

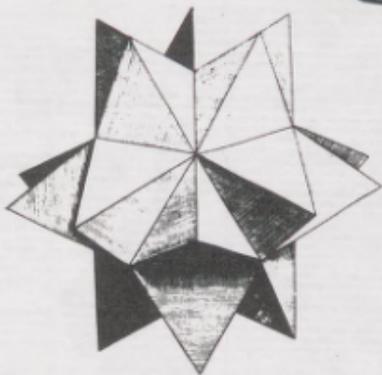
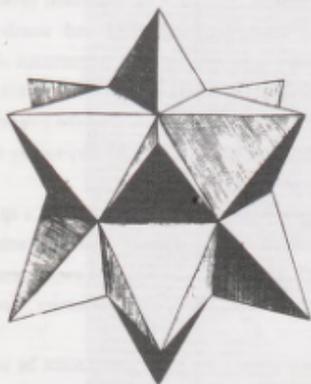
The
Franzheim



Architecture
Library

Aldus wishes to thank Genie Mims of the College of Architecture for providing the photographs of the Franzheim Architecture Library.





During the past several years, the University of Houston library system has been the recipient of a number of substantial and significant grants made by Mr. Kenneth Franzheim, II, in memory of his father, the noted architect. These grants have enabled the University to build solid and worthwhile collections in the areas of architecture and art history. A previous *Aldus* article concentrated on the acquisition of landmark architectural books for the Franzheim Memorial Collection. This piece is devoted to the Franzheim Architecture Library, the branch collection which serves the day to day needs of students and faculty of the College of Architecture.

The story of that library's development is an encouraging one. In a span of some half-dozen years, it has progressed from a state of relative stasis and inadequacy to one of dynamic growth aimed at establishing a useful research facility equipped to serve the needs of the College, the University, and the community.

Since architecture is largely a visual undertaking, its study must be undertaken visually. For this reason, a broadly based slide collection is a vital part of a library devoted to an architecture curriculum. Unfortunately, for a number of years the architecture library possessed only a small number of lantern slides, inadequate in both quantity and quality to the demands made by the College's courses of study. When, in 1969, Mr. Franzheim began to





These pages show slide trays and light tables, equipment necessary for the use of the growing collection of architectural slides.

make large monetary contributions to the University, this area was given priority for development.

In 1970 alone, some 14,500 modern 2" x 2" slides were added to the collection. With a firm base thus established, subsequent additions have increased the total to well over 25,000. This large infusion of slides, in order to realize their full potential, required a good deal of auxiliary equipment and services. Mr. Franzheim's gifts were instrumental in purchasing slide storage cabinets and a microprint typewriter for slide labelling. Funds for part-time help to do classification and arrangement were also provided. Light tables for simultaneous viewing of a large number of slides (needed by faculty in arranging their visual presentations) were custom built according to specifications developed by members of the College.

The central objective of these measures, of course, was the provision of a properly housed and serviced slide collection which would yield maximum benefit for students and faculty. Collecting aims were two-fold: to augment previously existing areas of interest by acquiring standard materials heretofore unobtainable and to branch out into new fields in order to accommodate an expanding curriculum.

The success of the slide program is shown in many ways. At present, stu-

dent and faculty use of the slide collection averages over 1000 items per week. Overall, the range and depth of many courses have been expanded as the collection grows in scope. For example, those devoted to important figures such as Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and Frank Lloyd Wright have been especially enriched due to the new slide materials. In the realm of earlier historical studies, the purchase of an especially fine slide and audio set dealing with ancient Egypt was made possible. A natural corollary to the slide collection's growing versatility has been its increased importance for interdisciplinary studies. The collection's resources may now be drawn on by such related areas as art history.

Book resources for architectural study have not been neglected. As with the slide collection, emphasis has been on the further development of present strengths and on the establishment of quality collections in new areas. Acquisition of the working library of Mr. Kenneth Franzheim, Sr., added several hundred nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural books to the library. More works of this type came from a retrospective collection formed in Liverpool, England, purchased for the Franzheim Memorial Collection. Since 1970, a significant number of standard reference works now out of print have been added to the library's shelves. Because such items, while essential to a balanced collection, are no longer in standard publisher's stocks,



*Journals and
are an important part*

they are rare and often expensive. That so many could be added to the library is largely due to Mr. Franzheim's continued interest and financial support.

Funds allocated from Mr. Franzheim's grants for the purchase of new books enabled the library to enlarge its buying program. The effects of this are seen in the broader range of circulating books available, in the addition of valuable new reference books, and in the increased number of journals on the shelves.

The area of urban design illustrates the effectiveness of these programs. When the College of Architecture decided to develop a curriculum in this field, the library found that it would be necessary to add a great deal of material to its stock on hand at the time. Without outside help, the process would have been a tedious one, possibly carried out at the expense of other, equally important, areas. With such help, it was possible to develop a good research collection in a relatively short time.

Yet another aspect of the growth of the Franzheim Architecture Library needs mention. As it has begun to assume the stature of a workable research facility, Houston area architectural firms have been able to draw on the library's resources in developing their own projects. Such contact and involvement with the community at large is a particularly worthwhile objective of an urban university. In this way, the resources of that university are



*reference works
of the library's collections.*

utilized for the greater common good of the area which it serves.

No conscientious librarian or library user can ever be completely satisfied. There are always areas that need improvement, always important new works that have to be bought. The task of achieving and maintaining the status of a first-rate research library suited to the needs of a first-rate curriculum is an enormous one. For the Franzheim Architecture Library, that task is not completed. Work in progress has recently received an encouraging impetus in the form of a grant from the Franzheim Synergy Trust. In the words of its founders, "Susan and Kenneth Franzheim II have recently formed the FRANZHEIM synergy TRUST, to provide the most direct, personally involved funding of innovative programs benefitting individuals singly or collectively throughout the world . . . synergistically planting seeds where heretofore arid land lay fallow."

The funds given by the trust to the University are to be used for the improvement of the slide collection and its facilities and for the purchase of landmark books in architecture. This grant is the latest manifestation of a long standing and greatly appreciated commitment toward the provision of quality resources in an important field of study. This commitment has over the years given the College of Architecture the opportunity to establish new and innovative programs and has greatly broadened its possibilities for excellence.



Students at work—a library's ultimate reason for being.