceded it, because the movement
in it is one of experience (the elevator going up) and the presentation of it seems to include us. There are other shots which include us in the movie, but they are often still, or nearly so, or so quickly disrupted by a cut or camera move that we fly back into spectatorship. And there are other shots in which the experience depicted is one of movement, walking, dancing and the like, but either our view of it is from a strange angle or the time of it is disrupted.

This scene in Funny Face recalls many scenes in Swingtime which seem to include us. They do this in ways we have already described, by locating the camera as if it is a witness, like someone standing on the floor with Fred and Ginger. But a sense of inclusion is constructed and evident through other means in Swingtime. If we can make a catalogue (undoubtedly incomplete) of the types of shots possible in film, we can begin to see the mechanisms each movie uses, as well as the chosen constraints within which it operates. Such a catalogue could of course be infinite because the issues involved: height of the camera, angle of the camera and its distance from the subject are infinite or nearly so. Each of these elements is often related to the others, a certain distance may require a certain height, height may call for the camera to be angled up or down, the oddity of an angled shot will require a certain height. But it is not
necessary that they all be employed as David Bordwell describes:

...the Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu often positions his camera only about three feet above the ground to film characters or objects on the floor. Note that this is not a matter of camera angle for the angle is a straight-on one. (58)

In Funny Face, however, we often see shots where the camera is positioned low to the ground and angled upwards, so that the characters almost loom in the frame never threateningly however. Or its positioned slightly above head height and either shot straight on or angled down to get the action. In either case our point of view is displaced, if ever so slightly from one which makes us an immediate, feet on the ground witness, as often occurs in Swingtime.

To these, we might add two more considerations. The first is the tilted shot, the subject askew in the frame, an expressive maneuver which doesn't occur in either of these films. The other occurs often in Swingtime but predominates in Funny Face: the movement of the camera within a single shot. A shot will begin, its subject framed in medium closeup for example, filmed straightforwardly, the subject will move, the camera will move or both will move and the relationship of camera and subject changes, according to any of the parameters of distance, height or angle or in some combination of them; or it may remain the same.
### A Catalogue of Film Shots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shot Type</th>
<th>Swingtime</th>
<th>Funny Face</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme long shot, in which full figures are smaller than one half the height of the frame. Shot straight on.</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long shot, in which full figures range from more than one half the height of the frame to the limits of the frame. Shot straight on.</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Americain or American Shot ranges from full figures filling the frame to three quarter figures, cropped at the knees. Shot straight on</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium shot shows figures' from the waist up. Shot straight on</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium close up shows figures' head and upper torso. Shot straight on</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close up shows the head and shoulders. Shot straight on</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme close up</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot straight on</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angled</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If we look at this catalogue, we see that the range within which Swingtime operates is more limited than what's possible, as well as more limited than what appears in Funny Face. In the range of distance from the subject, Swingtime has few extreme long shots (none so long as those presented in Funny Face) and perhaps only two or three extreme closeups. Approximately a tenth of its 700 shots are closeups. And the majority of its long shots are most often used in the dance sequences, where our point of view is that of someone in the audience of the nightclubs. Most of the movie takes place in the range between the American shot, where the body is full in the frame but of such a size that it is close to the frames edges, through the medium shot: body from waist up, medium closeup: head and chest to the closeup: head and shoulders.

This range of shots used in Swingtime represents a realm of figuration (to use a much abused word,) that is to say the figures possess the frame. In this range, the figures on the screen are compelling; they are of such a size that they fill a significant portion of the frame and represent a visual and consequently narrative, focus; we recognize gestures and expressions. The organization of the theater, particularly in the thirties, is such that for most moviegoers sitting in or near the middle of the theater (ignoring the wonders of the 70mm screen,) the actor's presence is of a scale we understand:
Presented on this and the following pages are examples of shots from Swingtime and Funny Face, from the extreme long shot, through the extreme close up.
though its big up there on the screen, we interpret it as our own scale, seeing them as we might see people in our encounters in daily life, from a three quarter view, or the waste up, even in close up. Perhaps this is best illustrated in recollections of scenes which include an extreme closeup, which I would describe as out of this realm of figuration. The extreme closeup is shot from a position of intimacy; its clearly an invasion of the personal space of another. It produces in us a discomfort, so close are we to the action written so large on the subjects face. In Swingtime, we neither invade nor stand off, but are brought into a realm of conviviality.

Shots from above head height or below the waist do not occur often in Swingtime, either filmed straight on or at an angle. When they occur they signal a change in perspective, an alteration of our relationship to the action as occurs in the scene at the New Amsterdam Hotel, or they represent a dramatic gesture, as in the opening scene in the city. Most of the shots in Swingtime are shot from what we can call eye level, from that locale above the waist to the head. And most often they are shot straightforwardly, so that the figures are represented directly before us in the picture plane. As the action requires the angle of our viewing can change, as it does in the scene in the dance studio where we see them straight on, full in the frame and then from an angle, in order to see Fred on the floor. We've seen these
shots often used when we are the witness to events, as in the dance studio, but the same mechanics are used to represent the point of view of one of the actors. In this we become involved in the action not as witness but as participant. This represents one of the artifices of film in general, and of this film in particular, and as such, throws us into implausibility. But of course, its used to engage us and visually exists within this figurative realm, in distance similar to our encounters with people, in height, similar to our presence among them.

The organization of such shots, the editing, also comes into play. As we saw in Funny Face, evocations of experience can be distorted not only by camera angle, height or distance from the subject, but by their juxtaposition with other shots. In Swingtime, there are nearly 300 more shots than in Funny Face, though the films run the same length of time. In this very fact we might consider the power of editing in the possibilities that it will destroy this sense of witnessing or participating in the action. But it is rarely the case in Swingtime. Given the following types of shots which recur in the film:

The witness pans: the camera is stationary but follows the action
The witness tracks: the camera moves with the action
The witness blinks: the view changes, from a medium shot to closeup or from one character to another, height and angle remain the same only distance changes. Or
the view changes, from one character to another, for example. The participant does all of the above. The view from above or below, neither witness nor participant, does all of the above.

We can see that possibilities of their combination are numerous. Yet they all exist in the realms already discussed of distance and height and angle. Rarely in Swingtime do we find a juxtaposition of shots so different that we are startled. If we do, it usually signals the start of a new scene. Instead, even when it jumps from witness to participant, from participant to participant or to that of the view above, there are sufficient signals, both visual and narrative (the dialogue) that transition is easy. The action remains continuous. Appropriately enough, this is known as continuity editing and its presence in the visuals and the dialogue is the mechanism chosen by Stevens with which to construct his narrative. It enhances our sense of inclusion perhaps only because of the seduction of the narrative, a story with a plot and action and possibly a moral.

It's evident in many of the scenes described previously, in the dance studio where the point of view changes or in the scene in the city where the camera rises up above the street. It's evident too, in one of the movies last scenes, the near tragic number called "Never Gonna Dance." In this scene,
(1) Fred enters mysteriously, through mirrored doors which show us Ginger and the bandleader in embrace. Our view of him could be theirs, but they are otherwise occupied. It's between a medium shot and an American shot. 18 seconds.

(2) We see them more closely, his point of view. An American. 2.5 seconds.

(3) He walks toward them, their point of view. A repeat of 1. 2 seconds.

(4) We see the whole room and Fred entering the frame from the left. Our view of it resembles that of a witness standing on the floor. 3 seconds.
(5) is a repeat of 2, as Fred gets closer. 17 seconds

(6) is a repeat of 4, as the bandleader leaves. 5 seconds

(7) is a similar angle and height as 5, but closer, a medium shot rather than an American shot, of the two of them. 7 seconds

(8) is Ginger's point of view of Fred in medium closeup. 2.5 seconds
(9) is a repeat of 7, we are witnesses. 24 seconds

(10) is a repeat of 8. 2.5 seconds

(11) is shot from the dance floor straight on, they are full bodies in the frame, something between a long shot and the American shot, as they stand surrounded by the sweeping stairs. 14 seconds.

(12) is a medium shot, similar to 11, just closer. 35 seconds.
(13) is a repeat of 11. (4 seconds)

(14) is an entirely new shot, the camera is located at the top of the stairs, looking down at Fred as he sings from the bottom of the stairs. 13 seconds.

(15) from the top of the stairs but resembling her point of view. 38 seconds.

(16) Fred's point of view of Ginger on the stairs. 4 seconds.
(17) same as 15. 32 seconds.

(18) same as 16. 1.5 seconds.

(19) same as 14, looking down at Fred. 9.5 seconds

(20) Fred from the top of the stairs, resembling Gingers point of view. 21 seconds.
(21) Ginger from Fred’s point of view. 4.5 seconds.

(22) same as 17, but as Fred ascends the stairs, Ginger descends and enters the frame. Our point of view is that of one firmly planted at the top of the stairs. 47 seconds.

(23) A long shot; similar to 12, its further away to capture them as they dance. It begins from a view as witness standing on the dance floor then rises up to catch them as they ascend the stairs, lingering then as a witness at the top of the stairs for the completion of the dance. 2 minutes and 31 seconds.
The scene actually has one more shot, a bit closer of them dancing, which lasts for another 27 seconds, until Ginger drifts out the door. But it was not a planned cut, (rarely are the Astaire–Rogers' dances cut;) this one was inadvertent: Ginger's feet began to bleed during this last take, after some two hundred rehearsals of this one scene.

What's evident, even in this scene which is somewhat atypical, is the realm of figuration in the range of shots used. The long shots are used to locate the actors in place, but most of the action occurs within the range of American shot to closeup. Evident too, is the continuity in editing; narrative connections are made by a repetition of shots, as well as by the implications of dialogue. The dramatic crane shot at the end, which rises from the position of witness to high above the floor to witness again, at the top of the stairs, is itself an illustration of continuity; it's used, instead of several shots, so as to keep them in our realm. Its dramatic in that, once again, we take flight from our landedness. But it also impressively illustrates the space or volume in which they exist. Its a volume constructed for them to dance in and suggests one last element which contributes to the sense of inclusion: its constructed to contain the action, but in its volume and material forms: the circular stair, the circular walls,
the floor, all filmed straightforwardly, it extends out to us, to the theater in which we reside.

It's a Hollywood confection, suggesting the wonderful possibilities in that dream factory to create worlds unto themselves. They are fantasy worlds but based on certain inspirations, as Croce described, and not limited by the structural requisites of architecture. They don't have to keep the rain out. But the wonderful thing about Swingtime is the sense of habitation within it, both the actors' and our own. Represented through the mechanisms which bring the action close to us and which establish our point of view, the film seems to envelope us in its constructed world, safe in the knowledge that somehow the rain is being kept out.

If Swingtime seems a world constructed to include us, Funny Face seems an example of what Szarkowski said of the photograph: it's taken not made. Its ultimate expression of this is the montage of Paris, a world represented by iconic images. The act of selection is apparent in both the choice of shots and the organization of the frame, the point of view represented within them. Its evident, too, in their juxtaposition over time, expressing ubiquity, distorting time and representing that essential characteristic of the photograph: that it depicts a reality to which we are not present.

Not only does the movie represent this
visually, its the subject of its story: the workings of a fashion magazine. The movies most charming scene describes this very act of taking pictures, as Fred photographs Hepburn on location throughout Paris. Once again, the monuments and scenographic representations of Paris are invoked: the Champs Elysees, a flower market, the railroad station, the opera, the Louvre. Invoked too, as Fred coaxes an attitude from Hepburn appropriate for each locale are a variety of literary influences: Anna Karenina, fairy tales, Tristan and Isolde.

Like the passage up the Eiffel Tower, these scenes are photographed straightforwardly, once again, because the action represented demands it. To capture the act of photographing here requires that we be located in the same realm and on the same plane as Fred and his camera. Yet any sense we have of being witness to the action is denied when the photograph is taken, stilled and shown in various transformations (in negative, selectively colored) and finally cropped, ready for the magazine.

This scene seems to epitomize the movie, its subject, its consequent self reflexivity, taking photographs of taking photographs, and its distancing of us from the action depicted. That we are spectators is evident throughout the film. Human movement, through buildings, streets, cities, is presented artfully from angles above and
below as well as straight on. This happens in many movies, one might even say most, in which devices are used as a form of expression, to evoke a mood or sensibility that more straightforward representation cannot convey. *Funny Face* does this also, in selected scenes such as in that dismal bookstore in Greenwich Village or in the streets and cafes of Paris. In these scenes, it utilizes movement and various points of view to evoke the sense of the place. The volume of the bookstore as well as the character of its forms, the sheer number of books, the shelves, the dust are made evident through means we could never share in experience. The camera never rests as it moves up and down and all around, even going behind the bookshelves, behind the wall to show Hepburn and Astaire putting books away. In the streets of Paris, the camera is positioned low to the ground, capturing the wet streets, the buildings, Fred and Hepburn amid the mist. It moves as they do, the camera seeming even lower as they get larger in the frame. As they pass buildings, the shot changes, reverting to a long shot again, but again becoming a medium shot in the course of their travel. The shot changes again as they enter the courtyard, now the camera is located high above them and slowly drops down; it zooms in on them. It changes again, the camera pulled back further, to catch Fred as he walks around, it moves in closer and changes once more, to a completely
different view of her window, signalling as she opens it, the beginning of the number. These sequences are long: these five shots take a total of 3 minutes 15 seconds, but the camera seemingly never stops moving; the possibilities exhausted in one shot, it regroups and makes another. The result is a kind of omnipresence, the expression of our ability to be everywhere. And yet, we are always aware as we float around or jump from one place to another, that we are not in control. Figures are large and then quite small, seen from above, below or straight on. Our point of view is never established as thoroughly as it is in Swingtime. Funny Face is not so much a movie about Fred dancing as it is about the camera moving, dancing in its own way.

But Funny Face, so concerned about the artfulness of these arrangements, its filmic quality, does not use them for greater effect. Artfulness not art is its intention. There is an unwillingness to go all the way in its use of these expressive devices; it reverts too quickly to the conventions of the musical, to the dances and songs, themselves stagy and artificial, and to representations of form and character through type. It never seemingly takes a stand, or rather does indeed take a stand, but a commercial one, reflective of the magazine its depicting. It resorts to quick appropriations of current understandings, a rendering of the world that reminds us of advertising.
We might bemoan Funny Face's ultimate banality, but perhaps it is because of the silliness of its content that we see its artifice so well. We might not think of Swingtime as art, but its use of filmic constructs projects an idea beyond itself, the idea of inclusivity and containment, which suggest both the tenets of modernism and the New Deal optimism of its director. Funny Face never gets beyond artifice, beyond entertainment. We are always spectators. In one locale so obviously constructed for the movie, the offices of Quality Magazine, our connection to the action is disrupted by the implausibility of what goes on in it, its artifice and distortion of time. In other scenes it is the movement of the camera or the juxtaposition of sequences that pushes us away. Funny Face to use Cavell's term, not only depicts "a reality to which we are not present" but makes little attempt to include us or suggest our presence. We are forever spectators and the film "a moving image of skepticism."
Conclusion

Perhaps nothing is more apparent in this discussion than the differences between these two "gullible" movies, Swingtime and Funny Face, made twenty years apart. They offer remarkably divergent renderings of the built world. The city, in each case New York, is represented quite differently. In Swingtime, it's a kind of communal construct of streets and people and buildings; in Funny Face it's the locus of high rise towers and work, with odd bits of history thrown in. Modern architecture appears in Swingtime in its early stages, eclectic, vital and optimistic. It is satirized in Funny Face, depicted in its late forms as minimal and reduced. In each movie, the modern is contrasted with historical forms. But the old hotel in the country in Swingtime is a ruin, while the monuments and history of Paris are nearly sanctified in Funny Face.

We might describe all of this as the architectural content of these movies. Yet it's evident that the content cannot be severed from the form through which it is presented. And evident in the totality of form and content is the attitude, expression, sensibility of the filmmaker. We could simply describe these films as the personal, artistic expressions of their respective directors and leave them to stand on their own. George Steven's optimistic faith in America is as evident in Swingtime as it is in any of his films; Stanley Donen's concerns for movement and style are obviously displayed in Funny Face.

But such a statement would deny some essential truths about the movies, in particular, about Hollywood movies. Movies are the results of an immense collaborative effort, led by the director, but including the writer, cameraman, the editor, the best boy, the electricians, and on down the line. The production schedule, from idea to finished product, resembles that of a building, taking years from beginning to end.

But more importantly, movies are a communicative medium. They are intended for an audience. And Hollywood movies, whether made in 1936, 1957 or 1985, are money making propositions and seek a mass audience. In striving for popular appeal, they utilize and reflect the shared understandings of popular sensibility. They are cultural expressions filtered through the eyes of the filmmakers.

Both Swingtime and Funny Face reveal the popular sensibility of their times and, taken together, reveal the changes wrought over the twenty years between 1936 and
1957. Those twenty years were remarkable ones in America: the Depression, World War II and the dropping of the atom bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the return of soldiers home, urban renewal, suburban migration, the Cold War. The period included not only profound events that changed the world forever, but also the effects of such events, or to use a horribly appropriate word, the fallout.

The differences in the two movies and the sensibilities they reflect are perhaps most clearly seen in their depictions of the city. In Swingtime, New York is presented through the point of view of a traveler within it, feet on the ground, walking around as one among many in this communal construct. We are a part of it. This depiction of the city reflects the utopian instincts of early Modernism and the New Deal, as well as George Stevens’ own faith in egalitarian democracy. And it mirrors the architectural sensibility, evident in constructions like Rockefeller Center, which gave form to such instincts.

New York in Funny Face is quite different. The city is a massive construct with which we are already familiar, or thought to be so. Funny Face describes the city in terms of the working world of midtown, which are represented by the activity inside the offices of Quality Magazine and the view of the city from the office windows. The architectural form in the office is minimalist and reduced, prescribed by the tenets of the International Style; life within it is proscribed by conformity. This working world is posed in sharp contrast first with that dismal little bookstore in Greenwich Village and then with Paris, city of monuments and icons. But we come to this historical city like our heroes do, as tourists not travellers, voyeurs in a way, fleeing the drudgery of the working world to appropriate history, not through any suggestion of experience but through images. The city is made evident by its monuments and types, but it is "a reality to which we are not present." Our job is to watch. No effort is made to include us.

In contrast, although Swingtime operates within a much more constrained palette of film’s constructs, it uses them in service of a larger idea, projecting a sense of inclusion and containment for its characters and for us, as we watch. Stevens limits the distance of his camera from the subject, as well as its height and the use of angled views. The result is a relative constancy in the size of the figures in the frame and a consistency of point of view. He organizes the sequences through the mechanism of continuity editing, enticing us through visual continuity, into the confection that is this "perfectly swell romance."
This sense of inclusion is not only the result of the mechanics of filming but of the sets themselves, constructed of materials and forms that assert a figural three dimensionality, yet contain the action and reach out to us. A sense of volume is projected, recalling an essential tenet of the International Style, "a new conception of architecture as volume rather than mass," as defined by Hitchcock and Johnson. Yet we know Hitchcock and Johnson would have been hard pressed to include these constructions in any description of that Style. The forms within them are too spirited perhaps, too eclectic, too figural themselves to satisfy the Style's other prescriptives.

But what is suggested both in Swingtime's sets and in some of the examples of the International Style used by Hitchcock and Johnson, is a realm of habitation within the volume. In Swingtime, it is a realm that holds the actors, the action and us. Swingtime offers a wonderful description of the possibility of form not only to contain us, but to facilitate movement and to accommodate gathering. Swingtime's sets work not only with volume but with the horizontal plane, the floor and its intermediaries: stairs, mezzanines and platforms, recalling the ideas expressed in Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye or Villa Garches. Yet the material forms of the sets are more akin to the McGraw Hill building, also cited by Hitchcock and Johnson and described by Vincent Scully as "proto juke-box." The figural quality of Swingtime's sets, from the lamps on the tables to the sweeping stairs in the Silver Sandal, all project a modernity, a newness that is almost startling.

In its propagation of this attitude, we might think of Swingtime as simultaneously reflecting and, as David Gebhard stated, "solidifying current taste." What's obvious is that the spirit of modernity was in the air, in movies like Swingtime, in buildings like Rockefeller Center or in Hitchcock and Johnson's examples of the International Style. Yet, as the forms of Late Modernism, so minimal and reduced, attest, the boisterous eclecticism of this era gave way to a dominant, prescriptive style. Swingtime might seem to suggest a similar total prescription, so dominant its moral vision. We can imagine the constructs of point of view, constancy of size and constructed volume could be used to suggest a totality far less tolerant than that expressed in Swingtime.

But the tolerance of Swingtime's utopian vision is the movie's strength. Swingtime is a romance amid "top hats and empty pockets." It is a world constructed for sociability, as we can imagine some buildings to be. Le Corbusier's Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts at Harvard, for example, is also all about gathering in its circular forms, all about being one among many amid the columns that stand on the open planes of its
floors, and all about movement in its stairwells, around its columns, up and down its ramp. (61) We can imagine Fred and Ginger dancing in it, through it, around it. The two, movie and building, can be equated for their creation of the realm of figure, a realm that is inclusive and inhabitable or so it seems.

Funny Face, made twenty years after Swingtime, is so remarkably different in intent, and in its reflection of the world, that it seems to negate Swingtime's influence upon movies, not to mention architectural sensibility. T.S. Eliot's admonition that the new restructures and consequently influences the past as much as the past influences the new would seem to apply here. (62) Funny Face seems to make Swingtime a relic, discarded in the march of progress that was Modernism in its later stages. Funny Face seems included in that march as an expression of film for film's sake, a credo that resembles the 'art for art's sake' dictum of the 1950's and 1960's. And yet, it also satirizes Modernism; it seems to prefigure our own sensibility, which in 1985, might describe that march of so-called progress more like Sherman's march to the sea. Modern architecture is depicted pessimistically in Funny Face as the depleted and austere workplace in midtown. In a different form and in a different place, it is also the home of the offbeat and the faddish. The movie also satirizes functionalism — when the reception area becomes a stage set, secretaries become chorus girls — let's go find Mickey Rooney, let's put on a show.

But Funny Face is also a movie about a magazine and it adopts the conventions and forms of mass media in constructing its narrative. It uses iconic images of the visual world to dress up its story. The movie is ultimately only concerned with its own properties, with image and movement and the artfulness of both, rather than with a larger idea. If Swingtime can be said to have a moral of inclusivity, which has worrisome implications, Funny Face is scary for the absence of a moral. Like the magazine it describes, it is all about fashion and the appearance of things. It is all about images.

Funny Face seems to epitomize contemporary movies, and the media in general, giving evidence of the presence and power of mechanically reproduced images in our culture. We see these essentially photographic images all around us in newspapers, magazines, movies, television, representing to us worlds known and unknown. So prevalent are these images in our experience that they have become a kind of shorthand of cultural expression, meaningful descriptions of individual and shared interests and concerns.
It is not surprising, then, to see images used in architecture. And yet, architects have always used images, often as initial inspirations, as a means of visualizing what they hope the form to be. The image represents qualities about the building or space much like images can be used in movies to convey a mood, to create a larger effect, to express a larger idea. In architecture, this initial image is a reference that is transformed to meet the requirements of site, program, material, cost and other criteria established by both architect and client.

But we also see images used much more directly in architecture. We see references, often to historical forms, applied directly to the facades and structures of buildings. Philip Johnson's ATT building with its Chippendale top is perhaps the most obvious example, but such references exist all around us: the gable roof atop the high rise hotel, the local A&P dressed up in colonial garb to house the frozen foods, Robert Stern's appropriation of the Shingle Style, Michael Graves' pastiche of classical references, even the typical tract house, be it a "Cape Cod," a "ranch," a "colonial," what have you. Often, the historical form exists in an uneasy juxtaposition with elements of contemporary life: the modern technology and spatial organization of the tower or the A&P or the technological wonder that is the modern kitchen.

The prevalence of these representations of historic forms is an index of the importance of tradition to us. It is also a reaction, among contemporary architects and some home owners alike, to Modernism's denial of tradition. Yet there is something odd about these representations. The source of their strangeness lies in their reference to something other than the reality of the building itself. It lies in the dominance of these imagistic forms as signs, conveyors of meaning, representations of something "other" than our experience within them.

In this, I am reminded of Stanley Cavell's statement about photography.

The reality in a photograph is present to me while I am not present to it; and a world I know and see, but to which I am nevertheless not present (through no fault of my subjectivity,) is a world past. (63)

These iconographic forms are like the images in a film, recognizable appropriations of what is known and familiar. And yet they are "past" not only in the sense of being historical, but in being so referential to an "other" reality that they are removed from the temporal and spatial reality that is the building and our use of it. They resist our appropriation of them as elements of here/now.
Walter Benjamin provides a wonderful description of the act of appropriation of architectural form:

Buildings are appropriated in a two-fold manner: by use and by perception – or rather by touch and sight. Such appropriation cannot be understood in terms of the attentive concentration of a tourist before a famous building....Tactile appropriation is accomplished not so much by attention as by habit. As regards architecture, habit determines to a large extent even optical reception. The latter, too, occurs much less through rapt attention than by noticing the object in incidental fashion....For the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation.(64)

Imagistic forms, in which the references dominate visually, invite the tourist's view. One reason for this is the presence of such references in the vertical plane, the wall, the facade, reminiscent of the picture plane. As Michael Graves describes:

The wall contributes primarily to the character of a room because of its figurative possibilities.... While we see and understand the wall in a face to face manner, we stand perpendicular to the plan....The plan however, because it is seen perspectivally, is less capable of expressing character and more involved with our spatial understanding of the room.(65)

And yet, when so visually or referentially dominant, these expressions of "character" interrupt our spatial understanding of the room. We stand before them, if only for a second, attempting to decipher their references. The reality of the building is dressed up in forms that give it meaning beyond itself, much like the story of Funny Face was dressed up in its association with the monuments and glamour of Paris.

Yet, rather than bemoan the presence of images and such direct references in the palette of architects, we might better consider what to do with them. We might learn to transform them into the terms of architecture so that they work not only optically but through tactile appropriation, through habit. To do so requires the translation of two dimensional, iconic signs into three dimensional and spatial forms. To do so requires the integration of the vertical plane that Graves stresses and the horizontal plane that accommodates our use and spatial understanding of the building. In this integration, we might then create the realm of habit or habitation in which the figural, even imagistic, qualities of the form exist but do not dominate our own use, and in which reference coexists with presence.
This integration is an assertion of the real, tactile, immediate constructs of architectural form. The simultaneity of present and past recalls T.S.Eliot's definition of the historical sense:

a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and temporal together... (which) makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity. (66)

We can begin to see this integration of image and form, vertical and horizontal, past and present in the work of Robert Venturi, who quotes Eliot in his book "Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture." Venturi certainly uses iconographic forms and images in his work, yet he does so with a rich understanding of the terms of architecture, the spatial and formal requisites that accommodate our use of buildings. Even when most obvious, Venturi's references nonetheless allow and suggest more than a mere optical reading. Images often occur as vignettes, to accomplish a special task, to convey meaning themselves as signs; they also occur as architecture, in relation to other elements of the building.

And Venturi takes his references from wide variety of sources, from history as well as the cultural apparati of the present day, from Vitruvius and Las Vegas. In his work we can see an iconography that recalls Funny Face, but also an expression of the realm of habitation that reminds us of Swingtime. We see the possibility that images can be transformed and that architecture might constitute something that can be both "taken" and "made."
The horse was crazy, but, still he was able to worry about what he had done.

from Winter's Tale by Mark Helprin

A last word:

If we see evidence of the power of images in the work of contemporary architects such as Robert Venturi, we might want to speculate about some of the other constructs of movies: sequence, point of view, time. I've no doubt that modern technology, having brought us the camera, will bring us even more amazing wonders. God knows, soon we will probably be able to be in two places at once (and not just on the phone) or see several points of view simultaneously (and not be diagnosed schizophrenic). Is this the so called "post-modern condition?" Maybe. But right now it's a bit beyond me.
Notes


9 Ibid, p.3.


11 Truffaut, *op cit.*, p.32.

12 Hitchcock as quoted by Truffaut, *op cit.*, pp. 42 - 43.

13 Ibid., p.32.


15 Ibid., p.18.


18 Cavell, "What Photography Calls Thinking" *op cit.*, p.4.

19 David Hockney as quoted by Lawrence Wechsler in "True to Life" in *Cameraworks David Hockney*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1984, p.39.


23 Ibid., p.2.


28 Henry Russell Hitchcock in " The International Style Twenty Years After," Appendix to *The International Style*, op cit., p.239.


30 Arthur Drexler. " Notes to the Centennial exhibition of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe" op cit.

31 Hitchcock and Johnson, *op cit.*, p.87.

32 Drexler, " Notes..." op cit.


41 Ibid., p. 101.


43 Ibid., p.72.


45 Croce, *op cit.*, p. 102.

46 Story attributed to Le Corbusier, told in "A Theory of Urban Form," Seminar at Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, John Whiteman, Professor, Spring, 1985.

47 From my notes of lectures by Peter Prangnell on "Architectural Form," at M.I.T., Fall, 1983.


49 Hitchcock and Johnson, *The International Style*, *op cit.*, pp. 113, 156, 158, 193.


51 Ibid., p. 176.


54 Croce, *op cit.*, p. 112.

55 From "A Fine Romance," in the film Swingtime, music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Dorothy Fields.


57 Ibid., pp. 21-22.

58 Bordwell and Thompson, *op cit.*, p. 117.

59 Reference was made to Bordwell and Thompson's *Film Art*, *op cit.*, in constructing this catalogue.


61 Peter Prangnell, in private conversation during a tour of the Carpenter Center.


64 Benjamin, op cit., p.240.


66 T.S. Eliot, op cit., p.4.

Photo Credits

The photographs of Swingtime and Funny Face were taken off the video screen by the author. (Tri X film at 1/15 sec. while the movie runs.)

All other photographs not cited here were taken by the author.

From Hitchcock and Johnson, The International Style, the photos on pp. 27,28 and 66.

From Hubert and Shapiro, William Lescaze the photos of the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society on p.65.

From the pamphlet accompanying a guided tour of Rockefeller Center, 1939, the photo on the left of p.67, on the top of p.72 and on p.73.

From Vincent Scully's. American Architecture and Urbanism, the photo on the bottom right of p. 67.

From Architectural Record, October 1935, "Modernize Main Street Competition," the drawings on pp. 69 and 70.

The photo of the Pan Pacific Auditorium in Los Angeles on p.66 was taken and given to me by Karen Swett. The postcard of Disneyland on p.85 was sent to Karen by her mother. My thanks to both of them.

Photographs of architecture taken by the author which are not identified in the text are as follows:


p. 31 Lever House in New York by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.


p. 60 top Lever House, below it a photo of the model of Philip Johnson's glass house which is in the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

p. 61 bottom: the hallway is in the Seagram's building.

p. 62 The Seagrams building.

p. 67 Rockefeller Center.
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_________________________, "Modernize Main Street' Competition," in Architectural Record, New York, October, 1935.

Arnheim, Rudolf, Film as Art, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1957.


