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Journal

California History, 93(1)

ISSN

0162-2897

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Publication Date

2016-02-01

DOI

10.1525/ch.2016.93.1.4

Peer reviewed

The Fair that Never Was

Architecture and Urban Boosterism at the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair

ABSTRACT The unbuilt proposals for the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair offer a cross section of designs put before the public in a formative moment just before modernism came to dominate architectural discourse and production. Projects by luminaries Bernard Maybeck and Richard Neutra joined projects by Joseph Strauss and Henry Killam Murphy. Here were architectural hopefuls at the nadir of the Great Depression attempting to draw their way into the commission of a lifetime. Thus, a Beaux-Arts bohemian competed with a sincere modernist, a self-promoting engineer, and America's leading practitioner in China. At the same time, the proposals were part of the larger economic and political landscape of San Francisco, as neighborhood associations and politicians used them to attract the fair to their part of the city. More than pie in the sky, these designs show in amplified form the way architecture is embedded in public discourse as a form of persuasion, a kind of politics by other means through which elites and other stakeholders argued for their preferred reality. As tools of intra-urban boosterism, these plans reveal the competing interests within San Francisco at a pivotal moment in its development, when its future lay in the formation of a regional metropolis that could compete with Los Angeles for commerce on the West Coast and beyond. **KEYWORDS:** California Architectural History, American Studies, San Francisco History

IN JULY 1933, a little-known advertising agent named Harmon S. Butler presented a model of a "Pan-Pacific Trade and Travel Exposition" to be held on an artificial island proposed for the Yerba Buena shoals in the San Francisco Bay. In his ungainly model, a concentric ring of land surrounds a round island. Causeways bisect the island, with smaller satellite islands to the east and west, one for a deepwater terminal, another for what he called "Pleasure Island," the amusement zone of the fair. Vertically, four-hundred-foot towers surround a great domed building at the core of the island and unspecified buildings of various shapes dot the outer ring. Butler's proposal preempted the business community, city officials, and architects who ordinarily take the initiative in planning expositions. His was the first in a series of unbuilt and long-since-forgotten proposals for the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair from luminaries such as Bernard Maybeck and Richard Neutra, as well as lesser-known architects and engineers such as Joseph Strauss and Henry Murphy. Taken together, they show a cross section of designs put before the public in this formative moment just before

California History, Vol. 93, Number 1, pp. 4–25, ISSN 0162-2897, electronic ISSN 2327-1485. © 2016 by the Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press's Reprints and Permissions web page, <http://www.ucpress.edu/journals.php?p=reprints>. DOI: 10.1525/CH.2016.93.1.4.



Harmon S. Butler, model of "Pan-Pacific Trade and Travel Exposition," 1933

San Francisco Public Library

modernism came to dominate architectural discourse and production. Only architectural competitions compare as a way of bringing together such a range of designs, and yet the proposals for the fair are distinct from those submitted to a competition for being uninvited. Here were architectural hopefuls at the nadir of the Great Depression attempting to draw their way into the commission of a lifetime. At the same time, the proposals were part of the larger economic and political landscape of San Francisco as neighborhood associations and politicians used them to attract the fair to their part of the city.

BERNARD MAYBECK'S SWAN SONG

The idea of a bridge celebration for the completion of the Golden Gate and San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridges had been proposed in the early 1930s, but Butler was the first to think of it as a proper world's fair, place it on the shoals, and link it thematically with the Pacific. He printed letterhead; wrote to over four hundred political, business, and civic leaders; and promoted his idea as only an adman could.¹ Newspapers published photographs of his model, which was exhibited by the Chamber of Commerce at the Commercial Club. His proposal was prescient, uncannily anticipating the eventual fair. In a sectional model, he detailed how the walls would "be constructed of a new translucent material of high luster and rich color," much like the vermiculite that would be used in the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition. This would be mounted on a light metal framework that stood two feet from the actual buildings, forming a shell with concealed illumination—a "radically different illuminating treatment" that the fair would also emulate.² Butler was made a member of the

Bridge Celebration Founding Committee and played a part in writing the initial report that favored the shoals site.³ The name Pleasure Island never stuck for the amusement zone, but it helped the organizers rhyme their way to Treasure Island.⁴ Butler thus proposed the site, nearly named the fair, promoted it to the business community, and then all but disappeared from the record, but not before setting in motion a series of public proposals by competing stakeholders to stage the fair in various parts of the city.

Bernard Maybeck was among the first architects to sketch a scheme for the fair. The venerable designer had been a seminal figure in the formation of a regional architecture in the Bay Area at the turn of the century. His Palace of Fine Arts building at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) terminated the fair's great axis and was its lone surviving building. The new fair would provide an outlet for his still-formidable talents, even as he "appeared to be drifting into retirement."⁵ In a pastel made in October 1933, he sketched a linear campus that stretches along the northern coast of the city from the Palace of Fine Arts to the Golden Gate Bridge. Paired lighthouse-like towers alternate with blue-domed *tempiet-tos* vaguely like the Temple of Vesta in Rome. Maybeck imagined the changeful landscape as a dramatic stage set for the fair, with the bridge and the Marin Headlands as backdrop, and the boat-filled bay as the immediate foreground, drawing together two of the city's icons: Maybeck's own Palace of Fine Arts (in the lower right of the image) and the Golden Gate Bridge, which was then still only an idea.

Short on details, the perspective was simply meant to suggest the possibilities of the site. The image tidily condensed past and future, land and sea, city and region. Several years into the Great Depression and with few projects on his boards, Maybeck had time on his hands. He would go on to sketch dozens, if not hundreds, of drawings for the exposition. In fact, after years of designing mostly houses, he was aroused by the fair to think again in the Grand Manner. The scale of the drawing itself—over ten feet long!—mirrors the amplitude of his vision. One can imagine the bemocked Maybeck working vigorously over the huge piece of brown paper with pastel and paint. Where Butler's stiff model is pure public relations, Maybeck's drawing is all gesture.

Around the same time, Maybeck explored a second site centered on India Basin, located just north of Hunters Point and stretching to Islais Creek, along the city's eastern edge.



Bernard Maybeck, proposal for fair at the Marina, 1933

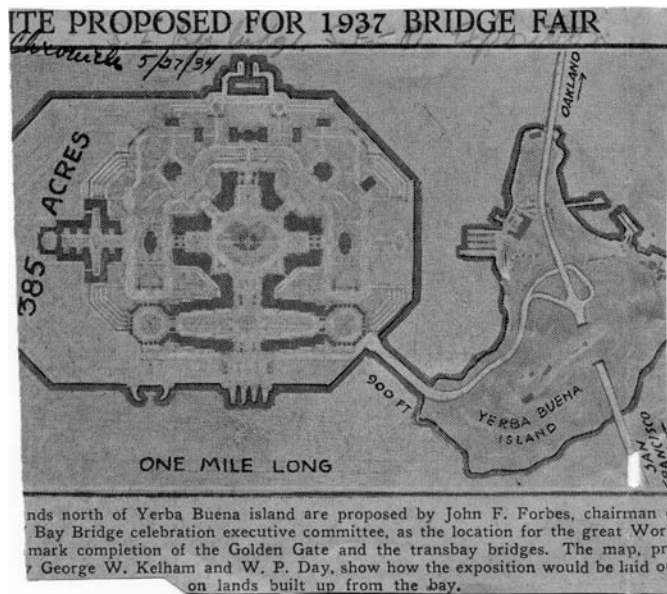
Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley

The site gained early and widespread support for the fair. Maybeck linked it with the Marina site with a meandering complex of courts and buildings and a huge colossus rising out of India Basin. A reverie both baroque and dramatic, it was nonetheless measured and to scale. In other drawings he continued to play with colossal figures in water, rhythms of colorful pylons, and the Greco-Roman vocabulary that had been a mainstay of American world's fairs before the 1930s, and of which he was a master.

These are curious images for the mid-1930s, Beaux-Arts fever dreams utterly out of step with changing currents in American architecture. Or are they? To be sure, outside of Washington, D.C., variations on art deco and *moderne* architecture had become standard in governmental and commercial building. Faceted and streamlined architecture became the self-conscious choice at the Chicago Exposition of 1933–1934, as it would be in New York in 1939. The architectural press had already tilted strongly toward the many strands of modern architecture, European and native, then rapidly developing. But the Beaux-Arts manner was far from moribund, as the vitality of Maybeck's sketch demonstrates. In the mid-1930s, French-trained and French-influenced classicists still outnumbered modernists in most architecture schools. Even in California, the palace coup was still some years off.⁶

Maybeck's proposals likely never saw the light of day and, in any case, the still-unofficial fair would soon have official imagery—part of the backroom dealing typical of politics in the period, and part of what would stimulate further architectural agitation. W. P. Day and George Kelham published their proposal for the fair on the shoals site in May 1934 in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Among the city's leading architects, Day and Kelham were officially contracted by the exposition's organizers and had a wealth of expert data at their disposal. In their awkward sketch,



W. P. Day and George Kelham, plan for fair, *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 1934

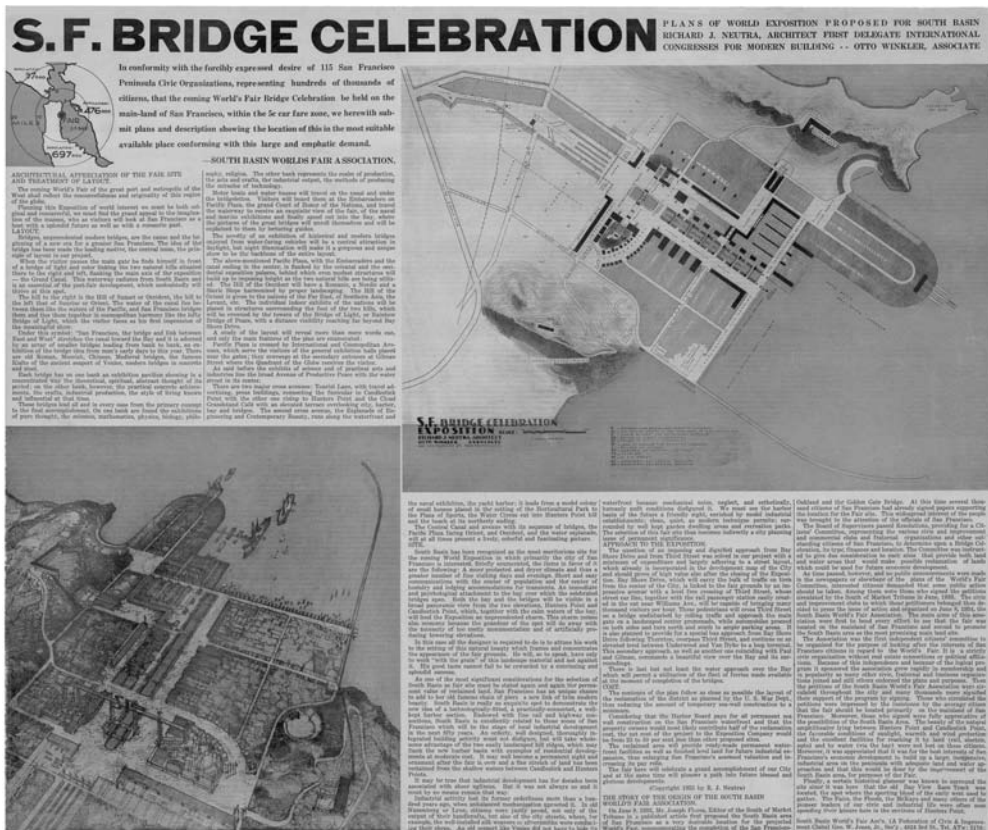
Courtesy Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library

the formal axes of a traditional Beaux-Arts plan open onto a central court where radiating minor axes converge. A major tower would have pinned down the central court. The sketch's roughness betrays the architects' rush to get it into print and win the first salvo in a battle over competing sites played out in the newspapers and city council meetings.

RICHARD NEUTRA AND SOUTH BASIN

Counterproposals quickly emerged, most sponsored by local groups of merchants or promoters seeking to keep the fair within the five-cent carfare on the peninsula, in South Basin, the Marina, or Lake Merced. These proposals used architecture as a vehicle of urban boosterism. The most ambitious proposal came from the South Basin World's Fair Association, which formed in reaction to Day and Kelham's semiofficial plan.⁷ The association published a broadside of its proposal featuring a design by Richard Neutra and Otto Winkler.

Neutra was the big name, but Winkler was the driving force behind the project. An Austrian immigrant with no formal training, he had the pluck to entice Neutra into a partnership in 1934. Winkler turned his living room into an office and told the older architect that all it needed was a sign out front.⁸ Neutra wrote back with surprising alacrity:



Richard Neutra and Otto Winkler, broadside for the South Basin World's Fair Association, 1935

Courtesy Earth Sciences and Map Library, University of California, Berkeley

Your offer to connect your efforts with mine is fine and it might lead to some earnest work with a lot of research work wrought into it, as I like it. You know I am not choosing the way of least resistance and so far I found my choice was right. We might have to start with some small job, which doesn't yield any appreciable income. . . . But then we might—without fearing comebacks be prepared to tackle some greater work and sail into the limelight and foreground. If you actually like to take the trouble of building up such a tedious career as I have done for myself, I feel for my person that by giving up a part of our natural individual selfishness, we could accomplish something.⁹

By May 1934, they had worked out an informal collaboration and Neutra's San Francisco office came into being.

In August, Winkler proposed getting involved with the exposition. He already had a firm grasp on the politics: the San Francisco Bay Exposition Corporation, he wrote Neutra, "is determined to put the fair on the shoals of Yerba Buena (Goat Island) but it is pretending not to have made any decision until the citizens pass on the bonds."¹⁰ He dismissed Day and Kelham's report, noting that over one hundred civic clubs had endorsed the South Basin site and "about six assemblymen . . . will fight for state allocation in the next legislature."¹¹ Most importantly, he had made contact with the South Basin Association and reported forthrightly to Neutra:

This committee has no power to appoint any engineers or architects, but I am promised that if we were able to submit a lay out [sic] or perspective sketches for propaganda purposes, they would put all the power behind it to push it forward. I don't know whether such a proposition would tempt you but I believe it would be a great publicity stunt to show so much civic interest. . . . This is very unluccrative work, I agree, but I believe we ought to do something to rank among the local men.¹²

And with this, they entered the fray.

Winkler spent days walking Hunters Point, Candlestick Point, and the basin between them, observing weather conditions and the urban texture of the area, and sketching.¹³ At the same time he tirelessly attended meetings. The project was soon much more than a "stunt." He wrote lovingly of the area, telling Neutra it was "a workingman's district with unfalsified character. Unpretentious, a little frontyard with a tree, in the backyard a pile of firewood. A few old women sit on the sunny stairs, shawls around their heads—very *mahrish*. . . . The district breathes the romantic *Vorortatmosphäre* of Molnars 'Liliom.'"¹⁴ The Bohemian and German references were more than descriptive.¹⁵ The fair had become autobiographical, as creative work often is, bound to Winkler's identity as a displaced Austrian and to his prospects in San Francisco. The land promised ambitious things: "Up here is bewildering greatness; one side the thrilling mystic of a city, the other side a truck garden in the smiling quietness of plain nature. Perhaps you can consider a smaller café on Hunters Point for the dreamers who like to run away from home."¹⁶ This mode of observation became central to Winkler and Neutra's design, which, counter to the tradition of fair architecture, sought to frame and enhance the natural beauty of the site rather than erect ostentatious buildings that would form their own context.

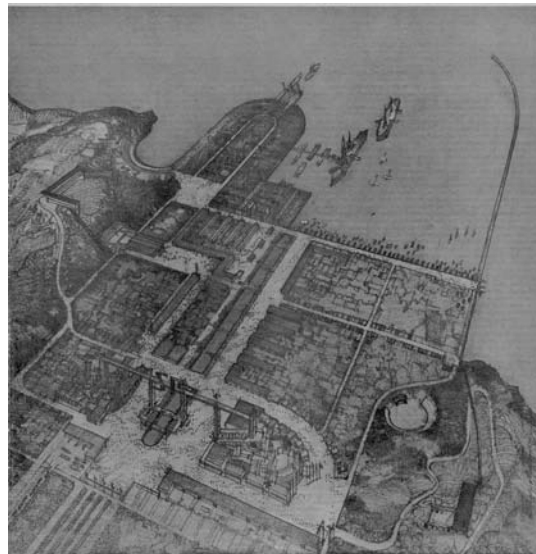
The two architects mailed sketches back and forth. By mid-September of 1934, Winkler managed to get their plans "twice on the blackboard in the Chamber of the Supervisors."¹⁷ Predictably, politics upstaged design: "The sponsors of Yerba Buena Shoals are trying to choke any attempts of getting the fair into San Francisco with a technicality of the S.F. Charter,"

he told Neutra. “On the other hand, Andrew Gallagher (Supervisor) is one of the most powerful speakers for San Francisco and he will arouse civic interest over the radio and a big public meeting.”¹⁸ Winkler pressed forward. He disseminated tracings and photostats and brought them to community meetings on a nearly nightly basis.¹⁹

Winkler managed to win over Supervisor Adolph Uhl, who saw Winkler and Neutra’s plan as a way of promoting his own agenda to keep the fair on the “mainland.” Uhl was confident that he could block the shoals site.²⁰ Winkler scheduled meetings with Leland Cutler, the president of the exposition, and sought out the same with Day and Kelham. Reaching beyond local power, he somehow finagled an audience with Charles Merriam, a political scientist and planner who was part of Franklin Roosevelt’s “brain trust.” When Merriam missed the appointment, the architect appealed directly to Harry Hopkins, the Federal Relief Administration supervisor who funneled WPA funds to the fair.²¹ As the end of the year approached, the South Basin Fair Association seemed to win over Cutler with the Neutra-Winkler plan.²² The architects’ initial idea to “start with some small job” long forgotten, they seemed prepared to “sail into the limelight.”

The initial plan, in Winkler’s hand, extended and filled in the basin and cut a canal between the two knolls that framed the heart of the exposition.²³ The correspondence between the two architects suggests that Neutra accepted this idea, elaborated on it, and redrew it in his inimitable style.

Together they laid out a comprehensive vision of the fair for the South Basin World’s Fair Association.²⁴ Liberties had to be taken. After all, there was a site but no program beyond the most general idea that this was to be a “bridge celebration.” In place of the clichéd tower that anchors many fairs, Winkler imagined a giant bridge “of light and color linking the two natural hills” and straddling the main axis, or “Grand Canal.” A series of “bridgelettes”



Richard Neutra and Otto Winkler, broadside for the South Basin World’s Fair Association, 1935, detail, perspective

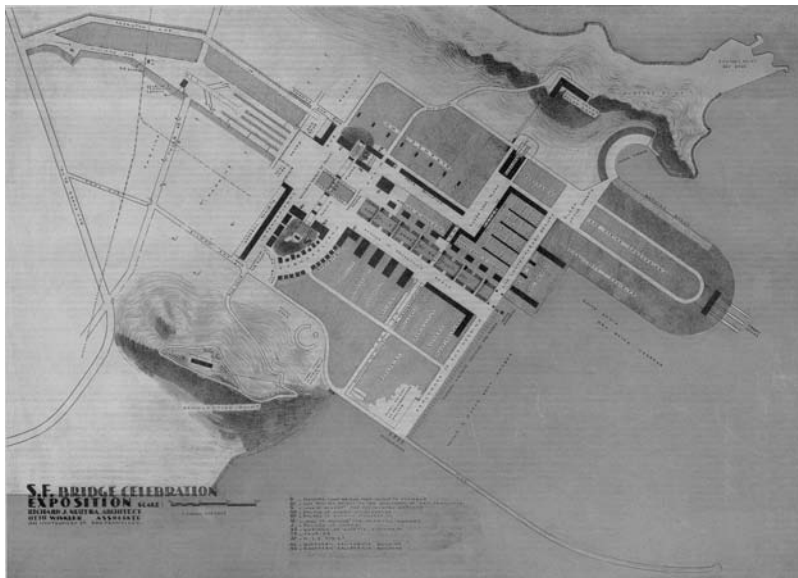
Courtesy Earth Sciences and Map Library, University of California, Berkeley

spanned the canal at intervals, these in uncharacteristically historical styles: Roman, Moorish, Chinese, medieval, the Rialto, and modern bridges of concrete and steel.

These were not merely decorative; they gave the fair its didactic thrust. They narrated the history of bridges leading up to San Francisco's new additions. Each bridge, moreover, led on one side to a pavilion "showing in a concentrated way the theoretical, spiritual, abstract thought" of the period and culture that created it. Blustery boosterism thus became something more sober. On the other side of the canal, visitors would find exhibits of "practical, concrete achievements," or, as Neutra put it, "the realm of production." The history of bridges would end at water's edge, with the apotheosis of the Bay Area's newest additions, implying that these most modern spans were the product of the most advanced culture. In its progressive ethos, Neutra's scheme was little different than previous expositions, where the microcosm of the fair suggests a symbolic order for the world.

While Neutra's drawings are stunningly modern, he struggled to conceive of an equally modernist arrangement for the fair. Beyond the bridges and their pavilions to the north lay exhibit buildings for applied science and the arts, handicraft and industry, and beyond that, the amusement zone—a conventional arrangement. To the south lay a series of equally conventional exhibits on horticulture, biology, agriculture, sociology, religion, electricity, physics, and chemistry. Elsewhere, a more modernist framework comes through. He proposed a model colony of small, prefabricated houses—a *Siedlung*, or settlement of sorts—an idea he could have borrowed from Modeltown, a village of large-scale model houses at the 1935 San Diego Exposition to which he contributed.²⁵

Like many exposition plans, Neutra and Winkler's would have left the city with a legacy of additional, "improved" land in an area on the peninsula, within easy commuting distance of



Richard Neutra and Otto Winkler, broadside for the South Basin World's Fair Association, 1935, detail, plan

Courtesy Earth Sciences and Map Library, University of California, Berkeley

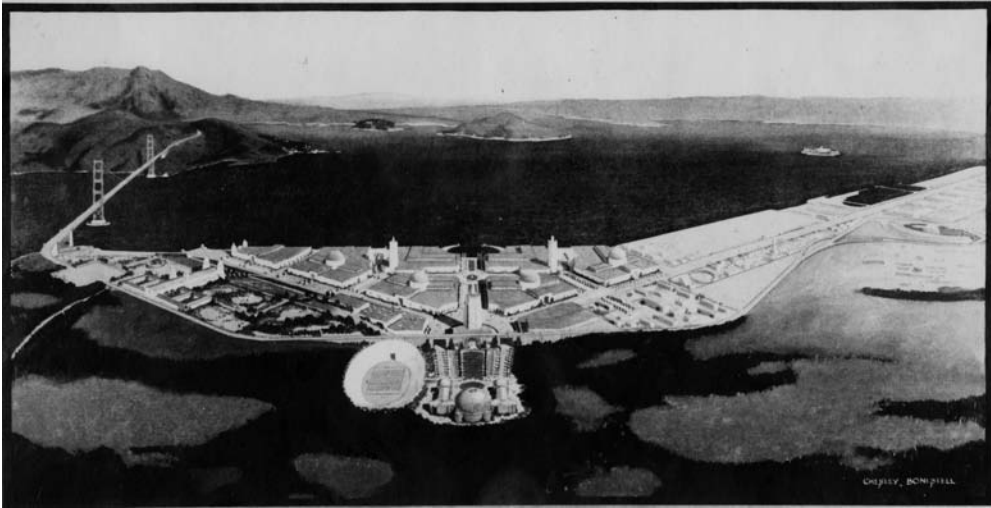
downtown—an infrastructure for future development. For this very reason, many groups urged the city to choose a site on the peninsula. As everyone knew well, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) of 1915 had left the city with the Marina, an area extensively developed largely in the 1920s. Urban improvement was an expected function of fairs. In spite of their extravagant cost and intentional obsolescence, they were business propositions meant to be judged not on their profits alone—there were seldom any—or the buildings left standing, but rather on the business they brought to the city and their ability to stimulate future growth and development. This is why so many fairs have broken new land. Neutra understood this well. “San Francisco,” he wrote, “has an unique chance to add to her old famous chain of piers a new link of trim modern beauty. South Basin is really an exquisite spot to demonstrate the new idea of a technologically-fitted, a practically-connected, a well-kept harbor section.”

This was not simply a practical matter of modernization. Neutra saw the natural beauty of the land as its greatest asset. The “unprecedented charm” of the site itself “means also economy because the grandeur of the spot will do away with the necessity of too costly monumentalism and of artificially producing towering elevations.” With language that recalls the rhetoric of his one-time master, Frank Lloyd Wright, he eschewed the artificial spectacle of exposition architecture and insisted that “all the designer is required to do is to attune his work to the setting of this natural beauty . . . to work ‘with the grain’ of this landscape material and not against it.” It was a sensitive approach for an interloper, but one handed him by Winkler’s obvious admiration for the site.

Neutra then carefully articulated an argument for the site in terms of city planning, a lifetime interest of his.²⁶ “We must see the harbor basin of the future,” he began, as “a friendly sight, enriched by model industrial establishments.” Unlike the “sheer ugliness” of unplanned industrialization, this site would be “clean, quiet, as modern technique permits; surrounded by well kept garden dwelling areas and recreation parks” on the landscaped ridges: “The selection of the fair site thus becomes indirectly a city planning issue of permanent significance.” This was more than ballyhoo. His plan carefully incorporated the preexisting street grid and tied existing streetcar lines to a proposal for a new rail station. It was a studied plan. The reclamation of land followed the plans of the U.S. War Department for the area, reducing temporary construction of seawall, rendering “ready-made permanent waterfront facilities as well as finished level land for future industrial expansion, thus enlarging San Francisco’s assessed valuation and increasing its pay rolls.” Since the late 1920s, plans to fill in the South Basin had been debated in the city.²⁷ The exposition became a pretext for urban “improvement,” a form of urban boosterism given particular urgency by the conditions of the Depression. It would, Neutra concluded, “pioneer a path into future blessed and glorious developments.”²⁸

JOSEPH STRAUSS AND THE MARINA

While the South Basin Association published Winkler and Neutra’s plan, newspapers promoted Joseph Strauss’s proposal for the Marina site.²⁹ The engineer of the Golden Gate Bridge, Strauss proposed a site that spread from the Presidio, a government-owned military site, along the coastline to Fort Point, taking in Maybeck’s Palace of Fine Arts.



Chesley Bonestell for Joseph Strauss, plan for Marina site

Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley

In an act of bald self-promotion, the fair would end where the south pier of his Golden Gate Bridge would rise. No evidence survives to connect his plan with Maybeck's musings of the previous year, but the site is virtually the same and one wonders if Strauss turned first to Maybeck, the old master whose ties to the earlier fair would have been valuable. Either way, the site was loaded. It recalled the earlier fair, drew attention to the new bridge, and promised to reclaim more land from the bay for the city.

Because of his audacious bridge project, Strauss was one of the most celebrated, if complicated, personalities in San Francisco at the time. A civil engineer with hypertrophic ambitions, for his senior thesis in college he had "designed a bridge joining the North American and Asian continents across the fifty-mile-wide Bering Strait."³⁰ San Franciscans would have encountered his work first at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. There he designed a ride called the Aeroscope, sometimes called a bascule bridge, or more commonly a drawbridge, with a massive counterweight on wheels. He modified the bascule to lift a three-hundred-foot crane topped with an observatory that could hold over one hundred people. He went on to design a series of prominent bridges in the 1920s, culminating in his being appointed chief engineer of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1929, a fact that he promoted tirelessly, even as he handed over the engineering and design to Clifford Paine and Irving Morrow, respectively.³¹ Workers broke ground on the bridge in January 1933, but Strauss, exhausted from his work, spent the next six months recuperating from a nervous breakdown. He began to design the exposition during his convalescence in early 1933, "merely for his own satisfaction, and not with the idea of showing it to anyone," as he told the newspaper.³²

Strauss was clearly disingenuous. He pitched the idea for months. In October 1934 he showed his plans to Leland Cutler, having retained Chesley Bonestell to illustrate the idea.³³ As early as April 1934, he sent a proposal to R. F. Allen, the head of the Celebration Committee and a member of the Down Town Association, which favored a site on the peninsula.³⁴ The engineer had worked out a detailed plan for eleven major buildings, an amusement zone,

an area for state buildings, and a flying field, “grouped about three axes radiating from a point one hundred feet north of the center line of the high viaduct of the Presidio Approach to the Golden Gate Bridge.”³⁵ The architecture, he had decided, should not be a “rehash of the classic or renaissance styles of the past.” “Nor,” he wrote,

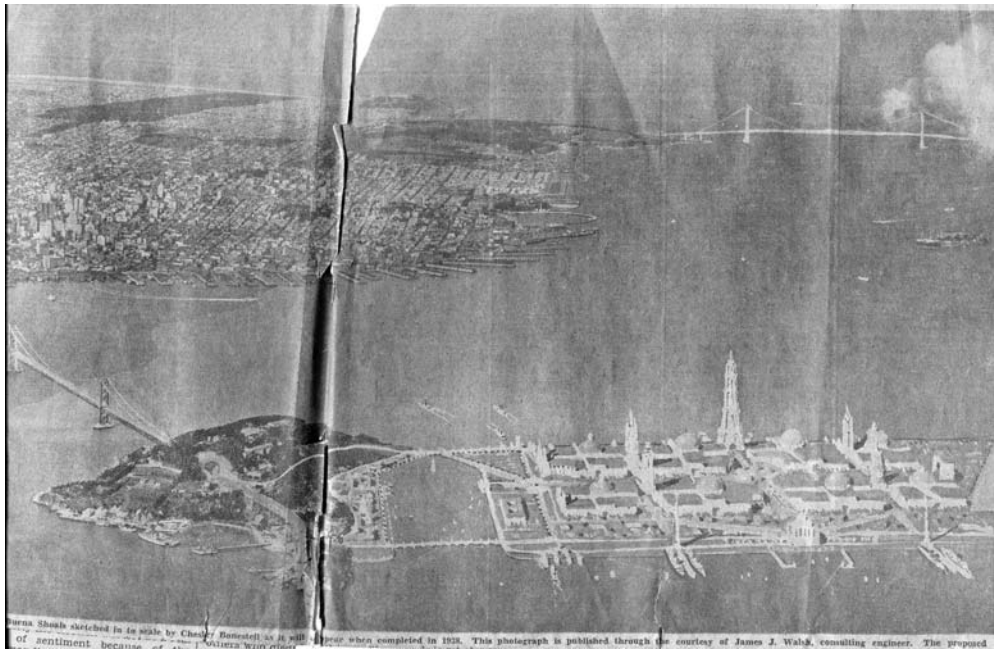
should it be the conscious effort to be modern, which has given rise to so many grotesque and unfortunate examples of late, and which have discouraged the public and made explanations necessary on the part of the designers. It is rather the unconscious development which has led into the best of the modern, and has been compelled by the use of new materials, such as glass, metal, etc. and improvements in structural design, that should be sought for.³⁶

Bonestell’s illustrations, which seem not to have survived in the original, reveal little about what Strauss envisioned architecturally, but soon photographs of his plans made the rounds. A set is preserved among William Merchant’s papers.³⁷ Merchant was in practice with Maybeck and was also a member of the exposition’s architectural commission. Strauss was aiming high.

In choosing Chesley Bonestell, Strauss commissioned one of the most accomplished commercial artists in the Bay Area, and one ideally suited for the work. Trained as an architect, Bonestell had been the chief designer in Willis Polk’s office in Berkeley in the early twentieth century. He went on to a career as an architectural illustrator, cover artist, and later a matte artist in Hollywood. In 1927, he drew the Chrysler Building for William Van Alen before returning to the Bay Area to work in Arthur Brown Jr.’s firm.³⁸ Brown chaired the architectural commission for the exposition *and* was a city supervisor. Of more immediate interest to Strauss, organizers of the 1915 fair had followed Bonestell’s recommendations after he reviewed potential sites.³⁹ Strauss had turned from promoting his bridge to promoting his plans for a bridge celebration.

In Bonestell’s perspective, the three axes appear like a great avian form or plane with sprawling wings alighting on the north shore of San Francisco, just where Strauss’s buoyant bridge touches down. “It commands a view of the entire bay,” wrote the engineer, “the Golden Gate, Mt. Tamalpais, and both bridges.”⁴⁰ Strauss used the road to the bridge as the southern boundary, which doubled Crissy Field in size and absorbed substantial tidal flats to provide more land.⁴¹ If the aeronautical imagery of the plan was not obvious, Crissy Field spread to the northeast, acting as a pendant to the bridge—a pictorial rejoinder to the plan for an airport on the Yerba Buena shoals. This, too, could have served as San Francisco’s future airport, as it was both near downtown and minutes from the Golden Gate Bridge. Their plan also gently nods to the 1915 fair, both by incorporating Maybeck’s Palace of Fine Arts and echoing it with a series of massive domes.⁴² Strauss and Bonestell would have offered a formidable challenge to Neutra and the South Basin Association, or to the architects lined up with the exposition.

The South Basin and Marina plans emerged in late 1934, both in clear protest against the Exposition Company’s tacit decision to use the Yerba Buena shoals site.⁴³ The Exposition Company had already invested heavily in creating a new island. It sent Leland Cutler to Washington, D.C., to secure federal assistance with land reclamation and sponsored Day and Kelham’s study. The company also agreed to listen to “representative citizens” with other ideas, but the matter had been largely agreed and acted on by fall 1934.⁴⁴ The public discussion of alternate sites threw plans for the fair into turmoil.



Chesley Bonestell, aerial view of proposed fair, *San Francisco News*, May 3, 1935

Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library

With the brouhaha over the site erupting, the Exposition Company prepared its own promotional materials in advance of a public vote. Not to be upstaged by Strauss, it, too, hired Bonestell, who created a fantasia of domes, towers, colonnades, picturesque bridges, and terminals, compressing them into a spectacle that reached a crescendo with an impossibly tall tower on the south side of the island.⁴⁵ The image survives only because the *San Francisco Chronicle* published it. Bonestell superimposed the island onto an aerial view of the city, carefully drawing in the unfinished San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge. In the background, he painted in the Golden Gate Bridge in white in order to bring out its connection to the exposition. Shunting aside practical matters, he filled in the chamfered corners of the island and avoided the sea of parking that would take up a quarter of the new landmass.

With a public vote on the fair at stake, the image had to sell the plan. It put a gleaming, white city before the people. The image was intended to help people forget Day and Kelham's stiff drawing, which had appeared almost a year earlier.⁴⁶

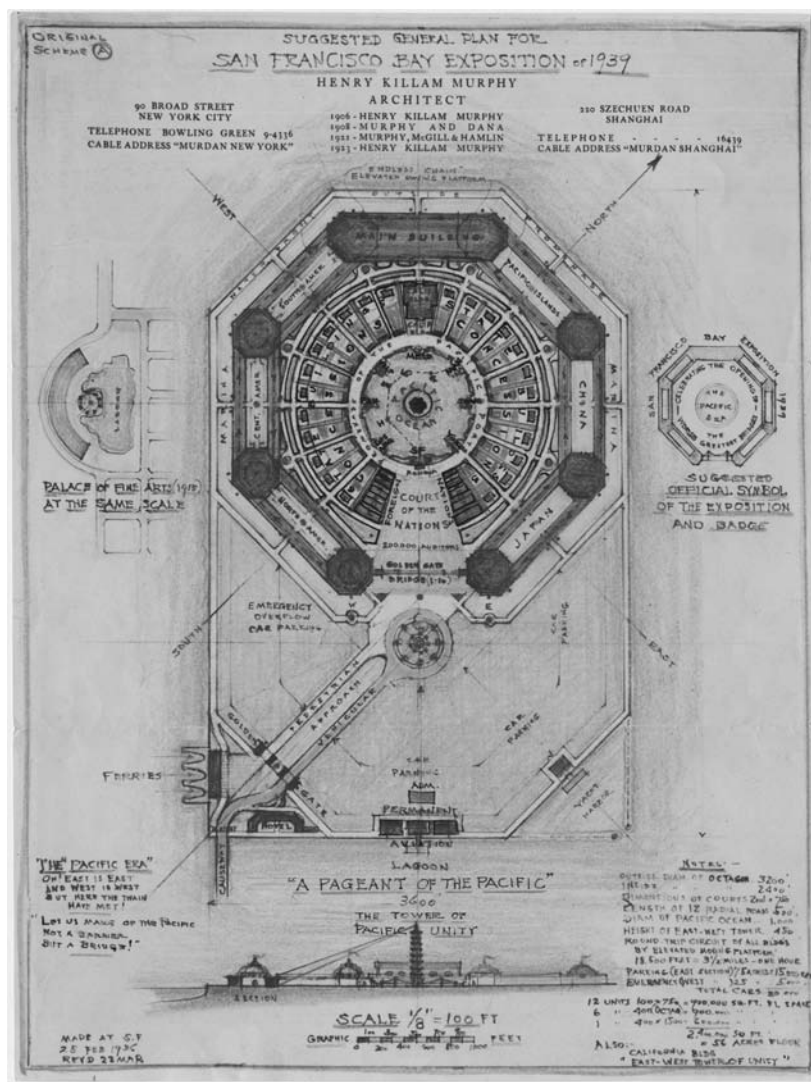
And it worked. The shoals site was approved with an overwhelming majority, and Leland Cutler promptly appointed an architectural commission consisting of Arthur Brown Jr., William Merchant, Louis Hobart, Ernest Weihe, and Timothy Pflueger, with George Kelham as chair (until Brown took over when Kelham died in 1936). Kelham, in turn, drafted a working plan and divided up the exposition palaces and courts among the commission architects. By the end of the summer of 1935, promotion had begun, including a model that toured California to drum up support for the fair. Backroom dealing sped up the design process, but it fostered ill will among Bay Area architects. William Wurster, who had no official role with the exposition, wrote to Allen L. Chickering, the law partner of his friend and client Warren

Gregory: “There is nothing to be done about it—but you should know how hopeless the entire younger group feel—how we fear it may only be a mirror of past performance.”⁴⁷

HENRY KILLAM MURPHY’S PAGODA

While Neutra and Strauss worked fruitlessly on their schemes, another architect proposed a competing vision. In February 1936, Henry Killam Murphy quickly sketched a plan on his firm’s letterhead.⁴⁸

Like the other proposals, this was architecture on the fly. Unlike the others, Murphy knew the site and theme. He had only to invent the program. Into the northern half of the island he inserted a single octagon whose planes are parallel to the lopped-off corners of the



Henry Killam Murphy, plan for the fair, 1936
 Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

new landmass. Into this he fit a circular building of concentric exhibition halls with radiating spokes that open out to the south into a Court of Nations. The great courts of the octagon are devoted to various regions of the Pacific: North America, Central America, South America, the Pacific Islands, China, and Japan. The main building fills the northern hall, while the south range remains open as a monumental entrance. The plan simultaneously pays homage to Bernini's colonnades at Saint Peter's in Rome and to the 1867 exposition in Paris, the latter being a single, domed oblong building with radiating halls cut through concentric ones like a section of an onion.

These references almost obscure the most obvious reference: Murphy adapted the plan of a pagoda for the entire building!⁴⁹ The Pacific Ocean symbolically fills the core of the circle, with the California building on an axis with the opening. At the center of the symbolic Pacific stands an actual pagoda—the “Tower of Pacific Unity”—and domes rise over the pivots that hinge the halls of the octagon. It was a purely symbolic architecture; in fact, it was a kind of cosmogram the likes of which only Murphy could have designed.

Almost an exact contemporary of Arthur Brown Jr., Murphy (1877–1954) trained at Yale at the turn of the century and designed buildings on the East Coast as well as for Yale-in-China University at Changsha from 1913 to 1923. The turning point of his career came in 1928, when he became architectural advisor to the Chinese government, a post that led to plans for a number of prominent campuses and cities, including the rebuilding of the capital at Nanjing.⁵⁰ With the political climate in China making building increasingly difficult, he returned to the United States in 1935, presumably to retire, which makes his plan for the San Francisco fair all the more intriguing.⁵¹ For Murphy, who was still only fifty-nine years old, the fair would have been a major commission in a precarious moment in his career. With offices in New York and Shanghai, he was a significant international architect with ample experience in large-scale planning and more ties to the Pacific than any of the other exposition architects.

In April 1936, while staying in San Francisco, Murphy developed an extensive description to accompany his sketch. It was a knowing plan in a number of ways. He knew the correct shape and site of the island and was well aware of the need for wind protection. Hence the pagoda plan, which would put all visitors alee of the westerly wind. The continuous single building, he claimed, would maximize the use of floor space and lower construction costs, as would the repetition of the exhibition halls, since they are all the same, being part of the octagon. Knowing the potential hazards of prescribing an architectural style in the 1930s, he advocated “no particular style of exterior architecture . . . ; the door being left open to all.” For the central tower, he suggested “an embodiment of the union of Eastern architectural forms with Western engineering methods,” an orientalist proposition that in 1936 would have troubled people less than insisting on specific architectural prescriptions. Stylistically, it was precisely what the architectural commission had in mind.

His scheme far outstripped the ambitions of any temporary exposition. Murphy envisioned it continuing afterward as the “world's largest university teaching its visitors lessons of the Pacific,” with, he claimed preposterously, fifteen million students from around the globe. The ground plan itself would “graphically bring home to its visitor-students the great lesson of the potentialities of the Pacific—of its essential commercial unity.” In place of allegory, which “passes completely over the heads of the great majority

of exposition-visitors,” he believed the plainly symbolic plan would speak directly. With the Pacific at the center, represented as an eighteen-acre body of water, he envisioned realistic miniatures of the principle ports of the Pacific surrounding it: Yokohama, Shanghai, Manila, Melbourne, Valparaiso, Panama, and Los Angeles, with miniature islands (Honolulu, Midway, Wake, and Guam) where the Pan-American Airways’ China Clipper flew. A miniature Golden Gate Bridge spans the miniature bay under which would pass miniature boats carrying real passengers.

Murphy also understood the fair as a commercial enterprise, and this he inscribed in the plan. One would have entered the exposition as trade entered the San Francisco Bay Area, through a scaled-down replica of the Golden Gate Bridge to encounter a miniature of the entire Bay Area, culminating with Treasure Island, whose peak would serve as a rostrum for the opening ceremonies in a Court of Nations. Visitors would then disperse through the exposition, encountering the first layer, which Murphy reserved for the concessions. “Why not frankly recognize this community of interest,” he wrote, “and provide, in the general plan of the Exposition, the best possible location and best possible arrangement for the Concessions, to ensure the greatest possible financial return?” Why not “cut loose entirely from precedent . . . in the location and in the arrangement of the Concessions,” he asked rhetorically, arguing against placing them in a peripheral zone, as was customary, on a long promenade “stretching discouragingly into the distance”? Just as museums in recent decades have channeled visitors through their gift shops, so did Murphy move the crowds first through the concessions on their way to the didactic exhibits.

In short, the concessions encircled the central feature of the fair, the miniature Pacific, creating a layer of commerce around the Pacific. The utility of this is as obvious as the symbolism: in addition to integrating commerce, its place in the inner ring in the fair made the commercial reality of the exposition explicit, rather than hiding commerce and politics behind the veneer of culture. Murphy believed that this would take away the need of proprietors to employ “gaudy exterior treatment” to attract visitors “numbed by the usual interminable succession of shows.” Their placement would make the exposition “the Concessionaire’s Paradise.” Such an inversion of fair practices flew in the face of conventional wisdom and social conventions, but it played into the economic realities of the exposition. The Gayway, the amusement zone built for the fair, by contrast, would be peripheral, although those who arrived by car would pass through it on their way to the fair proper. New York’s amusement zone in 1939–40 would be removed entirely from the symmetrical diagram of the plan.

It is impossible to know just how quixotic Murphy’s gambit was. We don’t even know to whom he sent it. Did he think that his intricate plan would win over exposition directors, put the fair in his hands, and thereby open up a new chapter in his career? Or was the architectural commission operating so quietly that no one, least of all an outsider, knew that the fair was spoken for? In late 1935 and early 1936, with only the key plan in place, the commission was, in fact, at loose ends. Throughout the fall of that year, Arthur Brown Jr., was in France, delayed for unknown reasons from returning until early 1936. His assistant, Edward Frick, who would serve as chief of the Division of Architecture for the Golden Gate International Exhibition, elaborated Brown’s early ideas for the plan and created the first finished rendering for the commission. Brown was in absentia. In these months, Frick would appeal to him repeatedly for help and ask about news of his return, with little evidence of an answer.

Kelham was anxious, too, and he may not have been well—he would die within the year.⁵² Perhaps Murphy, Neutra, and Maybeck suspected just how tenuous the fair was and continued to work with the hope that they could step into the breach.

MAYBECK'S FOLLY

With the site selected and the plan more or less determined, all that remained was to work out the details of the exposition. Even with the architecture commission in place, Bernard Maybeck continued to sketch ideas for the lagoon, a major section of the exposition. He clearly thought that it was his to design. Two undated views likely from these same months in the summer of 1935 show him riffing on the key plan.⁵³ In the aerial view, imagined from an ideal point above the Embarcadero in San Francisco (possibly from his office in the Russ Building), Maybeck played with the vertical development of the horizontal plan. His tower, fronted by a colossus, is far more muscular than Arthur Brown's Tower of the Sun, which would become the vertical element of the fair.

In a second view, this one drawn from San Francisco looking east across the bay, Maybeck created a dramatic sense of approaching an exotic walled city by boat at night.

A variety of vaguely Central American and Southeast Asian pyramids spreads out symmetrically to either side of the tower, which thrusts up in stages, culminating in a blue beam of light that cuts through the charcoal sky. It vaguely resembles the Empire State Building, a surprising architectural language for Maybeck to have adopted so late in his career, and evidence of collaboration with the younger Merchant, who was more comfortable with the fashions of the day.

For all of his facility with form and fairy light, Maybeck's drawings reveal a practical, disciplined architect. He took the presumed shape of the island as a given, made the most of the



Bernard Maybeck, proposed plan for fair, ca. 1935

Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley



Bernard Maybeck, proposed plan for fair, ca. 1935

Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley

causeway, and, in grouping the buildings on the southern half of the island, he followed the key plan and basic square footage of the fair. The references to Mayan or Southeast Asian pyramids anticipate the wishes of the architecture commission—to which he was privy through Merchant—to create a novel synthesis of “Pacific” architecture. Where he departed from the script—for instance, replacing the vast parking lot with what appear to be verdant, tree-lined fields—he did so with justification. A letter from his wife, Ann White Maybeck, who managed his office, shows him trying to avoid parking cars on the island altogether. Writing in July 1935, when he would have been working on these drawings, she told of a “tower hugging the north side of Goat Island . . . with ramps and storage for 1,000 cars or so.” The government, she explained, would not allow the preservation of the tower at the 1915 fair because of “danger to aviators in the fog,” but “a storage tower hugging the hillside would not bring criticism.”⁵⁴ Clearly, Maybeck was more deeply involved than records of the fair suggest.

In fact, the same month that the Maybecks dreamed up a hill-hugging tower on Yerba Buena Island, Arthur Brown Jr. drew a pastel that mirrors Maybeck’s own view from the bay.

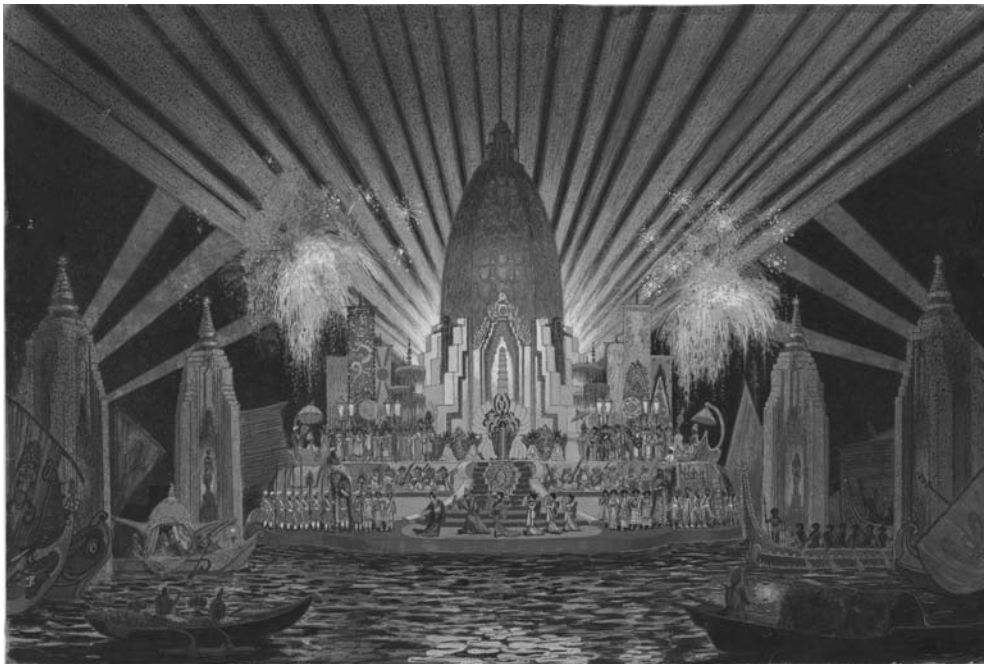
In Brown’s drawing, a tower marches up from the causeway, just as Maybeck’s would have done. The scale of the drawing diminishes its size, but it is nearly equal in height to the sixty-foot walls of the compound to its north. Brown’s larger conception of the fair was considerably different than Maybeck’s. A massive triumphal arch-cum-tower lands on the multiplying buttresses of a gothicized base, a design that nods to the postwar battlefield monuments in Europe by Edwin Lutyens and others. And yet, stylistic choices aside, the two drawings line up remarkably. Brown and Maybeck chose nearly identical frames of reference, included a fragment of the bridge, drew in the reflection of Yerba Buena Island in the water, and worked with roughly the same footprint for the walled “town,” congregating the buildings on the southern half, as the key plan dictated. Had Brown called on Maybeck it would be no surprise. He had taken a drawing studio that Maybeck offered out of his home in 1895, before attending the *École de Beaux Arts* in Paris at the older architect’s encouragement.

Whatever the case may be, over the next two years Maybeck and Merchant drew reams of sketches for the fair, focusing on the lagoon, or “Pacific Basin.” At the center of the area, Maybeck envisioned a major tower that would have anchored the far edge of the lagoon and terminated the east-west axis of the fair; because of its site, it would have been one of the most prominent buildings of the fair. Various labels like the Temple of Youth or the Temple of Music in their drawings, the building would have provided a counterpoint to Brown’s Tower of the Sun. The latter was tall, thin, classical, and white, an anemic axis mundi widely criticized in the press.⁵⁵ Maybeck and Merchant’s tower, by contrast, was thick, exotic, polychromatic, and, in some drawings, exuberantly theatrical.



Arthur Brown Jr., proposed plan for fair, July 8, 1935

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley



Bernard Maybeck, Tower of Youth
Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley.

That they were working on a legitimate project is assured. From the official model to the earliest plans, including a Chesley Bonestell painting as part of the fair's publicity campaign, their monumental tower appeared in some form, including in a puff piece in *Popular Mechanics* in late 1937.⁵⁶ The first dated drawings that are cued to the evolving key plan came in March 1936, a month after dredgers began filling in the shoals.⁵⁷ For months Maybeck passed ideas back and forth with Merchant. Dozens of pin marks puncture the edges of their drawings, revealing how the architects reviewed their work, possibly with the architectural commission. The most developed examples exhibit a high level of finish. Exposition architecture through and through, the building crossed a triumphal arch with a Southeast Asian stupa. The architects bolstered it with faceted art deco buttresses that march up the tower like the steps of a Mayan pyramid.⁵⁸ Iwans, or Islamic arches of ample depth, open into a hollow dome. In some versions a great fountain fills the dome, dancing with iridescent colors and light.⁵⁹ As a Temple of Music, it would have been among the most melodramatic bandstands in history.

As a Temple of Youth, however, it would have been the theme building of the fair. William Merchant had proposed as much.⁶⁰ Maybeck would naturally have understood it as a pendant to his Palace of Fine Arts in 1915. No wonder he played obsessively with the temple's form. The version in the figure above is garish and orientalist to the point of vulgarity. In this painting, a battery of searchlights frame a golden stupa. Encrusted with mosaics, the tower bursts out of a riot of costumed actors, colorful banners, lanterns, and umbrellas that fill out the multiple tiers of the stage. On the first level, stage right, an Indian prince seated in a howdah rides on his elephant, fanned by a dark servant

and surrounded by a small army in red. Stage left, his princess, seated on her own elephant, balances him out. Her attendants hold a red ladder in preparation for her dismount. Between them, at center stage, a Chinese opera reaches its crescendo as the central characters slash at one another with daggers. Tucked in the middle tier, a South Asian orchestra plays sitars, santirs, and drums, while above them a row of conspicuously brown-skinned Maya, Aztec, and Inca people, bedecked in a sartorial fiction of gowns, wraps, and hats, stand in a passive tableau between a fantastically feathered serpent-god.

The rest of the cultures of the Pacific—Africans, Polynesians, and others—sail into the scene in their exotic craft, cutting through waters that could have been painted by Claude Monet in his water lily period. The idea may have come from the Bridge Celebration Founding Committee itself, which had suggested floating exhibits in boats for those nations that could not pay.⁶¹ Between the buttresses of the temple stand allegorical figures, ethnically ambiguous women who represent the ideal synthesis of the Pacific cultures coming together below. Pageant, people, and architecture have become one.

No other image produced in anticipation of the fair comes closer to expressing the intentions and inherent (if not also incoherent) cultural problems of the “Pageant of the Pacific.” Unlike the great exhibitions that straddled the turn of the century, where “scientific” classifications of race were embedded in racist and imperialist projects, Maybeck’s image proposes something more naïve and ambiguous.⁶² Together, the lines of the figures look like the great bas reliefs of Persepolis brought to life with excessive pigment—the reference would have been of the moment, since the revelations of this stunningly multicultural site had just come to light.⁶³ It would also have been symbolically on point. There, in the fifth century BCE, Babylonians, Greeks, Mesopotamians, and peoples from other kingdoms gathered to pay tribute to the Persian king, and, as they ascended the stairs to his palace, they saw endless sculptural reliefs of themselves, as subjects, bearing gifts. By contrast, in Maybeck’s drawing, the visitors take center stage in an architectural setting and pageant that invites cultural synthesis, if not miscegenation. The American hosts are curiously absent, but we can assume that they are the audience of this drama, as well as the powerful culture that convened the peoples of the Pacific in San Francisco in order to establish the city as the epicenter of trade. Urban boosterism met the theatricality of Cecil B. DeMille on a world historical stage.

What makes this seemingly far-fetched interpretation possible is the physical place of Maybeck’s tower at the exposition. Whereas the large palaces held endless exhibits on industry, electricity, agriculture, travel, housing, and decorative arts, alongside corporate exhibits of every type, they gave way at the lagoon to an extensive area organized by nation, race, and geography. In other words, visitors would leave behind the sphere of material things, Neutra’s “realm of production,” to enter a world of people and their cultures, aggregated around the lagoon. Here, they became the exhibit. In this assembly of Pacific peoples, the tower would have been the architectural stage for observing their dramatic interaction. The two architects spent considerable time addressing the larger context of this stage, and not simply the tower.

Sometime in 1937 the Temple of Youth or Music was scrapped, most likely when plans to terminate the axis with the Federal Building emerged. Merchant seems to have made a last-ditch effort to build it in the Pacific Area, adjacent to the lagoon. The building even shows up there in a late photograph of the working model, taken in November 1938. But by then the

project was dead; neither architect had continued with their folly that late. Save a building for the California area that he did with Merchant, Maybeck would be cut out of the fair entirely.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, the work of Maybeck and Merchant, Neutra and Winkler, Strauss, and Murphy makes the architectural moment of the San Francisco World's Fair look like an eccentric collage of competing manners and attitudes. Maybeck and Merchant inflected their Beaux-Arts plans with art deco forms and the sort of fanciful exoticisms common to world's fairs that were becoming increasingly unconvincing in the 1930s. Neutra and Winkler clothed their heavy-handed symbolism in modernist garb in a dramatic bid to sway the city to a different site. It was a moody architecture, romantic and disarming—a manifesto fit for a poster. Strauss banked on Bonestell's graphics, Maybeck's Palace of Fine Arts, and his own bridge to lure San Francisco into reprising the Marina site. It was the work of a political operator, replete with a noncommittal architecture aimed at alienating no one. And finally, Henry Murphy's massive pagoda with its elaborate symbolic program played to the theme of the fair, melding the kitsch of exposition architecture with *architectural parlante* and an un-sentimental view of its commercial nature. Savvy and ridiculous at once, if that is possible, it had more than a whiff of the nineteenth century about it. Yet Murphy's proposal was the closest attempt to create a memorable icon and an appropriately hybrid architecture for the fair.

It is perhaps unfair to take these proposals as a cross section of American architecture in the mid-1930s. They are, after all, proposals for exposition architecture: grossly exaggerated, melodramatic, mostly temporary, and intended to sell. But if one "dials down" the bravado and peers past the pretension, the bones of the moment remain. All but Neutra's design begin with Beaux-Arts plans of major and minor axes converging on grand public spaces that feature monumental buildings. Style is handled freely and flexibly, and—especially in Maybeck's case—with the astonishingly facile hand that the French school taught. At the same time, several of the proposals were nondenominational about architectural style. Soon, this flexible—one might say even say agnostic—attitude would be replaced by the more dogmatic approach of the Modern Movement.

A case may also be made for the coexistence of multiple strands as a California phenomenon. Architectural critic Talbot Hamlin observed as much, noting the freer manner of the buildings of the San Francisco fair in contrast to the overly serious attitude of those at New York's fair of the same year.⁶⁴ While Arthur Brown Jr., and his colleagues on the architectural commission remained fiercely devoted to the sort of classicism that came from Paris through the Chicago Exposition of 1893, they were now a powerful minority holding court in the ruins of a cultural movement.⁶⁵

Finally, architecture is so often seen as an autonomous cultural product. Even when buildings are rightly placed within their socioeconomic, cultural, or aesthetic context, their dynamic public nature is too easily forgotten. The unbuilt projects of the fair show in amplified form the way architecture is embedded in public discourse as a form of persuasion, a kind of politics by other means through which elites and other stakeholders argue for their preferred reality. As a tool of intra-urban boosterism, these plans reveal the competing interests within San Francisco at a pivotal moment in its development, when its future lay in the formation of

a regional metropolis that could compete with Los Angeles for commerce on the West Coast and beyond.⁶⁶ Seen in this light, the sites advanced by the smaller interest groups seem parochial, too local to alter the larger fate of the city. And the idea of building an island that would become the city's international airport, however misguided this turned out to be, appears visionary, part of San Francisco's bid to compete through the new technology of the airplane.

NOTES

1. Thanks to Waverly Lowell, Marc Treib, Jeffrey Cody, Pablo Zunzunegui, and Jason Miller. "Now He's Out in the Cold," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 19, 1939.
2. "1940 Fair in Miniature Shown," *Post-Enquirer*, August 5, 1933, Vertical Files: San Francisco. Golden Gate International Exposition. 1933–1935, OPL. On lighting, see A. F. Dickerson, "Color, Light, and Structure at the Golden Gate Exhibition" (New York: 1939), unpaginated. Bancroft Library (hereafter Bancroft).
3. His name would be omitted from the official history of the fair. See Jack James and Earle Weller, *Treasure Island, "The Magic City," 1939–1940: The Story of the Golden Gate International Exposition* (San Francisco: Pisani Printing and Publishing Co., 1941), appendix, xxi.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Sally B. Woodbridge, *Bernard Maybeck: Visionary Architect* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1992), 193.
6. William Littmann, "Assault on the Ecole: Student Campaigns against the Beaux Arts, 1925–1950," *Journal of Architectural Education* 53, no. 3 (February 2000), 159–166.
7. See "San Francisco Bridge Celebration," a poster by the South Basin World's Fair Association, 1935. Earth Science and Map Library, UC Berkeley. The initial idea for a fair at South Basin came in June 1933 courtesy of Joseph Flores, the editor of a now-defunct neighborhood newspaper called *South of Market Tribune*.
8. Otto Winkler to Richard Neutra, March 29, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
9. *Ibid.*, verso for Neutra's answer.
10. Winkler to Neutra, August 31, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. Winkler to Neutra, September 10, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
14. The reference is to Forenc Molnár's 1909 play, *Liliom*. It was a timely reference, since the play had been brought to Broadway in the 1920s and was reprised in 1932. *Mährisch* means "Moravian." *Vorortatmosphäre* refers to the suburbs.
15. Winkler to Neutra, September 10, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
16. Winkler to Neutra, September 23, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
17. Winkler to Neutra, September 18, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. Winkler to Neutra, September 23, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
21. Winkler to Harry Hopkins, November 8, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
22. Winkler to Neutra, December 5, 1934, Box 1980, Folder 9, Neutra Papers, UCLA.
23. A range of sketches survive in the Richard and Dion Neutra Papers at the University of California, Los Angeles.
24. The following descriptions come from the poster. See Richard J. Neutra and Otto Winkler, "San Francisco Bridge Celebration: Plans of World Exposition Proposed for South Basin (San Francisco: South Basin World's Fair Association, 1934). A copy can be found in the Earth Sciences and Map Library, University of California, Berkeley.
25. Matthew F. Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 178–179.
26. See the frequent references to planning in Thomas S. Hines, *Richard Neutra and the Search for Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).
27. See, for instance, "Downtowners against Reclamation Bill," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 6, 1929, 15.
28. Neutra and Winkler, "San Francisco Bridge Celebration."
29. "Fair Sites: The Marina," *San Francisco News*, October 31, 1934, 15.
30. "Joseph Baermann Strauss," American National Biography Online. Accessed June 3, 2011.
31. *Ibid.*
32. "Fair Sites: The Marina."
33. *Ibid.*

34. Joseph B. Strauss to R. F. Allen, "Suggestions for Proposed Exposition to be held in San Francisco in 1937," April 11, 1934, William Merchant Collection, Box 1, Folder 6, Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter ED Archives).
35. *Ibid.*, 7.
36. *Ibid.*, 9.
37. William Merchant Collection, ED Archives, University of California, Berkeley.
38. See Ron Miller and Frederick C. Durant III, *The Art of Chesley Bonestell* (London: Collins and Brown Limited, 2001).
39. *Ibid.*, 19.
40. "Fair Sites: The Marina."
41. *Ibid.*
42. Joseph B. Strauss to R. F. Allen, "Suggestions for Proposed Exposition," 8.
43. Another less developed and compelling proposal for a site on Lake Merced appeared at the same time. See "Fair Sites: Lake Merced," *San Francisco News*, October 30, 1934, 15.
44. H. C. Bottorff, "Closing report, San Francisco Bay Exposition, sponsor for the Golden Gate International Exposition," 1–3. Bancroft Pamphlet Folio pf F869.S3.953.B6. Bancroft.
45. See the image in the *San Francisco News*, May 3, 1935: Vertical Files, San Francisco. Golden Gate International Exposition. 1933–1935, Oakland Public Library.
46. It also improved and amplified a less artful image that had appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* two weeks earlier. See "1938 . . . Our Exposition . . . If You Vote for It," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 24, 1935: Vertical Files, San Francisco. Golden Gate International Exposition. 1933–1935, Oakland Public Library.
47. Wurster to Allen L. Chickering, June 22, 1936, Series I, Folder 1, W.W. Wurster, Deans Records (hereafter Wurster), ED Archives.
48. Murphy, Suggested general plan for San Francisco Bay Exposition of 1939, 1936, BANC MSS C-Z 70, Bancroft. All quotations come from this manuscript.
49. Thanks to my student Yishi Lui for pointing this out to me.
50. Obituary, *New York Times*, October 14, 1954, 29.
51. Jeffrey Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "Adaptive Architecture," 1914–1935* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 8, 205.
52. For the letters between Frick and Brown, see BANC MSS 81/142, Box 37, Folder 15, Bancroft.
53. Maybeck seemed impressed by the early plan. Fremdling to Brown, October 19, 1935, Arthur Brown Papers, Box 37, Folder 15, Bancroft.
54. Ann White Maybeck to Merchant, July 22, 1935, Merchant Collection, Box 1, Folder 5, ED Archives.
55. Andrew M. Shanken, *Into the Void Pacific: Building the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 98–102.
56. See "Golden Gate Exposition Plans," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 18, 1936. "Floating Grandstands at Fair to Carry Audience," *Popular Mechanics* 68, no. 5 (November 1937), 662.
57. See the photostat of the early scheme, March 22, 1936, FF 80, Maybeck Collection, ED Archives.
58. Or, given the presence of water, it could be a *salsabil*—a stepped fountain, Middle Eastern in origin, used in courtyards for the natural effects of evaporative cooling.
59. See particularly his sketch of July 7, 1936, FF 80, Maybeck Collection, ED Archives.
60. Merchant, handwritten notes on the proposed fair, Box 1, Folder 6. Merchant Papers, ED Archives.
61. "Meet Me at the Fair," *San Francisco News*, August 4, 1934. Folder: San Francisco. Golden Gate International Exposition. 1933–1935, Vertical Files, History Room, Oakland Public Library.
62. Patricia A. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000) and Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
63. Hundreds of articles and commentaries were published on Persepolis in the 1930s. See M. S. Dimand, "A Persian Relief from Persepolis," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 30, no. 4 (April 1935): 75–77; Ananda Coomaraswamy, "A Relief from Persepolis," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 31, no. 184 (April 1933): 22–25.
64. Talbot Hamlin, "Some Fair Comparisons," *Pencil Points* 20, no. 1 (October 1939): 642–647.
65. Shanken, especially Timothy Pflueger's criticism on pages 53, 56, and 102.
66. See Roger W. Lotchin, "The Darwinian City: The Politics of Urbanization in San Francisco between the World Wars," *Pacific Historical Review* 48, no. 3 (August 1979), 360–363, 365, 375.