back in Chicago for a year before designing a house in 1935 for Harriet Higgison in Wood Dale, Illinois. It showed the influence of Mies van der Rohe, apparently still the master Goldberg remembered from his Bauhaus days, brightly enough that in 1937 he designed a house in Glencoe, Illinois, for Lewis Abrahms that repeats the rhythms of Mies's famed 1930 Tugendhat House in the Czech Republic. With the passage of time Goldberg became his own man. In 1937, in the Chicago suburb of Melrose Park, he and fellow architect Gilmor Black saw to the completion of five houses based on an earlier Goldberg project. The five became known as the "Standard Houses Corporation answer to the lowest cost housing problem" (66).

Goldberg’s interest in the design of communities lay behind his first project built with a developer—the 1954-55 Drexel Town and Garden Houses, made in partnership with Arthur Rubloff, president of a noteworthy Chicago real estate firm. Goldberg now assumed a direction he would follow for the rest of his career: projects based on their relationship with nearby urban areas. Drexel was built in a neglected neighborhood on Chicago’s South Side, close to cultural and educational institutions, including the University of Chicago. From the remains of a once splendid mansion Goldberg created an urban landscape of sixty-four townhouses, a common playground, and a pavilion for community activities. Drexel also enabled lower- and middle-income families to gain homeownership.

During the 1950s Goldberg added multifamily urban constructions to single-family residences. Given the personal connections cited earlier in this review, it was now only a short step to Marina City. During the 1950s Goldberg added multifamily urban constructions to single-family residences. Given the personal connections cited earlier in this review, it was now only a short step to Marina City.

There are some minor errors in the text. In their first chapter, “Before Marina City,” Marjanović and Rüedi Ray identify an architect working for Mies and his colleague Lilly Reich as Bruno Walter (24). In fact, one Ernst Walther was Mies's assistant in those Bauhaus years, as Smith notes, correctly, in her essay (Ryan 21). Zoé Ryan, in “Shifting Scales: Bertrand Goldberg’s Furniture Designs,” also names Bruno Walter as Mies’s assistant, but she commits other mistakes as well. She identifies Holabird and Root as the designers of the Travel and Transport Building of the Century of Progress Exposition. The actual designers were Edward H. Bennett, John Holabird, and Hubert Burnham. Ryan also writes about a plywood chair (1939) and bench. The chair is illustrated in a two-page spread; the bench is not shown. Ryan continues: “Goldberg’s plywood chair and bench have finike braces providing additional support …” Nothing like that appears in the illustration. These errors detract from the otherwise thorough and accurate commentary on Goldberg’s furniture design.

With “Humanist Structures: Bertrand Goldberg Builds for Health Care,” Alison Fisher contributes a second essay covering a portion of Goldberg’s output that could be a corpus unto itself. Her title recalls Goldberg’s belief that architecture as an activity should be inseparable from social considerations. To that end the hospital seemed an ideal institution. Goldberg visited a demonstration hospital at the Century of Progress International Exposition in 1933, an occasion that would lead to his active involvement in hospital design in the 1960s. That connection demonstrated something about Goldberg’s creative approach. Many architects did not seek hospital commissions; the technical and programmatic requirements were burdensome and did not encourage creativity. Goldberg, however, took as a challenge the very problems that other architects turned away from. By the mid-1960s he had gained commissions for master plans for Harvard University, the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and Stanford University. He was a pioneer in the organization of quarters serving physicians, nurses, and patients. One of his most accomplished buildings, Prentice Women’s Hospital (1970) in Chicago, was notable for four adjacent cylindrical concrete lobes, with a nurses’ and physicians’ station at the intersection. In 2011 the owner, Northwestern University, decided to have it demolished and replaced by a biomedical research tower. Renowned architects such as Frank Gehry, Renzo Piano, and Tadao Ando signed a petition protesting the demolition plans, but the university has proceeded with its intentions.

The final essay, “Speculating Beyond Iconicity: Bertrand Goldberg’s Urban Project,” is by Sarah Whiting, dean of architecture at Rice University. One of her principal topics is Goldberg’s interest in population density. Much of the public attention to Marina City, she notes, was paid to the amenities—bowling alley, theater, ice-skating rink, and office building: “Goldberg’s interest was primarily the complex’s density and its effect on the city” (152). As Whiting points out, quoting Goldberg, “If one were to string together a line of Marina Cities, the entire population of Chicago could fit along ‘the North Bank of the Chicago River in a strip four miles wide running from the Merchandise Mart to the lake’” (152). Goldberg went on to speculate about the schools our taxes would pay for, how much cheaper the costs of electricity and telephone service would be, and other benefits. These concerns were central to his urban vision. Another Goldberg quote cited by Whiting summarizes the arc of his career: “I became sort of interested in another aspect of architecture; not interested alone in architecture as a series of individual projects … but to see how those various projects began to influence other people’s lives, who weren’t our clients necessarily, became a matter of interest to me so I became really interested in this thing called urbanism” (156).

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Timothy Hyde
Constitutional Modernism: Architecture and Civil Society in Cuba, 1933–1959
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012, x + 371 pp., 11 color and 67 b/w illus. $31.50, ISBN 9780816678112

Through times of democracy and dictatorship, revolution and rebuilding, cultural actors in twentieth-century Cuba self-consciously constructed national traditions, synthesizing colonial anachronisms left after the island’s independence from Spain in 1898 with imported modernist innovations. Between the ouster of the infamous president-cum-dictator Gerardo Machado in 1933 and the revolution of 1959,
a complex set of historic, social, and aesthetic conditions emerged that set modern architecture in dialogue with a developing discourse of civil society and constitutionalism. These were years of military rule under Fulgencio Batista, an autocrat who haunted the Cuban political landscape as a behind-the-scenes puppeteer, quasi-legitimate president, and eventually an unfettered dictator until Castro’s coup. Alongside politicians and civil servants, writers, artists, urbanists, and architects simultaneously struggled to define Cuba’s national identity. The resulting urban forms and social and legal histories are the subject of Timothy Hyde’s Constitutional Modernism.

The book focuses in particular on modernist architecture and urbanism as forms of civic expression, and it deals almost exclusively with the capital city of Havana, which is understood as an urban metonym for the nation as a whole. It brings welcome complexity to discussions of mid-twentieth-century Cuban art and architecture, which are often framed in terms of design typologies. Bringing the social, civic, and architectural realms into dialogue with one another, Hyde asks, “How does architecture make its appearance in civil society?” (2). His thorough and scrupulous study charts the confluence of politics and architecture, anchored by the discourse of constitutionalism.

The Cuban Constitution of 1940 aimed to establish a stable, independent republic, enacting a historical transition from colony to nation, a transition that many still believed incomplete. It is no small thing, then, for Hyde to claim that the principles and intentions of the constitution emerged in relation to concurrent debates on urban planning, resulting in ambitious plans for the development and preservation of urban Havana. New roles for civil society in law and in architecture oscillated around the question of national identity. Cubanidad (Cubanness) preoccupied twentieth-century intellectuals, including academics such as Fernando Ortiz, writers such as Jorge Mañach and Alejo Carpentier, and visual artists such as Wifredo Lam and Amelia Peláez. In this historic moment, new plans for Havana’s public spaces articulated the definite aims of Cuba’s emerging civil society, as modernism and reform became entwined. In this middle republican period, Cuban architects such as Pedro Martínez Inclán, Nicolás Arroyo, Gabriela Menéndez, Eugenio Batista, Max Borges, Eduardo Montoulieu Jr., and Mario Romañach worked alongside well-known international architects such as José Luis Sert, Paul Lester Wiener, Jean Labatut, and Félix Candela to engage modern architecture as a project of national reform.

The dramatic journey from the revolution of 1933 to that of 1959 brought aesthetic and political turns in architectural practice. Hyde addresses this political and architectural narrative with archival documents, contemporary writings, and direct interviews with some of the architects involved. His study presents a complex, multilayered analysis following the conditions of possibility implicit in architecture as a cultural practice. The book balances architectural, political, and cultural history. It is structured in three parts: first a discussion of the Constitution of 1940; then a consideration of the city and of urban planning; and a closing analysis of the monuments designed during the 1950s. These three sections traverse diachronic and synchronic axes to reveal a “history of potentialities as much as a history of actualities” (15).

In his study of the logic of the Cuban Constitution of 1940, Hyde demonstrates that its makers were deeply concerned with creating a legal order acknowledging el hecho cubano (the Cuban fact—or the reality of Cuba’s past and present), while simultaneously imposing a new system of civic norms capable of shaping an ideal future republic. These debates led to a national planning law whose goal was to create better cities and, in turn, better citizens. In rediscovering and appropriating colonial institutions, such as the Laws of the Indies composed in 1573 to govern, among other things, the urban development of the Spanish Empire, twentieth-century city planners acknowledged two civic actualities in Havana, the real and the theoretical. The 1940 Constitution provided a platform for modernist architecture in Cuba as well as the rationale for the creation in 1955 of the Junta Nacional de Planificación (National Planning Board).

With the theoretical and cultural stage now set, Hyde moves on to examine the urban landscapes built during the Machado and Batista regimes. Born out of the traditions of civic art and architecture in the French Beaux-Arts and the North American City Beautiful movements, the French urbanist Jean-Claude Nicolas Forestier’s partially realized 1926 plan for Havana provided a starting point from which the National Planning Board could refashion the city. Hyde is especially concerned with the way in which the Plan Piloto (pilot plan) created by Wiener and Sert provided a marker of the Cuban Constitution’s normalizing goals. This is the case, for instance, in their use of cuadras, or block layouts. These normalizing cuadras may be seen in relation to similar international modernist projects that negotiated past traditions and future growth, as in Ildefons Cerdà’s plan for the extension of Barcelona, for example. They effectively reconfigured the enclosed patio common to private urban residences in the colonial era, so as to create new civic spaces. Reminiscent of Le Corbusier’s large urban blocks, the Sert and Wiener plan set houses back-to-back around the perimeter of the cuadra, leaving an open space, or patio, at the center. Hyde closes his discussion on the Plan Piloto by teasing out the historicist presumptions that underlay the constitution, articulated in the plan’s proposed reconfiguration of the colonial quarter, the Habana Vieja. While Wiener and Sert called for a wholesale alteration of the old city, they were still concerned with balancing the normative aims of their modernist project with the need to preserve certain historic spaces, such as the colonial Plaza de Armas and the Plaza de la Catedral.

From discussions of the theoretical underpinnings of civic life and constitutionalism to the city as a conceptual space for those theories, Hyde brings his discussion to particular architectural examples in the final section, “Monument.” These include Labatut’s Monument aJosé Martí (the José Martí Memorial) and the unrealized presidential palace, the Palacio de las Palmas (Palace of Palms), designed by Sert, Romañach, and Candela. Analysis of these complicated and sometimes frustrated projects allows Hyde to examine the specific agency of modern architecture.
within the context of Cuban constitution-alism. In regard to the Labatut design, with its star-shaped obelisk, open plaza, and monumental sculpture of the so-called Cuban apostle José Martí, he discusses the prolonged debates that surrounded the many alternative plans for the monument; in so doing, he considers how Cuban citizens themselves might be refracted by these built objects. In his analysis of the plans for Batista’s presidential palace, he pays close attention to the abstracted royal palm trees, symbols of Cuban national-ity, which supported the building’s hovering roof, showing how they spoke directly to questions of Cuban cultural identity. At once symbolic and tectonic, these forms were taken from Candela’s experimentations with concrete shells and the double representations of Antoni Gaudí’s fractal-inspired mimesis of nature. Hyde reveals that José Martí himself had penned design sketches for a column order based on the royal palm tree. Working uncomfortably under the commission of the despot Batista, the architects chose to use abstracted royal palm trees as a symbol of cubanidad; in so doing, their designs were embedded in a broader relationship with the mimetic structure of the recently written constitution.

Constitutional Modernism succeeds in reading the consequential effects of architecture in the political circumstances of the Cuban nation in the early twentieth century. It contributes to a growing body of scholarship dealing with variations on architectural modernism in ex-colonial cities and countries, such as the work of Tom Avermaete, Serhat Karakayali, and Marion von Osten on Algeria and Morocco and that of Swati Chattopadhyay on Calcutta. Moreover, it opens the door for future studies looking more deeply at the despot Batista, the architects chose to use abstracted royal palm trees as a symbol of cubanidad; in so doing, their designs were embedded in a broader relationship with the mimetic structure of the recently written constitution.

Richard Aitken
The Garden of Ideas: Four Centuries of Australian Style

Architect Richard Aitken, author of The Garden of Ideas: Four Centuries of Australian Style, is well known to landscape archi-tects and garden historians. As coeditor of The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens (2002), author of several books, from Gardenesque (2004) to Seeds of Change (2006), and founder of the journal Australian Garden History, Aitken has done much to put Australian garden history on the map. His recent book continues that important work.

In The Garden of Ideas, Aitken’s intention is “to open a conversation, one that results in a more profound understanding of our culture of garden-making, and one that leads to enhanced appreciation both of exceptional and representative examples of Australian garden-making” (xi). The book admirably accomplishes this in its survey of Australia’s ever-changing and complex garden styles.

While there have been many fine studies on Australian garden history, until Aitken’s book, none has attempted such an ambitious overview from the eighteenth cen-tury to the present. None has offered in quite such sumptuous detail so many thoughtfully chosen or well-produced images. And none has examined in such depth, or with such erudition, the nature of changing garden designs. In short, Aitken’s Garden of Ideas cleaves to all a garden history book should be: it is lavishly produced, contains thoughtful and sometimes provocative ideas, and veritably drips with beautifully reproduced color images. Moreover, the work informs an exhibition of the same title that toured Australia in 2013, an exhibition that no doubt did much to further garden history’s appeal among a broad public.

In documenting Australia’s changing garden styles, the work’s nine chapters progress in a loosely chronological fashion. They situate Australia’s gardening experience in light of its European context (starting in the seventeenth century), before breezily analyzing its changing style through British colonization, Federation (1901), war, post-war prosperity, and our recent, more anx-ious times. While Aitken does not use footnotes, the publisher has provided all the references by page number at the back. Thus, the work will appeal both to experts and those new to garden design.

One of the real strengths of Aitken’s oeuvre, which is as evident in The Garden of Ideas as it is in his other works, is the depth of the author’s understanding of the intricacies of garden design. This under-standing is truly extraordinary: extending from late eighteenth-century aesthetic debates on the garden to contemporary ideas of the ecological garden, all of which are illuminated by an incredibly detailed knowledge of local context, itself accumu-lated through decades of archival research. This breadth and depth of view are par-ticularly illuminating as, understanding both local and international garden design trends so well, Aitken is able to demonstrate the extent to which international garden trends influenced local developments. Where another might have placed Australia’s 1970s and 1980s fashion for local planting within the trajectory of earlier twentieth-century movements in North America and Germany, Aitken’s knowledge of local context is able to prove that it was largely independent and homegrown.

Another of Aitken’s strengths is his ability to move easily between popular and elite gardening. He is equally at home discussing popular gardening magazines as he is distill-ing the tenets of postwar high modernism. That he accomplishes this in crisp, lively, and concise prose is all the more commendable.

Inevitably a book that purports to provide an overview of a continent’s four cen-turies of gardening style is highly selective. Some will question the scant attention paid to Aboriginal Australian gardening. Others will wonder why their region is not better represented, or not represented at all.

Note