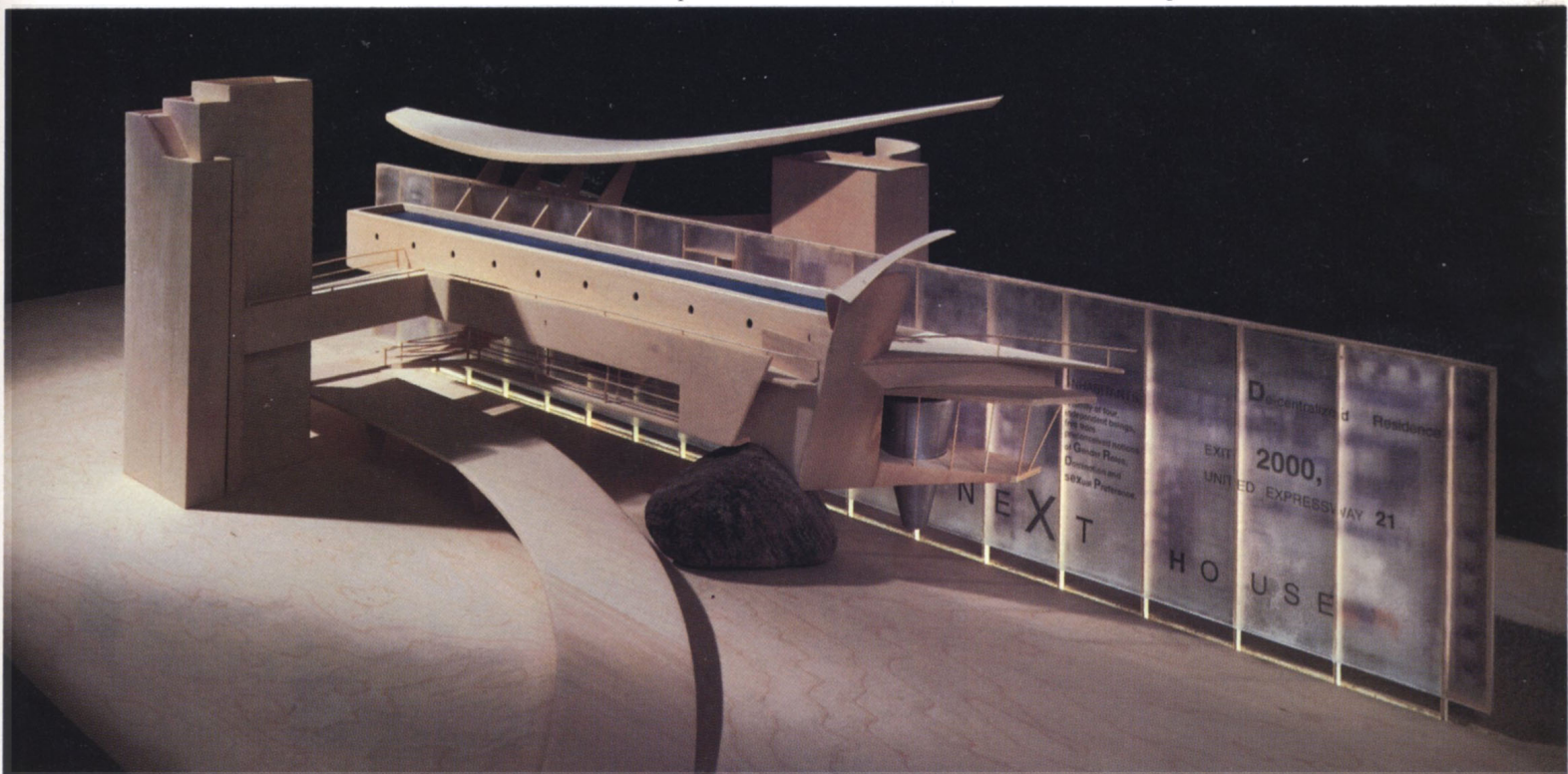


MOORE/KENNON: Model of competition winner.



MOORE/KENNON: Spirits of Mies and Le Corbusier evoked.



HARIRI & HARIRI: Scheme for new millennium house challenges gender roles. Interiors plug into digital information wall, which takes the place of central living room.

Cincinnati Exhibit of Dream Houses

Radical questions about the form of the house helped inaugurate 20th century architecture: Le Corbusier's "machine for living," Adolf Loos's *Raumplan*, and Frank Lloyd Wright's "broken box." For a new exhibition titled "The Architect's Dream: Houses for the Next Millennium," which opened November 19 and runs until January 23, The Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) in Cincinnati commissioned 16 architects to take up this question once again by designing the house of their dreams on the site of their dreams. Guest curator Daniel Friedman, assistant professor of architecture at the University of Cincinnati, invited participants to reconsider the house in response to our increasingly complex domestic experience. The program

encouraged speculation on the changing constitution of marriage, family, place, and community according to five themes: body, health, and hygiene; new technology; public and private spaces; production and consumption; work and leisure life.

The new exhibition displays projects by New York architects Karen Bausman and Leslie Gill of Bausman-Gill Associates; and Gisue Hariri and Mojgan Hariri of Hariri & Hariri; California architects Pam Kinzie of Kinzie & Associates Architects and Les Taylor; Hank Koning and Julie Eizenberg of Koning Eizenberg Architecture; Eric Owen Moss of Eric Owen Moss Architects; Atlanta architects Merrill Elam of Scogin Elam Bray Architects; and Frederick Pearsall and Stuart Romm of Romm + Pearsall Architects; Philadelphia architects Marco Frascari and Claudio Sgarbi; Cincinnati-

based John C. Senhauser; and Chicago architect Joseph M. Valerio of Valerio-Associates.

The curators originally invited 30 architects. They chose them to represent a range of established practitioners and emerging designers, educators, and specialists in innovative affordable housing. Friedman and former CAC chief curator Cynthia Goodman selected the final 12 schemes based on the portfolios submitted by all the participants.

The winner of a national design competition cosponsored by AIA Cincinnati joined the selected schemes developed by the invited exhibitors. Jurors Deborah K. Dietsch, Michael Rotondi, and Charles Gwathmey selected a design by Peter Moore and Kevin Kennon of New York-based Moore/Kennon from among 65 schemes.

The exhibition's 13 projects in-

JOSEPH W. MOLITOR

clude aerodynamic forms and poetic constructions that examine the ethereal properties of shelter and time. Some of the schemes prophesize an ecologically sound technology, while others renounce the centrality of the house and the sanctity of the ground. Most of the schemes, however, explore a dream's abstract and hallucinatory qualities, not the commercial dream of suburbia.

According to the exhibition's organizers, most competition entries did not seem to question the changing constitution of the family, but several winners did. Hariri & Hariri's house, for example, is occupied by a family of "four independent beings free from preconceived notions of gender roles, domination, and sexual orientation." The architects propose three interior "habitats" that can be plugged into a huge digital information wall, which obviates the centralized living room. Joseph Valerio's scheme translates the numbing repetitiveness of the suburbs into a "city without community," creating austere rooms arranged in an endless, nonhierarchical grid.

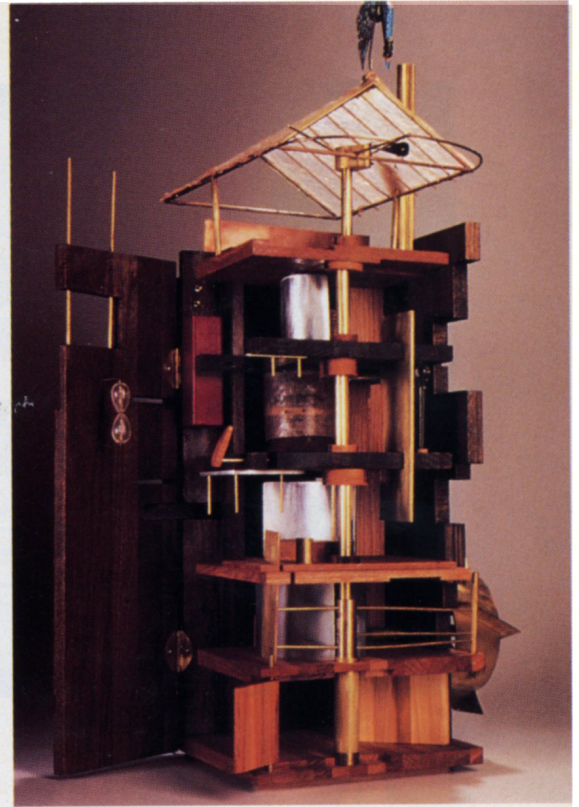
But such references to the loss of community and the implications of the collective house are, for the most part, embodied in individual, abstract projects that only point to social context indirectly.

Save the hauntingly apocalyptic vision of Leslie Gill and Adi Shamir Zion, who embedded their house in the contaminated earth of Chernobyl, the exhibition is silent on complex problems related to basic human needs, economic disenfranchisement, and urban decay.

Accompanying the exhibition is a chronology of houses designed by architects—from Hadrian to Malcolm Holzman—for themselves and their families. Researched and compiled by assistant guest curator Merrie Stillpass, the house design timeline underscores the premise that architects often use their own houses as laboratories for generating and testing key ideas later applied to larger scale public works.



MERRILL ELAM: Aerial house proposed for posttechnology age.



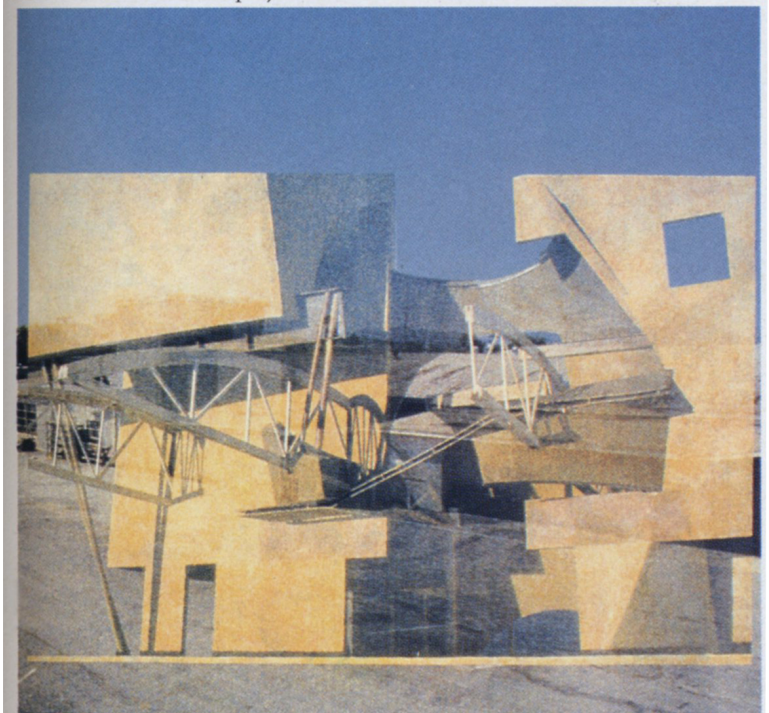
FRASCARI AND SGARBI: Tower house recalls Scarpa project.

To know something of the next house is to know something of the next city. The Cincinnati show avoids both a Jules Verne-style evocation of the future and the thornier problem of the architect's responsibilities in a society unable to ensure its citizens safe, affordable housing. It concentrates instead on the personal dreams and the theoretical excavations of a strikingly diverse gathering of practitioners. In their varying contemplations, these architects offer rich, ironic, and disturbing images of the antemillennial house, notable not only for what they proclaim as for what they leave to doubt.—*Ann Marie Borys*

Ann Marie Borys is a Cincinnati-based architect and educator.



ERIC OWEN MOSS: Rhino 2 project excavates Southern California location.



ERIC OWEN MOSS: Bowstring trusses recall industrial history of building site.